

Attempt a character - sketch of Emma Woodhouse.

Introduction — Emma Woodhouse is the heroine of Jane Austen's popular novel Emma. She herself says about her, "I am going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like." We have to agree with the views of Howells, her great critic that it required great courage on the part of a great novelist to portray a heroine like Emma and to expect her to win the readers fancy. She is an officious and self confident girl having some faults, too.

As a young and beautiful heroine —

When we read the beginning of the story of Emma, we observe that she is described as being young, rich, intelligent, beautiful charming and gay girl. It is undeniable fact that she is devoted to her father, charitable to the poor, fond of Mr. Knightley and related to her friends.

In the first part of the novel, we observe that Emma is a girl of unimaginable self-confidence and delusion that she is a match between the handsome young vicar and Harriet Smith. She doesn't pay any attention to the advice of George Knightley to live the vicar to choose his own wife, because a young man twenty-six can very well take care of himself. She tries her best to arouse Mr. Elton's interest in Harriet by making a picture of the girl in the company of Mr. Elton. At this critical juncture, she

attempts Harriet to refuse the honest young gentleman, Robert Martin, whom Mr. Knightley considers her superior. Mr. Knightley warns Emma not to consider Mr. Elton at all. If she is going to make a match for Harriet as the vicar would marry for worldly pleasures and benefits.

We find that she has been blinded by her own illusion. She persuades Harriet that Mr. Elton is only waiting for suitable occasion to offer his proposal of marriage to her. He, at last openly professes himself to be her lover. In this way, Emma's delusion leaves her extremely socked while Mr. Elton is mortified and Harriet is hurt.

A symbol of great illusion —

In the second part of the story of Emma, we see that Emma is again the victim of illusion regarding Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax. She is prepared to like the handsome young gentleman Churchill because he hates Jane Fairfax. When Emma is confused again, Mr. Knightley warns her to be more careful in forming her opinions.

A girl of over-confidence —

Emma has got a match-making instinct. It is seen that poor Harriet is saved from the gypsies by the Churchill, deserves him. Harriet was already impressed by Mr. Knightley's dancing with her when she had no partner. Emma has

the closest bond between her and Mr. Knightley. They are both essentially good and noble creatures and when ever Emma does wrong, Mr. Knightley corrects. she becomes a very lovable character in the company of George Knightley. At last Emma, knew that she could not allow anyone else to marry Mr. Knightley. On the end of the novel, she becomes the wife of George Knightley.

Conclusion — Emma is seen to arrive at knowledge of her own heart only at the end of several delusions. We can't help loving her for the delightful contradiction in her nature which are made her so charming to Mr. Knightley.