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Five Acts, by Honoré de Balzac**

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PAMELA GIRAUD: A PLAY IN FIVE ACTS ***

PAMELA GIRAUD

A PLAY IN FIVE ACTS

by Honore de Balzac

**Presented for the First Time at Paris at the
Theatre de la Gaité, September 26, 1843**

[PERSONS OF THE
PLAY](#)

[PAMELA
GIRAUD](#)

[ACT I](#)

[ACT II](#)

[ACT III](#)

[ACT IV](#)

[ACT V](#)

PERSONS OF THE PLAY

General de Verby
Dupre, a lawyer
Rousseau, a wealthy merchant
Jules Rousseau, his son
Joseph Binet
Giraud, a porter
Chief of Special Police
Antoine, servant to the Rousseaus

Pamela Giraud
Madame du Brocard, a widow; aunt of Jules Rousseau
Madame Rousseau
Madame Giraud
Justine, chambermaid to Madame Rousseau

Sheriff
Magistrate
Police Officers
Gendarmes

SCENE: Paris

TIME: During the Napoleonic plots under Louis XVIII. (1815-1824)

PAMELA GIRAUD

ACT I

SCENE FIRST

(Setting is an attic and workshop of an artificial flower-maker. It is poorly lighted by means of a candle placed on the work-table. The ceiling slopes abruptly at the back allowing space to conceal a man. On the right is a door, on the left a fireplace. Pamela is discovered at work, and Joseph Binet is seated near her.)

Pamela, Joseph Binet and later Jules Rousseau.

Pamela
Monsieur Joseph Binet!

Joseph
Mademoiselle Pamela Giraud!

Pamela
I plainly see that you wish me to hate you.

Joseph
The idea! What? And this is the beginning of our love—Hate me!

Pamela
Oh, come! Let us talk sensibly.

Joseph
You do not wish, then, that I should express how much I love you?

Pamela
Ah! I may as well tell you plainly, since you compel me to do so, that I do not wish to become the wife of an upholsterer's apprentice.

Joseph
Is it necessary to become an emperor, or something like that, in order to marry a flower-maker?

Pamela
No. But it is necessary to be loved, and I don't love you in any way whatever.

Joseph
In any way! I thought there was only one way of loving.

Pamela

So there is, but there are many ways of not loving. You can be my friend, without my loving you.

Joseph
Oh!

Pamela
I can look upon you with indifference—

Joseph
Ah!

Pamela
You can be odious to me! And at this moment you weary me, which is worse!

Joseph
I weary her! I who would cut myself into fine pieces to do all that she wishes!

Pamela
If you would do what I wish, you would not remain here.

Joseph
And if I go away—Will you love me a little?

Pamela
Yes, for the only time I like you is when you are away!

Joseph
And if I never came back?

Pamela
I should be delighted.

Joseph
Zounds! Why should I, senior apprentice with M. Morel, instead of aiming at setting up business for myself, fall in love with this young lady? It is folly! It certainly hinders me in my career; and yet I dream of her—I am infatuated with her. Suppose my uncle knew it!—But she is not the only woman in Paris, and, after all, Mlle. Pamela Giraud, who are you that you should be so high and mighty?

Pamela
I am the daughter of a poor ruined tailor, now become a porter. I gain my own living—if working night and day can be called living—and it is with difficulty that I snatch a little holiday to gather lilacs in the Pres-Saint-Gervais; and I certainly recognize that the senior apprentice of M. Morel is altogether too good for me. I do not wish to enter a family which believes that it would thus form a mesalliance. The Binets indeed!

Joseph
But what has happened to you in the last eight or ten days, my dear little pet of a Pamela? Up to ten days ago I used to come and cut out your flowers for you, I used to make the stalks for the roses, and the hearts for the violets; we used to talk together, we sometimes used to go to the play, and have a good cry there—and I was "good Joseph," "my little Joseph"—a Joseph in fact of the right stuff to make your husband. All of a sudden—Pshaw! I became of no account.

Pamela
Now you must really go away. Here you are neither in the street, nor in your own house.

Joseph
Very well, I'll be off, mademoiselle—yes, I'll go away! I'll have a talk in the porter's lodge with your mother; she does not ask anything better than my entrance into the family, not she; she won't change her mind!

Pamela
All right! Instead of entering her family, enter her lodge, the porter's lodge, M. Joseph! Go and talk with my mother, go on!—(Exit Joseph.) Perhaps he'll keep their attention so that M. Adolph can get up stairs without being seen. Adolph Durand! What a pretty name! There is half a romance in it! And what a handsome young man! For the last fifteen days he has absolutely persecuted me. I knew that I was rather pretty; but I never believed I was all he called me. He must be an artist, or a government official! Whatever he is, I can't help liking him; he is so aristocratic! But what if his appearance were deceitful, and there were anything wrong about him!—For the letter which he has just sent me has an air of mystery about it—(She draws a letter from her bosom and reads it) "Expect me this evening. I wish to see you alone, and, if possible, to enter unnoticed by any one; my life is in danger, and oh! if you only knew what a terrible misfortune threatens me! Adolph Durand." He writes in pencil. His life is in danger—Ah! How anxious I feel!

Joseph (returning)
Just as I was going down stairs, I said to myself: "Why should Pamela"

(Jules' head appears at the window.)

Pamela

Ah!

Joseph
What's the matter?

(Jules disappears.)

Pamela
I thought I saw—I mean—I thought I heard a sound overhead. Just go into the garret. Some one perhaps has hidden there. You are not afraid, are you?

Joseph
No.

Pamela
Very well! Go up and search! Otherwise I shall be frightened for the whole night.

Joseph
I will go at once. I will climb over the roof if you like.

(He passes through a narrow door that leads to the garret.)

Pamela *(follows him)*
Be quick! *(Jules enters.)* Ah! sir, what trouble you are giving me!

Jules
It is to save my life, and perhaps you will never regret it. You know how much I love you!

(He kisses her hand.)

Pamela
I know that you have told me so; but you treat me—

Jules
As my deliverer.

Pamela
You wrote to me—and your letter has filled me with trouble—I know neither who you are—

Joseph *(from the outer room)*
Mademoiselle, I am in the garret. I have looked over the whole roof.

Jules
He is coming back—Where can I hide?

Pamela
But you must not stay here!

Jules
You wish to ruin me, Pamela!

Pamela
Look, hide yourself there!

(She points to the cranny under the sloping roof.)

Joseph *(returning)*
Are you alone, mademoiselle?

Pamela
No; for are not you here?

Joseph
I heard something like the voice of a man. The voice came from below.

Pamela
Nonsense, more likely it came from above—Look down the staircase—

Joseph
Oh! But I am sure—

Pamela
Nonsense. Leave me, sir; I wish to be alone.

Joseph
Alone, with a man's voice?

Pamela
I suppose you don't believe me?

Joseph
But I heard it plain enough.

Pamela
You heard nothing.

Joseph
Ah! Pamela!

Pamela
If you prefer to believe the sounds which you say reached your ears,

rather than the words I speak, you would make a very bad husband. That is quite sufficient for me.

Joseph

That doesn't prove that I did not hear—

Pamela

Since I can't convince you, you can believe what you like. Yes! you did hear a voice, the voice of a young man, who is in love with me, and who does whatever I wish—He disappears when he is asked, and comes when he is wanted. And now what are you waiting for? Do you think that while he is here, your presence can be anything but disagreeable to us? Go and ask my father and mother what his name is. He must have told them when he came up stairs—he, and the voice you heard.

Joseph

Mlle. Pamela, forgive a poor youth who is mad with love. It is not only my heart that I have lost, but my head also, when I think of you. I know that you are just as good as you are beautiful, I know that you have in your soul more treasures of sweetness than you ever show, and so I know that you are right, and were I to hear ten voices, were I to see ten men here, I would care nothing about it. But one—

Pamela

Well, what of it?

Joseph

A single one—that is what wounds me. But I must be off; it seems funny that I should have said all that to you. I know quite well that there is no one here but you. Till we meet again, Mlle. Pamela; I am going—I trust you.

Pamela (aside)

He evidently does not feel quite sure.

Joseph (aside)

There is some one here! I will run down and tell the whole matter to her father and mother. (Aloud) Adieu, Mlle. Pamela. (Exit.)

SCENE SECOND

Pamela and Jules.

Pamela

M. Adolph, you see to what you are exposing me. That poor lad is a workman, a most kind-hearted fellow; he has an uncle rich enough to set him up in business; he wishes to marry me, and in one moment I have lost my prospects—and for whom? I do not know you, and from the manner in which you imperil the reputation of a young girl who has no capital but her good behavior, I conclude that you think you have the right to do so. You are rich and you make sport of poor people!

Jules

No, my dear Pamela. I know who you are, and I take you at your true value. I love you, I am rich, and we will never leave one another. My traveling carriage is with a friend, at the gate of St. Denis; we will proceed on foot to catch it; I intend embarking for England. You must come with me. I cannot explain my intentions now, for the least delay may prove fatal to me.

Pamela

What do you mean?

Jules

You shall see—

Pamela

Are you in your right senses, M. Adolph? After having followed me about for a month, seen me twice at a dance, written me several declarations, such as young men of your sort write to any and every woman, you point-blank propose an elopement!

Jules

Oh, I beg of you, don't delay an instant! You'll repent of this for the rest of your life, and you will see too late what mischief you have done.

Pamela

But, my dear sir, you can perhaps explain yourself in a couple of words.

Jules

No,—for the secret is a matter of life and death to several persons.

Pamela

If it were only to save your life, whoever you are, I would do a good deal; but what assistance could I be to you in your flight! Why do you want to take me to England?

Jules

What a child you are! No one, of course, would suspect anything of two runaway lovers! And, let me tell you, I love you well enough to disregard everything else, and even to brave the anger of my parents—Once we are married at Gretna Green—

Pamela

Oh, mon Dieu! I am quite non-plussed! Here's a handsome young man urges you—implores you—and talks of marriage—

Jules

They are mounting the staircase—I am lost!—You have betrayed me!—

Pamela

M. Adolph, you alarm me! What is going to happen? Wait a moment, I will go and see.

Jules

In any case, take and keep this twenty thousand francs. It will be safer with you than in the hands of the police—I have only half an hour longer and all will be over.

Pamela

There is nothing to fear—It is only my father and mother.

Jules

You have the kindness of an angel. I trust my fate with you. But you must know that both of us must leave this house at once; and I swear on my honor, that nothing but good shall result to you.

(He hides again under the roof.)

SCENE THIRD

Pamela, M. Giraud and Mme. Giraud.

Pamela (who stands in such a way as to prevent her parents from entering fully into the room; aside)
Evidently here is a man in danger—and a man who loves me—two reasons why I should be interested in him.

Mme. Giraud

How is this, Pamela—you the solace of all our misfortunes, the prop of our old age, our only hope!

Giraud

A girl brought up on the strictest principles.

Mme. Giraud

Keep quiet, Giraud! You don't know what you are talking about.

Giraud

Certainly, Madame Giraud.

Mme. Giraud

And besides all this, Pamela, your example was cited in all the neighborhood as a girl who'd be useful to your parents in their declining years!

Giraud

And worthy to receive the prize of virtue!

Pamela

Then what is the meaning of all these reproaches?

Mme. Giraud

Joseph has just told us that you had a man hidden in your room.

Giraud

Yes—he heard the voice.

Mme. Giraud

Silence, Giraud!—Pamela—pay no attention to your father—

Pamela

And do you, mother, pay no attention to Joseph.

Giraud

What did I tell you on the stairs, Madame Giraud? Pamela knows how we count upon her. She wishes to make a good match as much on our account as on her own; her heart bleeds to see us porters, us, the authors of her life! She is too sensible to blunder in this matter. Is it not so, my child, you would not deceive your father?

Mme. Giraud

There is nobody here, is there, my love? For a young working-girl to have any one in her room, at ten o'clock at night—well—she runs a risk of losing—

Pamela

But it seems to me that if I had any one you would have seen him on his way up.

Giraud

She is right.

Mme. Giraud

She does not answer straight out. Please open the door of this room.

Pamela

Mother, stop! Do not come in here,—you shall not come in here!— Listen to me; as I love you, mother, and you, father, I have nothing to reproach myself with!—and I swear to it before God!—Do not in a moment withdraw from your daughter the confidence which you have had in her for so long a time.

Mme. Giraud
But why not tell us?

Pamela (aside)
Impossible! If they were to see this young man every one would soon know all about it.

Giraud (interrupting her)
We are your father and mother, and we must see!

Pamela
For the first time in my life, I refuse to obey you!—But you force me to it!—These lodgings are rented by me from the earnings of my work! I am of age and mistress of my own actions.

Mme. Giraud
Oh, Pamela! Can this be you, on whom we have placed all our hopes?

Giraud
You will ruin yourself!—and I shall remain a porter to the end of my days.

Pamela
You needn't be afraid of that! Well—I admit that there is some one here; but silence! You must go down stairs again to your lodge. You must tell Joseph that he does not know what he is talking about, that you have searched everywhere, that there is no one in my lodging; you must send him away—then you shall see this young man; you shall learn what I purpose doing. But you must keep everything the most profound secret.

Giraud
Unhappy girl! What do you take us for? (He sees the banknotes on the table.) Ah! what is this? Banknotes!

Mme. Giraud
Banknotes! (She recoils from Pamela.) Pamela, where did you get them?

Pamela
I will tell you when I write.

Giraud
When you write! She must be going to elope!

SCENE FOURTH

The same persons, and Joseph Binet.

Joseph (entering)
I was quite sure that there was something wrong about him!—He is a ringleader of thieves! The gendarmes, the magistrate, all the excitement she showed mean something—and now the house is surrounded!

Jules (appearing)
I am lost!

Pamela
I have done all that I could!

Giraud
And you, sir, who are you?

Joseph
Are you a—?

Mme. Giraud
Speak!

Jules
But for this idiot, I would have escaped! You will now have the ruin of an innocent man on your consciences.

Pamela
M. Adolph, are you innocent?

Jules
I am!

Pamela
What shall we do? (Pointing to the dormer window.) You can elude their pursuit that way out.

(She opens the dormer window and finds the police agents on the roof outside.)

Jules
It is too late. All you can do is to confirm my statement. You must declare that I am your daughter's lover; that I have asked you to give her in marriage to me; that I am of age; that my name is Adolph

Durand, son of a rich business man of Marseilles.

Giraud

He offers her lawful love and wealth!—Young man, I willingly take you under my protection.

SCENE FIFTH

The same persons, a sheriff, a police officer and gendarmes.

Giraud

Sir, what right have you to enter an occupied dwelling—the domicile of a peaceable young girl?

Joseph

Yes, what right have you—?

The sheriff

Young man, don't you worry about our right!—A few moments ago you were very friendly and slowed us where the unknown might be found, but now you have suddenly changed your tune.

Pamela

Bit what are you looking for? What do you want?

The sheriff

You seem to be well aware that we are looking for somebody.

Giraud

Sir, my daughter has no one with her but her future husband, M.—

The sheriff

Rousseau.

Pamela

M. Adolph Durand.

Giraud

Rousseau I don't know.—The gentleman I refer to is M. Adolph Durand.

Mme. Giraud

Son of a respectable merchant of Marseilles.

Joseph

Ah! you have been deceiving me! Ah!—That is the secret of your coldness, and he is—

The sheriff (to the officer of the police)

This does not seem to be the man?

The officer

Oh, yes, I am sure of it! (to the gendarmes) Carry out my orders.

Jules

Monsieur, I am the victim of some mistake; my name is not Jules Rousseau.

The officer

Oh! but you know his first name, which none of us has as yet mentioned.

Jules

But I heard some one say it. Here are my papers, which are perfectly correct.

The sheriff

Let me see them, please.

Giraud

Gentlemen, I assure you and declare to you—

The officer

If you go on in this way, and wish to make us believe that this gentleman is Adolph Durand, son of a merchant of—

Mme. Giraud

Of Marseilles—

The officer

You may all be arrested as his accomplices, locked up in jail this evening, and implicated in an affair from which you will not easily get off. Have you any regard for the safety of your neck?

Giraud

A great deal!

The officer

Very well! Hold your tongue, then.

Mme. Giraud

Do hold your tongue, Giraud!

Pamela

Merciful heaven! Why did I not believe him at once!

The sheriff (to his agents)
Search the gentleman!

(The agent takes out Jules' pocket handkerchief.)

The officer
It is marked with a J and an R. My dear sir, you are not very clever!

Joseph
What can he have done? Have you anything to do with it, mademoiselle?

Pamela
You are the sole cause of the trouble. Never speak to me again!

The officer
Monsieur, here we have the check for your dinner—you dined at the Palais Royal. While you were there you wrote a letter in pencil. One of your friends brought the letter here. His name was M. Adolph Durand, and he lent you his passport. We are certain of your identity; you are M. Jules Rousseau.

Joseph
The son of the rich M. Rousseau, whose house we are furnishing?

The sheriff
Hold your tongue!

The officer
You must come with us.

Jules
Certainly, monsieur. (To Giraud and his wife) Forgive the annoyance I have caused you—and you, Pamela, do not forget me! If you do not see me again, you may keep what I gave into your hands, and may it bring you happiness!

Giraud
O Lord!

Pamela
Poor Adolph!

The sheriff (to his agents)
Remain here. We are going to search this attic, and question every one of these people.

Joseph (with a gesture of horror)
Ah!—she prefers a criminal to me!

(Jules is put in charge of the agents.)

Curtain to the First Act.

ACT II

SCENE FIRST

(The setting is a drawing-room in the Rousseau mansion. Antoine is looking through the newspapers.)

Antoine and Justine.

Justine
Well, Antoine, have you read the papers?

Antoine
I am reading them. Isn't it a pity that we servants cannot learn, excepting through the papers, what is going on in the trial of M. Jules?

Justine
And yet the master and mistress and Mme. du Brocard, their sister, know nothing. M. Jules has been for three months—in what do they call it?—in close confinement.

Antoine
The arrest of the young man has evidently attracted great attention—

Justine
It seems absurd to think that a young man who had nothing to do but amuse himself, who would some day inherit his aunt's income of twenty thousand francs, and his father's and mother's fortune, which is quite double that amount, should be mixed up in a conspiracy!

Antoine
I admire him for it, for they were plotting to bring back the emperor! You may cause my throat to be cut if you like. We are alone here—you don't belong to the police; long live the emperor! say I.

Justine
For mercy's sake, hold your tongue, you old fool!—If any one heard you, you would get us all arrested.

Antoine
I am not afraid of that, thank God! The answers I made to the magistrate were non-committal; I never compromised M. Jules, like the traitors who informed against him.

Justine
Mme. du Brocard with all her immense savings ought to be able to buy him off.

Antoine
Oh, nonsense! Since the escape of Lavalette such a thing is impossible! They have become extremely particular at the gates of the prison, and they were never particularly accommodating. M. Jules will have to take his dose you see; he will be a martyr. I shall go and see him executed.

(Some one rings. Exit Antoine.)

Justine
We will go and see him! When one has known a condemned man I don't see how they can have the heart to—As for me I shall go to the Court of Assizes. I feel, poor boy, I owe him that!

SCENE SECOND

Dupre, Antoine and Justine.

Antoine (aside, as he ushers in Dupre)
Ah! The lawyer. (Aloud) Justine, go and tell madame that Monsieur Dupre is waiting. (Aside) The lawyer is a hard nut to crack, I'm thinking. (Aloud) Sir, is there any hope of saving our poor M. Jules?

Dupre
I perceive that you are very fond of your young master?

Antoine
Naturally enough!

Dupre
What would you do to save him?

Antoine
Anything, sir!

Dupre
That means nothing.

Antoine
Nothing?—I will give whatever evidence you like.

Dupre
If you are caught in contradicting yourself and convicted of perjury, do you know what you run the risk of?

Antoine
No, sir.

Dupre
The galleys.

Antoine
That is rather severe, sir.

Dupre
You would prefer to serve him without compromising yourself?

Antoine
Is there any other way?

Dupre
No.

Antoine
Well! I'll run the risk of the galleys.

Dupre (aside)
What devotion is here!

Antoine
My master would be sure to settle a pension on me.

Justine
Here is madame.

SCENE THIRD

The same persons and Madame Rousseau.

Mme. Rousseau (to Dupre)
Ah! Monsieur, we have been impatiently expecting this visit. (To

Antoine) Antoine! Quick, inform my husband. (To Dupre) Sir, I trust in your efforts, alone.

Dupre
You may be sure, madame, that I shall employ every energy—

Mme. Rousseau
Oh! Thank you! But of course Jules is not guilty. To think of him as a conspirator! Poor child, how could any one suspect him, who trembles before me at the slightest reproach—me, his mother! Ah, monsieur, promise that you will restore him to me!

Rousseau (entering the room)
(To Antoine) Yes, carry the letter to General de Verby. I shall wait for him here. (To Dupre) I am glad to see you, my dear M. Dupre—

Dupre
The battle will doubtless begin to-morrow; to-day preparations are being made, and the indictment drawn.

Rousseau
Has my poor Jules made any admissions?

Dupre
He has denied everything, and has played to perfection the part of an innocent man; but we are not able to oppose any testimony to that which is being brought against him.

Rousseau
Ah! Monsieur, save my son, and the half of my fortune shall be yours!

Dupre
If I had every half of a fortune that has been promised to me, I should be too rich for anything.

Rousseau
Do you question the extent of my gratitude?

Dupre
We will wait till the result of the trial is known, sir.

Mme. Rousseau
Take pity on a poor mother!

Dupre
Madame, I swear to you nothing so much excites my curiosity and my sympathy, as a genuine sentiment. And at Paris sincerity is so rare that I cannot be indifferent to the grief of a family threatened with the loss of an only son. You may therefore rely upon me.

Rousseau
Ah! Monsieur!

SCENE FOURTH

The same persons, General de Verby and Madame du Brocard.

Mme. du Brocard (showing in De Verby)
Come in, my dear general.

De Verby (bowing to Rousseau)
Monsieur—I simply came to learn—

Rousseau (presenting Dupre to De Verby)
General, M. Dupre.

(Dupre and De Verby exchange bows.)

Dupre (aside, while De Verby talks with Rousseau)
He is general of the antechamber, holding the place merely through the influence of his brother, the lord chamberlain; he doesn't seem to me to have come here without some object.

De Verby (to Dupre)
I understand, sir, that you are engaged for the defence of M. Jules Rousseau in this deplorable affair—

Dupre
Yes, sir, it is a deplorable affair, for the real culprits are not in prison; thus it is that justice rages fiercely against the rank and file, but the chiefs are always passed by. You are General Vicomte de Verby, I presume?

De Verby
Simple General Verby—I do not take the title—my opinions of course. —Doubtless you are acquainted with the evidence in this case?

Dupre
I have been in communication with the accused only for the last three days.

De Verby
And what do you think of the affair?

All

Yes, tell us.

Dupre

According to my experience of the law courts, I believe it possible to obtain important revelations by offering commutation of sentence to the condemned.

De Verby

The accused are all men of honor.

Rousseau

But—

Dupre

Characters sometime change at the prospect of the scaffold, especially when there is much at stake.

De Verby (*aside*)

A conspiracy ought not to be entered upon excepting with penniless accomplices.

Dupre

I shall induce my client to tell everything.

Rousseau

Of course.

Mme. du Brocard

Certainly.

Mme. Rousseau

He ought to do so.

De Verby (*anxiously*)

I presume there is no other way of escape for him?

Dupre

None whatever; it can be proved that he was of the number of those who had begun to put in execution the plot.

De Verby

I would rather lose my head than my honor.

Dupre

I should consider which of the two was worth more.

De Verby

You have your views in the matter.

Rousseau

Those are mine.

Dupre

And they are the opinions of the majority. I have seen many things done by men to escape the scaffold. There are people who push others to the front, who risk nothing, and yet reap all the fruits of success. Have such men any honor? Can one feel any obligation towards them?

De Verby

No, they are contemptible wretches.

Dupre (*aside*)

He has well said it. This is the fellow who has ruined poor Jules! I must keep my eye on him.

SCENE FIFTH

The same persons, Antoine and Jules (the latter led in by police agents.)

Antoine

Sir, a carriage stopped at the door. Several men got out. M. Jules is with them; they are bringing him in.

M. and Mme. Rousseau

My son!

Mme. du Brocard

My nephew!

Dupre

Yes, I see what it is—doubtless a search-warrant. They wish to look over his papers.

Antoine

Here he is.

(Jules appears in the centre, followed by the police and a magistrate; he rushes up to his mother.)

Jules

O mother! My good mother! (He embraces his mother.) Ah! I see you once more! (To Mme. du Brocard) Dear aunt!

Mme. Rousseau
My poor child! Come! Come—close to me; they will not dare— (To the police, who approach her) Leave him, leave him here!

Rousseau (rushing towards the police)
Be kind enough—

Dupre (to the magistrate)
Monsieur!

Jules
My dear mother, calm yourself! I shall soon be free; yes, be quite sure of that, and we will not part again.

Antoine (to Rousseau)
Sir, they wish to visit M. Jules's room.

Rousseau (to the magistrate)
In a moment, monsieur. I will go with you myself. (To Dupre, pointing to Jules) Do not leave him!

(He goes out conducting the magistrate, who makes a sign to the police to keep guard on Jules.)

Jules (seizing the hand of De Verby)
Ah, general! (To Dupre) And how good and generous of you, M. Dupre, to come here and comfort my mother. (In a low voice) Ah! conceal from her my danger. (Aloud, looking at his mother) Tell her the truth. Tell her that she has nothing to fear.

Dupre
I will tell her that it is in her power to save you.

Mme. Rousseau
In my power?

Mme. du Brocard
How can that be?

Dupre (to Mme. Rousseau)
By imploring him to disclose the names of those who have led him on.

De Verby (to Dupre)
Monsieur!

Mme. Rousseau
Yes, and you ought to do it. I, your mother, demand it of you.

Mme. du Brocard
Oh, certainly! My nephew shall tell everything. He has been led on by people who now abandon him to his fate, and he in his turn ought—

De Verby (in a low voice to Dupre)
What, sir! Would you advise your client to betray—?

Dupre (quickly)
Whom?

De Verby (in a troubled voice)
But—can't we find some other method? M. Jules knows what a man of high spirit owes to himself.

Dupre (aside)
He is the man—I felt sure of it!

Jules (to his mother and aunt)
Never, though I should die for it—never will I compromise any one else.

(De Verby shows his pleasure at this declaration.)

Mme. Rousseau
Ah! my God! (Looking at the police.) And there is no chance of our helping him to escape here!

Mme. du Brocard
No! that is out of the question.

Antoine (coming into the room)
M. Jules, they are asking for you.

Jules
I am coming!

Mme. Rousseau
Ah! I cannot let you go.

(She turns to the police with a supplicating look.)

Mme. du Brocard (to Dupre, who scrutinizes De Verby)
M. Dupre, I have thought that it would be a good thing—

Dupre (interrupting her)
Later, madame, later.

(He leads her to Jules, who goes out with his mother, followed by the agents.)

SCENE SIXTH

Dupre and De Verby.

De Verby *(aside)*

These people have hit upon a lawyer who is rich, without ambition—and eccentric.

Dupre *(crossing the stage and gazing at De Verby, aside)*

Now is my time to learn your secret. (Aloud) You are very much interested in my client, monsieur?

De Verby

Very much indeed.

Dupre

I have yet to understand what motive could have led him, young, rich and devoted to pleasure as he is, to implicate himself in a conspiracy—

De Verby

The passion for glory.

Dupre

Don't talk in that way to a lawyer who for twenty years has practiced in the courts; who has studied men and affairs well enough to know that the finest motives are only assumed as a disguise for trumpery passions, and has never yet met a man whose heart was free from the calculations of self-interest.

De Verby

Do you ever take up a case without charging anything?

Dupre

I often do so; but I never act contrary to my convictions.

De Verby

I understand that you are rich?

Dupre

I have some fortune. Without it, in the world as at present constituted, I should be on the straight road for the poor-house.

De Verby

It is then from conviction, I suppose, that you have undertaken the defence of young Rousseau?

Dupre

Certainly. I believe him to be the dupe of others in a higher station, and I like those who allow themselves to be duped from generous motives and not from self-interest; for in these times the dupe is often as greedy after gain as the man who exploits him.

De Verby

You belong, I perceive, to the sect of misanthropes.

Dupre

I do not care enough for mankind to hate them, for I have never yet met any one I could love. I am contented with studying my fellow-men; for I see that they are all engaged in playing each, with more or less success, his own little comedy. I have no illusion about anything, it is true, but I smile at it all like a spectator who sits in a theatre to be amused. One thing I never do; I hiss at nothing; for I have not sufficient feeling about things for that.

De Verby *(aside)*

How is it possible to influence such a man? (Aloud) Nevertheless, monsieur, you must sometimes need the services of others?

Dupre

Never!

De Verby

But you are sometimes sick?

Dupre

Then I like to be alone. Moreover, at Paris, anything can be bought, even attendance on the sick; believe me I live because it is my duty to do so. I have tested everything—charity, friendship, unselfish devotion. Those who have received benefits have disgusted me with the doing of kindnesses. Certain philanthropists have made me feel a loathing for charity. And of all humbugs that of sentiment is the most hateful.

De Verby

And what of patriotism, monsieur?

Dupre

That is a very trifling matter, since the cry of humanity has been raised.

De Verby *(somewhat discouraged)*

And so you take Jules Rousseau for a young enthusiast?

Dupre

No, sir, nothing of the sort. He presents a problem which I have to solve, and with your assistance I shall reach the solution. (De Verby changes countenance.) Come, let us speak candidly. I believe that you know something about all this.

De Verby

What do you mean, sir?

Dupre

You can save the young man.

De Verby

I? What can I do?

Dupre

You can give testimony which Antoine will corroborate—

De Verby

I have reasons for not appearing as a witness.

Dupre

Just so. You are one of the conspirators!

De Verby

Monsieur!

Dupre

It is you who have led on this poor boy.

De Verby

Monsieur, this language—!

Dupre

Don't attempt to deceive me, but tell me how you managed to gain this bad influence over him? He is rich, he is in need of nothing.

De Verby

Listen!—If you say another word—

Dupre

Oh! my life is of no consideration with me!

De Verby

Sir, you know very well that Jules will get off; and that if he does not behave properly, he will lose, through your fault, the chance of marriage with my niece, and thus the succession to the title of my brother, the Lord Chamberlain.

Dupre

Ah, that's what he was after, then! He's like all the rest of the schemers. Now consider, sir, what I am going to propose to you. You have powerful friends, and it is your duty—

De Verby

My duty! I do not understand you, sir.

Dupre

You have been able to effect his ruin, and can you not bring about his release? (Aside) I have him there.

De Verby

I shall give my best consideration to the matter.

Dupre

Don't consider for a moment that you can escape me.

De Verby

A general who fears no danger can have no fear of a lawyer—

Dupre

As you will!

(Exit De Verby, who jostles against Joseph.)

SCENE SEVENTH

Dupre and Joseph Binet.

Joseph

I heard only yesterday, monsieur, that you were engaged for the defence of M. Jules Rousseau; I have been to your place, and have waited for you until I could wait no later. This morning I found that you had left your home, and as I am working for this house, a happy inspiration sent me here. I thought you would be coming here, and I waited for you—

Dupre

What do you want with me?

Joseph

I am Joseph Binet.

Dupre
Well, proceed.

Joseph
Let me say without offence, sir, that I have fourteen hundred francs of my own—quite my own!—earned sou by sou. I am a journeyman upholsterer, and my uncle, Du Mouchel, a retired wine merchant, has plenty of the metal.

Dupre
Speak out openly! What is the meaning of this mysterious preamble?

Joseph
Fourteen hundred francs is of course a mere trifle, and they say that lawyers have to be well paid, and that it is because they are well paid that there are so many of them. I should have done better if I had been a lawyer—then she would have married me!

Dupre
Are you crazy?

Joseph
Not at all. I have here my fourteen hundred francs; take them, sir—no humbug! They are yours.

Dupre
And on what condition?

Joseph
You must save M. Jules—I mean, of course, from death—and you must have him transported. I don't want him to be put to death; but he must go abroad. He is rich, and he will enjoy himself. But save his life. Procure a sentence of simple transportation, say for fifteen years, and my fourteen hundred francs are yours. I will give them to you gladly, and I will moreover make you an office chair below the market price. There now!

Dupre
What is your object in speaking to me in this way?

Joseph
My object? I want to marry Pamela. I want to have my little Pamela.

Dupre
Pamela?

Joseph
Pamela Giraud.

Dupre
What connection has Pamela Giraud with Jules Rousseau?

Joseph
Well I never! Why! I thought that advocates were paid for learning and knowing everything. But you don't seem to know anything, sir. I am not surprised that there are those who say advocates are know-nothings. But I should like to have back my fourteen hundred francs. Pamela is accused, that is to say, she accuses me of having betrayed his head to the executioner, and you will understand that if after all he escapes, and is transported, I can marry, can wed Pamela; and as the transported man will not be in France, I need fear no disturbance in my home. Get him fifteen years; that is nothing; fifteen years for traveling and I shall have time to see my children grow up, and my wife old enough—you understand—

Dupre (aside)
He is candid, at any rate—Those who make their calculations aloud and in such evident excitement are not the worst of people.

Joseph
I say! Do you know the proverb—"A lawyer who talks to himself is like a pastry cook who eats his own wares,"—eh, sir?

Dupre
I understand you to say that Pamela is in love with M. Jules?

Joseph
Ah! I see, you understand matters.

Dupre
They used frequently to meet I suppose?

Joseph
Far too frequently! Oh! if I had only known it, I would have put a stop to it!

Dupre
Is she pretty?

Joseph
Who?—Pamela?—My eye! My Pamela! She is as pretty as the Apollo Belvidere!

Dupre
Keep your fourteen hundred francs, my friend, and if you have courage,

you and your Pamela, you will be able to help me in effecting his deliverance; for the question is absolutely whether we must let him go to the scaffold, or save him from it.

Joseph

I beg you, sir, do not think of saying one word to Pamela; she is in despair.

Dupre

Nevertheless you must bring it about that I see her this morning.

Joseph

I will send word to her through her parents.

Dupre

Ah! she has a father and mother living then? (Aside) This will cost a lot of money. (Aloud) Who are they?

Joseph

They are respectable porters.

Dupre

That is good.

Joseph

Old Giraud is a ruined tailor.

Dupre

Very well, go and inform them of my intended visit, and above all things preserve the utmost secrecy, or M. Jules will be sacrificed.

Joseph

I shall be dumb.

Dupre

And let it be thought that we have never met.

Joseph

We have never seen each other.

Dupre

Now go.

Joseph

I am going.

(He mistakes the door.)

Dupre

This is the way.

Joseph

This is the way, great advocate—but let me give you a bit of advice—a slight taste of transportation will not do him any harm; in fact, it will teach him to leave the government in peace. (Exit.)

SCENE EIGHTH

Rousseau, Madame Rousseau, Madame du Brocard (attended by Justine) and Dupre.

Mme. Rousseau

Poor child! What courage he shows!

Dupre

I hope to save him for you, madame; but it cannot be done without making great sacrifices.

Rousseau

Sir, the half of our fortune is at your disposal.

Mme. du Brocard

And the half of mine.

Dupre

It is always the half of some fortune or other. I am going to try to do my duty—afterwards, you must do yours; we shall have to make great efforts. You, madame, must rouse yourself, for I have great hopes.

Mme. Rousseau

Ah! sir, what can you mean?

Dupre

A little time ago, your son was a ruined man; at the present moment, I believe he can be saved.

Mme. Rousseau

What must we do?

Mme. du Brocard

What do you ask?

Rousseau

You may be sure we will do as you require.

Dupre

I feel certain you will. This is my plan which will undoubtedly succeed with the jury. Your son had an intrigue with a certain working-girl, Pamela Giraud, the daughter of a porter.

Mme. du Brocard
What low people!

Dupre

Yet you will have to humble yourselves to them. Your son was always with this young girl, and in this point lies the sole hope of his deliverance. The very evening on which the public prosecutor avers that he attended a meeting of the conspirators, he was possibly visiting her. If this is a fact, if she declares that he remained with her that night, if her father and her mother, if the rival of Jules confirm the testimony—we shall then have ground for hope. When the choice has to be made between a sentence of guilty and an alibi, the jury prefers the alibi.

Mme. Rousseau (aside)
Ah! sir, you bring back life to me.

Rousseau
Sir, we owe you a debt of eternal gratitude.

Dupre (looking at them)
What sum of money must I offer to the daughter, to the father and to the mother?

Mme. du Brocard
Are they poor?

Dupre
They are, but the matter concerns their honor.

Mme. du Brocard
Oh, she is only a working-girl!

Dupre (ironically)
It ought to be done very cheaply.

Rousseau
What do you think?

Dupre
I think that you are bargaining for the life of your son.

Mme. du Brocard
Well, M. Dupre, I suppose you may go as high as—

Mme. Rousseau
As high as—

Dupre
As high as—

Rousseau
Upon my word, I don't understand why you hesitate—and you must offer, sir, whatever sum you consider suitable.

Dupre
Just so, you leave it to my discretion. But what compensation do you offer her if she restores your son to you at the sacrifice of her honor? For possibly he has made love to her.

Mme. Rousseau
He shall marry her. I come from the people myself, and I am no marchioness.

Mme. du Brocard
What do you mean by that? You are forgetting Mlle. de Verby.

Mme. Rousseau
Sister, my son's life must be saved.

Dupre (aside)
Here we have the beginning of a comedy and the last which I wish to see; but I must keep them to their word. (Aloud) Perhaps it would be well if you secretly paid a visit to the young girl.

Mme. Rousseau
Oh, yes, I should like to go to see her—to implore her— (she rings) Justine! Antoine! Quick! Order the carriage! At once—

Antoine
Yes, madame.

Mme. Rousseau
Sister, will you go with me? Ah, Jules my poor son!

Mme. du Brocard
They are bringing him back.

The same persons, Jules (brought in by the police), and later De Verby.

Jules (kissing his mother)
O mother!—I will not say good-bye; I shall be back very soon.

(Rousseau and Mme. du Brocard embrace Jules.)

De Verby (going up to Dupre)
I will do, monsieur, what you have asked of me. One of my friends, M. Adolph Durand, who facilitated the flight of our dear Jules, will testify that his friend was altogether taken up with a grisette, whom he loved passionately, and with whom he was taking measures to elope.

Dupre
That is enough; success now depends upon the way we set about things.

The magistrate (to Jules)
We must be going, monsieur.

Jules
I will follow you. Be of good courage, mother!

(He bids farewell to Rousseau and Dupre; De Verby signs to him to be cautious.)

Mme. Rousseau (to Jules, as he is being led away)
Jules! Jules! Do not give up hope—we are going to save you!

(The police lead Jules away.)

Curtain to the Second Act.

ACT III

SCENE FIRST

(The stage represents the room of Pamela.)

Pamela, Giraud and Madame Giraud.

(Pamela is standing near her mother, who is knitting; Giraud is at work at a table on the left.)

Mme. Giraud
The fact of the matter is this, my poor daughter; I do not mean to reproach you, but you are the cause of all our trouble.

Giraud
No doubt about it! We came to Paris because in the country tailoring is no sort of a business, and we had some ambition for you, our Pamela, such a sweet, pretty little thing as you were. We said to each other: "We will go into service; I will work at my trade; we will give a good position to our child; and as she will be good, industrious and pretty, we can take care of our old age by marrying her well."

Pamela
O father!

Mme. Giraud
Half of our plans were already carried out.

Giraud
Yes, certainly. We had a good position; you made as fine flowers as any gardener could grow; and Joseph Binet, your neighbor, was to be the husband of our choice.

Mme. Giraud
Instead of all this, the scandal which has arisen in the house has caused the landlord to dismiss us; the talk of the neighborhood was incessant, for the young man was arrested in your room.

Pamela
And yet I have been guilty of nothing!

Giraud
Come, now, we know that well enough! Do you think if it were otherwise that we would stay near you? And that I would embrace you? After all, Pamela, there is nothing like a father and a mother! And when the whole world is against you, if a girl can look into her parents' face without a blush it is enough.

SCENE SECOND

The same persons and Joseph Binet.

Mme. Giraud
Well, well! Here is Joseph Binet.

Pamela
M. Binet, what are you doing here? But for your want of common-sense, M. Jules would not have been found here.

Joseph
I am come to tell you about him.

Pamela
What! Really? Well, let us hear, Joseph.

Joseph
Ah! you won't send me away now, will you? I have seen his lawyer, and I have offered him all that I possess if he would get him off!

Pamela
Do you mean it?

Joseph
Yes. Would you be satisfied if he was merely transported?

Pamela
Ah! you are a good fellow, Joseph, and I see that you love me! Let us be friends.

Joseph (aside)
I have good hopes that we shall be.

(A knock at the door is heard.)

SCENE THIRD

The preceding, M. de Verby and Madame du Brocard.

Mme. Giraud (opening the door)
There are some people here!

Giraud
A lady and a gentleman.

Joseph
What did you say?

(Pamela rises from her seat and takes a step toward M. de Verby, who bows to her.)

Mme. du Brocard
Is this Mlle. Pamela Giraud?

Pamela
It is, madame.

De Verby
Forgive us, mademoiselle, for presenting ourselves without previous announcement—

Pamela
There is no harm done. May I know the object of this visit?

Mme. du Brocard
And you, good people, are her father and mother?

Mme. Giraud
Yes, madame.

Joseph
She calls them good people—she must be one of the swells.

Pamela
Will you please be seated.

(Mme. Giraud offers them seats.)

Joseph (to Giraud)
My eye! The gentleman has on the ribbon of the Legion of Honor! He belongs to high society.

Giraud (looking at De Verby)
By my faith, that's true!

Mme. du Brocard
I am the aunt of M. Jules Rousseau.

Pamela
You, madame? Then this gentleman must be his father?

Mme. du Brocard
He is merely a friend of the family. We are come, mademoiselle, to ask a favor of you. (Looking at Binet with embarrassment.) Your brother?

Giraud
No, madame, just a neighbor of ours.

Mme. du Brocard (to Pamela)
Send him away.

Joseph (aside)
Send him away, indeed. I'd like to know what right she has—

(Pamela makes a sign to Joseph.)

Giraud (to Joseph)
My friend, you had better leave us. It seems this is a private matter.

Joseph
Very well. (Exit.)

SCENE FOURTH

The same persons excepting Binet.

Mme. du Brocard (to Pamela)
You are acquainted with my nephew. I do not intend to reproach you.
Your parents alone have the right.

Mme. Giraud
But, thank God, they have no reason.

Giraud
It is your nephew who has caused all this talk about her, but she is blameless!

De Verby (interrupting him)
But suppose that we wish her to be guilty?

Pamela
What do you mean, sir?

Giraud and Mme. Giraud
To think of it!

Mme. du Brocard (seizing De Verby's meaning)
Yes, suppose, to save the life of a poor young man—

De Verby
It were necessary to declare that M. Jules Rousseau spent nearly the whole night of the twenty-fourth of August here with you?

Pamela
Ah! sir!

De Verby (to Giraud and his wife)
Yes, suppose it were necessary to testify against your daughter, by alleging this?

Mme. Giraud
I would never say such a thing.

Giraud
What! Insult my child! Sir, I have had all possible troubles. I was once a tailor, now I am reduced to nothing. I am a porter! But I have remained a father. My daughter is our sole treasure, the glory of our old age, and you ask us to dishonor her?

Mme. du Brocard
Pray listen to me, sir.

Giraud
No, madame, I will listen to nothing. My daughter is the hope of my gray hairs.

Pamela
Calm yourself, father, I implore you.

Mme. Giraud
Keep quite, Giraud! Do let this lady and gentleman speak!

Mme. du Brocard
A family in deep affliction implores you to save them.

Pamela (aside)
Poor Jules!

De Verby (in a low voice to Pamela)
His fate is in your hands.

Mme. Giraud
We are respectable people and know what it is for parents, for a mother, to be in despair. But what you ask is out of the question.

(Pamela puts a handkerchief to her eyes.)

Giraud
We must stop this! You see the girl is in tears.

Mme. Giraud
She has done nothing but weep for several days.

Giraud
I know my daughter; she would be capable of going and making the declaration they ask, in spite of us.

Mme. Giraud

Yes,—for you must see, she loves him, she loves your nephew! And to save his life—Well! Well! I would have done as much in her place.

Mme. du Brocard

Have compassion on us!

De Verby

Grant this request of ours—

Mme. du Brocard (to Pamela)

If it is true that you love Jules—

Mme. Giraud (leading Giraud up to Pamela)

Did you hear that? Well! Listen to me. She is in love with this youth. It is quite certain that he also is in love with her. If she should make a sacrifice like that, as a return, he ought to marry her.

Pamela (with vehemence)

Never! (Aside) These people would not wish it, not they.

De Verby (to Mme. du Brocard)

They are consulting about it.

Mme. du Brocard (in a low voice to De Verby)

It will be absolutely necessary for us to make a sacrifice. We must appeal to their interest. It is the only plan!

De Verby

In venturing to ask of you so great a sacrifice, we are quite aware of the claims that you will have on our gratitude. The family of Jules, who might have blamed you on account of your relations with him, are, on the contrary, anxious to discharge the obligations which bind them to you.

Mme. Giraud

Ah! Did I not tell you so?

Pamela

Can it be possible that Jules—

De Verby

I am authorized to make a promise to you.

Pamela (with emotion)

Oh!

De Verby

Tell me, how much do you ask for the sacrifice required of you?

Pamela (in consternation)

What do you mean? How much—I ask—for saving Jules? What do you take me for?

Mme. du Brocard

Ah! Mademoiselle!

De Verby

You misunderstand me.

Pamela

No, it is you who misunderstand us! You are come here, to the house of poor people, and you are quite unaware of what you ask from them. You, madame, ought to know that whatever be the rank or the education of a woman, her honor is her sole treasure! And that which you in your own families guard with so much care, with so much reverence, you actually believe that people here, living in an attic, would be willing to sell! And you have said to yourselves: "Let us offer them money! We need just now the sacrifice of a working-girl's honor!"

Giraud

That is excellent! I recognize my own blood there.

Mme. du Brocard

My dear child, do not be offended! Money is money, after all.

De Verby (addressing Giraud)

Undoubtedly! And six thousand francs for a solid annual income as a price of—a—

Pamela

As the price of a lie! For I must out with it. But thank God I haven't yet lost my self-respect! Good-bye, sir.

(Pamela makes a low bow to Mme. du Brocard, then goes into her bed-chamber.)

De Verby

What is to be done?

Mme. du Brocard

I am quite nonplussed.

Giraud

I quite admit that an income of six thousand francs is no trifle, but our daughter has a high spirit, you see; she takes after me—

Mme. Giraud
And she will never yield.

SCENE FIFTH

The same persons, Joseph Binet, Dupre and Mme. Rousseau.

Joseph
This way, sir. This way, madame. (Dupre and Mme. Rousseau enter.)
These are the father and mother of Pamela Giraud!

Dupre (to De Verby)
I am very sorry, sir, that you have got here before me!

Mme. Rousseau
My sister has doubtless told you, madame, the sacrifice which we expect your daughter to make for us. Only an angel would make it.

Joseph
What sacrifice?

Mme. Giraud
It is no business of yours.

De Verby
We have just had an interview with Mlle. Pamela—

Mme. du Brocard
She has refused!

Mme. Rousseau
Oh, heavens!

Dupre
Refused what?

Mme. du Brocard
An income of six thousand francs.

Dupre
I could have wagered on it. To think of offering money!

Mme. du Brocard
But it was the only way—

Dupre
To spoil everything. (To Mme. Giraud) Madame, kindly tell your daughter that the counsel of M. Jules Rousseau is here and desires to see her.

Mme. Giraud
Oh, as for that you will gain nothing.

Giraud
Either from her or from us.

Joseph
But what is it they want?

Giraud
Hold your tongue.

Mme. du Brocard (to Mme. Giraud)
Madame, offer her—

Dupre
Now, Mme. du Brocard, I must beg you— (To Mme. Giraud) It is in the name of the mother of Jules that I ask of you permission to see your daughter.

Mme. Giraud
It will be of no use at all, sir! And to think that they point-blank offered her money when the young man a little time before had spoken of marrying her!

Mme. Rousseau (with excitement)
Well, why not?

Mme. Giraud (with vehemence)
How was that, madame?

Dupre (seizing the hand of Mme. Giraud)
Come, come! Bring me your daughter.

(Exit Mme. Giraud.)

De Verby and Mme. du Brocard
You have then made up your mind?

Dupre
It is not I, but madame who has made up her mind.

De Verby (questioning Mme. du Brocard)
What has she promised?

Dupre (seeing that Joseph is listening)
Be silent, general; stay for a moment, I beg you, with these ladies.
Here she comes. Now leave us alone, if you please.

(Pamela is brought in by her mother. She makes a curtsey to Mme. Rousseau, who gazes at her with emotion; then Dupre leads all but Pamela into the other room; Joseph remains behind.)

Joseph (aside)
I wonder what they mean. They all talk of a sacrifice! And old Giraud won't say a word to me! Well, I can bide my time. I promised the advocate that I would give him my fourteen hundred francs, but before I do so, I would like to see how he acts with regard to me.

Dupre (going up to Joseph)
Joseph Binet, you must leave the room.

Joseph
And not hear what you say about me?

Dupre
You must go away.

Joseph (aside)
It is evident that they are concealing something from me. (To Dupre) I have prepared her mind; she is much taken with the idea of transportation. Stick to that point.

Dupre
All right! But you must leave the room.

Joseph (aside)
Leave the room! Oh, indeed! Not I.

(Joseph makes as if he had withdrawn, but, quietly returning, hides himself in a closet.)

Dupre (to Pamela)
You have consented to see me, and I thank you for it. I know exactly what has recently taken place here, and I am not going to address you in the same way as you have been recently addressed.

Pamela
Your very presence assures me of that, sir.

Dupre
You are in love with this fine young man, this Joseph?

Pamela
I am aware, sir, that advocates are like confessors!

Dupre
My child, they have to be just as safe confidants. You may tell me everything without reserve.

Pamela
Well, sir, I did love him; that is to say, I thought I loved him, and I would very willingly have become his wife. I thought that with his energy Joseph would have made a good business, and that we could lead together a life of toil. When prosperity came, we would have taken with us my father and my mother; it was all very clear—it would have been a united family!

Dupre (aside)
The appearance of this young girl is in her favor! Let us see whether she is sincere or not. (Aloud) What are you thinking about?

Pamela
I was thinking about these past days, which seemed to me so happy in comparison with the present. A fortnight ago my head was turned by the sight of M. Jules; I fell in love with him, as young girls do fall in love, as I have seen other young girls fall in love with young men—with a love which would endure everything for those they loved! I used to say to myself: shall I ever be like that? Well, at this moment I do not know anything that I would not endure for M. Jules. A few moments ago they offered me money,—they, from whom I expected such nobleness, such greatness; and I was disgusted! Money! I have plenty of it, sir! I have twenty thousand francs! They are here, they are yours! That is to say, they are his! I have kept them to use in my efforts to save him, for I have betrayed him, because I doubted him, while he was so confident, so sure of me—and I was so distrustful of him!

Dupre
And he gave you twenty thousand francs?

Pamela
Ah, sir! He entrusted them with me. Here they are. I shall return them to his family, if he dies; but he shall not die! Tell me? Is it not so? You ought to know.

Dupre
My dear child, bear in mind that your whole life, perhaps your

happiness, depend upon the truthfulness of your answers. Answer me as if you stood in the presence of God.

Pamela
I will.

Dupre
You have never loved any one before?

Pamela
Never!

Dupre
You seem to be afraid! Come, I am terrifying you. You are not giving me your confidence.

Pamela
Oh, yes I am, sir; I swear I am! Since we have been in Paris, I have never left my mother, and I have thought of nothing but my work and my duty. I was alarmed and thrown into confusion a few moments ago, sir, but you inspire me with confidence, and I can tell you everything. Well, I acknowledge it,—I am in love with Jules; he is the only one I love, and I would follow him to the end of the world! You told me to speak as in the presence of God.

Dupre
Well, it is to your heart that I am going to appeal. Do for me what you have refused to do for others. Tell me the truth! You alone have the power to save him before the face of justice! You love him, Pamela; I understand what it would cost you to—

Pamela
To avow my love for him? Would that be sufficient to save him?

Dupre
I will answer for that!

Pamela
Well?

Dupre
My child!

Pamela
Well—he is saved.

Dupre (earnestly)
But—you will be compromised—

Pamela
But after all it is for him.

Dupre (aside)
I never expected it, but I shall not die without having seen with my own eyes an example of beautiful and noble candor, destitute alike of self-interest and designing reserve. (Aloud) Pamela, you are a good and generous girl.

Pamela
To act this way consoles me for many little miseries of life.

Dupre
My child, that is not everything! You are true as steel, you are high-spirited. But in order to succeed it is necessary to have assurance—determination—

Pamela
Oh, sir! You shall see!

Dupre
Do not be over-anxious. Dare to confess everything. Be brave! Imagine that you are before the Court of Assizes, the presiding judge, the public prosecutor, the prisoner at the bar, and me, his advocate; the jury is on one side. The big court-room is filled with people. Do not be alarmed.

Pamela
You needn't fear for me.

Dupre
A court officer brings you in; you have given your name and surname! Then the presiding judge asks you "How long have you known the prisoner, Rousseau?"—What would you answer?

Pamela
The truth!—I met him about a month before his arrest at the Ile d'Amour, Belleville.

Dupre
Who were with him?

Pamela
I noticed no one but him.

Dupre

Did you hear them talk politics?

Pamela (in astonishment)

Oh, sir! The judges must be aware that politics are matters of indifference at the Ile d'Amour.

Dupre

Very good, my child! But you must tell them all you know about Jules Rousseau.

Pamela

Of course. I shall still speak the truth, and repeat my testimony before the police justice. I knew nothing of the conspiracy, and was infinitely surprised when he was arrested in my room; the proof of which is that I feared M. Jules was a thief and afterwards apologized for my suspicion.

Dupre

You must acknowledge that from the time of your first acquaintance with this young man, he constantly came to see you. You must declare—

Pamela

I shall stick to the truth—He never left me alone! He came to see me for love, I received him from friendship, and I resisted him from a sense of duty—

Dupre

And at last?

Pamela (anxiously)

At last?

Dupre

You are trembling! Take care! Just now you promised me to tell the truth!

Pamela (aside)

The truth! Oh my God!

Dupre

I also am interested in this young man; but I recoil from a possible imposture. If he is guilty, my duty bids me defend him, if he is innocent, his cause shall be mine. Yes, without doubt, Pamela, I am about to demand from you a great sacrifice, but he needs it. The visits which Jules made to you were in the evening, and without the knowledge of your parents.

Pamela

Why no! never!

Dupre

How is this? For in that case there would be no hope for him.

Pamela (aside)

No hope for him! Then either he or I must be ruined. (Aloud) Sir, do not be alarmed; I felt a little fear because the real danger was not before my eyes. But when I shall stand before the judges!—when once I shall see him, see Jules—and feel that his safety depends upon me—

Dupre

That is good, very good. But what is most necessary to be made known is that on the evening of the twenty-fourth, he came here. If that is once understood, I shall be successful in saving him; otherwise, I can answer for nothing. He is lost!

Pamela (murmuring, greatly agitated)

Lost!—Jules lost!—No, no, no!—Better that my own good name be lost!

(Aloud) Yes, he came here on the twenty-fourth. (Aside) God forgive me! (Aloud) It was my saint's day—my name is Louise Pamela—and he was kind enough to bring me a bouquet, without the knowledge of my father or mother; he came in the evening, late. Ah! you need have no fear, sir—you see I shall tell all. (Aside) And all is a lie!

Dupre

He will be saved! (Rousseau appears) Ah! sir! (running to the door of the room) Come all of you and thank your deliverer!

SCENE SIXTH

Rousseau, De Verby, Madame du Brocard, Giraud, Madame Giraud, Dupre, and later Joseph Binet.

All

Does she consent?

Rousseau

You have saved my son. I shall never forget it.

Mme. du Brocard

You have put us under eternal obligations, my child.

Rousseau

My fortune shall be at your disposal.

Dupre

I will not say anything to you, my child! We shall meet again!

Joseph (coming out of the closet)

One moment! One moment! I have heard everything—and do you believe that I am going to put up with that? I was here in concealment all the time. And do you think I am going to let Pamela, whom I have loved and have wished to make my wife, say all that? (To Dupre) This is the way you are going to earn my fourteen hundred francs, eh! Well, I shall go to court myself and testify that the whole thing is a lie.

All

Great heaven!

Dupre

You miserable wretch!

De Verby

If you say a single word—

Joseph

Oh, I am not afraid!

De Verby (to Rousseau and Mme. du Brocard)

He shall never go to court! If necessary, I will have him shadowed, and I will put men on the watch to prevent him from entering.

Joseph

I'd just like to see you try it!

(Enter a sheriff's officer, who goes up to Dupre.)

Dupre

What do you want?

The sheriff's officer

I am the court officer of the Assizes—Mlle. Pamela Giraud! (Pamela comes forward.) In virtue of discretionary authority of the presiding judge, you are summoned to appear before him to-morrow at ten o'clock.

Joseph (to De Verby)

I will go also.

The officer

The porter has told me that you have here a gentleman called Joseph Binet.

Joseph

Here I am!

The officer

Please take your summons.

Joseph

I told you that I would go!

(The officer withdraws; every one is alarmed at the threats of Binet. Dupre tries to speak to him and reason with him, but he steals away.)

Curtain to the Third Act.

ACT IV

SCENE FIRST

(The stage represents Madame du Brocard's salon, from which can be seen the Court of Assizes.)

Madame du Brocard, Madame Rousseau, Rousseau, Joseph Binet, Dupre and Justine.

(Dupre is seated reading his note-book.)

Mme. Rousseau

M. Dupre!

Dupre

Yes, madame, the court adjourned after the speech of the prosecuting attorney. And I came over to reassure you personally.

Mme. du Brocard

I told you, sister, that some one was sure to come and keep us informed of things. In my house, here, which is so close to the court house, we are in a favorable position for learning all that goes on at the trial. Ah, M. Dupre! How can we thank you enough! You spoke superbly! (To Justine) Justine, bring in something to drink—Quick!

Rousseau

Sir, your speech— (To his wife) He was magnificent.

Dupre
Sir,—

Joseph (in tears)
Yes, you were magnificent, magnificent!

Dupre
I am not the person you ought to thank, but that child, that Pamela,
who showed such astonishing courage.

Joseph
And didn't I do well?

Mme. Rousseau
And he (pointing to Binet), did he carry out the threat he made to us?

Dupre
No, he took your side.

Joseph
It was your fault! But for you—Ah!—Well—I reached the court house,
having made up my mind to mix up everything; but when I saw all the
people, the judge, the jury, the crowd, and the terrible silence, I
trembled! Nevertheless I screwed up my courage. When I was questioned,
I was just about to answer, when my glance met the eyes of Mlle.
Pamela, which were filled with tears—I felt as if my tongue was
bound. And on the other side I saw M. Jules—a handsome youth, his
fine face conspicuous among them all. His expression was as tranquil
as if he had been a mere spectator. That knocked me out! "Don't be
afraid," said the judge to me. I was absolutely beside myself! I was
afraid of making some mistake; and then I had sworn to keep to the
truth; and then M. Dupre fixed his eye on me. I can't tell you what
that eye seemed to say to me—My tongue seemed twisted up. I broke out
into a sweat—my heart beat hard—and I began to cry, like a fool. You
were magnificent. And then in a moment it was all over. He made me do
exactly what he wanted. This is the way I lied: I said that on the
evening of the twenty-fourth I unexpectedly came to Pamela's room and
found M. Jules there—Yes, at Pamela's, the girl whom I was going to
marry, whom I still love—and our marriage will be the talk of the
whole neighborhood. Never mind, he's a great lawyer! Never mind! (To
Justine) Give me something to drink, will you?

Rousseau, Mme. Rousseau, Mme. du Brocard (To Joseph)
Dear friend! You showed yourself a fine fellow!

Dupre
The energy shown by Pamela makes me hopeful. I trembled for a moment
while she was giving evidence; the prosecuting attorney pressed her
very hard and seemed to doubt her veracity; she grew pale and I
thought she was going to faint.

Joseph
And what must my feelings have been?

Dupre
Her self-sacrifice was wonderful. You don't realize all that she has
undergone for you; I, myself even, was deceived by her; she was her
own accuser, yet all the time was innocent. Only one moment did she
falter; but darting a rapid glance at Jules, she suddenly rallied, a
blush took the place of pallor on her countenance, and we felt that
she had saved her lover; in spite of the risk she was running, she
repeated once more before all those people the story of her own
disgrace, and then fell weeping into the arms of her mother.

Joseph
Yes, she is a fine girl.

Dupre
But I must leave you; the summing up of the judge will come this
afternoon.

Rousseau
You must be going then.

Dupre
One moment! Do not forget Pamela! That young girl has compromised her
own honor for you and for him.

Joseph
As for me, I don't ask anything, but I have been led to expect—

Mme. du Brocard, Mme. Rousseau
We can never pay our debt of gratitude to you.

Dupre
Very good; come, gentlemen, we must be starting.

(Exeunt Dupre and Rousseau.)

SCENE SECOND

The same persons excepting Dupre and Rousseau.

Mme. du Brocard (stopping Joseph on his way out)

Listen to me!

Joseph

What can I do for you?

Mme. du Brocard

You see in what a state of anxiety we are; don't fail to let us know the least turn in our favor which the trial makes.

Mme. Rousseau

Yes, keep us well informed on the whole business.

Joseph

You may rest assured of that—But look here, I needn't leave the court house to do that, I intend to see everything, and to hear everything. But do you see that window there? My seat is just under it; you watch that window, and it if he is declared innocent you will see me wave my handkerchief.

Mme. Rousseau

Do not forget to do so.

Joseph

No danger of that; I am a poor chap, but I know what a mother's heart is! I am interested in this case, and for you, and for Pamela, I have said a lot of things! But when you are fond of people you'll do anything, and then I have been promised something—you may count upon me. (Exit.)

SCENE THIRD

The same persons excepting Joseph.

Mme. Rousseau

Justine, open this window, and wait for the signal which the young man has promised to give—Ah! but suppose my boy were condemned!

Mme. du Brocard

M. Dupre has spoken very hopefully about matters.

Mme. Rousseau

But with regard to this good girl, this admirable Pamela—what must we do for her?

Mme. du Brocard

We ought to do something to make her happy! I acknowledge that this young person is a succor sent from heaven! Only a noble heart could make the sacrifice that she has made! She deserves a fortune for it! Thirty thousand francs! That is what she ought to have. Jules owes his life to her. (Aside) Poor boy, will his life be saved?

(Mme. du Brocard looks toward the window.)

Mme. Rousseau

Well, Justine, do you see anything?

Justine

Nothing, madame.

Mme. Rousseau

Nothing yet! Yes, you are right, sister, it is only the heart that can prompt such noble actions. I do not know what you and my husband would think about it, but if we considered what was right, and had full regard to the happiness of Jules, apart from the brilliant prospect of an alliance with the family of De Verby, if my son loved her and she loved my son—it seems to me reasonable—

Mme. du Brocard and Justine

No! No!

Mme. Rousseau

Oh, sister! Say yes! Has she not well deserved it? But there is some one coming.

(The two women remain in their seats with clasped hands.)

SCENE FOURTH

The same persons and De Verby.

Justine

M. le General de Verby!

Mme. Rousseau and Mme. du Brocard

Ah!

De Verby

Everything is going on well! My presence was no longer necessary, so I return to you. There are great hopes of your son's acquittal. The charge of the presiding judge is decidedly in his favor.

Mme. Rousseau (joyfully)

Thank God!

De Verby

Jules has behaved admirably! My brother the Comte de Verby is very much interested in his favor. My niece looks upon him as a hero, and I know courage and honorable conduct when I see them. When once this affair has been settled, we will hasten the marriage.

Mme. Rousseau

We ought to tell you, sir, that we have made certain promises to this young girl.

Mme. du Brocard

Never mind that, sister.

De Verby

Doubtless the young girl deserves some recompense, and I suppose you will give her fifteen or twenty thousand francs,—that is due her.

Mme. du Brocard

You see, sister, that M. de Verby is a noble and generous man, and since he has fixed upon this sum, I think it will be sufficient.

Justine

M. Rousseau!

Mme. du Brocard

O brother!

Mme. Rousseau

Dear husband!

SCENE FIFTH

The same persons and Rousseau.

De Verby (to Rousseau)

Have you good news?

Mme. Rousseau

Is he acquitted?

Rousseau

No, but it is rumored that he is going to be; the jury are in consultation; I couldn't stay there any longer; I couldn't stand the suspense; I told Antoine to hurry here as soon as the verdict is given.

Mme. Rousseau

We shall learn what the verdict is from this window; we have agreed upon a signal to be given by that youth, Joseph Binet.

Rousseau

Ah! keep a good look out, Justine.

Mme. Rousseau

And how is Jules? What a trying time it must be for him!

Rousseau

Not at all! The unfortunate boy astonishes me by his coolness. Such courage as he has is worthy of a better cause than that of conspiracy. To think of his having put us in such a position! But for this I might have been appointed President of the Chamber of Commerce.

De Verby

You forget that, after all, his marriage with a member of my family will make some amends for his trouble.

Rousseau (struck by a sudden thought)

Ah, general! When I left the court room, Jules stood surrounded by his friends, among whom were M. Dupre and the young girl Pamela. Your niece and Madame de Verby must have noticed it, and I hope that you will try to explain matters to them.

(While Rousseau speaks with the general the ladies are watching for the signal.)

De Verby

Rest assured of that! I will take care that Jules appears as white as snow! It is of very great importance to explain this affair of the working-girl, otherwise the Comtesse de Verby might oppose the marriage. We must explain away this apparent amour, and she must be made to understand that the girl's evidence was a piece of self-sacrifice for which she had been paid.

Rousseau

I certainly intend to do my duty towards that young girl. I shall give her eight or ten thousand francs. It seems to me that that will be liberal, very liberal!

Mme. Rousseau (while Mme. du Brocard tries to restrain her)

Ah, sir, but what of her honor?

Rousseau

Well, I suppose that some one will marry her.

SCENE SIXTH

The same persons and Joseph.

Joseph (dashing in)
Monsieur! Madame! Give me some cologne or something, I beg you!

All
Whatever can be the matter?

Joseph
M. Antoine, your footman, is bringing Pamela here.

Rousseau
Has anything happened?

Joseph
When she saw the jury come in to give their verdict she was taken ill! Her father and mother, who were in the crowd at the other end of the court, couldn't stir. I cried out, and the presiding judge made them put me out of court!

Mme. Rousseau
But Jules! My son! What did the jury say?

Joseph
I know nothing! I had no eyes except for Pamela. As for your son, I suppose he is all right, but first with me comes Pamela—

De Verby
But you must have seen how the jury looked!

Joseph
Oh, yes! The foreman of the jury looked so gloomy—so severe—that I am quite persuaded— (He shudders.)

Mme. Rousseau
My poor Jules!

Joseph
Here comes Antoine and Mlle. Pamela.

SCENE SEVENTH

The same persons, Antoine and Pamela.

(They lead Pamela to a seat and give her smelling salts.)

Mme. du Brocard
My dear child!

Mme. Rousseau
My daughter!

Rousseau
Mademoiselle!

Pamela
I couldn't stand it any longer, the excitement was too great—and the suspense was so cruel. I tried to brace up my courage by the calmness of M. Jules while the jury was deliberating; the smile which he wore made me share his presentiment of coming release! But I was chilled to the heart when I looked at the pale, impassive countenance of M. Dupre!—And then, the sound of the bell that announced the return of the jury, and the murmur of anxiety that ran through the court—I was quite overcome!—A cold sweat suffused my cheek and I fainted.

Joseph
As for me, I shouted out, and they threw me into the street.

De Verby (to Rousseau)
If by mischance—

Rousseau
Sir!

De Verby (to Rousseau and the women)
If it should be necessary to appeal the case (pointing to Pamela), could we count upon her?

Mme. Rousseau
On her? To the end; I am sure of that.

Mme. du Brocard
Pamela!

Rousseau
Tell me, you who have shown yourself so good, so generous,—if we should still have need of your unselfish aid, would you be ready?

Pamela
Quite ready, sir! I have but one object, one single thought!—and that is, to save M. Jules!

Joseph (aside)
She loves him, she loves him!

Rousseau
Ah! all that I have is at your disposal.

(A murmur and cries are heard; general alarm.)

All
What a noise they are making! Listen to their shouts!

(Pamela totters to her feet. Joseph runs to the window, where Justine is watching.)

Joseph
There's a crowd of people rushing down the steps of the court,—they are coming here!

Justine and Joseph
It is M. Jules!

Rousseau and Mme. Rousseau
My son!

Mme. du Brocard and Pamela
Jules!

(They rush forward to Jules.)

De Verby
He is acquitted!

SCENE EIGHTH

The same persons and Jules (brought in by his mother and his aunt and followed by his friends).

(Jules flings himself into the arms of his mother; he does not at first see Pamela, who is seated in a corner near Joseph.)

Jules
O mother! Dear aunt! And my father! Here I am, restored to liberty again! (To General de Verby and the friends who have come with him) Let me thank you, general, and you, my friends, for your kind sympathy.

(After general handshaking the friends depart.)

Mme. Rousseau
And so my son has at last come back to me! It seems too good to be true.

Joseph (to Pamela)
Well, and what of you? He hasn't said a word to you, and you are the only one he hasn't seen.

Pamela
Silence, Joseph, silence!

(Pamela retires to the end of the stage.)

De Verby
Not only have you been acquitted, but you have also gained a high place in the esteem of those who are interested in the affair! You have exhibited both courage and discretion, such as have gratified us all.

Rousseau
Everybody has behaved well. Antoine, you have done nobly; you will end your life in this house.

Mme. Rousseau (to Jules)
Let me express my gratitude to M. Adolph Durand.

(Jules presents his friend.)

Jules
Yes, but my real deliverer, my guardian angel is poor Pamela! How well she understood my situation and her own also! What self-sacrifice she showed! Can I ever forget her emotion, her terror!—and then she fainted! (Mme. Rousseau, who has been thinking of nothing else but her son, now looks around for Pamela, sees her, and brings her up to Jules.) Ah, Pamela! Pamela! My gratitude to you shall be eternal!

Pamela
Ah, M. Jules! How happy I feel.

Jules
We will never part again? Will we, mother? She shall be your daughter!

De Verby (to Rousseau with vehemence)
My sister and my niece are expecting an answer; you will have to exercise your authority, sir. This young man seems to have a lively and romantic imagination. He is in danger of missing his career through a too scrupulous sense of honor, and a generosity which is tinged with folly!

Rousseau (in embarrassment)

The fact is—

De Verby
But I have your word.

Mme. du Brocard
Speak out, brother!

Jules
Mother, do you answer them, and show yourself on my side?

Rousseau (taking Jules by the hand)
Jules! I shall never forget the service which this young girl has done us. I understand the promptings of your gratitude; but as you are aware the Comte de Verby has our promise; it is not right that you should lightly sacrifice your future! You are not wanting in energy, you have given sufficient proof of that! A young conspirator should be quite able to extricate himself from such an affair as this.

De Verby (to Jules)
Undoubtedly! And our future diplomat will have a splendid chance.

Rousseau
Moreover my wishes in the matter—

Jules
O father!

Dupre (appearing)
Jules, I still have to take up your defence.

Pamela and Joseph
M. Dupre!

Jules
My friend!

Mme. du Brocard
It is the lawyer.

Dupre
I see! I am no longer "my dear Monsieur Dupre"!

Mme. du Brocard
Oh, you are always that! But before paying our debt of gratitude to you, we have to think about this young girl.

Dupre (coldly)
I beg your pardon, madame.

De Verby
This man is going to spoil everything.

Dupre (to Rousseau)
I heard all you said. It transcends all I have ever experienced. I could not have believed that ingratitude could follow so soon on the acceptance of a benefit. Rich as you are, rich as your son will be, what fairer task have you to perform than that of satisfying your conscience? In saving Jules, this girl has brought disgrace upon herself! Can it be possible that the fortune which you have so honorably gained should have killed in your heart every generous sentiment, and that self-interest alone— (He sees Mme. du Brocard making signs to her brother.) Ah! that is right, madame! It is you that give the tone in this household! And I forgot while I was pleading to this gentleman, that you would be at his elbow when I was no longer here.

Mme. du Brocard
We have pledged our word to the Count and Countess of Verby! Mlle. Pamela, whose friend I shall be all my life, did not effect the deliverance of my nephew on the understanding that she should blight his prospects.

Rousseau
There ought to be some basis of equality in a union by marriage. My son will some day have an income of eighty thousand francs.

Joseph (aside)
That suits me to a T. I shall marry her now. But this fellow here, he talks more like a Jewish money-changer than a father.

De Verby (to Dupre)
I think, sir, that your talent and character are such as to claim our highest admiration and esteem. The Rousseau family will always preserve your name in grateful memory; but these private discussions must be carried on without witnesses from outside. M. Rousseau has given me his word and I keep him to his promise! (To Jules) Come, my young friend, come to my brother's house; my niece is expecting you. To-morrow we will sign the marriage contract.

(Pamela falls senseless on her chair.)

Joseph
Ah, what have you done! Mlle. Pamela!

Dupre and Jules (darting towards her)
Good heavens!

De Verby (taking Jules by the hand)
Come—come—

Dupre
Stop a moment! I should have been glad to think that I was not the only protector that was left her! But listen, the matter is not yet ended! Pamela will certainly be arrested as a false witness! (Seizes the hand of De Verby.) And you will all be ruined.

(Dupre leads off Pamela.)

Joseph (hiding behind a sofa)
Don't tell anybody that I am here!

Curtain to the Fourth Act.

ACT V

SCENE FIRST

(The stage setting represents the private study in Dupre's house. On one side is a bookcase, on the other a desk. On the left is a window hung with heavy, sweeping silk curtains.)

Dupre, Pamela, Giraud and Madame Giraud.

(Pamela is seated on a chair reading; her mother is standing in front of her; Giraud is examining the pictures on the wall; Dupre is striding up and down the room.)

Dupre (stopping, addresses Giraud)
Did you take your usual precautions in coming here this morning?

Giraud
You may rest assured of that, sir; when I come here I walk with my head turned backwards! I know well enough that the least want of caution quickly results in misfortune. Your heart, my daughter, has led you astray this time; perjury is a terrible thing and I am afraid you are in a serious mess.

Mme. Giraud
I agree with you. You must be very careful, Giraud, for if any one were to follow you and discover that our poor daughter was here in concealment, through the generosity of M. Dupre—

Dupre
Come now, enough of that! (He continues to stride hastily about the room.) What ingratitude! The Rousseau family are ignorant of what steps I have taken. They believe that Pamela has been arrested, and none of them trouble their heads about it! They have sent Jules off to Brussels; De Verby is in the country; and Rousseau carries on his business at the Bourse as if nothing else was worth living for. Money, ambition, are their sole objects. The higher feelings count for nothing! They all worship the golden calf. Money makes them dance round their idol; the sight of it blinds them.

(Pamela has been watching him, she rises and approaches him.)

Pamela
M. Dupre, you are agitated, you seem unwell. I fear it is on my account.

Dupre
Have you not shared my disgust at the hateful want of feeling manifested by this family, who, as soon as their son is acquitted, throw you aside as a mere tool that has served their purpose?

Pamela
But what can we do about it, sir?

Dupre
Dear child, does your heart feel no bitterness against them?

Pamela
No, sir! I am happier than any of them; for I feel that I have done a good deed.

Mme. Giraud (embracing Pamela)
My poor dear daughter!

Giraud
This is the happiest moment of my life.

Dupre (addressing Pamela)
Mademoiselle, you are a noble girl! No one has better ground for

saying it than I, for it was I who came to you imploring you to speak the truth; and pure and honorable as you are, you have compromised your character for the sake of another. And now they repulse you and treat you with contempt; but I look upon you with hearty admiration—you shall yet be happy, for I will make full reparation to you!
Pamela, I am forty-eight years old. I have some reputation, and a fortune. I have spent my life as an honest man, and will finish it as such; will you be my wife?

Pamela (much moved)
I, sir?

Giraud
His wife! Our daughter his wife! What do you say to that, Mme. Giraud?

Mme. Giraud
Can it be possible?

Dupre
Why should you wonder at this? Let us have no idle phrases. Put the question to your own heart—and answer yes or no—Will you be my wife?

Pamela
You are a great man, sir, and I owe everything to you. Do you really wish to add to the debt? Ah! my gratitude—!

Dupre
Don't let me hear you use that word,—it spoils everything! The world is something that I despise! And I render to it no account of my conduct, my hatred or my love. From the moment I saw your courage and your resignation—I loved you. Try to love me in return!

Pamela
Ah, sir, indeed I will!

Mme. Giraud
Could any one help loving you?

Giraud
Sir, I am only a poor porter. I repeat it, I am nothing but a porter. You love our daughter, you have told her so. Forgive me—my eyes are full of tears—and that checks my utterance. (He wipes his eyes.) Well, well, you do right to love her! It proves that you have brains! For Pamela—there are a great many landowners' children who are her inferiors. But it is humiliating for her to have parents such as us.

Pamela
O father!

Giraud
You are a leader among men! Well, I and my wife, we will go and hide ourselves somewhere far into the country! And on Sunday, at the hour of mass, you will say, "They are praying to God for us!"

(Pamela kisses her parents.)

Dupre
You are good people, and to think that such as you have neither title nor fortune! And if you are pining for your country home, you shall return there and live there in happiness and tranquillity, and I will make provision for you.

Giraud and Mme. Giraud
Oh! our gratitude—

Dupre
That word again—I should like to cut it out of the dictionary! Meanwhile I intend to take you both with me into the country, so set about packing up.

Giraud
Sir!

Dupre
Well, what is it?

Giraud
Poor Joseph Binet is also in danger. He does not know that we are all here. But three days ago, he came to see your servant and seemed scared almost to death, and he is hidden here, as in a sanctuary, up in the attic.

Dupre
Call him down-stairs.

Giraud
He will not come, sir; he is too much afraid of being arrested—they pass him up food through a hole in the ceiling!

Dupre
He will soon be at liberty, I hope. I am expecting a letter which will relieve all your minds.

Giraud
At once?

Dupre
I expect the letter this evening.

Giraud (to his wife)
I am going to make my way cautiously to the house.

(Madame Giraud accompanies him, and gives him advice. Pamela arises to follow her.)

Dupre (restraining Pamela)
You are not in love with this Binet, are you?

Pamela
Oh, never!

Dupre
And the other?

Pamela (struggling with her feelings)
I shall love none but you!

(Pamela starts to leave the room. A noise is heard in the antechamber. Jules appears.)

SCENE SECOND

Pamela, Dupre and Jules.

Jules (to the servants)
Let me pass! I tell you—I must speak to him at once! (Noticing Dupre)
Ah, sir! What has become of Pamela? Is she at liberty? Is she safe?

Pamela (stopping at the door)
Jules!

Jules
Good heavens! You here?

Dupre
And you, sir, I thought you were at Brussels?

Jules
Yes, they sent me away against my will, and I yielded to them! Reared as I have been in obedience, I still tremble before my family! But I carried away with me the memory of what I had left behind! It has taken me six months to realize the situation, and I now acknowledge that I risked my life in order to obtain the hand of Mlle. de Verby, that I might gratify the ambition of my family, or, if you like, might honor my own vanity. I hoped some day to be a man of title, I, the son of a rich stock-broker! Then I met Pamela, and I fell in love with her! The rest you know! What was a mere sentiment has now become a duty, and every hour that has kept me from her I have felt that obedience to my family was rank cowardice; and while they believe I am far away, I have returned! You told me she had been arrested—and to think that I should run away (to both of them) without coming to see you, who had been my deliverer, and will be hers also.

Dupre (looking at them)
Good! Very good! He is an honorable fellow after all.

Pamela (aside, drying her tears)
Thank God for that!

Dupre
What do you expect to do? What are your plans?

Jules
What are my plans? To unite my fortune with hers. If necessary, to forfeit everything for her, and under God's protection to say to her, "Pamela, will you be mine?"

Dupre
The deuce you say! But there is a slight difficulty in the way—for I am going to marry her myself.

Jules (in great astonishment)
You?

Dupre
Yes, I! (Pamela casts down her eyes.) I have no family to oppose my wishes.

Jules
I will win over mine.

Dupre
They will send you off to Brussels again.

Jules
I must run and find my mother; my courage has returned! Were I to forfeit the favor of my father, were my aunt to cut me off with a sou, I would stand my ground. If I did otherwise, I should be destitute of self-respect, I should prove myself a soulless coward.—After that, is there any hope for me?

Dupre
Do you ask such a question of me?

Jules
Pamela, answer, I implore you!

Pamela (to Dupre)
I have given you my word, sir.

SCENE THIRD

The same persons and a servant.

(The servant hands a card to Dupre.)

Dupre (looking at the card with great surprise)
How is this? (To Jules) Do you know where M. de Verby is?

Jules
He is in Normandy, staying with his brother, Comte de Verby.

Dupre (looking at the card)
Very good. Now you had better go and find your mother.

Jules
But you promise me?

Dupre
I promise nothing.

Jules
Good-bye, Pamela! (Aside, as he goes out) I will come back soon.

Dupre (turning towards Pamela, after the departure of Jules)
Must he come back again?

Pamela (with great emotion, throwing herself into his arms)
Ah! sir! (Exit.)

Dupre (looking after her and wiping away a tear)
Gratitude, forsooth! (Opening a narrow secret door.) Come in, general;
come in!

SCENE FOURTH

Dupre and De Verby.

Dupre
Strange, sir, to find you here, when every one believes that you are
fifty leagues away from Paris.

De Verby
I arrived this morning.

Dupre
Without doubt some powerful motive brought you here?

De Verby
No selfish motive; but I couldn't remain wholly indifferent to the
affairs of others! You may prove useful to me.

Dupre
I shall be only too happy to have an opportunity of serving you.

De Verby
M. Dupre, the circumstances under which we have become acquainted have
put me in a position fully to appreciate your value. You occupy the
first place among the men whose talents and character claim my
attention.

Dupre
Ah! sir, you compel me to say that you, a veteran of the Empire, have
always seemed to me by your loyalty and your independence to be a
fitting representative of that glorious epoch. (Aside) I hope I have
paid him back in full.

De Verby
I suppose I may rely upon you for assistance?

Dupre
Certainly.

De Verby
I would like to ask for some information with regard to young Pamela
Giraud.

Dupre
I felt sure that was your object.

De Verby
The Rousseau family have behaved abominably.

Dupre
Would you have behaved any better?

De Verby

I intend to espouse her cause! Since her arrest as a perjurer, how do things go on?

Dupre

That can have very little interest for you.

De Verby

That may be true, but—

Dupre (aside)

He is trying to make me talk in order to find out whether he is likely to be compromised in the case. (Aloud) General de Verby, there are some men who cannot be seen through, either in their plans or in their thoughts; the actions and events which they give rise to alone reveal and explain such men. These are the strong men. I humbly beg that you will pardon my frankness when I say that I don't look upon you as being one of them.

De Verby

Sir! What language to use to me! You are a singular man!

Dupre

More than that! I believe that I am an original man! Listen to me. You throw out hints to me, and you think that as a future ambassador you can try on me your diplomatic methods; but you have chosen the wrong man and I am going to tell you something, which you will take no pleasure in learning. You are ambitious, but you are also prudent, and you have taken the lead in a certain conspiracy. The plot failed, and without worrying yourself about those whom you had pushed to the front, and who eagerly strove for success, you have yourself sneaked out of the way. As a political renegade you have proved your independence by burning incense to the new dynasty! And you expect as a reward to be made ambassador to Turin! In a month's time you will receive your credentials; meanwhile Pamela is arrested, you have been seen at her house, you may possibly be compromised by her trial for perjury! Then you rush to me, trembling with the fear of being unmasked, of losing the promotion which has caused you so many efforts to attain! You come to me with an air of obsequiousness, and with the words of flattery, expecting to make me your dupe, and thus to show your sincerity! Well, you have sufficient reason for alarm—Pamela is in the hands of justice, and she has told all.

De Verby

What then is to be done?

Dupre

I have one suggestion to make: Write to Jules that you release him from his engagement, and the Mlle. de Verby withdraws her promise to be his wife.

De Verby

Is that your advice?

Dupre

You find that the Rousseau family have behaved abominably, and you ought to despise them!

De Verby

But you know—engagements of this sort—

Dupre

I'll tell you what I know; I know that your private fortune is not equal to the position which you aspire to. Mme. du Brocard, whose wealth is equal to her pride, ought to come to your assistance, if this alliance—

De Verby

Sir! How dare you to affront my dignity in this way?

Dupre

Whether what I say be true or false, do what I tell you! If you agree, I will endeavor to save you from being compromised. But write—or get out of the difficulty the best way you can. But stay, I hear some clients coming.

De Verby

I don't want to see anybody! Everybody, even the Rousseau family, believes that I have left the city.

A servant (announcing a visitor)

Madame du Brocard!

De Verby

Oh, heavens!

(De Verby rushes into an office on the right.)

SCENE FIFTH

Dupre and Madame du Brocard.

(Madame du Brocard enters, her face hidden by a heavy black veil which she cautiously raises.)

Mme. du Brocard
I have been here several times without being lucky enough to find you in. We are quite alone here?

Dupre (smiling)
Quite alone!

Mme. du Brocard
And so this harrowing affair has broken out afresh?

Dupre
It has, unhappily!

Mme. du Brocard
That wretched young man! If I had not superintended his education, I would disinheret him! My life at present is not worth living. Is it possible that I, whose conduct and principles have won the esteem of all, should be involved in all this trouble? And yet on this occasion the only thing that gives me any anxiety is my conduct towards the Girauds!

Dupre
I can well believe it, for it was you who led astray and who induced Pamela to act as she did!

Mme. du Brocard
I feel, sir, that it is always a mistake to associate with people of a certain class—say, with a Bonapartist—a man who has neither conscience nor heart.

(De Verby, who has been listening, shrinks back with a gesture of rage.)

Dupre
You always seemed to have such a high opinion of him!

Mme. du Brocard
His family was highly thought of! And the prospect of this brilliant marriage! I always dreamt of a distinguished future for my nephew.

Dupre
But you are forgetting the general's affection for you, his unselfishness.

Mme. du Brocard
His affection! His unselfishness! The general does not possess a sou, and I had promised him a hundred thousand francs, when once the marriage contract was signed.

Dupre (coughs loudly, as he turns in the direction of De Verby)
Oh! indeed!

Mme. du Brocard
I am come to you secretly, and in confidence, in spite of all that has been said by this M. de Verby, who avers that you are a half-rate lawyer! He has said the most frightful things about you, and I come now to beg that you will extricate me from this difficulty. I will give you whatever money you demand.

Dupre
What I wish above all is that you promise to let your nephew marry whom he chooses, and give him the fortune you had designed for him, in case he married Mlle. de Verby.

Mme. du Brocard
One moment; you said, whom he pleased?

Dupre
Give me your answer!

Mme. du Brocard
But I ought to know.

Dupre
Very well then, you must extricate yourself without my assistance.

Mme. du Brocard
You are taking advantage of my situation! Ah! some one is coming.

Dupre (looking towards the newcomers)
It is some of your own family!

Mme. du Brocard (peering cautiously)
It is my brother-in-law Rousseau—What is he up to now? He swore to me that he would keep quiet!

Dupre
You also took an oath. In fact, there has been a great deal of swearing in your family lately.

Mme. du Brocard
I hope I shall be able to hear what he has to say!

(Rousseau appears with his wife. Mme. du Brocard conceals herself

behind the curtain.)

Dupre (looking at her)

Very good! But if these two want to hide themselves, I don't know where I shall put them!

SCENE SIXTH

Dupre, Rousseau and Madame Rousseau.

Rousseau

Sir, we are at our wits' end—Madame du Brocard, my sister-in-law, came this morning and told us all sorts of stories.

Mme. Rousseau

Sir, I am in the most serious alarm.

Dupre (offering her a seat)

Pray be seated, madame.

Rousseau

If all she says be true, my son is still in difficulties.

Dupre

I pity you; I do indeed!

Rousseau

It seems as if I should never get free! This unfortunate affair has lasted for six months, and it seems to have cut ten years off my life. I have been forced to neglect the most magnificent speculations, financial combinations of absolute certitude, and to let them pass into the hands of others. And then came the trial! But when I thought the affair was all over, I have been compelled once more to leave my business, and to spend my precious time in these interviews and solicitations.

Dupre

I pity you; I do indeed!

Mme. Rousseau

Meanwhile it is impossible for me—

Rousseau

It is all your fault, and that of your family. Mme. du Brocard, who at first used always to call me "my dear Rousseau"—because I had a few hundred thousand crowns—

Dupre

Such a sum is a fine varnish for a man.

Rousseau

From pride and ambition, she threw herself at the head of M. de Verby. (De Verby and Mme. du Brocard listen.) Pretty couple they are! Two charming characters, one a military lobbyist, and the other an old hypocritical devotee!

(The two withdraw their heads quickly.)

Mme. Rousseau

Sir, she is my sister!

Dupre

Really, you are going too far!

Rousseau

You do not know them! Sir, I address you once again, there is sure to be a new trial. What has become of that girl?

Dupre

That girl is to be my wife, sir.

Rousseau and Mme. Rousseau

Your wife!

De Verby and Mme. du Brocard

His wife!

Dupre

Yes, I shall marry her as soon as she regains her liberty—that is, provided she doesn't become the wife of your son!

Rousseau

The wife of my son!—

Mme. Rousseau

What did he say?

Dupre

What is the matter? Does that astonish you? You're bound to entertain this proposal—and I demand that you do so.

Rousseau (ironically)

Ah! M. Dupre, I don't care a brass button about my son's union with Mlle. de Verby—the niece of a disreputable man! It was that fool of a Madame du Brocard who tried to bring about this grand match. But to

come down to a daughter of a porter—

Dupre
Her father is no longer that, sir!

Rousseau
What do you mean?

Dupre
He lost his place through your son, and he intends returning to the country, to live on the money— (Rousseau listens attentively) on the money which you have promised to give him.

Rousseau
Ah! you are joking!

Dupre
On the contrary, I am quite serious. Your son will marry their daughter—and you will provide a pension for the old people.

Rousseau
Sir—

SCENE SEVENTH

The same persons and Joseph (coming in pale and faint).

Joseph
M. Dupre, M. Dupre, save me!

All three
What has happened? What is the matter?

Joseph
Soldiers! Mounted soldiers are coming to arrest me!

Dupre
Hold your tongue! Hold your tongue! (Everybody seems alarmed. Dupre looks with anxiety towards the room where Pamela is. To Joseph) To arrest you?

Joseph
I saw one of them. Don't you hear him? He is coming up-stairs. Hide me!

(Joseph tries to hide himself in the small room, from which De Verby comes out with a cry.)

De Verby
Ah!

(Joseph gets behind the curtain and Mme. du Brocard rushes forth with a shriek.)

Mme. du Brocard
Oh, heavens!

Mme. Rousseau
My sister!

Rousseau
M. de Verby!

(The door opens.)

Joseph (falling exhausted over a chair)
We are all nabbed.

The servant (entering, to Dupre)
A message from the Keeper of the Seals.

Joseph
The Keeper of the Seals! That must be about me!

Dupre (advancing with a serious face and addressing the four others)
I shall now leave you all four face to face—you whose mutual love and esteem is so great. Ponder well all I have said to you; she who sacrificed all for you, has been despised and humiliated, both for you and by you. It is yours to make full reparation to her—to make it to-day—this very instant—in this very room. And then, we can take measures by which all can obtain deliverance, if indeed you are worth the trouble it will cost me.

(Exit Dupre.)

SCENE EIGHTH

The same persons with the exception of Dupre.

(They stand looking awkwardly at each other for a moment.)

Joseph (going up to them)
We are a nice lot of people. (To De Verby) I should like to know when we are put in prison, whether you are going to look out for me, for my pocket is as light as my heart is heavy. (De Verby turns his back on

him. To Rousseau) You know well enough that I was promised something for my services. (Rousseau withdraws from him without answering. To Mme. du Brocard) Tell me now, wasn't something promised to me?

Mme. du Brocard
We will see about that later.

Mme. Rousseau
But what do you fear? What are you doing in this place? Were you pursued by any one?

Joseph
Not at all. I have been four days in this house, hidden like so much vermin in the garret. I came here because the old Giraud people were not to be found in their quarters. They have been carried off somewhere. Pamela has also disappeared—she is doubtless in hiding. I had no particular desire to run any risk; I admit that I lied to the judge. If I am condemned I will obtain my freedom by making a few startling revelations; I will tell on everybody!—

De Verby (with energy)
It must be done!

(De Verby sits at the table and writes.)

Mme. du Brocard
O Jules, Jules! Wretched child, you are the cause of all this!

Mme. Rousseau (to her husband)
You see, this lawyer has got you all in his power! You will have to agree to his terms.

(De Verby rises from the table. Mme. du Brocard takes his place and begins to write.)

Mme. Rousseau (to her husband)
My dear, I implore you!

Rousseau (with decision)
By heavens! I shall promise to this devil of a lawyer all that he asks of me; but Jules is at Brussels.

(The door opens, Joseph cries out in alarm, but it is Dupre who enters.)

SCENE NINTH

The same persons and Dupre.

Dupre
How is this?

(Mme du Brocard hands him the letter she has been writing; De Verby hands him his; and it is passed over to Rousseau who reads it with astonishment; De Verby casts a furious glance at Dupre and the Rousseau family, and dashes out of the room.)

Dupre (to Rousseau)
And what decision have you made, sir?

Rousseau
I shall let my son do exactly what he wants in the matter.

Mme. Rousseau
Dear husband!

Dupre (aside)
He thinks that Jules is out of town.

Rousseau
At present Jules is at Brussels, and he must return at once.

Dupre
That is perfectly fair! It is quite clear that I can't demand anything at the moment of you, so long as he is away; to do so would be absurd.

Rousseau
Certainly! We can settle matters later.

Dupre
Yes, as soon as he returns.

Rousseau
Oh! as soon as he returns. (Aside) I will take pretty good care that he remains where he is.

Dupre (going towards the door on the left)
Come in, young man, and thank your family, who have given their full consent to your marriage.

Mme. Rousseau
It is Jules!

Mme. du Brocard
It is my nephew!

Jules
Can it be possible?

Dupre (darting towards another room)
And you, Pamela, my child, my daughter!—embrace your husband.

(Jules rushes towards her.)

Mme. du Brocard (to Rousseau)
How has all this come about?

Dupre
Pamela never was arrested. There is no likelihood of her ever being. I haven't a title of nobility. I am not the brother of a peer of France, but still I have some influence. The self-sacrifice of this poor girl has aroused the sympathy of the government—the indictment has been quashed. The Keeper of the Seals has sent me word of this by an orderly on horseback, whom this simpleton took for a regiment of soldiers in pursuit of him.

Joseph
It is very hard to see plainly through a garret window.

Mme. du Brocard
Sir, you have caught me by surprise; I take back my promise.

Dupre
But I still have possession of your latter. Do you wish to have a lawsuit about it? Very well, I will appear against you on the other side.

Giraud and Mme. Giraud (entering and approaching Dupre)
M. Dupre!

Dupre
Are you satisfied with me?

(In the meantime Jules and Mme. Rousseau have been imploring Rousseau to yield his consent; he hesitates, but at last kisses Pamela on the forehead. Dupre approaches Rousseau and, seeing him kiss Pamela, wrings his hand.)

Dupre
You have done well, sir. (Then turning to Jules) Will you make her happy?

Jules
Ah, my friend, you need not ask!

(Pamela kisses the hand of Dupre.)

Joseph (to Dupre)
What a fool I have been! Well, he is going to marry her, and I am actually glad for them! But am I not to get something out of all this?

Dupre
Certainly, you shall have all the fees that come to me from the lawsuit.

Joseph
You may count on my gratitude.

Dupre
That will be receipt in full!

Final curtain.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PAMELA GIRAUD: A PLAY IN FIVE ACTS ***

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