

MACMILLAN READERS
INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

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Emma

Retold by Margaret Turner



MACMILLAN

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The Polite Society of Highbury

The village of Highbury was in the county of Surrey and about sixteen miles from London. There were several large houses in the neighbourhood⁹. They were owned by the most important people in Highbury.

The largest house was called Donwell Abbey¹⁰. It was about a mile from the village and it was the home of Mr George Knightley who also owned much of the land in Highbury. Mr Knightley worked hard for the people of the neighbourhood and everybody liked and respected¹¹ him.

Mr Knightley's dearest friends were Miss Emma Woodhouse and her father, old Mr Henry Woodhouse. They lived in a large and comfortable house in Highbury, called Hartfield. Emma and her father were important people in Highbury.

Mr Woodhouse had been a widower¹² for many years. His wife, Emma's mother, had died when Emma was three years old. Mr Woodhouse lived very quietly. He did not often leave his home and call on other people. He worried about his health. He often thought that he was ill.

Emma Woodhouse, Mr Woodhouse's younger daughter, was nearly twenty-one years old. Because her mother was dead, Emma was in charge of everything at Hartfield. She gave orders to the servants and she decided how much money was spent. She was also the leader of the polite society in the neighbourhood. Emma Woodhouse was very pretty, very clever and very rich. She was charming¹³ too and she had many friends. Emma always thought that she was right. Most of her friends agreed with her. Only Mr Knightley ever told her that she was wrong.