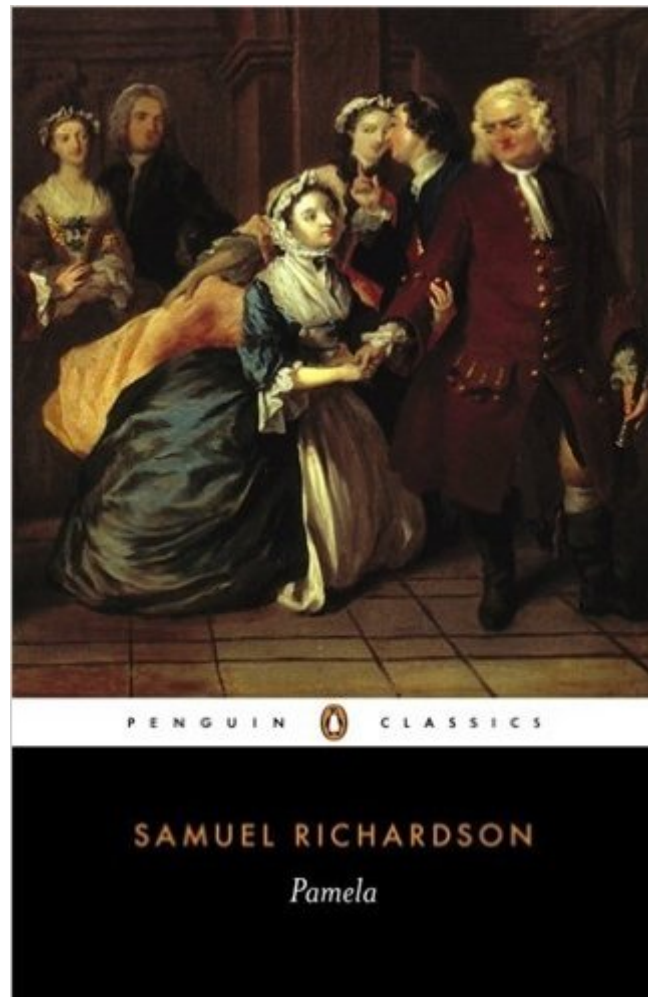


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Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

"I cannot be patient, I cannot be passive, when my virtue is in danger." Fifteen-year-old Pamela Andrews, alone and unprotected, is relentlessly pursued by her dead mistress's son. Although she is attracted to young Mr B., she holds out against his demands and threats of abduction and rape, determined to defend her virginity and abide by her own moral standards. Psychologically acute in its investigations of sex, freedom and power, Richardson's first novel caused a sensation when it was first published, with its depiction of a servant heroine who dares to assert herself. Richly comic and full of lively scenes and descriptions, *Pamela* contains a diverse cast of characters, ranging from the vulgar and malevolent Mrs Jewkes to the aggressive but awkward country squire who serves this unusual love story as both its villain and its hero. This edition incorporates all the revisions made by Richardson in his lifetime. Margaret A. Doody's introduction discusses the genre of epistolary novels, and examines characterization, the role of women and class differences in *Pamela*. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

Samuel Richardson's first novel, 1740's "Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded" is a clever and rich novel. Written to entertain and edify readers of both sexes, "Pamela" is an epistolary novel, presented in the form of letters and a journal between young Pamela Andrews and her parents. From the viewpoint of a domestic servant, Pamela illustrates the complex relationships between commoners and aristocrats, including the range of socially and economically diverse people between those extremes. The novel also explores the erotics of social ambition within the context of eighteenth century bourgeois religious ethics. Pamela is a mid-teen waiting maid, and as the novel begins, the Lady she serves has just died. Prior to her death, this Lady recommends her servants, and particularly Pamela, who has been educated and refined above her social station, to the Lady's son, a strapping young man, Mr. B. Mr. B, with his own plans for Pamela, gladly takes her into his service, rather than send her to his sister, Lady Davers. Shortly after entering his service, Pamela begins to be uncomfortable, as Mr. B starts trying to seduce her. Pamela, in correspondence with her parents, and under the direct advice of the housekeeper, Mrs. Jervis, vows to protect her virtue and chastity. The rest of the novel deals with Pamela's efforts to fend off Mr. B's advances, in conditions that often amount to imprisonment and attempted rape. There are many noteworthy issues in "Pamela," first of all being the figuration of the word "virtue." In the context of the novel, and its main character, the word has gender connotations, which align virtue with chastity and marriagability.

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