

A Rose for Emily Summary

Writer: William Faulkner | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

"[A Rose for Emily](#)" is a short story of five sections written by [William Faulkner](#) (1897-1962). The story was first published in 1930. This story is a Southern Gothic tale that delves into the mysterious and dreadful life of Miss Emily Grierson. Miss Emily Grierson is a woman living in the fictional town of Jefferson, Mississippi.

In section I, The unnamed narrator reveals the death of Miss Emily Grierson. She was the last remaining member of a once-prominent Southern family. The town is curious about her life and her home, which is described as "**an eyesore among eyesores**" due to its decaying appearance. The narrative then shifts to the **past**. The narrator describes Miss Emily's family background and her father, Mr. Grierson. Mr. Grierson was a controlling and overbearing figure in Miss Emily Grierson's life. He is portrayed as a man who believes no suitor is good enough for his daughter. So, he isolates Emily from the rest of the town. When he dies, Miss Emily refuses to acknowledge his death for three days, and the town attributes this to her inability to accept change.

In section II, the town recalls an incident involving Miss Emily's courtship with Homer Barron. He is a Yankee labourer who comes to Jefferson to work on paving the town's streets. Emily's relationship with Homer raises eyebrows in the town due to the significant differences in their social status and her father's disapproval. However, they begin spending time together, and the town assumes they will eventually marry. This section also touches on the mysterious nature of their relationship, as Emily is not seen for some time, and Homer is only spotted briefly.

In section III, After a period of courtship, Homer Barron is last seen entering Miss Emily's home, and he is never seen again. The town guesses about what may have happened to him. Some guess they have married. Emily is rarely seen in public after this. Her home becomes even more isolated. The townspeople continue to gossip about her. But they never interfere in her affairs due to her status as a Grierson. Emily becomes increasingly detached.

In section IV, Several years later, after Miss Emily's death, the townspeople can finally enter her home. In a locked upstairs bedroom, they discover the decomposed corpse of Homer Barron lying on a bed. Beside the corpse is a pillow with a strand of Miss Emily's grey hair. It suggests that she had been sleeping beside the body for years. The townspeople are both

horrified and fascinated by this discovery. It becomes clear that Emily had been living with the corpse, refusing to accept the passage of time and change.

The final section of the story deals with Miss Emily's immediate death. Following Emily's death, her servant grants entry to some of the women from Jefferson. She exits the back door and vanishes without a trace. Soon after, two female cousins arrive and arrange a funeral for Emily Grierson. The entire town attends out of both curiosity and a sense of duty. After a respectful period, the townspeople decide to enter Miss Emily's home and finally unlock the upstairs door, which had remained sealed for over four decades. As the dust settles, they come across the skeletal remains of Homer Baron lying in bed. Beside his remains, they find a pillow with an indentation where a head once rested and a single long grey hair.

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