



Emma

# Emma

by the Author of "Pride and Prejudice"

*"Seldom, very seldom, does complete truth belong to any human disclosure; seldom can it happen that something is not a little disguised or a little mistaken."*

**Summary:** A young woman of substance, **Emma Woodhouse**, takes it in her mind to match-make. She meddles in the life of a young friend of unknown parentage much to the dismay of her long time family friend and Emma's brother in law, **Mr. Knightley**. He encourages her to befriend the talented but orphaned **Jane Fairfax**. However, Emma's heart becomes tangled with **Frank Churchill** who holds a secret from Emma and her community that involves Jane Fairfax.

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## How to use this book:

- Read the paragraphs out loud.
  - Those marked "Scene" are to be acted out by the group.
  - Characters whose names are bolded appear in the scene. Supporting cast are played by GM or Jane Austen's player.
  - Those paragraphs in *italics* help set the stage for later scenes.
  - Special scenes occur occasionally - *Jane's life, Hunt/Parlor and Dance*.
  - Jane Austen's player will join this novel during Act 4.
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## SUPPORTING CAST

**Mr. Woodhouse** - he is well meaning doesn't see that others have very different needs than he has. Hates change, not a fan of marriage, afraid of chicken thieves in the neighborhood, eats very little plain food and is afraid richer food will make everyone sick. Loves his daughter and trusts Mr. Knightley implicitly.

**Harriet Smith** - student of a girls boarding school, supported by an anonymous benefactor, does not know who her parents are. A friendly, artless girl who is flattered by Emma's attention. Courted by local farmer Robert Martin. Emma believes Harriet's mysterious background may be of a higher station than the Martins.

**Miss Bates** - a spinster aunt to Jane Fairfax. She and her mother were well born but are fallen on hard times. Jane is the light of her life and she reads her letters many times to anyone who will listen. A well-meaning but boring lady whom everyone treats with respect due and dignity.

**Mrs Bates** - Miss Bates' mother and Jane Fairfax' grandmother. A quiet older lady fallen on hard times but respected for her work with the poor.

**Mr. Elton** - newly arrived in town, Mr Elton dresses well and is very impressed with himself.

**Robert Martin:** a farmer and tenant of Mr Knightley's estate. Well-educated and respected by Mr. Knightley, Martin is respectable but not part of the gentry.

**Mrs. Weston (formerly Miss Taylor)** - former governess and good friend of Emma. Recently married Mr. Weston, father of Frank Churchill. A good tempered, educated woman.

**Mr. Weston** - Father of Frank Churchill. After Frank's mother died, gave him up to wife's well-to-do family to raise. His first marriage was troubled and he struggles with having given up his son. But now he has made his own money and found a sweet second bride in Emma's dear Miss Taylor.

**Mrs. Elton** - Mr Elton's glamorous but shallow new bride.

## ***SCENES FROM JANE AUSTEN'S LIFE 1***

### **ACT 1**

Scene:

At Hartfield estate, **Emma Woodhouse** comforts her father, **Mr. Woodhouse**. Her governess and companion, Miss Taylor, has married Mr Weston and left them. **Mr. Knightley** arrives to visit, bringing tales of chicken thieves in the neighborhood. He knows Emma may need help in her task. Emma, bragging about making the match between their friends, upsets her father who asks her to promise not to make any more. Mr Knightley expresses his skepticism that she did any such thing and warns her against meddling.

*Emma's home life is much reduced by losing Mrs Weston as a daily companion. Emma meets Harriet Smith and is pleased with her. Harriet is a student at a nearby girls boarding school. Harriet does not know who her parents are, and she is supported by an anonymous benefactor. Emma takes Harriet Smith under her tutelage and decides to make a love match for her.*

Scene:

Walking through town with **Harriet**, **Emma** decides that the elegant new vicar, **Mr. Elton** would be a good match for her young friend. Mr Elton is very pleased with Emma's attention. They meet **Robert Martin** the local farmer who has been courting Harriet. Emma judges Robert silently. Wanting to save her friend from a low match, after he leaves she compares Robert to gentlemen. She warns Harriet that if she married Robert, she and Emma could no longer be friends.

*Emma, Harriet and Mr. Elton spend time together. Emma makes Harriet think Mr. Elton loves her. Mr. Elton pursues Emma.*

*On a snowy carriage ride home alone, Mr. Elton and Emma Mr Elton makes a marriage offer to Emma. Emma refuses in no uncertain terms. She tries to redirect his emotions to Harriet and Mr. Elton is angry that she thinks he would stoop so low.*

*Emma informs Harriet of her mistake. Harriet is upset and disappointed. Mr Knightley learns what Emma has done and scolds her.*

Scene:

**Jane Fairfax** returns to town, staying with her maternal aunt **Miss Bates** and grandmother, **Mrs Bates**. **Emma** visits. Miss Bates speaks goodnaturedly but repeats herself as is her habit. Learning that Jane knows Frank, Emma grills her about him. Jane, keeping the secret of her engagement to Frank, is very cool to Emma. She avoids her questions, bringing up Mr Dixon and his new wife, the daughter of her benefactors. Emma feeling rebuffed by Jane imagines Jane loves Mr Dixon.

# HUNTING & PARLOR INTERLUDE

When you finish your scenes, gentlemen join the others to go hunting. Ladies to sew in the parlor. Mingle with characters from the other books and Jane Austen.

**Men:** write down what you've hunted to contribute to the feast for the dances, write down the feelings you cannot share.

**Women:** write down what you are making for other character's trousseaus, write down the feelings you cannot share.

## ACT 2

*Emma and Mr. Knightley have a moment together and mend their fences. Mr. Knightley enjoins Emma to spend time with Jane rather than encouraging Harriet beyond her station. Emma promises not to make any more matches.*

*However, Emma interferes with gestures made by the Martins to connect with Harriet. Emma succeeds in keeping distance between the girl and the family.*

Scene:

**Frank Churchill** pays his respects to the Woodhouse household. He is very attentive to **Mr. Woodhouse** and each member of the party. He mentions how the house would be a fine place for a ball. The members of the party converse. **Emma** comments to **Mr. Knightley** how he adapts himself to each person, which Mr. Knightley finds questionable. Frank and Emma talk about Jane Fairfax. She tells him her theory about Mr Dixon, and Frank is taken aback at first. But as he questions her further, he realizes how little Emma knows Jane. He humors her and feeds the fires of her suspicions. Emma is very pleased with his attentions.

*Frank goes to London to "get his hair cut." Shortly thereafter a pianoforte is delivered to Jane Fairfax. It is a great mystery to the town. Only Jane knows it was sent by Frank to allow her to play while in town. It is a wildly extravagant gift.*

Scene:

At an evening gathering, everyone is there. **Mr Knightley** has brought his carriage to give **Jane Fairfax** a ride home. **Mrs. Weston** tells Emma she thinks Mr. Knightley is taken with Jane. Emma denies it, saying Mr. Knightley would never marry and have children “steal” his estate from their nephew, his brother’s son. People speculate about who gave Jane the piano. They discuss the idea of a ball. **Frank Churchill** flirts with Emma, talking about Jane’s “love” for Mr Dixon. He tells Emma he is going to quiz Jane about it, and uses that as a pretext to talk with Jane very briefly. Mr Knightley thinks Frank is acting oddly.

*Plans for the ball commence. Finding that Hartfield is too small, Frank and Emma visit a local hall to see if it could be suitable for a dance. There are difficulties about the dinner room being far from the dancing room and fear of dancers getting chills. Frank goes to get Miss Bates and Jane Fairfax to help. When he returns they all decide the dance will go ahead there.*

Scene:

Unexpectedly, **Frank** is called away to be with his adoptive family. His aunt needs him. They must cancel plans for the dance. He says good bye to **Emma**, saying he thinks she may suspect something but doesn’t finish this thought. Emma thinks he may be smitten with her. Emma misses him and decides she was maybe a little in love with him after all.

*After being refused by Emma, Mr Elton gets married very quickly to a fashionable, wealthy woman. Jane Fairfax is taken under the wing of Mrs. Elton. Emma visiting the new bride, find Mrs. Elton overbearing and arrogant. The Eltons rub Emma’s face in their smug happiness.*

*News: Frank Churchill will return and a new date is set for the ball.*

# DANCE

At the Dance:

**Mr Knightley:** Mr Elton snubs Harriet by refusing to dance with her. Mr. Knightley rescues Harriet, and later dances with Jane.

**Frank Churchill:** He dances with Emma. When Jane arrives, he rushes out to meet her and her family.

**Emma:** She dances with Frank. She thinks his feelings toward her have “cooled.” She spends time while they dance admiring Mr. Knightley as he dances with Harriet.

**Jane Fairfax:** gets to the party late and has to endure watching Frank dance with Emma. Dances with Mr. Knightley

# REST BREAK

## SCENES FROM JANE AUSTEN'S LIFE 2

### ACT 3

*Mrs. Weston, Mr. Knightley and Emma talk about Jane accepting Mrs Elton's influence. Knightley defends Jane, who else should she go to—since Emma has not been friendly. Emma implies he may be in love with Jane, which Mr. Knightley denies. Later, Mrs Weston uses his denials as proof to Emma that he feels for Jane.*

Scene:

**Emma** hosts a gathering in honor of the new bride **Mrs. Elton** out of pure social obligation. The town believes **Emma** and **Frank** are becoming attached, engagement is hinted at. **Jane** is receiving letters secretly from Frank and is nearly found out by Mrs Elton who teases her for getting the mail when others can do so. Jane tries to cover, but blushes and seems guilty.

Scene:

**Harriet** reveals her love for Mr Knightley to **Emma**. Her gratitude for his kindness at the dance has grown into attachment. Harriet tells Emma that she encouraged her to not put limits on who might love her. Emma feels this is all wrong but bites her tongue. She doesn't understand why this makes her so unhappy. *The party plays a word game where Frank apologizes in code to Jane for saying something publicly she told him in a letter.*

Scene:

They go on an outing to Donwell Abbey for a picnic and strawberry picking. What starts as a lovely day devolves into bad feelings. **Emma** flirts with **Frank Churchill** and loses her temper insulting **Miss Bates**. **Jane** and Frank have been quarrelling. Frank uses Emma to make Jane jealous and she then breaks off the engagement. **Mr. Knightly** is bitterly disappointed in Emma for treating Miss Bates poorly, and he tells her so. Emma is heart broken, and finally realizes she loves Mr. Knightley.

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## SCENES FROM JANE AUSTEN'S LIFE 3



# ACT 4

(With Jane Austen)

## Scene:

Frank's aunt dies, leaving him free to dispose of his money as he will. **Frank** and **Jane** come together, then reveal themselves as being engaged to **Mr** and **Mrs Weston** and **Miss** and **Mrs Bates**.

## Scene:

Breaking the news of Frank and Jane's engagement to **Emma**, **Mr Knightley** is afraid she will be heart broken. He proposes and she tells him of her own love for him. Together they tell **Mr. Woodhouse**, who finally is won over when they remind him about the chicken thieves - Mr Knightley will live with them, and he can protect them all.

## *SCENE FROM JANE AUSTEN'S LIFE 4*

# DANCE

## At the Dance:

New couples enjoy each others company, mingle and dance and those of their acquaintances who have also found joy.

A feast is laid, bounty of the hunt.

Brides, collect your trousseau, gifts from your peers.

Jane Austen is a guest at this gathering. If there is time, find her to thank her for your sorrows and joys.

*Thank you for playing  
So Fine a Brush!!!*