

AI-Generated Graded Readers

Masaru Uchida, Gifu University

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About This Edition

This book is a simplified English adaptation created for extensive reading practice.

The text was generated using ChatGPT and prepared for intermediate English learners as part of an educational project.

Target reading level: CEFR A2-B1

This edition aims to support fluency development through accessible vocabulary, expanded narration, and improved readability while preserving the original story structure.

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Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary* (Simplified Edition, Adapted and Simplified by ChatGPT)

Part 1

We were in class when the headmaster came in with a new boy. A school servant came behind him and carried a large desk. Some boys had been half asleep, but they quickly sat straight. Everyone looked at the door.

The new boy stood near it and did not move. He was taller than most of us, though he looked only about fifteen. He had the awkward body of a country boy who had grown too fast. His clothes were plain and did not fit him well. He looked strong, but he also looked afraid to breathe too loudly.

The headmaster told us to sit down. Then he spoke to the teacher in a low voice. The new boy would join the class. If he worked well, he might later move higher. We all turned to stare at him again.

He still stood there in silence. His hair was cut straight across his forehead. His hands were red at the wrists, as if he was used to working outdoors without proper sleeves. His boots were thick and dirty. He held his cap in both hands.

When the lesson began, he listened with painful care. He looked as if each word was important. He did not lean on his desk. He did not cross his legs. He did not even seem to blink much. When the bell rang, he had to be told what to do with the others.

After prayers, we boys threw our caps on the floor in the usual noisy way. It was our habit. The caps hit the wall and raised dust. But the new boy kept his cap on his knees. He either did not know the trick or did not dare copy it.

His cap itself was strange. It seemed made from many kinds of caps joined together into one ugly thing. There was a stiff shape beneath it, bits of velvet and fur on the outside, and a long cord hanging from the top. It was new, but it looked foolish. Even before he spoke, the cap made us want to laugh.

“Stand up,” said the teacher.

The boy stood. His cap fell to the floor. The whole class burst out laughing. He

bent to pick it up, but another boy pushed it down again with his elbow. He picked it up once more, his face already red.

“Get rid of your helmet,” said the teacher with a smile.

That made us laugh even more. The new boy did not know what to do. He looked at the cap in his hands as if it had betrayed him.

“Stand up,” said the teacher again. “Tell me your name.”

The boy tried. What came out was a weak, broken sound. We could not understand it.

“Again.”

He tried again, but the class was already laughing.

“Louder!” cried the teacher.

Then the boy opened his mouth wide and shouted as if he were calling across a field, “Charbovari!”

The room exploded. Boys repeated the strange sound again and again. Some stamped their feet. Some barked like dogs. Some bent over their desks in laughter. “Charbovari! Charbovari!”

At last the teacher made us quiet down. He worked out the name, letter by letter. It was Charles Bovary. Then he ordered Charles to sit on the punishment bench near his desk.

Charles rose to obey, but before he went he stopped and looked around.

“What are you looking for?” asked the teacher.

“My cap,” Charles said in a timid voice.

Fresh laughter broke out. The teacher shouted for silence and punished us all with lines. Then he gave Charles an extra punishment too. After that the room grew quiet at last.

For two hours Charles sat still and looked down. Now and then a paper ball struck him, but he only wiped his face and remained in place. In the evening, when study time began, he carefully arranged his pens and books. He worked harder than anyone. He looked up words one by one in the dictionary and wrote with great care.

That was Charles Bovary’s beginning among us. Even then, one could see two

things in him at once. He was patient, and he was ordinary. He was not bright. He was not quick. But he tried. He always tried.

His mother had sent him late to school. At home she had protected him too much. His father had done the opposite. Charles grew between these two different forces and became soft in some ways, dull in others, and never fully his own master.

His father had once been handsome and full of confidence. He talked loudly, dressed brightly, and liked pleasure more than work. After marriage he wasted much of his wife's money and then retired to the country when things went badly. He knew little about farming and cared less. He liked eating well, drinking, smoking, and doing nothing.

Charles's mother had suffered much because of him. At first she had loved her husband deeply, but he gave her little in return. Little by little she grew bitter and silent. She kept the house together, watched the money, paid the bills, and worked hard while her husband complained and sat by the fire.

When Charles was born, she poured all her hopes into him. She fed him, watched him, and dreamed of a better life for him. She imagined him rising in the world, becoming learned and respected. She wanted him to do what his father had not done.

His father did not think much of lessons. He wanted the boy to grow strong and rough. Charles was allowed to run about barefoot, to wander in the fields, to play with the village boys, and to spend his days outdoors. He followed workers, watched animals, and passed long hours in the open country.

He grew like a tree in a field—straight enough, healthy enough, but left mostly to chance. He learned little in a regular way. A village priest gave him lessons when there was time, sometimes between one duty and another. Charles would stand in the sacristy or under a tree, trying to remember his verbs while the priest half slept or hurried away.

It was not enough. At last his mother forced the matter. Charles was sent to school in Rouen. There he lived quietly, did his work, and remained somewhere in the middle of the class. No one noticed him much. He was neither one of the

clever boys nor one of the wild ones. He was simply there.

He ate well, slept well, and followed the rules. Every week he wrote a long letter to his mother. He did not shine in any subject. Still, by steady effort, he managed to stay in place. His mother took this as a sign that he would one day become a doctor.

So when his school years ended, he was pushed toward medicine. It was not because he had a calling. It was because his mother wished it, and because such a path seemed respectable enough. Charles accepted it as he accepted most things in life.

He went to Rouen again, now to study medicine. The names of the subjects alone frightened him. Anatomy, pathology, pharmacy, chemistry—these were only sounds to him at first. He listened, but did not understand. He copied notes, bought notebooks, and tried to learn by force what did not naturally enter his mind.

He worked like a machine. He attended the lectures. He memorized what others explained. He moved from one room to another, from lecture hall to hospital, from hospital to his poor room, with the tired obedience of a man who does what is expected because he knows no other way.

Sometimes in the evening he opened the window and looked out over the town. The river ran below. The sky turned red. Workers passed by. From far away came the noise of life. Then he would think of the country, of fresh air, of trees, of quiet fields. But he did not go back. He remained where he was and tried to continue.

Yet he was not made for study. He grew tired. He became careless. He missed lectures. He found easier pleasures in lazy evenings and foolish company. At last he failed his examination.

He did not even dare go home at once. He stopped outside the village and sent for his mother. When he told her the truth, she did not blame him. She blamed the examiners, fate, everything except her son. Then she set him to work again.

Charles obeyed. He studied once more. This time he passed. Not brilliantly, but enough. It was a victory made from effort, memory, and patience, not talent.

Now he was ready to begin life as a country doctor.

He did not know it yet, but the true story of his life had still not begun. It would

begin when he rode one dark night to a farm called Les Bertaux and met a young woman named Emma.

Part 2

After Charles passed his examination, the next question was where he should begin his practice. His mother arranged everything. There was a small village called Tostes where an old doctor had recently died. Charles could take his place there. It was not a large village, but there would be enough patients for a young doctor.

Before he began this new life, however, his mother believed that something more was necessary. A man should not live alone. A doctor especially needed a wife to keep his house in order and support his reputation.

She soon found a suitable woman.

The lady was a widow named Madame Dubuc. She was about forty-five years old and possessed an income of twelve hundred francs a year. Her face was thin, and her skin was covered with many small marks. She was not beautiful, but she was respectable, and she had money.

Madame Bovary, Charles's mother, worked very hard to arrange the marriage. Several other men had also hoped to marry the widow, but Madame Bovary pushed them aside with determination. At last Charles and Madame Dubuc were married.

Charles believed that marriage would make his life easier. He imagined that he would have more comfort and freedom. But he soon discovered that this was not so.

Madame Dubuc controlled everything.

She watched how Charles spent money. She opened his letters. She listened carefully whenever a woman came to see the doctor. If a patient failed to pay quickly enough, she forced Charles to demand the money. She complained constantly about her health—her nerves, her chest, her stomach.

Each morning she required chocolate to drink. Each evening she spoke of her

suffering and her fears. When Charles returned from his visits, she would stretch her thin arms around his neck and tell him that he did not love her enough.

Charles did his best to comfort her, but he often felt tired and confused. Marriage had not brought the peaceful happiness he had imagined.

One night, around eleven o'clock, there was a loud noise outside the house. A horse had stopped in the street. The servant opened the window and spoke with a man below.

The man had come with a letter. It was for Doctor Bovary.

Charles sat up in bed and read it by candlelight. The letter asked him to come immediately to a farm called Les Bertaux. A farmer named Monsieur Rouault had broken his leg and needed a doctor.

The farm was far away across the countryside. Because it was dark, they decided that the servant boy would go ahead to guide the way, and Charles would follow later when the moon rose.

At four in the morning Charles set out on horseback.

The air was cold and silent. The rain had stopped, but the ground was still wet. Birds sat quietly on the bare branches of trees. The sky was pale with the first light of morning.

Charles rode slowly along the road. At times he almost fell asleep in the saddle. The quiet rhythm of the horse made him dream. In his mind, memories of school and hospital mixed with thoughts of his wife sleeping at home.

At last he reached the farm.

It was a large farmyard surrounded by buildings. In the stables he could see strong horses eating from wooden racks. Chickens and turkeys walked across a great pile of manure in the yard. The barn stood tall with smooth walls. Everything showed that the farm was prosperous.

A young woman came to the door to greet him.

She wore a blue dress with several flounces. Without speaking much, she led him inside the house and then upstairs to see the patient.

The farmer lay in bed, sweating and groaning loudly. He was a heavy man with a red face and bright blue eyes. A large bottle of brandy stood beside his bed.

When he saw the doctor, he began complaining about his pain.

Charles examined the leg carefully. Fortunately the fracture was simple. It would not be difficult to treat.

He asked for pieces of wood to make splints. While the servant tore up cloth for bandages, the young woman tried to sew small pads for the leg.

She had trouble finding her sewing things. Her father called impatiently from the bed, but she did not answer. While she sewed she pricked her fingers several times and quietly placed them in her mouth.

Charles noticed her hands.

Her nails were smooth and shining, shaped like small almonds. Her hands themselves were not perfectly soft. They were a little firm at the joints. Yet they seemed elegant and delicate compared with the rough hands of farm workers.

But it was not her hands that truly struck him.

It was her eyes.

They were brown, but so dark that they almost appeared black. Long lashes gave them a deep shadow. When she looked at him, her gaze was direct and calm.

When the bandage was finished, the farmer insisted that Charles stay for a meal before leaving.

They went down to the kitchen. A great fire burned in the hearth. Several pots stood near it where the servants' breakfast was cooking.

Charles sat at a small table with the farmer and his daughter.

They spoke of the weather, of wolves that sometimes appeared in the fields at night, and of the farm. The young woman said that she did not enjoy life in the countryside. She had to help her father manage everything since her mother had died two years earlier.

The room was cold. She shivered slightly as she ate.

Her neck rose above the white collar of her dress. Her black hair was parted neatly and gathered behind her head. At the temples it curved gently around her face.

Charles had never before noticed such details in a woman.

When the meal ended, he prepared to leave.

He returned to the room to look for his riding whip. The young woman helped him search. The whip had fallen near the sacks of flour beside the wall.

She bent down to pick it up. Charles bent down at the same moment.

For a second his chest touched her back.

She straightened quickly and blushed.

Without speaking she handed him the whip.

After that visit Charles was supposed to return only once or twice more to check the farmer's leg. But he found reasons to go again.

First he returned the next day. Then twice a week. Then sometimes without any clear reason at all.

The farmer's leg healed well. Everyone praised Doctor Bovary's skill.

Old Rouault told his neighbors that the young doctor was better than the famous physicians of Rouen.

Charles listened with modest pleasure. But the truth was that something else drew him to the farm.

He liked entering the courtyard and hearing the chickens scatter. He liked the smell of hay in the stables. He liked the sound of wooden shoes on the stone floor.

Most of all he liked seeing Mademoiselle Emma Rouault.

She often walked with him to the first step outside the house when he left. If the horse was not yet ready, she waited there quietly beside him.

Sometimes the wind lifted the soft hair at the back of her neck. Sometimes the sunlight shone through her parasol and colored her pale skin.

Charles felt strangely happy during those moments.

He did not yet fully understand what was happening in his heart.

But every time he rode away from the farm, he already wished to return.

Part 3

Charles soon found reasons to visit the farm again and again.

At first he told himself that the farmer's leg might still need attention. Then he said that he must make certain that the bone had healed properly. But even when

the injury was nearly cured, he continued to ride to Les Bertaux.

The road there became familiar to him.

He knew where the path narrowed between two hedges. He knew the place where the wind bent the tall poplar trees. He knew the sound of the dogs barking before he even saw the farmhouse.

And each time he arrived, Emma Rouault appeared at the door.

Sometimes she held a basket of eggs. Sometimes she wiped her hands on her apron as she came from the kitchen. Sometimes she simply stood there, looking across the yard as if she had been expecting him.

They spoke politely, as people do who do not yet know one another well.

Charles asked about the farm.

Emma answered calmly. She explained which fields produced wheat, which fields were used for grazing, and how the servants worked during the different seasons.

Yet while she spoke of these practical matters, it was clear that they did not interest her very much.

Often she seemed distracted.

Her gaze moved beyond the yard, beyond the fields, toward the distant horizon. It was as if she were searching for something that did not exist in that quiet countryside.

Charles noticed small details about her life.

Inside the house there were books on a table near the window. Some were religious works, but others were novels. The pages had been read many times. In the evenings, Emma often sat beside the lamp and read alone.

She had once been educated in a convent school in Rouen. There she had learned music, drawing, and a little literature. She had also learned the habits of polite society.

Now, however, she lived on the farm with her father, and the days passed slowly.

Sometimes she played the piano that stood in the sitting room. The instrument was slightly out of tune, but the melodies filled the quiet house.

Charles listened with admiration.

He did not understand music very well, but he felt that such accomplishments were signs of refinement and intelligence. Compared with the simple life of Tostes, the atmosphere of the farm seemed almost elegant.

One afternoon, while Charles and Emma walked in the garden, her father watched them from the doorway.

Old Rouault was not a foolish man.

He had noticed the doctor's frequent visits. He also noticed the way Emma spoke more brightly when Charles was present. The farmer considered the matter carefully.

Charles Bovary, he thought, was not brilliant, but he was honest. He had a profession. He worked hard. And he appeared to admire Emma sincerely.

There was only one problem.

Charles was already married.

Yet fate soon removed that obstacle.

Madame Dubuc, Charles's wife, suddenly discovered that the property she believed she possessed did not exist. The lawyer who had managed her money had betrayed her. The income she had promised Charles was gone.

The shock struck her deeply.

Within a short time she fell ill and died.

Charles mourned her sincerely. He wore black clothes and spoke of her with respect. Yet his grief did not last very long.

His marriage had not been a happy one.

Life soon returned to its usual course.

During that time Charles continued visiting the farm. At first he felt uncertain. Perhaps it would be improper to appear too often after his wife's death.

But Emma's father seemed pleased to see him.

One evening, after supper, the farmer spoke openly.

They were sitting near the fire while Emma worked quietly at her sewing.

Old Rouault cleared his throat and said, "Doctor, a man should not remain alone for long. A house without a woman becomes cold."

Charles did not immediately understand.

The farmer continued.

“My daughter has been alone here with me since her mother died. The farm is heavy work for a young woman. If she were married, she might live more comfortably.”

Charles felt his heart beat faster.

He did not dare look directly at Emma.

“Of course,” Rouault added, “the choice must be hers.”

Emma lowered her head slightly but did not speak.

That silence was enough.

The matter was settled.

Within a short time Charles Bovary and Emma Rouault were engaged to be married.

The wedding was held on the farm itself.

Preparations began many days before the ceremony. Large quantities of food were ordered. Servants worked from morning until night. Chickens, ducks, and pigs were prepared for cooking. Tables were carried into the yard.

On the morning of the wedding, guests arrived from neighboring farms and villages.

The men wore dark coats that were too tight or too large. Their boots were thick with mud from the fields. The women wore dresses decorated with ribbons and bright colors.

Laughter and loud voices filled the courtyard.

The ceremony itself took place in the village church.

Emma wore a white dress with a long veil. Charles stood beside her, nervous but proud. The priest spoke solemnly while the guests watched.

When the ceremony ended, everyone returned to the farm for the celebration.

The meal lasted many hours.

There were roasted meats, pies, bread, and large bowls of cider. Guests told stories and sang songs. Some danced in the yard while musicians played simple tunes.

As evening approached, lanterns were hung in the trees.

Charles felt completely happy.

He believed that all the hopes of his life had now been fulfilled. He had a profession, a house, and a beautiful wife.

Emma, however, experienced the day differently.

The noise, the laughter, the heavy food, and the rough manners of the guests seemed strange to her. She watched the celebration with a quiet smile, but inside she felt a certain distance.

The romantic images she had imagined during her years of reading novels did not appear that day.

No elegant carriages arrived. No noble guests spoke brilliant words. The wedding feast resembled a village fair more than the splendid ceremonies she had dreamed of.

Yet the day passed quickly.

At last the guests departed. The lanterns went out. The courtyard grew silent again.

Emma left the farm where she had grown up.

She rode away beside her husband toward the small village where their new life would begin.

Charles believed that happiness had finally come.

Emma still waited to discover what happiness truly meant.

Part 4

Charles and Emma began their married life in the small village of Tostes.

The house was simple. It stood beside the road with a small garden behind it. The rooms were narrow, and the furniture was ordinary. There were a few chairs, a table, a cupboard, and the doctor's medical instruments carefully arranged in one corner.

For Charles, this house seemed comfortable enough.

For Emma, however, it felt disappointing from the very first day.

During her years at the convent school, she had imagined marriage very

differently. In the novels she had read, married life was full of passion, poetry, and beautiful adventures. Lovers spoke with deep emotion and lived in elegant rooms decorated with fine fabrics and shining mirrors.

But in Tostes there was only quiet routine.

Charles left the house each morning to visit his patients. Emma remained behind to manage the house. She gave instructions to the servant, watched the cooking, and tried to arrange the furniture so that the rooms would appear more attractive.

Yet even after she changed everything several times, the house still looked plain. Charles, meanwhile, was completely satisfied.

He adored his wife.

Often he could not pass her without touching her hand, her scarf, or the ribbon in her hair. Sometimes he kissed her cheeks again and again with enthusiastic affection.

Emma responded politely, but she pushed him away gently, half smiling, as one might push away an overexcited child.

At first she believed that she must surely be in love.

She had married, and therefore she must feel the powerful happiness described in books. But as days passed, she noticed something strange.

The happiness she expected did not appear.

She began to wonder whether she had misunderstood something.

Perhaps the words “happiness,” “passion,” and “ecstasy,” which seemed so beautiful when she read them in novels, did not have the same meaning in real life.

During the first weeks of marriage she asked herself again and again:

Was this truly the happiest time of her life?

Was this what people called the honeymoon?

She thought that perhaps newly married couples should travel. In the books she had read, husbands and wives often visited distant lands after their wedding.

She imagined herself sitting beside her husband in a carriage as it climbed the mountain roads of Switzerland. She imagined the sound of bells from goats

wandering across green slopes. She imagined small wooden houses and wide views across the valleys.

Or perhaps they would visit Scotland. She imagined quiet cottages beside lakes, mist rising from the water, and long walks through ancient forests.

In such places, she thought, love might grow naturally.

But none of this happened.

Charles had neither the habit nor the imagination for such journeys. He had never even considered visiting the theater in Rouen when he had lived there as a student.

He did not know how to swim.

He could not fence with a sword.

He had never fired a pistol.

One day Emma mentioned a term from horseback riding that she had read in a novel.

Charles could not explain it.

Emma felt disappointed.

A man, she believed, should know everything. He should guide a woman through the secrets of life. He should understand sports, travel, and the elegant pleasures of society.

Instead, Charles spoke about ordinary things.

His conversation was flat and predictable, like a paved road where common ideas marched forward in dull rows. There was no excitement in his words, no humor, no dreams.

Yet Charles believed sincerely that Emma was happy.

He watched her quietly during the evenings when she sat near the window. He admired the curve of her neck and the softness of her voice.

To him she seemed perfect.

Emma, however, grew restless.

She read novels again and again. The stories were always similar.

They told of romantic adventures: lovers who suffered for one another, noble heroes who fought bravely, women who fainted in lonely houses, coaches racing

through dark forests, horses dying from exhaustion, secret promises whispered beside lakes under the moonlight.

In these stories the men were strong like lions yet gentle like lambs. Their clothing was always elegant, and when they wept, they wept freely and beautifully.

Emma closed the books and looked around her own room.

The contrast was painful.

Outside the window she could see only the small road and the same quiet fields. The future seemed to stretch before her like a long, dark corridor with a door closed at the end.

Nothing ever happened.

Days resembled one another endlessly.

Yesterday looked like today.

Tomorrow would look exactly the same.

Sometimes she wondered whether other people's lives were different.

Even if their lives were ordinary, surely some event must occur now and then—something unexpected that might change everything.

But for Emma nothing changed.

The monotony of daily life pressed upon her like a weight.

Without realizing it, she began to dream of another existence.

Somewhere beyond the village, beyond the fields, there must be a brighter world waiting.

And though she did not yet know how she would reach it, she began to feel that she must try.

Part 5

Not long after their marriage, an event occurred that excited Emma deeply.

One of Charles's patients was the Marquis d'Andervilliers, a nobleman who lived in a great house called Vaubyessard. Charles had once treated the marquis successfully for an illness, and the nobleman remembered him kindly.

One day a letter arrived.

The marquis invited Doctor Bovary and his wife to attend a grand ball at his château.

Emma could hardly believe the news.

At last she would see the kind of world she had imagined for so long. The elegant society she had read about in novels would appear before her eyes.

For several days she prepared carefully.

She chose her dress with great attention. She arranged her hair again and again before the mirror. Even the smallest detail seemed important. She wanted everything to be perfect.

When the evening arrived, they traveled to the château by carriage.

As they approached, Emma saw lights shining through the tall windows. Music drifted through the warm air. Servants stood beside the entrance holding lanterns.

Inside, the great hall was filled with people.

Gentlemen wore black coats and shining boots. Ladies moved through the rooms in dresses that rustled softly as they walked. Their jewels glittered beneath the chandeliers.

Emma felt as if she had entered another world.

Everywhere she looked she saw refinement and grace. The furniture was elegant, the walls were covered with paintings, and the tables were decorated with silver dishes and flowers.

At first Emma remained quiet beside Charles, who felt uncomfortable among so many strangers. But soon the music began.

Couples moved gracefully across the floor.

One gentleman approached Emma.

He was called the Vicomte, though most people simply called him “the Viscount.” His waistcoat opened widely at the chest, and his clothes fit him perfectly. His manners were confident and easy.

“Madame Bovary,” he said with a polite bow, “may I have the pleasure of this dance?”

Emma hesitated for only a moment.

Then she placed her hand in his.

They began slowly, turning gently to the music. The viscount guided her carefully, speaking softly so that she would not feel nervous.

But soon the dance grew faster.

They turned more quickly. Around them the lamps, the walls, the furniture, and the floor seemed to spin like a great circle.

As they passed near the doorway, Emma's dress brushed against the viscount's leg. For a moment their steps tangled together.

His eyes looked down into hers.

Emma looked up at him.

She felt suddenly dizzy and stopped for an instant. But the viscount pulled her forward again, and they continued dancing faster and faster until they disappeared into the corridor beyond the hall.

Emma's breath came quickly.

She leaned her head lightly against his chest, almost fainting from excitement.

Later there was supper.

Servants carried magnificent dishes to the tables: roasted meats, delicate pastries, fruits arranged in shining bowls. Crystal glasses sparkled under the candlelight.

Emma observed everything with intense attention.

The voices of the guests were soft and confident. They spoke easily of travel, politics, theater, and fashion. The women laughed lightly while fans moved in their hands like the wings of birds.

Charles ate with pleasure but understood little of the conversation.

Emma listened to every word.

She memorized the gestures, the expressions, the elegant manner in which the guests raised their glasses or turned their heads while speaking.

She wished to belong to this world.

When the evening ended and they returned home, Emma felt as if she had awakened from a beautiful dream.

For several days she thought of nothing else.

She remembered the shining floors, the music, the warm light of the chandeliers,

and the graceful movements of the dancers.

In comparison, the house in Tostes seemed smaller and duller than ever.

Charles continued his ordinary work. Patients came and went. Meals were prepared and eaten as usual.

But Emma's thoughts remained at the château.

Sometimes she imagined that the viscount might appear suddenly on the road outside the house. Sometimes she remembered the smell of his hair when they danced.

Weeks passed.

No invitation came again.

The great house at Vaubyessard remained silent and distant, like a memory that belonged to another life.

Emma returned to the routine of village existence.

Yet the memory of the ball remained in her mind.

It was like a bright window opening onto a world she could see but could never reach.

From that moment onward, the quiet life of Tostes seemed more unbearable than ever before.

Part 6

After the ball at Vaubyessard, Emma could no longer see her life in the same way.

The memory of that night remained bright in her mind. She remembered the shining chandeliers, the elegant ladies, the gentle music, and the graceful movements of the dancers. Compared with that world, everything in Tostes now seemed dull and narrow.

The days returned to their ordinary rhythm.

Charles left the house early each morning to visit patients in the surrounding villages. Emma remained alone for long hours. She tried to read, but the books she once loved now made her restless rather than comforted.

When she looked around the house, she saw only the signs of a small provincial life.

The same chairs stood in the same places. The same plates appeared at every meal. Outside the window, the same road stretched past the house with the same slow carts passing along it.

Nothing ever changed.

Emma began to feel a deep dissatisfaction.

Sometimes she walked in the garden, but the garden was small. Sometimes she tried to sew, but her hands soon fell idle. She listened to the ticking of the clock and felt the minutes pass one by one.

In the evenings Charles returned home tired but cheerful.

He spoke about his patients: a farmer with a fever, a child with a cough, an old woman who refused to take medicine. These stories seemed interesting to him.

Emma listened politely, but she felt no interest in them.

The world he described was the same small world she saw every day.

Charles never noticed her disappointment.

When he looked at Emma sitting quietly beside the lamp, he thought she appeared calm and happy. He admired her gentle silence.

Emma, however, often felt that she was living in a dream that had slowly turned into a prison.

She remembered the novels she had read in the convent.

In those stories the heroines lived intense lives filled with emotion. They traveled across beautiful landscapes, suffered for love, and experienced great joys and terrible sorrows.

Emma's own life seemed empty beside those images.

Even her marriage disappointed her.

She had expected passion, something powerful and transforming. Instead she found only affection.

Charles loved her deeply, but his love was simple and calm.

Sometimes he kissed her repeatedly with enthusiastic devotion. At other times he touched her scarf, her hair, or her hand as if he could not resist showing his

affection.

Emma accepted these gestures quietly, but they did not move her heart.

The more Charles loved her, the more she felt that something was missing.

She began to ask herself troubling questions.

Had she made a mistake in marrying him?

Had she misunderstood what love truly meant?

These thoughts grew stronger when she thought again about the ball.

She imagined the lives of the elegant guests she had seen there. Surely their days were full of excitement. Surely their homes were filled with music, laughter, and interesting conversations.

The contrast made her own situation unbearable.

Her disappointment slowly turned into sadness.

At times she sat motionless for long periods, staring at the same place without speaking. At other times she suddenly became impatient with the smallest details of daily life.

The servant noticed the change.

Even Charles began to worry.

Emma often complained of headaches, fatigue, and weakness. She ate little and slept poorly. Some days she remained in bed long after the morning had begun.

Charles tried to help her.

He suggested that she go outside more often. Fresh air might improve her health. Perhaps she should ride on horseback or walk in the countryside.

Emma refused.

The countryside itself seemed to depress her.

Its quiet fields and simple farms reminded her too strongly of the life she wished to escape.

At last Charles became seriously concerned.

He feared that Emma's health might truly be failing.

After thinking carefully about the situation, he decided that a change of location might help her recover. A different village, a different house, and new surroundings might restore her spirits.

He soon heard of an opportunity.

A doctor was needed in a larger town called Yonville-l'Abbaye.

Yonville was more lively than Tostes. It had several shops, a busy marketplace, and a few families of higher social standing. There was even an inn where travelers sometimes stopped on their journeys.

Charles believed that such a place might be good for Emma.

He told her about the idea one evening.

Emma listened quietly.

The thought of leaving Tostes filled her with a sudden feeling of hope.

Perhaps in Yonville life would finally begin to change.

Part 7

The decision was soon made.

Charles would leave Tostes and establish his medical practice in Yonville-l'Abbaye.

Preparations began quickly. Furniture was packed into carts. Medical instruments were carefully wrapped. The servant arranged the kitchen utensils in large baskets.

Emma supervised everything with unusual energy.

Leaving Tostes felt like escaping from a prison. Each object that disappeared into the carts seemed to remove a piece of the life she had grown to hate.

On the morning of departure the house looked empty and unfamiliar.

Charles walked through the rooms with quiet satisfaction. To him the move was simply a practical improvement for his career.

Emma stood at the window for a moment before leaving.

She looked once more at the road, the garden, and the distant fields. She felt no sadness.

Instead she felt relief.

At last they climbed into the carriage and began the journey to Yonville.

The road passed through open countryside. The weather was clear, and the

fields stretched peacefully toward the horizon.

Emma watched the landscape with restless curiosity.

Each village they passed seemed full of possibility. Every distant church tower suggested a new beginning.

Charles spoke cheerfully about the future.

“Yonville is larger than Tostes,” he said. “There are more patients there. We shall live comfortably.”

Emma listened politely, but her thoughts were elsewhere.

She imagined elegant houses, interesting people, and perhaps even the kind of refined society she had once glimpsed at the marquis’s ball.

By evening they arrived in Yonville.

The town lay beside a small river. A few narrow streets crossed the center, surrounded by farms and orchards. There was a church with a square tower, several shops, and an inn called the Lion d’Or.

It was not a large town, but compared with Tostes it appeared lively.

Their new house stood near the center of the village.

It was larger than the one in Tostes and included several comfortable rooms. Behind the house there was a garden with fruit trees and a small path leading toward the river.

Emma entered the house and looked around carefully.

She imagined how she might arrange the furniture, where she would place flowers, and how she might decorate the rooms to create a more elegant atmosphere.

That evening they went to the inn for supper.

The innkeeper, Madame Lefrançois, greeted them warmly. She was a busy woman who knew everything that happened in Yonville.

At the table they met several important people of the town.

One of them was Monsieur Homais, the pharmacist.

Homais was a tall man with an energetic voice and a great confidence in his own opinions. He spoke constantly about science, progress, and the importance of reason.

He believed himself to be the most intelligent man in Yonville.

During the meal he explained many subjects to Charles and Emma: medicine, politics, agriculture, and even literature.

Emma listened quietly.

Another guest sat near her.

He was a young man named Léon Dupuis.

Léon worked as a clerk in a lawyer's office. He was polite, gentle, and somewhat shy. His dark hair fell neatly across his forehead, and his eyes seemed thoughtful.

When Emma spoke, Léon listened attentively.

Soon they discovered that they shared certain interests.

They both enjoyed reading books.

Léon said that on stormy evenings he loved nothing more than sitting beside the lamp with a novel while the wind blew against the windows.

Emma's eyes brightened.

"Yes," she said softly. "To read like that... it is almost like traveling. One can imagine distant countries and live other lives."

Léon smiled.

"Exactly. Sometimes when I read, I feel as if I become one of the characters in the story."

Emma leaned slightly toward him.

"Yes," she said again. "Yes, that is exactly how it feels."

They spoke about poetry as well.

Léon confessed that he admired poets deeply. Poetry moved him more than ordinary prose.

Emma replied that she also loved poetry, though lately she preferred novels that carried the reader forward with excitement and suspense.

Charles listened politely but understood little of their conversation.

He finished his meal and spoke with Homais about medical matters.

Emma and Léon continued speaking quietly together.

Something in their conversation felt natural and easy.

Both of them sensed that they had discovered a sympathetic mind.

When the evening ended and the Bovarys returned home, Emma felt strangely animated.

Yonville already seemed different from Tostes.

There were new people here, new possibilities, and perhaps new emotions waiting to appear.

Without realizing it, Emma had taken the first step toward another chapter of her life.

Part 8

Life in Yonville soon began to take its regular form.

Charles established his medical practice and started visiting patients in the town and the surrounding countryside. He rode from house to house each day with the same patient diligence he had shown in Tostes.

Emma, however, found Yonville more interesting.

The town contained several families, and people visited one another often. Conversations took place in the pharmacy, in the inn, and in the small square near the church.

Emma soon became acquainted with these local habits.

Among the people she saw most frequently was Léon Dupuis.

Léon often visited the Bovarys in the evening. Sometimes he brought a book. Sometimes he simply came to talk.

Their conversations were quiet but intense.

Charles usually sat nearby, listening with interest but saying little. He admired Léon's education and felt proud that such a refined young man enjoyed visiting their home.

Emma and Léon spoke about literature, music, and distant places.

They spoke about lakes in Switzerland, ancient cities in Italy, and the great boulevards of Paris. Neither of them had seen most of these places, yet they described them with enthusiasm.

Their imaginations supplied what experience had not.

When Léon described a beautiful landscape from a novel he had read, Emma closed her eyes for a moment and pictured it clearly.

She saw mountains, forests, rivers, and elegant cities far from the quiet streets of Yonville.

Sometimes she felt that Léon understood her better than anyone else.

There were evenings when the wind blew against the windows and the lamp burned softly beside them.

Léon would read a passage aloud from a book.

Emma listened without moving.

At such moments they both felt a deep emotion that neither dared to express.

Charles, meanwhile, remained unaware of anything unusual.

He believed that Emma enjoyed the company of a thoughtful young friend. The idea that anything more might exist between them never entered his mind.

But Emma's feelings were slowly changing.

When Léon spoke, she watched his face carefully. She noticed the tone of his voice and the small movements of his hands.

Sometimes she felt that a single word from him could change her entire mood.

Yet she never allowed herself to speak openly about these feelings.

In fact, the more she felt drawn toward Léon, the more she tried to appear calm and distant.

Her pride would not allow her to reveal her heart too easily.

Léon experienced a similar struggle.

He admired Emma deeply.

Her beauty, her intelligence, and her sadness fascinated him. She seemed to him like a character from one of the novels he loved.

Yet he hesitated.

Emma was married.

Charles was kind to him and welcomed him into the house as a friend. Léon did not wish to betray that trust.

So their relationship remained suspended between friendship and unspoken

emotion.

Meanwhile, daily life continued in Yonville.

The pharmacist Homais spoke constantly about progress and science. The innkeeper Madame Lefrançois complained about customers and politics. Farmers came to Charles with ordinary illnesses.

Amid these small events, Emma's inner life grew more complicated.

Sometimes she felt a brief happiness when Léon visited.

At other times she became irritated with everything around her.

The quiet life of Yonville still seemed narrow.

She had hoped that moving to a new town would transform her existence. But even here the days passed with the same slow rhythm.

Emma began to feel again that mysterious dissatisfaction she had known in Tostes.

Only now, another emotion had joined it.

It was the quiet, growing presence of Léon Dupuis in her thoughts.

Part 9

Emma and Léon continued to see each other often.

Their conversations remained gentle and thoughtful. They spoke about books, music, and distant places. Each discovered in the other the same quiet dissatisfaction with ordinary life.

Yet neither of them dared to go further.

Emma felt that she must behave with dignity. She wished to appear calm and superior, like the heroines she admired in novels.

Léon, on the other hand, feared doing something improper.

Charles trusted him completely. To betray that trust seemed dishonorable. And so Léon remained silent about the feelings that troubled his heart.

Sometimes, when Emma and Léon sat together in the Bovarys' small sitting room, long moments of silence passed between them.

The lamp burned softly.

The wind touched the windows.

Charles turned the pages of a medical book.

During those quiet moments Emma sometimes felt that Léon might suddenly speak the words she herself could not say.

But he never did.

Instead, their conversations remained polite and distant.

The tension between them slowly grew stronger.

Meanwhile, Emma's dissatisfaction with her life became more intense.

She now saw Charles with new eyes.

His habits irritated her.

His quiet satisfaction with ordinary things seemed almost insulting. He ate with pleasure, spoke cheerfully about his patients, and slept peacefully each night.

Emma sometimes watched him in silence.

How could he remain so calm?

Did he not feel that life contained something more than this narrow existence?

Her frustration gradually turned into resentment.

At times she even wished that Charles would behave badly—perhaps speak harshly or lose his temper—so that she might have a stronger reason to hate him.

But Charles remained the same gentle and patient husband.

His kindness only made Emma's inner conflict more painful.

During this time another event occurred.

Emma discovered that she was going to have a child.

Charles was delighted.

The news filled him with excitement and pride. He imagined the future with enthusiasm. Perhaps the child would be a son who would one day become a doctor like himself.

Emma reacted differently.

At first the news surprised her. She had not imagined motherhood in her dreams of romance and passion.

Yet she soon began to think about the child with curiosity.

She imagined dressing a small girl in beautiful clothes. She imagined teaching

her music and poetry. Perhaps the child would grow into a refined young woman who might escape the dull life that had trapped her mother.

Months passed.

Emma's health changed as the pregnancy advanced. She grew tired easily and often remained indoors.

Léon continued visiting the house, but their conversations became more restrained.

Both of them felt that a barrier now existed between them.

Léon realized that Emma's life was becoming more firmly tied to her marriage and her future as a mother.

His own feelings seemed increasingly impossible.

One evening, after leaving the Bovarys' house, Léon walked alone through the quiet streets of Yonville.

He felt restless and unhappy.

His work at the lawyer's office bored him. The small town offered little opportunity for ambition or adventure.

Gradually an idea formed in his mind.

Perhaps he should leave Yonville.

Paris offered opportunities for study and success. If he continued his legal education there, he might build a better future.

The decision was painful.

Yet Léon began to believe that leaving was the only way to escape the quiet suffering that his feelings for Emma had created.

When he finally told Emma about his plan, she listened silently.

She felt a sudden emptiness.

Yet she did not ask him to stay.

Pride once again prevented her from speaking openly.

"Paris is a beautiful city," she said calmly. "You will certainly find many interesting experiences there."

Léon looked at her for a moment.

He hoped she might say something more.

But Emma remained composed.

Soon afterward Léon left Yonville for Paris.

When he was gone, Emma felt the silence of the house more strongly than ever.

The child was born a short time later.

It was a girl.

They named her Berthe.

Charles was overjoyed.

Emma, however, felt only a quiet disappointment.

She had hoped for a son.

A son might have lived freely, she thought. A son could travel, explore the world, and experience the adventures that she herself had never known.

A daughter, she feared, would grow up to live the same narrow life she now endured.

And so, even at the moment of birth, Emma's dreams continued to drift farther away from the reality of her life.

Part 10

After Léon left Yonville for Paris, Emma's life seemed to grow even quieter.

The birth of her daughter had changed the household. The small child cried often, and the servant moved constantly through the rooms carrying water, cloths, and baskets. Yet even these small disturbances did not bring Emma the emotional fulfillment she had imagined.

Charles adored the baby.

When he returned home from his visits, he went immediately to the cradle. He lifted the child carefully and laughed with pride whenever the little girl moved her arms or opened her eyes.

Emma watched these scenes without enthusiasm.

She cared for the child properly, but she did not feel the deep affection that Charles expected. Sometimes she looked at the small face with a certain impatience, as if the child represented another duty rather than a source of joy.

The days passed slowly.

Emma spent long hours sitting beside the window, reading novels or staring at the road outside. Occasionally she visited neighbors in the town, but these visits rarely satisfied her.

Yonville, though larger than Tostes, remained a provincial town.

The conversations she heard there were still limited to the same subjects: harvests, illnesses, local gossip, and the price of goods.

Emma longed for something more exciting.

During this period she became acquainted with a merchant named Monsieur Lheureux.

Lheureux owned a shop in Yonville where he sold cloth, ribbons, hats, and many fashionable items from the cities. He was a polite man with careful manners and a friendly smile.

From the beginning he showed great attention to Emma.

One afternoon he visited the Bovarys' house carrying several packages.

"Madame Bovary," he said politely, "I have just received some beautiful new goods from Paris. I thought they might interest you."

Emma hesitated, but curiosity soon overcame her caution.

Lheureux opened the packages and placed the items on the table.

There were fine shawls, delicate gloves, elegant fabrics, and small decorative objects. The colors shone softly in the afternoon light.

Emma touched the materials with fascination.

The fabrics felt smooth and luxurious beneath her fingers. Each object seemed to belong to a more refined world than the one she lived in.

Lheureux watched her carefully.

He had a talent for understanding people's desires.

"These items are very fashionable in Paris," he explained. "Of course, you need not decide immediately. You may take them home and consider them at your leisure."

Emma asked about the price.

Lheureux smiled reassuringly.

“There is no need to pay at once. Payment can always be arranged later.”

Emma felt relieved.

She chose a shawl and a few small objects for the house. Lheureux wrapped them carefully and promised to send them the next day.

From that moment a new habit began.

Lheureux returned frequently to the Bovarys' house. Each time he brought something new: ribbons, gloves, ornaments, fabrics, or fashionable accessories.

Emma's interest in these objects grew quickly.

The small luxuries helped her create an atmosphere that felt closer to the elegant life she imagined. A new curtain, a decorative box, or a delicate piece of cloth could transform the appearance of a room.

Lheureux always spoke kindly and respectfully.

He never demanded immediate payment.

Instead he offered credit.

“You may settle the account whenever it is convenient,” he would say.

Emma gradually became accustomed to this arrangement.

At first the purchases were small.

But as time passed, her desires expanded.

She began ordering more expensive items—fine dresses, elegant hats, and decorative furniture.

Each purchase seemed harmless by itself.

Yet slowly the total amount of money she owed began to grow.

Emma did not fully realize the danger.

Lheureux kept careful records in his books.

He understood that Emma's taste for luxury might one day become very profitable.

Meanwhile Emma continued searching for something that would change her life.

She did not yet know that another person in Yonville had already begun watching her with great interest.

His name was Rodolphe Boulanger.

And soon their paths would cross.

Part 11

Rodolphe Boulanger lived in a large house not far from Yonville.

He was a wealthy landowner about thirty-four years old. His manner was confident, and his experience with women was considerable. He understood how easily admiration and flattering words could influence a lonely heart.

Rodolphe often visited Yonville on business. One day he attended a local gathering where many of the town's residents had assembled.

There he noticed Emma Bovary.

She stood quietly beside her husband, listening politely to the conversations around her. Her face seemed calm, yet something in her expression suggested dissatisfaction.

Rodolphe observed her carefully.

"That woman is beautiful," he thought.

He looked at Charles.

Charles appeared ordinary and somewhat awkward. His coat was slightly worn, and his beard was not carefully trimmed.

Rodolphe smiled to himself.

"The husband looks foolish enough," he thought. "The wife must be terribly bored. While he rides about treating patients, she probably spends her days sewing and staring out the window."

Rodolphe had seen this situation many times before.

"She must be longing for excitement," he continued thinking. "A few gentle words, a little attention—she will fall in love quickly. The only question is how to end the affair later without difficulty."

Soon an opportunity presented itself.

A large agricultural fair was scheduled in Yonville.

Farmers from the surrounding countryside gathered to display their animals, tools, and harvests. Prizes were awarded for the best livestock and agricultural

improvements.

The event attracted a great crowd.

Stalls filled the square. Animals stood tied beside fences. Merchants sold food and drink. Loud voices called out the names of prize winners.

Emma and Charles attended the fair.

The noise and confusion irritated Emma. The ceremony seemed provincial and ridiculous to her. Officials gave long speeches praising fertilizers, crops, and farming techniques.

Rodolphe approached Charles during the event.

He greeted the doctor warmly and suggested that they watch the ceremony from a quieter place.

Soon they all climbed to a room above the square where they could observe the crowd from a window.

Outside, the judges continued announcing prizes for pigs, cattle, and sheep. The loudspeaker repeated the names of farmers who had improved their manure or raised particularly fine animals.

Meanwhile Rodolphe turned toward Emma.

He spoke softly so that his voice would not mix with the noisy speeches below.

His words were full of emotion.

“Madame,” he said, “why are we here today? What strange force brings two people together like this?”

Emma looked at him, surprised.

Rodolphe continued.

“We are like two rivers that flow separately across the land,” he said. “At first they seem far apart, but gradually their natural course brings them closer until they finally join.”

As he spoke, he gently took Emma’s hand.

She did not pull it away.

Emma felt confused.

Memories from her past passed quickly through her mind: the elegant ball at Vaubyessard, the gentle voice of Léon, the dreams she had formed from her novels.

For a moment everything seemed to blend together.
Rodolphe's face appeared very close to hers.
His words sounded passionate and sincere.
Emma felt a trembling in her hand.
It moved slightly within his grasp, like a small bird struggling to escape.
Rodolphe pressed her hand more firmly.
"Thank you," he whispered suddenly. "You understand me. I knew you would."
Their eyes met.
Neither of them spoke for several seconds.
Outside the window the speeches continued.
A voice announced the winner of a prize for the best fertilizer. Applause rose from the crowd.
But inside the room another kind of excitement was growing.
Rodolphe had begun the careful work of seduction.
Emma did not yet realize how skillfully he had already begun to guide her emotions.

Part 12

After the agricultural fair, Rodolphe did not visit Emma again for several weeks. This delay was deliberate.
He understood that absence could increase desire more effectively than constant attention. If Emma had already begun to think about him, then waiting would only make those thoughts stronger.
"It would be foolish to return immediately," he told himself.
Instead he went hunting in the countryside and occupied himself with other matters. Yet he remained confident that Emma would soon be thinking of him more and more.
When several weeks had passed, Rodolphe returned to Yonville.
He entered the Bovarys' house one evening as if nothing unusual had occurred. The moment Emma saw him, her face turned pale.

Rodolphe noticed the change immediately.

“Excellent,” he thought calmly. “The plan has worked.”

Their conversation that evening was simple and polite. Charles spoke about medicine and village affairs. Rodolphe answered casually.

Yet beneath the ordinary words another current flowed between Rodolphe and Emma.

Emma felt uneasy.

She could not forget the moment during the fair when Rodolphe had taken her hand and spoken with such intensity. His sudden return stirred emotions that she had tried to control.

Rodolphe behaved as if nothing important had happened.

He spoke pleasantly, laughed easily, and showed no sign of impatience.

But he watched Emma carefully.

He noticed every movement of her eyes, every hesitation in her voice.

Soon he found a new opportunity.

One afternoon he suggested that Emma learn to ride a horse.

“Riding is excellent for health,” he explained to Charles. “Madame Bovary would benefit greatly from fresh air and exercise.”

Charles agreed immediately.

He had always worried about Emma’s fragile health, and the idea of outdoor activity seemed very sensible.

Emma hesitated.

But Rodolphe’s confident manner made the suggestion difficult to refuse.

Soon it became a regular habit.

Rodolphe and Emma rode together through the forests and fields near Yonville. Charles encouraged these excursions, believing that they would strengthen Emma’s health.

The countryside stretched wide around them.

Tall trees formed green tunnels above the paths. Sunlight fell in shifting patterns across the ground. The air carried the smell of leaves and distant water.

At first Emma felt nervous riding beside Rodolphe.

Yet the movement of the horses and the open landscape gradually relaxed her.
They spoke about many things during these rides.

Rodolphe often complained about society.

He spoke of the emptiness of ordinary life and the cruelty of social rules that prevented people from following their true feelings.

Emma listened eagerly.

His words seemed to express the dissatisfaction she herself had long felt but never clearly explained.

One day they stopped in a quiet place deep within the forest.

The horses stood beside the path while the leaves moved softly in the wind.

Emma's voice trembled.

"This is wrong," she said quietly. "It is wrong for us to be here like this."

Rodolphe stepped closer.

"Why wrong?" he asked gently.

Emma looked away.

"Because... because I am married."

Rodolphe spoke her name softly.

"Emma..."

She repeated his name in return.

"Rodolphe..."

For a moment neither of them moved.

Then Emma leaned toward him.

Her head rested against his shoulder. Her breathing grew uneven. Tears filled her eyes as she surrendered to the emotion that had been growing within her.

The forest remained silent around them.

At that moment Emma believed that her long search for passion had finally reached its fulfillment.

She felt as if she had entered the world of the novels she once loved.

"I have a lover," she thought again and again.

The words themselves seemed magical.

In her imagination she joined the heroines of the stories she had read in her

youth. Like them, she now believed she was living a grand romantic drama.

Rodolphe, however, felt something different.

For him the moment represented success.

He had achieved exactly what he had planned. Emma had surrendered her heart completely.

And although he enjoyed the excitement of the affair, he also knew that such passions rarely lasted forever.

Still, for now, the adventure had begun.

Part 13

Emma's life changed completely after her relationship with Rodolphe began.

Each day seemed filled with new excitement.

She thought constantly about their meetings. Even when she remained at home beside Charles, her thoughts traveled far away into the forests and fields where she had spoken Rodolphe's name.

The smallest events now seemed full of meaning.

A letter from Rodolphe could fill her entire morning with happiness. The sound of a horse outside the house might make her heart beat faster. Every hour brought the possibility of seeing him again.

Emma believed that she had finally discovered the great passion she had dreamed of since her youth.

In her imagination, their love resembled the romances she had read in novels.

She imagined dramatic sacrifices, secret messages, and heroic devotion. Each meeting with Rodolphe seemed to confirm that she had entered a life of intense emotion.

Rodolphe encouraged these illusions.

He spoke with eloquence about love and destiny. He praised Emma's beauty and her sensitivity. His words were warm and confident.

Yet behind this passionate language, Rodolphe remained calm and practical.

He enjoyed the affair, but he did not allow himself to feel the same romantic

excitement that filled Emma's heart.

Meanwhile Emma began changing her behavior at home.

She became more cheerful with Charles, almost affectionate at times. This sudden kindness surprised him greatly.

Charles believed that Emma's health had finally improved.

"The fresh air from riding must be helping her," he said happily.

He encouraged her to continue riding with Rodolphe whenever she wished.

Emma accepted this freedom eagerly.

Their meetings became more frequent.

Sometimes they rode into the countryside together. At other times Emma found excuses to visit Rodolphe's house.

Each meeting seemed to deepen Emma's attachment.

She began writing letters to Rodolphe filled with emotional declarations. She spoke of eternal devotion and the desire to escape the ordinary world.

Rodolphe read these letters with amusement.

They pleased him, but they also made him cautious. Emma's emotions seemed increasingly intense.

"She is becoming serious," he thought.

Yet he continued the relationship.

For Emma, however, the affair soon became the center of her existence.

She began imagining a future in which she and Rodolphe would live together openly. The quiet village life she shared with Charles seemed more unbearable each day.

At the same time another influence entered her life.

Monsieur Lheureux continued visiting the house with new goods from the cities.

Emma's taste for luxury grew rapidly.

She purchased elegant dresses, decorative objects, and fashionable accessories. These items helped her imagine that she belonged to a more refined world.

Lheureux always offered the same reassuring words.

"There is no hurry about payment," he said kindly. "You may settle the account whenever it is convenient."

Emma accepted these offers without thinking deeply about the consequences.
Her debts slowly increased.

She ordered beautiful items not only for herself but also for Rodolphe. She purchased small gifts to please him: gloves, riding equipment, and other elegant objects.

Each purchase seemed like a small expression of love.

Meanwhile the total amount she owed to Lheureux continued growing quietly in his account books.

Emma did not realize how dangerous the situation was becoming.

Her thoughts were filled with Rodolphe and with dreams of a future beyond Yonville.

The quiet village, her husband, and even her child began to seem like obstacles standing in the way of her happiness.

Gradually a bold idea formed in her mind.

If she truly loved Rodolphe, then perhaps they should escape together.

They could leave Yonville behind forever.

They could travel far away to another city or even another country.

There they would live the passionate life she had always imagined.

When Emma finally spoke to Rodolphe about this idea, she expected him to share her excitement.

Rodolphe listened carefully.

But his reaction was very different from what Emma hoped.

For the first time since their affair began, he felt a quiet sense of alarm.

Part 14

Emma spoke to Rodolphe with increasing urgency about leaving Yonville.

At first she mentioned the idea gently.

“How wonderful it would be,” she said one afternoon, “to travel together somewhere far away.”

Rodolphe smiled and answered with vague words.

But Emma soon spoke more openly.

“We must leave,” she said. “We cannot continue living like this forever. I belong to you now.”

Rodolphe listened quietly.

Inside, however, he felt uneasy.

He had expected a romantic affair, not a permanent commitment. Emma’s emotional intensity now seemed dangerous.

Still, he did not wish to disappoint her immediately.

He allowed the conversation to continue.

Emma described her plans with growing excitement.

They would leave secretly. One night a carriage would arrive. They would travel across the countryside, perhaps to Paris or even farther.

There they would begin a new life together.

Rodolphe nodded and pretended to consider the idea seriously.

Yet as Emma spoke, he already knew that he would never go with her.

The idea of abandoning his comfortable life and his property seemed absurd.

Nevertheless, Emma’s enthusiasm continued to grow.

She began preparing for their escape.

She gathered clothing and small personal objects. She imagined the moment when she would leave Yonville forever.

Her thoughts moved quickly and wildly.

Each detail of the plan seemed to bring her closer to the passionate life she desired.

Rodolphe watched this development with increasing concern.

“She is becoming too serious,” he thought.

For him the affair had been pleasant entertainment. But Emma’s dreams of permanent devotion threatened to complicate everything.

At last he decided that the relationship must end.

Yet he did not wish to confront Emma directly.

Instead he prepared a letter.

One evening he sat alone at his desk with two candles burning beside him. The

light moved slightly in the evening air.

Rodolphe began writing.

“Emma,” he wrote, “the thought of causing you pain is like death to me. You must forget me. Why did I ever meet you? Why are you so beautiful?”

Then he stopped and smiled to himself.

“Yes,” he murmured, “that phrase usually works well.”

He continued writing.

In the letter he blamed fate for their separation. He insisted that their love had been real but impossible.

Finally he added a final sentence.

“When you read this sad letter,” he wrote, “I will already be far away.”

Rodolphe read the letter once more.

He believed it contained exactly the right mixture of emotion and distance.

Then he sealed it.

The next morning Emma waited anxiously for the moment when they would leave together.

Her heart beat rapidly with excitement.

She imagined the carriage arriving.

She imagined Rodolphe taking her hand and leading her toward their new life.

Instead a servant delivered the letter.

Emma opened it quickly.

As she read the words, her face grew pale.

Rodolphe was leaving.

He had abandoned her.

The passionate future she had imagined disappeared in an instant.

Emma felt a terrible shock.

For several moments she could not move.

Then she ran upstairs to her room.

Her thoughts became confused and desperate.

The world seemed empty and meaningless.

At that moment Emma felt that life itself had lost its purpose.

Part 15

After reading Rodolphe's letter, Emma felt as if the world had suddenly collapsed around her.

The dreams that had filled her mind only hours before disappeared instantly. The imagined journey, the secret escape, the new life of passion—all of it dissolved into nothing.

She sat motionless for a long time, holding the letter in her hands.

The room seemed strangely silent.

At last she rose and walked slowly to the window.

Outside she could see the small road leading away from the house. The sky was gray, and the air felt heavy. Everything looked ordinary, as if nothing important had happened.

Yet Emma felt a terrible emptiness.

For a moment a desperate thought entered her mind.

She climbed onto a chair and leaned toward the open window.

The ground below seemed very far away.

If she jumped, she thought, everything would end.

But suddenly the voice of Charles calling her name from downstairs broke the spell.

Emma stepped back.

Her strength left her at once, and she collapsed into a chair.

Soon afterward she became seriously ill.

Charles believed that the illness came from exhaustion and emotional distress. Emma remained in bed for many weeks, weak and pale.

Charles cared for her with great tenderness.

He rarely left the house except when patients urgently needed him. When he returned, he sat beside Emma's bed and watched her anxiously.

He spoke gently, brought her medicine, and tried to comfort her in every possible way.

Emma, however, remained distant.
Her mind was still filled with memories of Rodolphe.
She reread his letter again and again. Each word seemed to wound her heart.
At times she wept quietly.
At other times she stared at the ceiling without moving.
Slowly, however, her physical health improved.
The fever passed, and her strength gradually returned. Charles felt enormous relief.
“You will soon be completely well,” he said happily.
Emma smiled faintly.
Yet although her body recovered, her emotions remained troubled.
The experience with Rodolphe had left a deep mark on her mind.
She now saw her life even more clearly than before.
Charles’s kindness seemed almost painful to her. His gentle devotion reminded her constantly of the deception she had practiced.
At the same time she felt angry with Rodolphe.
How easily he had abandoned her!
She remembered the passionate words he had spoken, the promises he had implied. Now those memories felt humiliating.
Gradually Emma tried to direct her thoughts toward other things.
For a time she turned toward religion.
She visited the church more frequently and spoke with the priest. Religious books replaced the novels she had once loved.
She attempted to believe that spiritual devotion might offer the peace she had never found in romance.
Yet even this effort did not last long.
Her nature remained restless.
The desire for excitement, beauty, and emotional intensity soon returned.
Meanwhile the debts she had accumulated through Monsieur Lheureux continued to grow quietly.
Bills arrived from time to time, though Emma often avoided looking at them

carefully. Lheureux remained polite and patient.

He always assured her that payment could be arranged later.

Emma accepted these assurances gratefully.

Life in Yonville slowly returned to its usual routine.

Charles visited his patients.

The townspeople continued their ordinary conversations.

Emma appeared calmer and more composed.

Yet beneath this calm surface her heart remained dissatisfied.

She still dreamed of a different life.

And soon another event would awaken those dreams again.

Part 16

Nearly three years passed.

Emma's illness faded into memory, and life in Yonville returned to its usual rhythm. Charles continued working as a doctor, visiting farms and cottages throughout the countryside.

Emma appeared calmer than before.

She no longer spoke of romantic dreams. She spent more time caring for her daughter Berthe and managing the house.

Yet inside, her dissatisfaction had not disappeared.

The quiet life of Yonville still felt narrow. The small conversations of the town, the same daily routines, and the same familiar faces continued to weigh on her spirit.

Meanwhile Monsieur Lheureux remained a frequent visitor.

He still brought fashionable goods from the cities—fine fabrics, elegant accessories, and decorative objects for the house. Emma accepted these items with increasing ease.

The bills continued to grow.

Lheureux, however, never appeared worried. His politeness made Emma believe that the situation was harmless.

“You may pay whenever it is convenient,” he repeated.

Emma trusted these words more than she should have.

One day an opportunity arose for Emma to travel to Rouen.

Charles suggested the trip himself.

Emma had expressed interest in seeing an opera performance in the city, and Charles believed that such entertainment might lift her spirits.

The journey required several hours by carriage.

When they arrived in Rouen, Emma felt the excitement she had long missed. The streets were larger and busier than those in Yonville. Shops displayed elegant goods behind glass windows. Well-dressed people walked confidently along the sidewalks.

Emma felt as if she had stepped into a more vibrant world.

That evening they attended the opera.

The theater was bright with lights and filled with music. The audience sat quietly while the singers performed dramatic scenes on the stage.

Emma watched with deep emotion.

The story of the opera—full of love, betrayal, and sacrifice—reminded her strongly of the novels she once adored. Tears appeared in her eyes as she followed the tragic events unfolding before her.

During one of the pauses in the performance, Emma looked across the audience.

Suddenly she recognized a familiar face.

It was Léon Dupuis.

He was no longer the shy young clerk who had lived in Yonville. His clothes were more elegant now, and his expression seemed more confident.

When he saw Emma, Léon immediately approached her.

Their meeting was both joyful and awkward.

They spoke politely at first, exchanging simple questions about their lives. Léon explained that he had completed his legal studies in Paris and was now working in Rouen.

Emma listened carefully.

Memories of their quiet conversations in Yonville returned to her mind.

Léon also remembered those evenings clearly.

When he looked at Emma now, he felt the same admiration he had once tried to suppress.

The opera resumed.

Yet neither Emma nor Léon paid much attention to the music anymore.

Instead they spoke softly together during the intervals.

Charles, meanwhile, watched the stage with interest. He did not notice the growing closeness between his wife and the young lawyer.

When the performance ended, Léon insisted on walking with them through the city streets.

The night air was cool and pleasant.

As they walked, Emma felt a familiar excitement.

The past seemed to return suddenly.

The quiet emotions she had once shared with Léon in Yonville began to awaken again.

This time, however, the situation would not remain innocent.

Both of them had changed since those earlier days.

And soon their reunion would lead them into a new and dangerous chapter of Emma's life.

Part 17

After the evening at the opera, Emma could not forget Léon.

The meeting in Rouen had awakened emotions that she had once tried to silence. Now those feelings returned stronger than before.

Léon felt the same change.

When he had lived in Yonville years earlier, he had been shy and uncertain. He had feared speaking openly about his feelings for Emma.

But life in Paris had changed him.

The city had taught him confidence. He had seen new ideas, new habits, and a more daring way of living. Now he no longer hesitated as he once had.

The day after the opera, Emma met Léon again.

At first the meeting seemed innocent.

Charles believed that Emma was visiting Rouen to receive music lessons from a teacher in the city. The journey required several hours by carriage, but Charles encouraged it.

“Music will do you good,” he said kindly.

Emma accepted this explanation gratefully.

Soon the trips became regular.

Each week she traveled from Yonville to Rouen, telling Charles that she was attending lessons. In reality she met Léon.

They walked together through the city streets.

Rouen offered many places where they could disappear among the crowds: cafés, gardens, shops, and theaters.

The city itself seemed to encourage their relationship.

The noise of carriages, the movement of people, and the endless variety of shops created an atmosphere very different from the quiet life of Yonville.

Emma felt alive again.

Soon their meetings became more intimate.

Léon rented a small room in a hotel where they could spend time together in complete privacy.

Emma entered the room with trembling excitement.

At last she believed she had found the passionate love she had always desired.

For Léon, the experience felt equally thrilling.

He admired Emma deeply, and the secrecy of their meetings added a sense of adventure.

Each week their relationship grew more intense.

After spending the afternoon together, Emma returned to Yonville in the evening carriage.

The journey home often took several hours.

Along the road the carriage sometimes passed through lonely hills where a strange figure appeared.

It was a beggar.

The man was blind.

When he removed his hat, two empty holes appeared where his eyelids should have been. His face was dirty, and his clothes hung in torn pieces around his body.

Sometimes he walked beside the carriage for a moment, singing in a rough, unpleasant voice.

Emma always felt a sudden fear when she saw him.

His appearance seemed terrible and mysterious.

The beggar's voice followed the carriage as it moved away, echoing strangely across the empty fields.

Emma shivered whenever she heard that sound.

Yet despite these uneasy moments, she continued her journeys to Rouen.

The secret life she shared with Léon had become essential to her happiness.

At the same time her spending increased.

Emma purchased elegant dresses for her trips to the city. She bought gloves, jewelry, and other fashionable items that she believed suited her new life.

Monsieur Lheureux continued supplying everything she desired.

He also provided something even more dangerous.

He offered credit.

Emma signed documents without reading them carefully. She trusted that she could somehow manage the payments later.

The total amount she owed slowly became enormous.

Yet Emma refused to think about it.

Her attention remained fixed on her meetings with Léon and the excitement of her double life.

For a time she believed that nothing could destroy the happiness she had finally discovered.

But the quiet calculations of Monsieur Lheureux were moving steadily toward a different conclusion.

Emma's secret life with Léon continued for many months.

Each week she traveled from Yonville to Rouen with the same explanation for Charles: she was going to her music lessons.

Charles believed her completely.

He even encouraged these visits. He thought the lessons would improve Emma's spirits and bring refinement into their home.

Meanwhile Emma's meetings with Léon became more passionate.

They spent long afternoons together in the hotel room Léon had arranged. There they spoke of love, dreams, and the future.

Emma often imagined that their relationship might eventually replace her marriage entirely.

She pictured a life in which she and Léon would live openly together in a large city. In her imagination such a future seemed both beautiful and inevitable.

Léon listened to these ideas with enthusiasm.

Yet unlike Emma, he still hesitated to imagine a permanent break from society. His affection was sincere, but he remained cautious.

Meanwhile another problem was quietly growing in the background.

Emma's debts had reached an alarming level.

Monsieur Lheureux had carefully recorded every purchase she had made over the past several years. The total amount had become enormous.

At first Lheureux had allowed Emma to delay payment.

Now his attitude began to change.

One afternoon he appeared at the Bovarys' house carrying several documents.

His polite smile remained, but his voice sounded more serious.

"Madame Bovary," he said gently, "there are certain financial matters that must now be settled."

Emma felt uneasy.

Lheureux explained that the various purchases she had made had been converted into legal notes—formal promises to repay the money at specific times.

These notes had been renewed several times, but the total sum was now

extremely large.

Emma tried to remain calm.

“Surely this can be arranged,” she said.

Lheureux nodded politely.

“Of course. I only require payment of the amount indicated here.”

He placed the document on the table.

Emma read the numbers.

Her heart began to beat rapidly.

The amount was far greater than she had imagined.

Lheureux then added something even more alarming.

“The law requires that the full sum be paid within twenty-four hours.”

Emma stared at him in disbelief.

“Twenty-four hours?”

“Yes,” he replied calmly. “Otherwise legal action must begin.”

Emma felt the room spinning around her.

She suddenly realized that she was trapped.

She had no money of her own.

Charles knew nothing about these debts.

And the law could now take their house, their furniture, and everything they possessed.

Desperation filled her mind.

She immediately began searching for help.

First she turned to Léon.

She traveled to Rouen and explained the situation urgently.

“You must help me,” she said. “I need money—immediately.”

Léon was shocked.

The amount she required was far beyond his means.

He tried to comfort her, but he could not provide the solution she needed.

Emma left Rouen feeling even more desperate.

There remained only one person who might help her.

Rodolphe.

Though he had abandoned her once, he was wealthy.

Emma decided to visit him.

She traveled quickly to his estate and entered the house with trembling determination.

Rodolphe received her politely.

When Emma explained her situation, she spoke with intense emotion. She begged him for assistance.

Rodolphe listened carefully.

But his answer was calm and final.

He could not help her.

Emma's last hope disappeared.

As she left Rodolphe's house, despair overwhelmed her completely.

She wandered through the streets of Yonville in confusion.

The world seemed dark and hopeless.

At last she arrived at the pharmacy.

Inside, she saw a small cupboard where dangerous medicines were kept.

Without fully understanding what she was doing, Emma opened it.

There she found a container of arsenic.

In a moment of terrible decision, she took the poison.

Her fate had now been sealed.

Part 19

Emma ran from the pharmacy carrying the poison.

Her thoughts were confused and desperate. She no longer felt the world clearly around her. Everything seemed distant, like a dream.

When she reached the house, she hurried upstairs to her room.

There she opened the small container.

Inside was a white powder.

Without hesitation she took a handful and placed it in her mouth.

The taste was bitter and burning.

Immediately her body reacted.

She felt a terrible pain rising in her stomach and chest. Her breath became quick and uneven. She tried to swallow, but her throat seemed to close.

Emma staggered toward the bed.

Her hands trembled violently.

Soon the poison began to take full effect.

Her chest rose and fell rapidly as if her lungs could not draw enough air. Her tongue hung loosely from her mouth. Her eyes moved wildly, searching the room without focus.

Charles, who had been downstairs, heard a strange noise.

He rushed into the room.

When he saw Emma's condition, he was terrified.

"Emma!" he cried. "What has happened?"

Emma could not answer.

Her body shook with violent spasms. The muscles of her arms and legs twisted painfully as the poison spread through her blood.

Charles called for help immediately.

The pharmacist Homais arrived first. Soon a priest and several neighbors gathered around the bed.

They tried desperately to save her.

Medicines were brought. Cold cloths were placed on her forehead. The priest spoke prayers beside her.

But nothing could stop the poison.

Emma's suffering grew more terrible.

Her breathing became harsh and irregular. Her body bent with violent convulsions. The effort to breathe seemed like a battle against an invisible force.

Meanwhile, outside the house, a familiar voice appeared.

The blind beggar who often walked along the road passed by the house at that moment.

His rough voice sang a strange and haunting song.

Emma heard the sound.

Suddenly she cried out.

“The blind man!”

Then she began laughing.

The laughter was wild and frightening. It echoed strangely in the room.

Emma seemed to see the beggar’s horrible face rising before her eyes—his empty eyelids, his twisted expression, his mocking voice.

The vision filled her with terror.

Her laughter suddenly turned into silence.

Another violent convulsion shook her body.

Then everything stopped.

Emma Bovary was dead.

The room became very quiet.

Charles stood beside the bed in disbelief.

He could not understand what had happened.

The woman he loved, the center of his life, had disappeared forever.

His grief was deep and helpless.

Yet the tragedy of the Bovary family was not finished.

The consequences of Emma’s life would continue long after her death.

Part 20

After Emma’s death, the house in Yonville fell into deep silence.

Charles could not accept what had happened.

For many days he remained in the same rooms where Emma had lived. Every object reminded him of her—the chair where she used to sit, the books she had touched, the small items she had arranged on the tables.

Sometimes he opened her drawers and examined the objects inside.

There he found letters.

At first he did not understand their meaning. But gradually the truth revealed itself.

Emma had loved another man.

In fact, she had loved two.

Charles read the letters again and again.

Rodolphe's handwriting appeared clearly on several pages. Other letters came from Léon.

The discovery struck him with terrible force.

His wife, whom he had loved with complete devotion, had betrayed him.

Yet even this knowledge did not turn his grief into anger.

Charles felt only sadness.

One day, while walking through Yonville, he suddenly encountered Rodolphe.

Rodolphe stopped.

For a moment he feared that Charles might accuse him or attack him.

But Charles spoke quietly.

"I do not blame you," he said.

Rodolphe remained silent.

Charles continued, holding his head in his hands.

"Yes... I do not blame you anymore."

Then he added a strange sentence, the only grand phrase he had ever spoken in his life.

"It is the work of fate."

Rodolphe looked at him with surprise.

The words sounded noble, yet they also seemed oddly weak and helpless. Rodolphe felt almost embarrassed by them.

After this meeting Charles returned home.

His strength was slowly disappearing.

The discovery of Emma's betrayal had destroyed the last support of his life.

He spent long hours sitting quietly in the garden behind the house.

The garden contained a small arbor covered with vines. Beneath it stood a wooden bench.

One afternoon Charles walked there alone.

Sunlight passed through the leaves above him, creating small patterns of light on the ground. The air smelled softly of flowers.

Charles sat down on the bench.

Memories filled his mind.

He remembered Emma's smile, her voice, the way she moved through the house. Even the painful memories of her distance and dissatisfaction now seemed precious to him.

His chest rose slowly as he breathed.

The quiet beauty of the garden surrounded him.

Time passed unnoticed.

In the evening Berthe, his small daughter, came into the garden.

She had not seen her father since earlier in the day.

"Papa," she called softly, "come to dinner."

Charles did not answer.

Berthe thought he was pretending not to hear.

She stepped closer and touched his arm.

At that moment his body fell gently to the ground.

Charles Bovary was dead.

The tragedy of the Bovary family reached its final stage.

The house, the furniture, and all their possessions were sold to pay Emma's debts.

After everything had been settled, only twelve francs and seventy-five centimes remained.

That small sum paid for Berthe's journey to live with her grandmother.

But the old woman died within the same year.

Emma's father was already ill and unable to care for the child.

At last Berthe went to live with a poor aunt.

The aunt had little money and could not support the girl without help.

And so Berthe, the daughter of Emma Bovary—who had once dreamed of luxury, elegance, and the brilliant life of great cities—was sent to work in a cotton factory.

Thus the story ended.

Emma had dreamed of rising toward the world of wealth and beauty she

admired.

Instead, after all her desires and struggles, her family fell from the middle class into the harsh life of the working poor.

The dreams of Madame Bovary had vanished.

Only their consequences remained.