

NAXOS
AudioBooks

**CLASSIC
FICTION**

Jane Austen

Emma

Read by **Juliet Stevenson**



NA309512D

1	Emma Woodhouse of Hartfield – handsome, clever, rich and nearly 21	10:57
2	Mr Weston of Randalls, widower and father	8:14
3	Harriet Smith comes under Emma’s wing	8:31
4	Harriet sits for Emma with Mr Elton in attendance	5:46
5	Mr Knightley of Donwell Abbey gives his advice concerning Robert Martin	9:57
6	Emma: ‘I have very little intention of ever marrying at all’	9:00
7	Mr and Mrs John Knightley of Brunswick Square arrive at Hartfield	6:33
8	Plans for a party at Randalls	6:39
9	The carriages arrive – Emma and Mr Elton leave together	13:00
10	Emma regrets her match-making	6:58
11	News of Jane Fairfax’s arrival	5:03
12	The history of Jane Fairfax	7:43
13	Emma and Mr Knightley converse and Mr Frank Churchill of Enscombe arrives	7:39
14	Out walking with Frank Churchill	7:05
15	An invitation from the ‘moderately genteel’ Coles	5:31

16	The Coles' party	10:31
17	Out walking with Harriet	9:04
18	Frank Churchill returns to Enscombe	5:34
19	Mrs Elton was first seen at church	9:47
20	A dinner party at Hartfield for the Eltons	7:21
21	Emma meets Frank Churchill again	11:41
22	A game of alphabets	6:19
23	Strawberries at Mr Knightley's Donwell Abbey	7:12
24	Mr Knightley takes Emma to task	12:33
25	Mr Knightley takes his leave	4:59
26	Surprising news of a forthcoming marriage	6:48
27	More confusion for Emma	5:34
28	Emma with Mr Knightley in the shrubbery	9:32

Total time: 3:45:45

Jane Austen

Emma

Jane Austen was born in Hampshire in 1775, the seventh of eight children. Her father was a clergyman who ensured that his children were well educated. After a brief spell at boarding school when they were very young, Jane and her sister Cassandra were educated at home. In 1801 Mr Austen retired and the family moved to Bath. Although Jane Austen never married, she is reputed to have had a romance in 1802, but she parted from her lover, who died the following year. In 1803 she was proposed to by a wealthy Hampshire landowner and after initially accepting his proposal, she refused him the following morning. In 1805 her father died, and she moved with her mother to Southampton and in 1809 to the village of Chawton.

In 1816 Jane Austen became seriously ill, and was taken to Winchester in search of a cure. She died there in 1817. She is remembered by six great novels: **Sense and Sensibility** (1811), **Pride and Prejudice** (1813), **Mansfield Park** (1814), **Emma** (1816), **Northanger Abbey** (1818) and **Persuasion** (1818).

Emma was written and published in less

than two years, while Jane Austen was living at Chawton in Hampshire. Although it lacks the narrative scope of her other novels, many have hailed it as one of her most perfect and accomplished works in that she concentrates predominantly on the examination of a small society in the grip of a complex pattern of social and moral values.

The character of Emma was a brave intention. Indeed Jane Austen wrote: "I am going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like." Thus, at the beginning of the book we meet a wealthy, over-indulged young woman, who feels she has every right to trifle with the destiny of others simply as a result of the social position she occupies. She is therefore only subscribing to the accepted social hierarchy when she explains to Harriet Smith that were she to have married the humble Robert Martin, she could not possibly have visited them, given her elevated social position. This is a social value which contemporary readers would have recognised, but Jane Austen leaves us in no doubt as to what she feels is the morality of

such a statement. Thus, throughout the novel, characters reveal themselves not only according to the position they occupy in society, but also in terms of the way they behave towards one another. The Coles are an upwardly mobile family whom Emma at first despises for their presumption, but their generosity of spirit is contrasted with her small-minded arrogance.

For Jane Austen, a happy marriage was the symbol of social and moral adjustment and harmony, and it is not until Emma repents of her lack of sensitivity to others and her reckless interference in their lives, that she herself can become eligible. It is then that she discovers that she is in love, and by marrying the morally virtuous Mr Knightley equilibrium and harmony are restored.

Notes by Heather Godwin

The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS catalogue

BEETHOVEN PIANO TRIOS OP. 1 Stuttgart Piano Trio	8.550946
BEETHOVEN PIANO TRIOS OP. 3 Stuttgart Piano Trio	8.550947

Music programmed by Nicolas Soames

Music especially recorded for Emma:

JOHANN BAPTIST CRAMER STUDY NO. 30

PURVIS THE WEYMOUTH WALTZ

ANON ROBIN ADAIR

Played and arranged by Jennifer Purvis

Engineer: Alan Smyth, Bucks Audio Cassettes

Programmed by Simon Weir

Jane Austen

Emma

Read by **Juliet Stevenson**

Arrogant, self-willed and egotistical, **Emma** is Jane Austen's most unusual heroine. Her interfering ways and inveterate matchmaking are at once shocking and comic. She is 'handsome, clever and rich' and has 'a disposition to think too well of herself'. When she decides to introduce the humble Harriet Smith to the delights of genteel society and to find her a suitable husband, she precipitates herself and her immediate circle into a web of misunderstanding and intrigue, from which no one emerges unchanged.



Juliet Stevenson has worked extensively for the RSC, the Royal National Theatre, and other major theatre companies. She won an Olivier Award for her role in *Death and the Maiden* at the Royal Court, and a number of other awards for her work in the film *Truly, Madly, Deeply*. Other film credits include *The Trial*, *Ladder of Swords*, *Drowning by Numbers* and *A Secret Rapture*. Among her prominent TV appearances is *The Politician's Wife*. She also reads Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* and Austen's *Mansfield Park* for Naxos AudioBooks.

"Between the abridged recordings of Emma currently available there is no contest: the best has to be Juliet Stevenson's reading. Her voice is mature and reflective, so that her men and women are convincing and natural."

GRAMOPHONE

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3:45:45