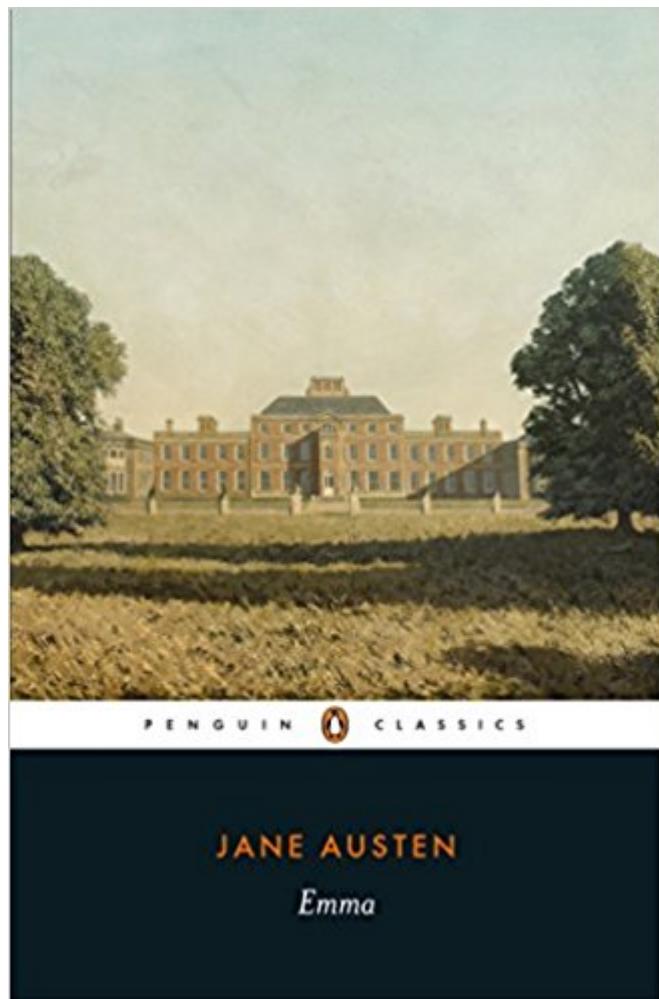


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Emma (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

The culmination of Jane Austen's genius, a sparkling comedy of love and marriage. Beautiful, clever, rich—and single—Emma Woodhouse is perfectly content with her life and sees no need for either love or marriage. Nothing, however, delights her more than interfering in the romantic lives of others. But when she ignores the warnings of her good friend Mr. Knightley and attempts to arrange a suitable match for her protegee Harriet Smith, her carefully laid plans soon unravel and have consequences that she never expected. With its imperfect but charming heroine and its witty and subtle exploration of relationships, *Emma* is often seen as Jane Austen's most flawless work. 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

Of all Jane Austen's heroines, Emma Woodhouse is the most flawed, the most infuriating, and, in the end, the most endearing. *Pride and Prejudice*'s Lizzie Bennet has more wit and sparkle; Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey* more imagination; and *Sense and Sensibility*'s Elinor Dashwood certainly more sense--but Emma is lovable precisely because she is so imperfect. Austen only completed six novels in her lifetime, of which five feature young women whose chances

for making a good marriage depend greatly on financial issues, and whose prospects if they fail are rather grim. Emma is the exception: "Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her." One may be tempted to wonder what Austen could possibly find to say about so fortunate a character. The answer is, quite a lot. For Emma, raised to think well of herself, has such a high opinion of her own worth that it blinds her to the opinions of others. The story revolves around a comedy of errors: Emma befriends Harriet Smith, a young woman of unknown parentage, and attempts to remake her in her own image. Ignoring the gaping difference in their respective fortunes and stations in life, Emma convinces herself and her friend that Harriet should look as high as Emma herself might for a husband--and she zeroes in on an ambitious vicar as the perfect match. At the same time, she reads too much into a flirtation with Frank Churchill, the newly arrived son of family friends, and thoughtlessly starts a rumor about poor but beautiful Jane Fairfax, the beloved niece of two genteelly impoverished elderly ladies in the village. As Emma's fantastically misguided schemes threaten to surge out of control, the voice of reason is provided by Mr. Knightly, the Woodhouse's longtime friend and neighbor. Though Austen herself described Emma as "a heroine whom no one but myself will much like," she endowed her creation with enough charm to see her through her most egregious behavior, and the saving grace of being able to learn from her mistakes. By the end of the novel Harriet, Frank, and Jane are all properly accounted for, Emma is wiser (though certainly not sadder), and the reader has had the satisfaction of enjoying Jane Austen at the height of her powers. --Alix Wilber --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is another case where a classic is being reprinted simply as a tie-in to a TV/feature film presentation. Libraries, nonetheless, can benefit by picking up a quality hardcover for a nice price. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

So I just wanted to let others know that this collection is one giant book of all Austen novels combined. You can't tell from the picture, but I was actually expecting (and hoping for) individual books packed in one box like other book collections I have. So I was definitely a bit disappointed when I received this book. And while I am used to reading large books like David McCullough biographies, this compilation is by far the heaviest I have in my possession. I'm not sure I will be able to read this in bed or even hold it up in my arms for any long period of time. So beware. I would

have chosen differently if had this information when I was contemplating purchase.

I just purchased the 'used' copy of the 2007 hardcover edition from the Wordsworth Library Collection. The problem is not with the bookseller's description, which is accurately noted as 'like new.' The problem is with the book's layout. There's not quite enough margin on the inside of the pages.. or maybe the binding is too tight... to be able to read the words along the inside edge without pulling and pressing on the book to make it flatter. Does not make for a relaxing dip into the works of one of my favorite authors. This was intended to replace a 1930's Modern Library edition which has started losing its covers. I have found a duplicate of my existing book and will be ordering that.... this one goes to Goodwill. Again, no slight on the vendor... this is not something you would notice unless you open the book and start to read.

A lot of water under the bridge since first reading this book many years ago. I do not know why I liked it so much then...possibly I was blinded by adolescents and want everyone to have a loving mate and played match maker myself thinking also I was above others..shame on me!! This book the second time around was so frustrating I could have screamed in parts. How dare Emma feel so superior in her small town and looked for others to make over in her image. How dare she play match maker with every eligible bachelor and made in the area thinking she knew best. Was she a true friend visiting all the families and offering her solicitations as if she were the queen and it being a big gift to shower her presence with others (all of whom she felt were inferior) on a regular basis. Glad to have revisited this book and will revisit others but don't think they will be by Jane Austen. My book was downloaded onto my Kindle from .

This book suffers from the same problems as Emma. I think I like the story line and characters better, but because it surrounds a well-off family, it spends a lot of time talking about the inane details of their lives. I slogged through as much as I could, but after spending several chapters discussing and leading up to the play the characters were putting together for their entertainment, I just couldn't keep reading. I give it 2 stars simply because I love Ms. Austen and her descriptions. She is an amazing author but needed to cut back on the pages and pages of detailed descriptions of the same things. It's not that it's bad to be so detailed, but she could have accomplished the same thing in a fraction of the time.

Mansfield Park is not the best of Austen books, maybe even the most boring, but still worth reading

because of the characters and the story and most of all because of the ending. I love Austen's ending, always good. There is nothing wrong with good endings. Fanny is a poor relation to the family who takes as a favor to her mother. Fanny lives in a cold attic and is treated almost as a servant, she serves everyone in the household. And yes, there is Edmund, the second son who is her friend, but to me he was not really her friend. True, he spends time with her, treats her fairly and loves her, but in some moments he betrays her allowing certain treatment from his sisters and an aunt. Fanny is strong, smart and she knows who she is. She dreams, she loves, she writes and she believes that one must follow one's heart and in the end this is what she gets, the love she dreamt about. The story is more complex than that, but it is for the new reader to find out.

I'm re-reading most of these novels while others are new to me. But they are all a delight. Austen does more with dialogue in defining characters than other authors can do with long descriptions. What an ear! There are no great tragedies, like in the Brontes' novels, but the lives of these characters have very human joys and heartbreaks that can resonate in any era. Austen was definitely a woman of her time, yet she understood the ins and outs of the middle class better than any other author of any century. Darcy and Elizabeth are no Heathcliff and Catherine, and I'm very glad of it. Their troubles stem from human frailties and interference, which 'most anyone who has had any kind of relationship can understand and relate to. These are novels to savor.

Besides the character names and personalities, McCall Smith pretty much writes a brand-new story. For the first nine chapters, he gives us a backstory on Emma's dad's childhood, how the governess came to live with them, and Emma's childhood. Chapter 10 in the beginning of the story we get from Austen--Emma meeting Harriet Smith and seeking to pair her off with the vicar. There is a lack of depth to Emma's relationship with Frank Churchill, and even Mr. Knightley makes very few appearances to warrant Emma falling in love with him. In some ways, McCall Smith does move the story faster along than Austen does in the original, but it definitely feels like a story BASED off of Austen's Emma versus a modern re-telling of it.

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