

MAN SIDE #2

21.

EMMA

(To audience)

Week after week
I'd come out a church
he'd ride by
offer to carry me home.
I'd say yes.
Not sure I really wanted to
but he was there
so I did.
Winter gave way to spring.
One night
he dropped me at my cousin's house...

P.C.

(Pulling up on his reins)

Whoa.

(EMMA steps off the crate.)

EMMA

Good night, P.C.

(She starts to exit.)

START

P.C.

Emma.

EMMA

Yes?

(P.C. "dismounts" from the crate.)

P.C.

Would you like to sit on the porch?
Talk for a spell?

EMMA

'Bout what?

P.C.

Life.
Each other.

EMMA
What for?

P.C.
So we could...
I'd like to tell you about myself.
My prospects...

EMMA
I already know all that.

P.C.
How?

EMMA
My cousin Carrie.
She told me all 'bout you.
How you went to college
got yourself a degree
now you're a schoolteacher...

She said your folks was rich.

P.C.
Don't know about that.

EMMA
Got more money than my folks, I reckon.
They run a furniture store...?

P.C.
Own a furniture factory.

EMMA
In Gallipolis?

P.C.
That's right.

EMMA
Carrie says you're considered quite a catch.

P.C.
Does she now...

How about you?

EMMA

How 'bout me what?

P.C.

You consider me a catch?

EMMA

No.

P.C.

You don't consider me a catch?

EMMA

I don't consider you at all.
Should I?

P.C.

Good God, woman!
I give you a ride home from church every Sunday!

EMMA

I know.

P.C.

Well?
Why do you think I do that?

EMMA

Being a good neighbor, I reckon.

P.C.

Neighbor?!
Emma
I wanna marry you.

EMMA

What?
Why?

P.C.

Because I love you.
Because you're the one for me.

You don't even know me!

EMMA

Then sit down here with me...
Tell me what all I don't know.

P.C.

END

(He sits on a crate and pats the space next to him. EMMA sits next to him.)

(To audience)
I told him everything.
'Bout Daddy and his drinking.
How I helped Mama raise up my younger brothers and sisters.
How I only went to school now and then
didn't get past eighth grade.
How we slept four to a bed in the wintertime
the snow blowing in on us through the cracks in the roof.
And the work
the hard work of farm life.
Then he asked me...

EMMA

Was there anything good?

P.C.

(A sacred memory)
The sweet corn
when it was roasted tender
dripping with butter and salt.

EMMA

It was the one good thing.

(Beat. To audience)
He reached out
real gentle
and touched my hair.

My beautiful Emma.

P.C.