

*From the Author of the Anne of Green Gables Novels*

**L. M. MONTGOMERY**

*First in the Emily Novels*

# *Emily & New Moon*



# **Emily Of New Moon (1923)**

## **Lucy Maud Montgomery**

1874-1942.

TO MR GEORGE BOYD MACMILLAN  
ALLOA, SCOTLAND  
IN RECOGNITION OF  
A LONG AND STIMULATING FRIENDSHIP

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THE HOUSE IN THE HOLLOW

The house in the hollow was "a mile from anywhere"--so Maywood people said. It was situated in a grassy little dale, looking as if it had never been built like other houses but had grown up there like a big, brown mushroom. It was reached by a long, green lane and almost hidden from view by an encircling growth of young birches. No other house could be seen from it although the village was just over the hill. Ellen Greene said it was the loneliest place in the world and vowed that she wouldn't stay there a day if it wasn't that she pitied the child.

Emily didn't know she was being pitied and didn't know what loneliness meant. She had plenty of company. There was Father--and Mike--and Saucy Sal. The Wind Woman was always around; and there were the trees--Adam-and-Eve, and the Rooster Pine, and all the friendly lady-birches.

And there was "the flash," too. She never knew when it might come, and the possibility of it kept her a-thrill and expectant.

Emily had slipped away in the chilly twilight for a walk. She remembered that walk very vividly all her life--perhaps because of a certain eerie beauty that was in it--perhaps because "the flash" came for the first time in weeks--more likely because of what happened after she came back from it.

It had been a dull, cold day in early May, threatening to rain but never raining. Father had lain on the sitting-room lounge all day. He had coughed a good deal and he had not talked much to Emily, which was a very unusual thing for him. Most of the time he lay with his hands clasped under his head and his large, sunken, dark-blue eyes fixed dreamily and unseeingly on the cloudy sky that was visible between the boughs of the two big spruces in the front yard--Adam-and-Eve, they always called those spruces, because of a whimsical resemblance Emily had traced between their position, with reference to a small apple-tree between them, and that of Adam and Eve and the Tree of Knowledge in an old-fashioned picture in one of Ellen Greene's books. The Tree of Knowledge looked exactly like the squat little apple-tree, and Adam and Eve stood up on either side as stiffly and rigidly as did the spruces.

Emily wondered what Father was thinking of, but she never bothered him with questions when his cough was bad. She only wished she had somebody to talk to. Ellen Greene wouldn't talk that day either. She did nothing but grunt, and grunts meant that Ellen was disturbed about something. She had grunted last night after the doctor had whispered to her in the kitchen, and she had grunted when she gave Emily a bedtime snack of bread and molasses. Emily did not like bread and molasses, but she ate it because she did not want to hurt Ellen's feelings. It was not often that Ellen allowed her anything to eat before going to bed, and when she did it meant that for some reason or other she wanted to confer a special favour.

Emily expected the grunting attack would wear off over night, as it generally did; but it had not, so no company was to be found in Ellen. Not that there was a great deal to be found at any time. Douglas Starr had once, in a fit of exasperation, told Emily that "Ellen Greene was a fat, lazy old thing of no importance," and Emily, whenever she looked at Ellen after that, thought the description fitted her to a hair. So Emily had curled herself up in the ragged, comfortable old wing-chair and read *The Pilgrim's Progress* all the afternoon. Emily loved *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Many a time had she walked the straight and narrow path with Christian and Christiana--although she never liked Christiana's adventures half as well as Christian's. For one thing, there was always such a crowd with Christiana. She had not half the fascination of that solitary, intrepid figure who faced all alone the shadows of the Dark Valley and the encounter with Apollyon. Darkness and hobgoblins were nothing when you had plenty of company. But to be ALONE--ah, Emily shivered with the delicious horror of it!

When Ellen announced that supper was ready Douglas Starr told Emily to go out to it.

"I don't want anything to-night. I'll just lie here and rest. And when you come in again we'll have a real talk, Elfkin."

He smiled up at her his old, beautiful smile, with the love behind it, that Emily always found so sweet. She ate her supper quite happily--though it wasn't a good supper. The bread was soggy and her egg was underdone, but for a wonder she was allowed to have both Saucy Sal and Mike sitting, one on each side of her, and Ellen only grunted when Emily fed them wee bits of bread and butter.

Mike had such a cute way of sitting up on his haunches and catching the bits in his paws, and Saucy Sal had HER trick of touching Emily's ankle with an almost human touch when her turn was too long in coming. Emily loved them both, but Mike was her favourite. He was a handsome, dark-grey cat with huge owl-like eyes, and he was

so soft and fat and fluffy. Sal was always thin; no amount of feeding put any flesh on her bones. Emily liked her, but never cared to cuddle or stroke her because of her thinness. Yet there was a sort of weird beauty about her that appealed to Emily. She was grey-and-white--very white and very sleek, with a long, pointed face, very long ears and very green eyes. She was a redoubtable fighter, and strange cats were vanquished in one round. The fearless little spitfire would even attack dogs and rout them utterly.

Emily loved her pussies. She had brought them up herself, as she proudly said. They had been given to her when they were kittens by her Sunday-school teacher.

"A LIVING present is so nice," she told Ellen, "because it keeps on getting nicer all the time."

But she worried considerably because Saucy Sal didn't have kittens.

"I don't know why she doesn't," she complained to Ellen Greene. "Most cats seem to have more kittens than they know what to do with."

After supper Emily went in and found that her father had fallen asleep. She was very glad of this; she knew he had not slept much for two nights; but she was a little disappointed that they were not going to have that "real talk." "Real" talks with Father were always such delightful things. But next best would be a walk--a lovely all-by-your-lonesome walk through the grey evening of the young spring. It was so long since she had had a walk.

"You put on your hood and mind you scoot back if it starts to rain," warned Ellen. "YOU can't monkey with colds the way some kids can."

"Why can't I?" Emily asked rather indignantly. Why must SHE be debarred from "monkeying with colds" if other children could? It

wasn't fair.

But Ellen only grunted. Emily muttered under her breath for her own satisfaction, "You are a fat old thing of no importance!" and slipped upstairs to get her hood--rather reluctantly, for she loved to run bareheaded. She put the faded blue hood on over her long, heavy braid of glossy, jet-black hair, and smiled chummily at her reflection in the little greenish glass. The smile began at the corners of her lips and spread over her face in a slow, subtle, very wonderful way, as Douglas Starr often thought. It was her dead mother's smile--the thing that had caught and held him long ago when he had first seen Juliet Murray. It seemed to be Emily's only physical inheritance from her mother. In all else, he thought, she was like the Starrs--in her large, purplish-grey eyes with their very long lashes and black brows, in her high, white forehead--too high for beauty--in the delicate modelling of her pale oval face and sensitive mouth, in the little ears that were pointed just a wee bit to show that she was kin to tribes of elfland.

"I'm going for a walk with the Wind Woman, dear," said Emily. "I wish I could take you, too. Do you EVER get out of that room, I wonder. The Wind Woman is going to be out in the fields to-night. She is tall and misty, with thin, grey, silky clothes blowing all about her--and wings like a bat's--only you can see through them--and shining eyes like stars looking through her long, loose hair. She can fly--but to-night she will walk with me all over the fields. She's a GREAT friend of mine--the Wind Woman is. I've known her ever since I was six. We're OLD, OLD friends--but not quite so old as you and I, little Emily-in-the-glass. We've been friends ALWAYS, haven't we?"

With a blown kiss to little Emily-in-the-glass, Emily-out-of-the-glass was off.

The Wind Woman was waiting for her outside--ruffling the little spears of striped grass that were sticking up stiffly in the bed

under the sitting-room window--tossing the big boughs of Adam-and-Eve--whispering among the misty green branches of the birches--teasing the "Rooster Pine" behind the house--it really did look like an enormous, ridiculous rooster, with a huge, bunchy tail and a head thrown back to crow.

It was so long since Emily had been out for a walk that she was half crazy with the joy of it. The winter had been so stormy and the snow so deep that she was never allowed out; April had been a month of rain and wind; so on this May evening she felt like a released prisoner. Where should she go? Down the brook--or over the fields to the spruce barrens? Emily chose the latter.

She loved the spruce barrens, away at the further end of the long, sloping pasture. That was a place where magic was made. She came more fully into her fairy birthright there than in any other place. Nobody who saw Emily skimming over the bare field would have envied her. She was little and pale and poorly clad; sometimes she shivered in her thin jacket; yet a queen might have gladly given a crown for her visions--her dreams of wonder. The brown, frosted grasses under her feet were velvet piles. The old mossy, gnarled half-dead spruce-tree, under which she paused for a moment to look up into the sky, was a marble column in a palace of the gods; the far dusky hills were the ramparts of a city of wonder. And for companions she had all the fairies of the country-side--for she could believe in them here--the fairies of the white clover and satin catkins, the little green folk of the grass, the elves of the young fir-trees, sprites of wind and wild fern and thistledown. Anything might happen there--everything might come true.

And the barrens were such a splendid place in which to play hide and seek with the Wind Woman. She was so very REAL there; if you could just spring quickly enough around a little cluster of spruces--only you never could--you would SEE her as well as feel her and hear her. There she was--that WAS the sweep of her grey cloak--no, she was laughing up in the very top of the taller trees--and the chase was on again--till, all at once, it seemed as if the

Wind Woman were gone--and the evening was bathed in a wonderful silence--and there was a sudden rift in the curdled clouds westward, and a lovely, pale, pinky-green lake of sky with a new moon in it.

Emily stood and looked at it with clasped hands and her little black head upturned. She must go home and write down a description of it in the yellow account-book, where the last thing written had been, "Mike's Biography." It would hurt her with its beauty until she wrote it down. Then she would read it to Father. She must not forget how the tips of the trees on the hill came out like fine black lace across the edge of the pinky-green sky.

And then, for one glorious, supreme moment, came "the flash."

Emily called it that, although she felt that the name didn't exactly describe it. It couldn't be described--not even to Father, who always seemed a little puzzled by it. Emily never spoke of it to any one else.

It had always seemed to Emily, ever since she could remember, that she was very, very near to a world of wonderful beauty. Between it and herself hung only a thin curtain; she could never draw the curtain aside--but sometimes, just for a moment, a wind fluttered it and then it was as if she caught a glimpse of the enchanting realm beyond--only a glimpse--and heard a note of unearthly music.

This moment came rarely--went swiftly, leaving her breathless with the inexpressible delight of it. She could never recall it--never summon it--never pretend it; but the wonder of it stayed with her for days. It never came twice with the same thing. To-night the dark boughs against that far-off sky had given it. It had come with a high, wild note of wind in the night, with a shadow wave over a ripe field, with a greybird lighting on her window-sill in a storm, with the singing of "Holy, holy, holy" in church, with a glimpse of the kitchen fire when she had come home on a dark autumn night, with the spirit-like blue of ice palms on a twilit pane,