

KELLY. Maybe it's because he's stuck with a bloated, self-centered witch!

KIMMY. Me, self-centered? Look who's talking, Miss Drama Queen!

KELLY. Oh, look in the mirror, why don't you? You make me sick!

KIMMY. Stay away from Marco!

KELLY. Make me!

KIMMY. I hate you!

KELLY. Not as much as I hate you!

(They grab one another by the hair.)

EMMA

adapted by Jon Jory
from the novel by Jane Austen

Characters

HARRIET, sweet and modest.

EMMA, wealthy, charming and vivacious.

Scene

Emma, a self-proclaimed matchmaker, is set on finding a suitable husband for her new friend Harriet. Though her brother-in-law and confidante Mr. Knightley discourages her, Emma has convinced Harriet to reject an offer of marriage from the respectable Mr. Martin and to instead seek the affections of Frank Churchill, who in turn has shown a marked interest in Emma. Emma and Harriet both have just separately discovered that Frank Churchill has been secretly engaged for some time.

HARRIET. Dear Miss Woodhouse, is not this the oddest news that ever was?

EMMA. What news do you mean?

HARRIET. About Jane Fairfax. Did you ever hear anything so strange? I met Mr. Weston just now and he told me.

EMMA. Harriet... He told you what?

HARRIET. That Jane Fairfax and Mr. Frank Churchill have been privately engaged this long while and are to be married.

EMMA. *(Amazed at HARRIET's cheerful and animated behavior:)* Yes, I see.

HARRIET. Had you any idea of his being in love with her? You, perhaps, might. You who can see into everybody's heart.

EMMA. Upon my word, I begin to doubt my having any such talent. Can you seriously ask me, Harriet, if I thought him attached at the very time I was—tacitly if not openly—encouraging you to give way to your feelings? You may be very sure if I had I should have cautioned you accordingly.

HARRIET. Me! Surely you do not think I care about Mr. Frank Churchill?

EMMA. You do not mean to deny that you gave me reason to understand that you did care about him.

HARRIET. Him!— Never, never. Dear Miss Woodhouse, how could you so mistake me?

EMMA. Harriet! Mistake you— Am I to suppose then...

HARRIET. I know we agreed never to name him—but considering how infinitely superior he is to everybody else. Mr. Frank Churchill, indeed! I hope I have better taste than to think of Mr. Frank Churchill, who is like nobody by his side.

EMMA. Harriet...

HARRIET. At first, if you had not told me that more wonderful things had happened; that there had been matches of greater disparity, I should not have dared.

EMMA. Wait, let us understand each other now, without the possibility of further mistake. Are you speaking of Mr. Knightly?

HARRIET. To be sure I am. I never had an idea of anybody else. When we talked about him, it was clear as possible.

EMMA. All you said appeared to me to relate to a different person. I could almost assert that you had named Mr. Churchill. I am sure the service he had rendered you, in protecting you from the Gypsies, was spoken of.

HARRIET. Oh, Miss Woodhouse, how you do forget!

EMMA. My dear Harriet, I perfectly remember. I told you that I did not wonder at your attachment; that considering the service he had rendered you, it was extremely natural, and you agreed.

HARRIET. Oh dear! Now I recollect what you mean; but I was thinking of something very different at the time. Indeed not the gypsies but of Mr. Knightly's coming and asking me to dance, when Mr. Elton would not stand up with me. That was the service which made me begin to feel how superior he was to every other being on earth.

(EMMA turns away.)

I hope Miss Woodhouse that if... After all they were your own words... 'Matches of greater disparity had taken place.' And if Mr. Knightly should really—if he does not mind the disparity I hope you will not set yourself against it. You are too good for that, I am sure.

EMMA. Have you any idea of Mr. Knightly returning your affection?

HARRIET. I must say that I have. I have been conscious of a difference in behavior ever since that dance. He talks to me a good deal more than he used to and his manner is much changed... Kinder and sweeter. Only two days ago he praised me for being without art or affectation...

(EMMA moves off to the square but HARRIET goes on speaking as if she was still there.)

He often removes from his chair to one closer to mine... Most clearly, he walked apart with me at the strawberry picking... And spoke to me in a

more particular way than he had ever done. He seemed to be almost asking me whether my affections were engaged.

EMMA. *(Returning.)* Might he not... Is it not possible that when enquiring as you thought, into the state of your affections, he might be alluding to Mr. Martin.

HARRIET. Mr. Martin! No indeed! I hope I know better now, than to care for Mr. Martin, or to be suspected of it. Please, dear Miss Woodhouse, have I not grounds for hope? I never would have presumed to think of it at first. You told me to observe him carefully and let his behavior be the rule of mine—and so I have. But now I seem to feel that I may deserve him.

EMMA. Harriet, I will only venture to declare, that Mr. Knightly is the last man in the world who would intentionally give any woman the idea of his feeling more for her than he really does.

(HARRIET embraces her then pulls back.)

HARRIET. I believe I hear Mr. Woodhouse coming...

EMMA. I shouldn't think...

HARRIET. I must go. I cannot compose myself and Mr. Woodhouse would be alarmed. *(Embraces EMMA again.)* My very dear Miss Woodhouse!

(HARRIET runs off. EMMA is alone.)