



Bouvard and Pecuchet

©2009 eNotes.com, Inc. or its Licensors. Please see [copyright information](#) at the end of this document.

Characters Discussed

Bouvard (boo-VAHR), a middle-class clerk, the protagonist of Flaubert's unfinished, posthumously published novel. He meets Pécuchet beside the Canal Saint Martin one summer afternoon and finds they have many common interests and traits. Upon receiving a bequest from a man he had thought was his uncle but who turns out to be his natural father, he decides, after consultation with his friend, to buy a house and farm far from the desk where he has toiled, and forget his plebeian occupation. In this way, circumstances that have prevented his extraordinary mind from achieving success will be changed. After a round of unsuccessful endeavors and undertakings, he returns to his desk.

Pécuchet (pay-kew-SHAY), his fat friend, who comes to help Bouvard run his farm. Consulting their neighbors, buying all the books and magazines available, they vainly try to make the farm pay, but the livestock runs away or dies. After the wheat field burns, Pécuchet persuades his friend to give up most of the farm in order to concentrate on a beautiful formal garden.

Madame Bordin (bohr-DAH-N), who attends the official banquet and opening of the formal garden and finds the dinner a failure and the garden impossible to see in the late evening. When Bouvard begins reading historical romances as a way of understanding psychology, she becomes his romantic interest. When she suggests that he give her part of his land, she is abruptly dropped.

M. Vaucorbeil (voh-kohr-BEHY), the local doctor. When the experiments of the partners leads them to an interest in medicine, Dr. Vaucorbeil protests their attempts to cure some of his own patients. However, he is avenged when their reading about medical symptoms convinces them that they are suffering from many ailments.

Abbé Jeufroy (zhew-FRWAH), the village priest, who comes into conflict with the pair after their interest in the study of life and the universe turns up geologic findings that contradict the teachings of the Church.

M. Foureau (foo-ROH), the village mayor.

Mélie (may-LEE), the servant of the partners. Pécuchet's romantic interest in her leaves him with an attack of venereal disease.

Victorine (veek-toh-REEN), a girl about to be sent to an orphan asylum. She is adopted by the partners, but she will not learn obedience and is eventually sent away. She is one more of their failures.

Victor, whom the partners think they can salvage from a reformatory. He proves to be an incorrigible delinquent.

Gorju (gohr-ZHEW), a veteran of seven years of African fighting.

Copyright Notice

©2009 eNotes.com, Inc.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this work covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, Web distribution or information storage retrieval systems without the written permission of the publisher.

For complete copyright information, please see the online version of this work:
<http://www.enotes.com/bouvard-pecuchet-salem>