

PART I

CHAPTER I

Emma Woodhouse¹, beautiful, clever, and rich, had lived nearly twenty-one happy years in a comfortable home. She was the youngest of the two daughters of a most loving father; and had, since her sister's marriage, been mistress of his house from a very early age. Her mother had died long ago.

Sixteen years had Miss **Taylor**² been in Mr. Woodhouse's family, less as a governess than a friend, very fond of both daughters, but particularly of Emma with whom they were very close. Then Miss Taylor married—that was the first grief. It was on the wedding-day of this beloved friend that Emma first sat in mournful thought. The wedding was over, and Emma's father and herself were left to dine at home together. Her father had gone to sleep after dinner, as usual, and she had then only to sit and think of what she had lost.

¹ **Emma Woodhouse** — Эмма Вудхаус

² **Taylor** — Тэйлор

Mr. Weston—Miss Taylor's husband—was a man of excellent character, easy fortune, suitable age, and pleasant manners; but it was a black morning for Emma. She recalled Miss Taylor's kindness—how she had taught and how she had played with her from five years old—how she had devoted herself to amuse the child.

It was true that her friend was going only half a mile from them; but Emma knew that great must be the difference between a Mrs. Weston, only half a mile from them, and a Miss Taylor in the house. Emma dearly loved her father, but he was no companion for her.

Mr. Woodhouse had no activity of mind or body, he was a much older man **in ways**¹ than in years; and **his talents could not have recommended him at any time**².

Emma's sister **Isabella**³ lived in London, only sixteen miles off, but that was much beyond her daily reach.

In **Highbury**⁴, the large and populous village, to which **Hartfield**⁵ belonged, she had no equals. The Woodhouses were first **in consequence**⁶ there. All looked up to them. She had many acquaintance

¹ **in ways** — по повадкам

² **his talents could not have recommended him at any time** — он не блистал никакими талантами

³ **Isabella** — Изабелла

⁴ **Highbury** — Хайбери

⁵ **Hartfield** — Хартфилд (название поместья)

⁶ **in consequence** — по положению

in the place, but not one among them who could be accepted **in lieu of**¹ Miss Taylor for even half a day. It was a melancholy change; and Emma could not but sigh over it. Her father was a nervous man, easily depressed; hating change of every kind. Matrimony, as the origin of change, was always disagreeable; and he was by no means yet reconciled to his own daughter's marrying, nor could ever speak of her but with compassion. He thought that Miss Taylor had done as sad a thing for herself as for them, and would have been a great deal happier if she had spent all the rest of her life at Hartfield. Emma smiled and chatted as cheerfully as she could, to keep him from such thoughts; but when tea came, it was impossible for him not to say exactly as he had said at dinner,

“Poor Miss Taylor!—I wish she were here again. What a pity it is that Mr. Weston married her!”

“I cannot agree with you, papa; you know I cannot. Mr. Weston is such a good-humoured, pleasant, excellent man, that he deserves a good wife; —and you would not have made Miss Taylor live with us for ever, when she might have a house of her own?”

“A house of her own!—But where is the advantage of a house of her own? Our house is three times as large.”

¹ **in lieu of** — ВМЕСТО

“We shall be going to see them often, and they will be coming to see us!—We shall be always meeting! We must begin; we must go and pay wedding visit very soon.”

“My dear, how am I to get so far? **Randalls**¹ is such a distance. I could not walk half so far.”

“No, papa, nobody thought of your walking. We must go in the carriage, to be sure.”

Emma hoped **backgammon**² would keep her father distracted for an evening. The backgammon-table was placed; but a visitor immediately afterwards walked in and made it unnecessary.

Mr. **Knightley**³, a sensible man about seven or eight-and-thirty, was not only a very old and intimate friend of the family, but particularly connected with it, as the elder brother of Isabella’s husband. He lived about a mile from Highbury, was a frequent visitor, and at this time more welcome than usual, as he was coming directly from their relatives in London. He had returned to a late dinner, after some days’ absence, and now walked up to Hartfield to say that all were well there. It animated Mr. Woodhouse for some time. When the inquiry about “poor Isabella” was over, Mr. Woodhouse decided to change the “poor” subject,

“Ah! poor Miss Taylor!”

¹ **Randalls** — Рэндалс

² **Backgammon** — триктрак (*шра*)

³ **Knightley** — Найтли

“Poor Mr. and Miss Woodhouse, if you please; but I cannot possibly say ‘poor Miss Taylor.’ I have a great regard for you and Emma; but when it comes to the question of dependence or independence!—At any rate, it must be better to have only one to please than two.”

“Especially when one of those two is such a capricious, troublesome creature!” said Emma playfully. “That is what you have in your head, I know—and what you would certainly say if my father were not by.”

“I believe it is very true, my dear, indeed,” said Mr. Woodhouse, with a sigh. “I am afraid I am sometimes very capricious and troublesome.”

“My dearest papa! You do not think I could mean you, or suppose Mr. Knightley to mean you. What a horrible idea! Oh no! I meant only myself. Mr. Knightley loves to find fault with me, you know — in a joke — it is all a joke. We always say what we like to one another.”

Mr. Knightley, in fact, was one of the few people who could see faults in Emma Woodhouse, and the only one who ever told her of them: and Emma did not particularly like that.

“Mr. Knightley,” said Emma’s father. “Emma is really very sorry to lose poor Miss Taylor, and I am sure she will miss her more and more.”

“It is impossible that Emma should not miss such a companion,” said Mr. Knightley. “But she knows how much the marriage is to Miss Taylor’s

advantage; Miss Taylor is settled in a home of her own. Every friend of Miss Taylor must be glad to have her so happily married.”

“And you have forgotten one thing,” said Emma, “and a very considerable one — that I **made the match myself**¹. I made the match, you know, four years ago; when so many people said Mr. Weston would never marry again.”

Mr. Knightley shook his head at her. Her father fondly replied, “Ah! my dear, I wish you would not make matches and foretell things, for whatever you say always comes to pass. Pray do not make any more matches.”

“I promise you to make none for myself, papa; but I must, indeed, for other people. It is the greatest amusement in the world! And after such success, you know!—Everybody said that Mr. Weston would never marry again. Oh dear, no! Mr. Weston, who had been a widower so long, and who seemed so perfectly comfortable without a wife, so constantly occupied either in his business in town or among his friends here! Oh no! All manner of nonsense was talked on the subject, but I believed none of it. I planned the match, and when such success has blessed me, dear papa, you cannot think that I shall stop match-making.”

“I do not understand what you mean by ‘success,’” said Mr. Knightley. “Where is your

¹ I made the match myself — я сама их сосватала

merit? What are you proud of? You made a lucky guess; and that is all that can be said.”

“And have you never known the pleasure and triumph of a lucky guess?—I pity you. If I had not promoted Mr. Weston’s visits here, and given many little encouragements, and smoothed many little matters, **it might not have come to anything after all**¹.”

“Emma, my dear,” said Mr. Woodhouse, “pray do not make any more matches; they are silly things, and break up one’s family circle grievously.”

“Only one more, papa; only for Mr. **Elton**². Poor Mr. Elton! You like Mr. Elton, papa, —I must look about for a wife for him. There is nobody in Highbury who deserves him. I think very well of Mr. Elton, and this is the only way I have of doing him a service.”

“Mr. Elton is a very pretty young man, to be sure, and a very good young man, and I have a great regard for him. But if you want to show him any attention, my dear, ask him to come and dine with us some day. That will be a much better thing.”

¹ **it might not have come to anything after all** — ничего бы тогда и не вышло

² **Elton** — Элтон

CHAPTER II

Mr. Weston was a native of Highbury, and born of a respectable family, which for the last two or three generations had been rising into gentility and property. When the chances of his military life had introduced him to Miss **Churchill**¹, of a great **Yorkshire**² family, and Miss Churchill fell in love with him, nobody was surprised, except her brother and his wife, who had never seen him, and who were full of pride and importance.

Miss Churchill, however, being of age, was not to be dissuaded from the marriage, and it took place, to the infinite mortification of Mr. and Mrs. Churchill, who threw her off with due decorum. It was an unsuitable connection, and did not produce much happiness. Mrs. Weston did not stop loving her husband, but she wanted at once to be the wife of Captain Weston, and Miss Churchill.

When Captain Weston's wife died, after a three years' marriage, he was rather a poorer man than at first, and with a child to maintain. From the expense of the child, however, he was soon relieved. Mr. and Mrs. Churchill, having no children of their own, offered to take little **Frank**³ in soon after his mother's death.

¹ **Churchill** — Черчилл

² **Yorkshire** — Йоркшир

³ **Frank** — Фрэнк

Mr. Weston engaged in trade. He had a small house in Highbury, where he spent most of his days off; and so the next eighteen or twenty years of his life passed cheerfully away. He had, by that time, bought a little estate adjoining Highbury, enough to marry a woman as Miss Taylor, and to live happily.

As to Frank, he took name of Churchill. It was most unlikely, therefore, that he should ever want his father's assistance. Mr. Weston saw his son every year in London, and was proud of him. Mr. Frank Churchill was one of the **boasts**¹ of Highbury. His coming to visit his father had been often talked of but never achieved. Now, upon his father's marriage, it was very generally proposed, that the visit should take place.

¹ **boast** — предмет гордости

CHAPTER III

Mr. Woodhouse was fond of society in his own way. He liked to command the visits of his own little circle, in a great measure, as he liked. He had not much intercourse with any families beyond that circle. The Westons and Mr. Knightley were the closest family friends; after these came Mrs. and Miss **Bates**¹, and Mrs. **Goddard**². Mrs. Bates, the widow of a former vicar of Highbury, was a very old lady, she lived with her single daughter **in a very small way**³. Her daughter was neither young, handsome, clever, nor married. And yet she was a happy woman. She loved everybody, was interested in everybody's happiness. The simplicity and cheerfulness of her nature, her contented and grateful spirit, were a recommendation to everybody.

These were the ladies whom Emma found herself very frequently able to collect; but it was no remedy for the absence of Mrs. Weston. As she sat one morning, a note was brought from Mrs. Goddard, requesting, in most respectful terms, to be allowed to bring Miss Smith with her; a most welcome request: for Miss Smith was a girl of seventeen, whom Emma knew very well **by sight**⁴.

¹ **Bates** — Бэйтс

² **Goddard** — Годдард

³ **in a very small way** — крайне скромно

⁴ **by sight** — в лицо

Harriet Smith¹ was the **natural daughter**² of somebody. Somebody had placed her, several years back, at Mrs. Goddard's school. This was all that was generally known of her history. She had no visible friends, and was now just returned from a long visit in the country to some young ladies who had been at school there with her.

She was a very pretty girl, and Emma admired her beauty. She was short, plump, and fair, with a fine bloom, blue eyes, light hair, regular features, and a look of great sweetness, and Emma was much pleased with her manners. And the acquaintance she had already formed were unworthy of her. The friends from whom she had just parted, though very good sort of people, must be doing her harm. They were a family of the name of Martin, whom Emma well knew **by character**³, as renting a large farm of Mr. Knightley, and residing in the parish of **Donwell**⁴—very creditably, she believed—she knew Mr. Knightley thought highly of them—but they must be coarse and unpolished, and very unfit to be the intimates of a girl who wanted only a little more knowledge and elegance to be quite perfect. Yes, she would improve her; she would detach her from her bad acquaintance, and introduce her into good society; she would form her opinions and her manners. It would be an interesting, and certainly a very kind undertaking.

¹ **Harriet Smith** — Гарриет Смит

² **natural daughter** — побочная дочь

³ **by character** — по отзывам

⁴ **Donwell** — Донуэлл