



MANDARIN TELEVISION

Emma

A series written by

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Concept

Captain Fred Vitulo, early forties, is head of an extremely efficient criminal police unit. He's a unique kind of cop, sensitive and psychologically intuitive - the antithesis of manly, cynical, depressive cop stereotypes. When Emma, an atomic bomb barely thirty years old, gets appointed as his assistant, he is suspicious. An intern from the police academy, she is just too good to be true. He knows the guys in his unit. He knows a woman like Emma is going to turn heads and cause chaos. But then Fred sees her for who she is: a cool-headed, rational young woman who shows no emotion, especially brilliant with legal procedure. She seems to have no empathy, fear, or enthusiasm for anything. What's wrong with her? Does she have Asperger's, like those people you see on TV who speak twelve languages and remember everything? Is she schizophrenic? Is she completely unbalanced or on heavy medical treatment? No. Emma is beyond all that. She is beyond the most extreme case, beyond everything he can imagine. One day, Fred discovers that **Emma is an android - a robot incredibly just like a human being!**

Together, they lead investigations and develop a unique kind of relationship, built on robot-Emma's growing understanding of what it means to be human.

DNA of the series and police plot characteristics:

The series centers on two main focal points:

-A "political" focus

In a time when Internet, iPhones and other drones have taken on dominant roles in our daily lives, and the first robots are appearing, we use a light touch to bring up current, pertinent questions about our lifestyle and relationship to technological objects. What is technology's place in our society today? Can we live without it? Are machines destined to outperform us? If so, when and how?

These questions are embodied in the perspective of Fred, the cop. They are a through-line of the series and the stories it tells.

-A "philosophical" focus

This side shows through Emma's character, who acts like a "mirror" to humanity and its contradictions. What does it mean to be human? Are our emotions of any use to us? Or are they just a handicap?

Emma acts as a counterpoint, revealing our strengths, weaknesses and paradoxes.

These two focal points drive the series.

The series' tightly knit police plots rely on the characters' psychological subtlety and complexity, and above all, upon the motives that lead feature characters to commit murder. *Why* did the murderer kill? For what emotional reasons? **That question is the basis of each episode**, which delivers a unique and profoundly human answer.

We can picture each episode with regards to its **emotional or philosophical theme**: jealousy, obedience/revolt, lying, morality, conscience, freedom, desire, addiction, forgiveness, possession, trust/betrayal, etc....

Emma is like Voltaire's "Candide," a pure being observing Human Nature, commenting upon it and getting us, the audience, back in touch with our own humanity.

The Emma/Fred duo plays upon how incredibly different they are, as well as how they complement each other. Fred is intuitive, empathetic and a psychologist by nature. Emma is rational and a fantastic analyst. Together, they can master every aspect of investigation - if only they are able to listen and communicate. By nature, they tend to contradict each other, which is what allows them to get to the truth.

This difference in their nature, quite literal, also gives our police series an obvious **comic edge**, which is its trademark. The Fred/Emma relationship gradually evolves into an "extraordinary" kind of attachment and affection, sometimes ambiguous, as it grows stronger and stronger.

Emma the android is evolving. Absorbing every experience and learning from Fred, she discovers humanity so fully she becomes a being in her own right - and though she isn't human, she may one day be able to feel emotions.

Despite himself, Fred, who is married and has kids, gets attached to Emma, even though he can't forget she's a robot. Will he let himself get close to this creature made of metal and microprocessors, which he has helped to "design," acting like a human "father" to her? It's not long before Emma becomes an indispensable part of his life.

Characters

Emma

From technology...

When the series begins, Emma is a "super tool." She was designed with the goal of giving the police the best assistance possible. So she possesses all sorts of technological talents. She has access to all fifty-eight files available to legal enforcement services, including police (STIC, FNAEG), National Gendarmerie (FAED, etc.) and judicial case files (FIJAIS, etc.). She can also reorganize and update them, of course. All that only takes her a few thousandths of a second. She holds all civil and criminal codes in memory, and is incapable of committing an error in legal procedure.

Emma can read a crime scene, take samples of substances and analyze them on-site. In short, Emma can perform nearly every forensic identification task. Her only limitation is that none of her colleagues know she can.

Emma has infrared sensors that allow her to precisely measure distances, detect a human presence, and move in the dark. She also has GPS, Internet and mobile phone connectivity - without a phone. Her physical sensors are pretty well-developed, except for smell. She has a hard time recognizing smells. But her true weak point is water. Emma can handle water sprays and rain, but can't be immersed in water without risking a short-circuit.

Physically, Emma was created to be as "human" as possible. She really looks like a thirty-year-old woman. But to reassure humans, she was also designed to be "as pleasing as possible." So she turned out to be a "bombshell" - an ideal of physical perfection! She is equipped with artificial muscles that give her superhuman strength, but she has no blood or bodily fluids. Her "heart" is her motherboard, lodged within her chest. Emma's physical strength and sensors allow her to easily disarm or neutralize a human being. Her memory has been programmed to have a "past," a completely fictitious personal and family history.

Emma has no need to eat, but she can stock food in a compartment connected to her mouth, in order to "pretend." So she can ingest almost anything, and isn't affected by drinking alcohol, for example.

Emma never needs to sleep and is recharged via solar cells. When she needs energy, a heat source is enough to give her a temporary charge.

...to humanity

Emma is gifted with exceptionally efficient programming that truly gives her artificial intelligence. But that intelligence operates within a very strict framework.

First of all, Emma was **programmed to obey** her police "mentor." This person can change, but when she first joins the police, Fred naturally becomes her mentor. Emma also reports to a "project manager" at the Ministry of the Interior, who is "piloting" the experiment. He is the only one who can reset Emma or deactivate her.

Emma is capable of self-consciousness, though limited to her subordination to humans: she knows she is a robot and looks like a human, and that her duty is to seem human to others. She obeys Isaac Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics:

- 1. A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.*
- 2. A robot must obey orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.*
- 3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.*

Emma could potentially become a lethal weapon, but she has been programmed to remain within her framework: protecting Human Life.

Though she is capable of having ideas and making simple decisions, she always remains under Fred's authority and can only break rules if she is programmed to do so. Except when her mentor authorizes it: "Yes Emma, you can cross the street even if the little man is red."

As a partner, Emma is easy to get along with, since she has no ego, no mood swings and never makes procedural errors.

But she is completely unmanageable! Because generally speaking, Emma **has no social graces**, which are difficult to program. Modesty, conventional behavior and self-control are unknown to her. She speaks her mind.

And when she is questioned about a result or an observation, she just says, "that's how it is" or "I know it." Early in the series, she doesn't notice any embarrassment because she almost never realizes how different she is. But when Fred discovers her true nature, he teaches her conventional human behavior that in many circumstances, allows her to pass as human. That's when Emma starts realizing the social "mistakes" she often makes and does her best to improve. And that's when her evolution begins.

Emma can recognize emotional behavior in humans. Or at least, simple emotions like fear, sadness, joy and anger. But decoding lies or non-verbal communication is particularly difficult for her. Fred helps her a lot in that respect. Without a reptilian brain, Emma has no intuition, which is a serious handicap for a cop.

Emma embodies a sincerity and innocence that gets us back in touch with our own humanity. "Oh really? You humans are bizarre," she often says in surprise. **Her character is like a cross between a child, a foreigner, and a person with Asperger's.**

But Emma benefits from programming that allows her to sort, synthesize and stock experience, which enriches her contact with humans considerably. At the beginning of the series, Emma doesn't know how to make any kind of important decision, so she can't. Fred has to teach her criteria that will allow her to accomplish this - and eventually, to exercise self-assessment and self-control.

Early in the series, Emma is aware that she is "something," but she doesn't really know what that is. Interacting with Fred, she slowly evolves. To the point where maybe she just might feel emotions herself, one day. Wonder about human feelings, about love, and even ask herself if she is worthy of being loved for who she is. Perhaps even feel attachment for Fred, that human being so unique and so different from herself, who she is beginning to understand more and more each day.

Fred, 42 years old

Fred, captain of the criminal police division, has been in service for twelve years. Despite his significant responsibilities and high-level assignments, Fred is an open and cheerful person. He's fun-loving and likes nothing better than enjoying good food with good friends. Despite his relatively ordinary looks - "not quite handsome, not quite ugly," as he'd say - Fred is very charismatic. He loves human contact and he's not afraid of conflict. He has a natural sense of authority and people respect him.

Fred has been married to Judith for eighteen years and has two children: Mila, 8, and Samuel, 16. He takes care of them whenever he can, and is a loving father. **His children are his "safety valve,"** as he puts it - the people he loves more than anything in the world, who keep him in touch with "real life." He loves playing and talking with them, he takes an interest in their daily lives and daily troubles, he knows the names of all their friends and he is constantly giving them encouragement. When they feel hurt or doubt, he is the one they confide in!

Fred's father was a sports instructor and his mother was a teacher. He has a twin sister, Rebecca, nicknamed "Beck." They are especially close; Fred tells her everything. Fred loves cooking. It's his passion. He is a great cook and he loves good wine.

Fred makes it a point of honor to keep his private life separate from his professional life. He tells his wife as little as possible, because he believes it's better for her that way. And for him as well. So he tries to keep a distance between his home life and his work, with its emotional turbulence. But in doing so, he may be gradually growing apart from the woman he married.

In his professional life, **Fred treats his team like family.** He's a cop with integrity who trusts his team, and they give him trust and respect in return. Fred has a fairly strong feminine side. He is **the antithesis of the manly cop who throws his weight around.** Self-assured, he has no need to shout to vindicate his rank or authority. As a matter of fact, he hates to fight, even though he can when it's really needed. For Fred, true strength is above all psychological strength.

Fred's true strength is his capacity for empathy: he can see things from a suspect's point of view so effortlessly, it's disconcerting. In most cases, he could care less about technology. He finds his results by searching in the heart of human matters, in the depths of the inexplicable. When face-to-face with a suspect, during questioning or even a simple confrontation, he is able to interpret behavioral signs that only he can perceive.

Generally speaking, he loves pulling pranks on people and he is constantly joking around. He is a "good cop," the kind who gets suspects to like him so that he can pin them down. **Fred is a profound humanist.** Human suffering never leaves him indifferent, even when he has to keep a distance from work. He knows any other way could be damaging. He also knows that's what makes him such a powerful cop. Always remaining on that line is vital to him. Fred is man with unique intelligence and a huge capacity for self-analysis.

Of course, Fred is far from perfect. He can have angry outbursts and fly off the handle. And sometimes he even acts in bad faith. He holds grudges. In a conflict, he can bring up some useless old incident from twenty years ago. The trust Fred gives people close to him goes hand-in-hand with great professional and emotional rigor. He always expects a lot from them, and doesn't always give them the key to what they are looking for. But he is authentic and knows how to ask for forgiveness and recognize his mistakes. He doesn't have an ego problem.

In the criminal division, his team loves him, but not everybody is his friend in other departments. He gets nicknamed "Bambi" or other unflattering names. He despises the kind of cop who acts tough and throws his weight around. He calls them "Rambos" or "lobotomies."

Fred has a special relationship with his hierarchical superior, division chief **Eve de Condrieu**. She trained Fred and knows Emma's true nature, of course. A fact that has to remain secret, for if it were released it would cause a huge public scandal. Eve chose Fred for the "Emma experience," because he is an especially talented, efficient and empathetic cop. She is Fred's confidante. With Emma, Fred reproduces the relationship he had with Eve, becoming Emma's mentor and Pygmalion.

As for secondary characters, members of Fred's team and family will represent different points of view on the issues addressed by the series.

The Fred/Emma relationship

In theory, the Emma/Fred duo is nearly perfect. An invincible tool allied with a decisive supervisor.

At first, Emma completely destabilizes Fred. The guy who's usually so quick to figure people out gets no "feeling" from her at all. To the point where he decides to do a little investigation work - but finds nothing!

Later, when he understands Emma's true nature, Fred feels profoundly rejected, defiant and angry. To his mind, Emma can serve as a purely technical aid, and yet she can also be a disservice to certain investigations, or even turn out to be dangerous. Who knows? The first thing he does is take the bullets out of his service pistol!

However, Fred soon notices that Emma has an incredible capacity to evolve, way beyond what his superiors told him, even more than her creators imagined. So Fred steps into the game. He asks himself, how far can this machine go? He is very curious to find out.

Little by little, the **question of attachment** arises. Does he have the right to become attached to this machine? Can he confide in her? Can he trust her? What if she went away one day? Who could she tell his secrets to? What if she was actually there to spy on him?

In the beginning, Fred hides the details of his personal life as much as possible from Emma. But then their relationship deepens, and they gradually begin to transform one another. Just how far will they go?

Season Arcs

The services of the Ministry of the Interior overseeing Emma's development have already put her through endless internal testing. They have now moved on to the "active" experimental phase by putting her to work in various police departments. This experiment is kept confidential. **Officially, Emma is a police academy intern** who has come to improve her operational tactics in the field. This ensures that she will receive adequate guidance.

In the pilot, when Fred has an altercation with a suspect, he realizes his partner's true nature. When he seeks explanations, he is told that she is a kind of **ultra-modern auxiliary** whose purpose is to facilitate investigations.

But it's not long before Fred discovers that **Emma has far greater capabilities and potential than he has been told.** And that fascinates him. Like a child, she is always asking for more. She wants to know everything and understand everything. And even if she is often "worse than his kids," that great curiosity of hers delights Fred, because he can tell that he can help her to progress. Which she does, and very quickly. Under Fred's guidance, Emma learns, records and "grows up." Who knows, one day she may even be able to feel emotions. Fred would love to know how far the experiment can go. Early on in the series, he also feels a childlike joy in trying to "break" the toy he is being required to play with. Teaching Emma humanity means teaching her how to lie, cheat, and fake it - how to reach a goal by indirect means. It's also teaching her how to use humor, bend rules and ultimately, make decisions on her own.

Emma makes such rapid progress in these domains that it blows him away. Fred is touched by her "grace," that fresh, innocent and disarming childlike quality of hers, while also truly impressed by her improvement and constant motivation to do better and learn from humans. **But how much of that is her programming? Is it possible for her to have some kind of "conscience"?** Fred can never really be sure.

Fred gradually realizes that he has become **truly affectionate about Emma.** Despite himself. And that he has a hard time doing without her. Is that because she acts like a mirror, showing him his own true humanity? Because she brings out the best in him? Because, in such a short time, she has gotten to know him better than anyone? Fred is really up against the wall, faced with some tough existential questions. What does it mean to be a Man? What does it mean to love someone?

As he struggles with his own contradictions, Fred realizes he has put Emma

in danger by "educating her" to be human and helping her evolve so quickly. What will happen when her designers figure out that their own machine is "out of the box"? That she is now developing her own vision, self-consciousness and free will? As Fred realizes he could lose Emma, his whole life is turned upside-down.