

ANNE OF GREEN GABLES
by Peter DeLaurier

ADAPTED FROM THE NOVEL
BY LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY

ACT I

Scene 1

(Music. June. Early evening, three locations. Bright River train station. Lights up on ANNE sitting expectantly on a bench clutching her carpetbag. Then, lights up on MARILLA in the kitchen at Green Gables setting the table and placing a third chair. She exits. Lights down on kitchen. Distant train whistle and sound of horse and buggy approaching. Lights up on MATTHEW driving the buggy. He tips his hat shyly to a lady he passes. He arrives at the station. Music out.)

MATTHEW. Whoa.

(Buggy stops. Mare whinnies. MATTHEW speaks to the mare.)

Oh, just stay quiet now.

(Pats mare. Notices ANNE waiting on the platform. She watches him.)

Oh.

(MOODY enters. MATTHEW tries to be invisible as he slips past ANNE to approach him.)

Well, now. Hello Moody. Is your father here?

MOODY. No, sir, Mr. Cuthbert. He left me to close up.

MATTHEW. Will the 5:30 train from Charlottetown be along soon?

MOODY. That was the 6:00 just left. But there was a passenger on the 5:30 dropped off for you.

MATTHEW. Ah.

MOODY. She's sitting out there on the bench.

MATTHEW. She?

MOODY. Yes, sir. *(Imitating.)* "There's more scope for imagination there."

MATTHEW. I'm not expecting a girl. It's a boy I've come for.

MOODY. Guess there's some mistake. Mrs. Spencer came off the train with that girl. Said you and your sister would be along for her presently.

MATTHEW. But...

MOODY. Sorry, Mr. Cuthbert. She's the only orphan we've got.

MATTHEW. I don't understand.

MOODY. My Dad says I've got to close up. *(He begins to exit.)* Maybe you should ask the girl. *(He is gone.)*

MATTHEW. Oh... *(Realizing MOODY is gone.)* Oh... *("I wish Marilla was here.")*

(He walks slowly toward ANNE who has been watching him all the time. As he gets close, she rises briskly and extends her hand to him.)

ANNE. I suppose you are Mr. Matthew Cuthbert of Green Gables?

(She waits just half a beat, then relaxes her hand but still keeps it available.)

I'm very glad to see you. I was beginning to be afraid you weren't coming for me and I was just starting to imagine all the things that might have happened to prevent you. I had made up my mind that if you couldn't come for me tonight I'd stay all night in that big wild cherry tree down the track. I wouldn't be a bit afraid.

(She makes her hand available to be taken again, MATTHEW shakes her hand, awkwardly.)

MATTHEW. Sorry I was late. The buggy is just over here. Give me your bag.

ANNE. Oh, I can carry it. It isn't heavy. I've got all my worldly goods in it, but it isn't heavy.

(They climb into the buggy.)

Mrs. Spencer said it was an eight-mile drive. *(Again she waits for him for half a beat.)* Mrs. Spencer said probably Miss Cuthbert would come with you.

MATTHEW. Marilla's back home getting things ready for the... Oh...

ANNE. Oh.

(Waits for more. None is forthcoming. MATTHEW clicks to the mare and they drive off at a trot. As they drive, the lights play over them with occasional, varied shapes of tree shadows in the early evening light.)

Oh, Mr. Cuthbert! It's wonderful that I'm going to live with you and your sister and belong to you.

(MATTHEW is discomfited.)

I've never belonged to anybody—not really. I don't suppose you ever were an orphan in an asylum. But it's worse than anything you could imagine.

(MATTHEW looks over at her.)

Mrs. Spencer said it was wicked of me to talk like that. It's so easy to be wicked without knowing it, isn't it?

(MATTHEW looks over at her.)

There is so little scope for the imagination in an asylum. I used to lie awake at nights and try to imagine. I guess that's why I'm so thin—I am dreadful thin, ain't I? *(Little joke.)* There isn't a pick on my bones.

(MATTHEW looks over at her, smiles a little.)

I do love to imagine I'm nice and plump, with dimples in my elbows. *(She looks about.)* Oh, Prince Edward Island is the bloomiest place! I just love it already. I'm so glad I'm going to live here. But those red roads are so funny. I asked Mrs. Spencer what made the roads red and she said she didn't know and for pity's sake not to ask her any more questions. She said I must have asked her a thousand already. But how are you going to find out about things if you don't ask questions? And what does make the roads red?

MATTHEW. Well now, I dunno. I never thought about it.

ANNE. Isn't it splendid to think of all the things there are to find out about? But am I talking too much? People are always telling me I do. Would you rather I didn't talk? If you say so I'll stop. I can stop when I make up my mind to it, although it is difficult.

MATTHEW. Oh, well... No. You can talk as much as you like. I don't mind.

ANNE. Oh, I'm so glad. I know you and I are going to get along fine.

(She takes his arm. He is surprised that he enjoys it. They drive for just a moment in silence quietly taking one another in.)

Just now I feel pretty near perfectly happy. I can't feel exactly perfectly happy because—well, what color would you call this?

(She sticks one of her braids in front of MATTHEW's face.)

MATTHEW. Well... It's red, ain't it?

ANNE. *(Sighing heavily and letting the braid drop.)* Yes, it's red. Now you see why I can't be perfectly happy. Nobody could who has red hair. I can imagine away the other things—the freckles and the green eyes and my skinniness. But I cannot imagine that red hair away. It will be my lifelong sorrow.

(MATTHEW considers her sorrow. They turn a corner. Music. Lights play across them the pattern of a hundred thousand apple blossoms.)

Oh, Mr. Cuthbert! Oh, Mr. Cuthbert!! Oh, Mr. Cuthbert!!!

(ANNE is silenced by their beauty. For a beat we simply hear the mare's hoof beats, the evening birds and watch ANNE watch the splendor of spring in her new home. MATTHEW shyly watches her take it in. ANNE whispers as she comes out of her reverie.)

Oh, Mr. Cuthbert. What is this place?

MATTHEW. What do you mean?

ANNE. This...this white place!

MATTHEW. Now, you must mean the Avenue. Crazy fella planted all these apple trees along the road years ago. It is a kind of pretty place, though.

ANNE. Pretty? Oh, *beautiful* doesn't even go far enough. Oh, it's wonderful—wonderful. It's the first thing I ever saw that couldn't be improved upon by imagination. It just satisfies me here.

(She puts a hand on her heart. Music out. The lights return to normal.)

"The Avenue." *(Makes a face.)* No, I shall always call it the "White Way of Delight." *(Puts hand on her heart as before.)* I've never had a home.

(MATTHEW looks at her.)

Not really, since I can remember. Oh, isn't that pretty!

MATTHEW. That's Barry's pond.

ANNE. Oh, I don't like that name either. I shall call it—let me see—

(She shivers. MATTHEW reacts.)

Oooh! "The Lake of Shining Waters." When I hit on a name that suits exactly it gives me a thrill. Do things ever give you a thrill?

MATTHEW. Hmmm. Well now, yes. It always kind of gives me a thrill like that to see them ugly white grubs that spade up in the cucumber beds. *(Shivers like she did.)* Oooh! I hate the look of them.

ANNE. Oh, I don't think that can be exactly the same kind of a thrill. Why do other people call it Barry's pond?

MATTHEW. I reckon because Mr. Barry lives up there in that house.

ANNE. Oh. Does Mr. Barry have any little girls? Well, not so very little either—about my size.

MATTHEW. He's got one about twelve. Her name is Diana.

ANNE. Oh! What a perfectly lovely name!

MATTHEW. Well now, I dunno.

ANNE. *(She stands up and waves back.)* Good night, dear Lake of Shining Waters.

MATTHEW. We're pretty near home now. That's Green Gables over—

ANNE. (*Hiding her eyes from his pointing.*) Oh, don't tell me. Let me guess. I'm sure I'll guess right.

(*She opens them and looks around at several possible houses. Picks one.*)

That's it, isn't it?

MATTHEW. (*Delighted.*) Well now, you've guessed it!

ANNE. Just as soon as I saw it I felt it was home.

(*They trot on. She leans her head on MATTHEW's shoulder. With growing unease, he watches her in her dream. They turn into the yard.*)

MATTHEW. Whoa.

(*Buggy stops. Mare whinnies.*)

Well... Here we are.

(*Music tag. They get out. ANNE regards the house, then takes her carpetbag and follows him into the kitchen. Sharp sound—tea kettle, maybe? —and light shift exterior to interior as MARILLA enters to meet them and stops short in amazement.*)

Scene 2

MARILLA. Matthew Cuthbert, who's that? Where's the boy?

MATTHEW. There wasn't any boy. There was only...her.

MARILLA. There *must* have been a boy! We sent word to Mrs. Spencer to bring a boy.

MATTHEW. Well, she didn't. She brought *her*. I had to bring her home, Marilla, no matter where the mistake had come in.

MARILLA. Well, this is a pretty piece of business!

(*They both turn to look at ANNE who has been watching them through this. She suddenly drops her carpetbag.*)

ANNE. You don't want me! You don't want me because I'm not a boy! Oh, I should have known. Nobody ever did want me.

(*She falls on the floor, lies across a rug and cries.*)

MARILLA. Well, there's no need to cry so about it.

ANNE. Yes, there *is* need! Oh, this is the most *tragical* thing that ever happened to me!

MARILLA. Well, don't cry any more. We're not going to turn you out-of-doors tonight. You'll have to stay here until we investigate this affair. What's your name?

(*ANNE gets to her knees.*)

ANNE. Could you please call me Cordelia?

MARILLA. *Call* you Cordelia? Is that your name?

ANNE. No-o-o, it's not exactly my name, but I would love to be called Cordelia.

MARILLA. I don't know what on earth you mean. If Cordelia isn't your name, what is?

ANNE. Anne Shirley. Oh, but, please call me Cordelia. It can't matter much to you what you call me if I'm only going to be here a little while.

MARILLA. Fiddlesticks! Anne is a real good plain sensible name.

ANNE. (*Disappointed. Standing and moving to MARILLA.*) Ohhh. If you have to call me Anne please call me Anne spelled with an E.

MARILLA. What difference does it make how it's spelled?

ANNE. Oh, it makes *such* a difference. It looks so much nicer. If you won't call me Cordelia, please, *please* call me Anne with an E.

MARILLA. Very well, then, Anne with an E, can you tell us how this mistake happened? Were there no boys at the asylum?

ANNE. Oh, yes. But Mrs. Spencer said *distinctly* that you wanted a girl about twelve years old. I couldn't sleep all last night for joy. (*To MATTHEW.*) Oh, why didn't you leave me at the station? If I hadn't

seen the White Way of Delight and the Lake of Shining Waters it wouldn't be so hard.

MARILLA. What on earth is she talking about?

MATTHEW. She's... Well...just some conversation we had on the road.

(He moves to the door.)

ANNE. If I was very beautiful and had nut-brown hair would you keep me?

MARILLA. No. We want a boy to help Matthew on the farm. A girl would be of no use to us. Take off your hat, now, and sit down to tea.

ANNE. Oh, I can't eat anything. I'm in the depths of despair.

MARILLA. What in the world?

ANNE. A lump comes right up in your throat and you can't swallow anything, not even if it was a chocolate caramel.

MARILLA. A what?

ANNE. I had a chocolate caramel once two years ago and it was simply delicious. I hope you won't be offended because I can't eat. Everything smells very nice.

MATTHEW. I guess she's tired. Best put her to bed.

(He exits to unhitch the buggy. MARILLA calls after him.)

MARILLA. Yes, but where. I got the pallet in the pantry ready for the boy and that won't do. And the spare room is not for... Ohhhh! Well, come along. The east gable room is clean.

(MARILLA takes a candle and Anne's bag. ANNE grabs her hat. They move to Anne's bedroom. MARILLA lights the candle.)

MARILLA. I suppose you have a nightgown?

ANNE. *(Nods.)* Mmmmm.

MARILLA. Well, undress as quick as you can and go to bed.

ANNE. I will.

MARILLA. *(Exiting.)* Good night.

ANNE. *(Calling after her.)* How can you call it a good night when you know it must be the very worst night I've ever had?

(MARILLA returns to the kitchen as MATTHEW comes in from outside. They face each other from their respective doors. ANNE sniffs as she looks about her room.)

MARILLA. Well, this is a pretty kettle of fish. This is what comes of sending word instead of going ourselves. One of us will have to drive over and see Mrs. Spencer tomorrow, that's certain. This girl will have to be sent back to the asylum.

MATTHEW. I suppose so.

MARILLA. You suppose so! Don't you know it?

MATTHEW. Well now, it's kind of a pity to send her back when she's so set on staying here.

MARILLA. Matthew Cuthbert, you don't mean to say you think we ought to keep her!

MATTHEW. Well, now, no, I suppose...we could hardly be expected to keep her.

MARILLA. *(She sits and pours tea.)* I should say not. What good would she be to us?

MATTHEW. *(After a beat.)* We might be some good to her.

MARILLA. I believe that child has bewitched you! I can see as plain as plain that you want to keep her.

MATTHEW. She could maybe be some comfort and companionship for you.

MARILLA. *(Bristling.)* I'm not suffering for companionship, thank you. It's you needs the help, not me.

MATTHEW. I could hire a French boy to help me.

MARILLA. *I'm not going to keep her!*

(MATTHEW looks at her intently for a moment.)

MARILLA. What?

(He looks.)

What, Matthew?

(He starts for the door.)

MARILLA. Aren't you having your tea? ...Matthew?

(He exits.)

Oohhh!

(ANNE cries in her room and blows out her candle. Lights out. Music tag to the next scene.)

Scene 3

(Lights up. Kitchen, the next morning. Birds singing. MARILLA is watching as ANNE finishes up the dishes. Anne's things are there.)

MARILLA. Well, you've washed those dishes right enough, I'll give you that.

ANNE. Thank you. The world doesn't seem such a howling wilderness as it did last night. I'm glad it's not rainy today because it's easier to be cheerful and bear up under affliction on a sunshiny day. I do feel that I have a good deal to bear up under. But I do like rainy mornings real well, too.

MARILLA. Oh, for pity's sake, hold your tongue, now. You talk entirely too much for a little girl.

(MATTHEW enters. ANNE begins to greet him, then holds her tongue. They catch eyes and nod. MARILLA watches them. MATTHEW looks to her.)

MARILLA. I suppose I can have the mare and buggy this morning?

(MATTHEW nods, barely perceptibly and looks to ANNE.)

I'm going to take Anne over to Mrs. Spencer's and settle this thing. She'll probably make arrangements to send her back to Nova Scotia.

(She removes Anne's chair. MATTHEW looks at her, then at ANNE, then back at MARILLA.)

What? Matthew?

(He shakes head and exits to the barn.)

There is nothing more aggravating than a man who won't talk back.

ANNE. Oh, I think he's lovely. He didn't mind how much I talked. I felt he was a kindred spirit as soon as I saw him.

MARILLA. You're both odd enough, if that's what you mean.

(Gets things ready to go, then takes knitting from her bag and works.)

Now sit here 'til Matthew comes. And hold your tongue!

(ANNE sits.)

Don't you have any piecework to do? Or mending?

(ANNE begins to speak, thinks better and shakes her head. MARILLA shudders a little.)

Idle hands!

(ANNE watches her. Looks about. Makes as if to speak. Thinks better. MARILLA has seen all this and cuts her off before she can speak.)

Now, since you're obviously bent on talking, you might as well talk to some purpose. Tell me what you know about yourself.

ANNE. *(A little reluctant.)* Oh. Oh, couldn't I please tell you what I imagine about myself?

MARILLA. No, I don't want any more of your imaginings. Just you stick to bald facts. Where were you born and how old are you?

ANNE. Oh, well. *(Sighs and girds herself for telling this.)* I was twelve in March. And I was born in Bolingbroke, Nova Scotia. My parents

were Walter and Bertha Shirley, and they were both teachers in the Bolingbroke High School. Aren't Walter and Bertha lovely names?

MARILLA. I guess it doesn't matter what a person's name is as long as he behaves himself.

ANNE. Well, I don't know. I read in a book once that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but... *(She notices MARILLA glaring at her. She goes on.)* Well, when my mother married my father she gave up teaching, of course. Mrs. Thomas—she cleaned for them sometimes—she said my parents were as poor as church mice and that I was the homeliest baby she ever saw, but my mother thought I was perfectly beautiful. She died of fever when I was just three months old. I do wish she'd lived long enough for me to remember calling her mother.

(She pauses and looks down. MARILLA glances over at her. ANNE goes on quickly.)

Father died four days afterwards from fever too. That was when I first got to be an orphan and nobody knew what to do with me. Finally, Mrs. Thomas, the scrub woman, said she'd take me. So I lived with her and her drunken husband until I was eight years old. Soon as I could walk I helped look after the children—there were four of them younger than me—and I can tell you they took a lot of looking after. Then Mr. Thomas got killed falling under a train. So, Mrs. Hammond from up the river came down and said she'd take me, seeing I had got to be so handy with children. Mrs. Hammond had eight children. Now, I like babies, in moderation, but twins three times in succession is *too much*. I told Mrs. Hammond so firmly, when the last pair came.

MARILLA. I should think so!

ANNE. I lived with Mrs. Hammond over four years, until Mr. Hammond died. I had to go to the asylum, because nobody would take me. And I was there four months until Mrs. Spencer came.

(She shudders a little, glad to be done with that story.)

MARILLA. Those women—Mrs. Thomas and Mrs. Hammond—did they—were they good to you?

ANNE. *(Near tears, embarrassed, ashamed.)* O-o-o-h. I feel sure they meant to be good to me.

(ANNE looks down and then away. MARILLA watches her. ANNE breaks and runs to the window.)

Oh! Isn't it wonderful!

MARILLA. What?

ANNE. That enormous cherry tree. I saw a corner of her from my window. I've named her The Snow Queen.

(Offstage sound of mare and buggy arriving and stopping.)

She's radiantly lovely! She blooms as if she really meant it!

(They collect their things to leave. MATTHEW enters, looks at ANNE.)

MARILLA. Well?

(MATTHEW humphs and moves to the other door.)

I'll be home in time to milk the cows.

MATTHEW. *(Looks at ANNE, then to MARILLA.)* Little Jerry Buote from down the Creek was here this morning. I told him I guessed I'd hire him for the summer.

(He exits.)

MARILLA. Ohhh!

(They move to the door.)

ANNE. How far is it to Mrs. Spencer's place, please?

MARILLA. 'Bout 10 miles, I'd guess.

ANNE. Good. I don't want to get there. Somehow, it will seem like the end of everything.

(They walk out the door. Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 4

(Lights up. Noon. Mrs. Spencer's parlor. Sound of babies crying and young children shouting off-stage and being hushed by MRS. SPENCER. She calls to them over the din from off stage.)

MRS. SPENCER. I'm so sorry about the noise, Miss Cuthbert. *(She enters.)* And, of course, I'm dreadful sorry about the mistake. Richard's daughter Nancy is a terrible flighty thing; she said particularly that you wanted a girl.

(MARILLA and ANNE look at one another overwhelmed by the noise.)

But I don't think you'll have to send her back. Mrs. Peter Blewett was complaining this morning that what she really needs is a little girl like Anne to help her. *(Screaming off—"MOTHER!!" She starts off.)* Excuse me.

MARILLA. Anne, go sit in the buggy.

(ANNE exits.)

MRS. SPENCER. She's got *such* a large family, you know, and she keeps losing the girls she hires to help.

(MARILLA gets up and looks about, needing to escape. Lights. Music tag. MARILLA carries Anne's bag into.)

Scene 5

(Kitchen at Green Gables, early evening. MATTHEW enters behind MARILLA, listening to her report.)

MATTHEW. Peter Blewett's wife?! I wouldn't give a dog I liked to that woman.

MARILLA. I don't much fancy her style myself, but it's that or keep her ourselves.

MATTHEW. Yes... Well...

MARILLA. I saw you prowling the lane as we drove up. I saw you beaming like an idiot when you saw she was with me. I've been thinking over the idea.

MATTHEW. And...

MARILLA. And nothing. I said I've been thinking.

MATTHEW. Hmmmph.

(He makes to leave. As MARILLA crosses, MATTHEW sneaks back in to listen. ANNE is in her room starting to undress. MARILLA enters.)

ANNE. Oh, Miss Cuthbert, did I really hear you say you're thinking you might let me stay at Green Gables?

MARILLA. *(Helping ANNE into her nightgown.)* Yes, you did hear me say *just that* and no more. We might decide to let Mrs. Blewett take you. It's obvious she needs you. I certainly don't. Now, Anne, last night you threw your clothes all about the floor. I haven't any use at all for little girls who aren't neat.

ANNE. I was so harrowed up in my mind last night. I'll fold them nicely tonight.

MARILLA. You'll have to remember a little better if we decide to let you stay here. You can say your prayers now.

ANNE. I never say prayers.

MARILLA. Why, Anne, don't you know that it's a terrible wicked thing not to say your prayers every night? I'm afraid God must think you are a very bad little girl.

ANNE. You'd find it easier to be bad than good if you had red hair. Mrs. Thomas told me that God made my hair red *on purpose*, and I've never cared about Him since.

MARILLA. Anne! You must say your prayers every night while you are under my roof.

ANNE. Why, of course I will. I'll do anything you want if only you'll keep me. But you'll have to tell me what to say just for this once.

MARILLA. Hmm. Well, then. You must kneel down.

ANNE. *(Kneeling.)* Why must people kneel down to pray? If I really wanted to pray I think I'd go out into a great big field all alone and I'd look up—up—up—into that lovely blue sky...

MARILLA. Anne.

ANNE. What must I say?

MARILLA. Well. You should... Umm... "Now I lay me down to..." Oh...you're old enough to pray for yourself, Anne. Just thank God for your blessings and ask Him humbly for the things you want.

ANNE. *(Burying her face in MARILLA's lap.)* Well, I'll do my best. Gracious heavenly Father—that's the way the ministers say it in church—Gracious heavenly Father, I thank Thee for the White Way of Delight and the Lake of Shining Waters and the Snow Queen. I really am extremely grateful for them. And that's all the blessings I can think of just now to thank Thee for. As for the things I want, it would take a great deal of time to name them all so I will only mention the two most important. Please, please let me stay at Green Gables; and please let me be good looking when I grow up. I remain, Yours respectfully, Anne Shirley. There, did I do all right?

MARILLA. *(Shocked, but struggling to avoid laughing out loud.)* That'll do for now. We'll teach you a proper one tomorrow. Now you get yourself to bed and mind you hang up those clothes.

(She crosses back toward the kitchen. ANNE runs to the door and calls after her.)

ANNE. Oh I just remembered. I should have said, "Amen" not "yours respectfully," shouldn't I? Do you suppose it will make any difference?

MARILLA. No, I...I don't suppose it will. Go to bed now. Good night.

ANNE. I will. And it is a good night!

(ANNE exits, changing. MATTHEW hears MARILLA coming and retreats to sit. She enters the kitchen.)

MARILLA. Matthew Cuthbert, it's about time somebody adopted that child and taught her something. She's next door to a perfect heathen. It seems sort of a duty. I dare say I'll make a terrible mess of it. But I'll do my best.

(MATTHEW jumps up, beaming. She cuts him off before he can speak.)

Mind, you're not to go interfering with my methods. Maybe an old maid doesn't know much about bringing up a child, but I guess she

knows more than an old bachelor. When I fail, it'll be time enough to put your oar in.

(MATTHEW replaces Anne's chair at the table and smiles. Lights. Music. MATTHEW exits.)

Scene 6

(Lights up. Next day, kitchen. ANNE and MARILLA are sewing piecework in silence. They are watching each other carefully without being obvious about it. ANNE's tension is building, she suddenly stops and turns to MARILLA, trembling.)

ANNE. Please, Miss Cuthbert...

MARILLA. *(Cutting her off.)* I suppose I might as well tell you. Matthew and I have decided to keep you—that is, if you will try to be a good little girl and show yourself grateful. Why, child, whatever is the matter?

ANNE. *(From the moment MARILLA said "...keep you" she has been saying "Oh, oh, oh." She jumps up and dances for joy. She wants to hug MARILLA and knows she can't.)* Oh. Oh. *(A discovery.)* I'm crying. I can't think why. Oh. Oh. I'm so happy! Why am I crying?

MARILLA. I suppose it's because you're all excited and worked up. Sit down on that chair and try to calm yourself.

(ANNE sits.)

ANNE. What am I to call you? I'd love to call you Aunt Marilla. It would make me feel as if I really belonged to you. Can't I?

MARILLA. No. You'll call me just plain Marilla. I'm not your aunt and I don't believe in calling people names that don't belong to them.

ANNE. But we could imagine you were my aunt.

MARILLA. I couldn't.

ANNE. Don't you ever imagine things are different from what they really are?

MARILLA. No.

ANNE. Oh! Oh, Miss Cuth—Marilla, how much you miss!

MARILLA. When the Lord puts us in certain circumstances He doesn't mean for us to imagine them away. And that reminds me. *(She picks up a card and hands it to ANNE.)* This is The Lord's Prayer. You'll devote your spare time today to learning it off by heart. There's to be no more of such praying as I heard last night.

ANNE. *(She looks at the card.)* Oh! I like this. I've heard it before at the asylum Sunday school. Oh, I'm so glad you thought of making me learn this, Miss...um...Marilla.

MARILLA. Well, just learn it now and hold your tongue.

(ANNE looks at the prayer for a moment, then.)

ANNE. Marilla, do you think that I shall ever have a bosom friend in Avonlea?

MARILLA. A what kind of friend?

ANNE. A bosom friend—a really kindred spirit to whom I can confide my inmost soul. I've dreamed of meeting her all my life. Do you think it's possible?

MARILLA. Well, I don't know. Diana Barry is about your age. You'll have to behave yourself, though. Mrs. Barry won't let Diana play with any little girl who isn't nice and good.

ANNE. Oh. *(Taking that in very gravely.)* What is Diana like? Is she pretty? Her hair isn't red, is it?

MARILLA. It seems impossible for you to stop talking if you've got anybody to listen to you. So go up to your room and learn that prayer.

(MARILLA exits. ANNE crosses to her room mumbling "for thine is the kingdom," etc. In the room she drops dramatically into a hard backed chair.)

ANNE. There. I know this prayer. Now I can imagine! This is a couch all heaped with gorgeous silken cushions, and I am reclining gracefully on it. I can see my reflection in that splendid big mirror hanging on the wall. My name is Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald—my skin is ivory and my hair is as black as midnight. No, it isn't—I can't make that seem real.

(She goes up to the little mirror.)

You're only Anne of Green Gables. But it's a million times nicer to be Anne of Green Gables than Anne of nowhere in particular.

(She runs to the window. Music builds under to the end.)

Oh, that must be Diana's house way over there. *(Calling.)* Hello, Diana! I hope you'll be my bosom friend! *(To no one in particular.)* HELLO! I'm Anne of Green Gables!

(Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 7

(Lights up. One week later, early evening, MARILLA busy in the kitchen. MRS. LYNDE knocks.)

MRS. LYNDE. Marilla?

MARILLA. Rachel. Come in.

MRS. LYNDE. *(Entering the kitchen.)* Well, Marilla, I'll just tell you plain that I think you're doing a mighty foolish thing—a risky thing, that's what.

MARILLA. Lovely evening, Rachel. Glad you could drop by.

MRS. LYNDE. Bringing a strange child into your house.

MARILLA. I will admit I've had some qualms myself.

MRS. LYNDE. Couldn't you have just sent her back?

MARILLA. Well, Rachel, I suppose we could, but Matthew took a fancy to her. And she's a real bright little thing. It's only a week now, but the house seems a different place already.

MRS. LYNDE. It's a great responsibility you've taken on yourself—and no experience with children. But I don't want to discourage you I'm sure, Marilla.

MARILLA. I'm not feeling very discouraged, Rachel. Now, I don't suppose you really came over just to see me. *(Calls out door.)* Anne!

ANNE. *(Running in breathless and red faced.)* Yes, Marilla?

MRS. LYNDE. Well, they didn't pick you for your looks. She's terrible skinny, Marilla. *(Sits regally.)* Come here, child, and let me have

a look at you. Lawful heart, did you ever see such freckles? And hair as red as carrots! Come here, child, I say.

ANNE. *(Leaping across the floor to stand right in front of MRS. LYNDE. She stamps her foot.)* I hate you! I hate you—I hate you—I hate you! How dare you call me skinny and ugly? How dare you say I'm freckled and redheaded? You are a rude, impolite, unfeeling woman!

MARILLA. Anne!

ANNE. How would you like to have such things said about you? How would you like to be told that you are fat and clumsy and... and don't have a spark of imagination in you?

MRS. LYNDE. Did anybody ever see such a temper!

MARILLA. Anne! Go to your room and stay there until I come up.

(ANNE runs crying out of the room, throws herself on her bed.)

MRS. LYNDE. Well, I don't envy you your job bringing that up, Marilla.

MARILLA. You shouldn't have twitted her about her looks, Rachel.

MRS. LYNDE. Marilla Cuthbert, you don't mean to say...

MARILLA. No, I'm not trying to excuse her. She's been very naughty and I'll give her a good talking to. But we must make allowances—she's never been taught what is right. And you were too hard on her, Rachel.

MRS. LYNDE. Well! I see that I'll have to be very careful what I say after this, Marilla, since the fine feelings of orphans, brought from goodness knows where, have to be considered before anything else. If you'll take my advice—which I suppose you won't do—you'll give her that "talking to" with a fair-sized birch switch.

(She sweeps out as grandly as she can. MARILLA watches her go. Turns back toward Anne's room. Distressed and confused, she reluctantly picks up a wooden spoon, tests its efficacy on her hand and hides it behind her back. She crosses into Anne's room.)

MARILLA. Well, you made a fine exhibition of yourself. I don't say that Mrs. Lynde was... exactly right. She's much too outspoken. But that's no excuse. She...she was a stranger...and an older person...and my visitor. You were rude and saucy and...and

(She goes for the spoon, stops. ANNE is unaware of this struggle.)

And, you must go to her and tell her you are very sorry for your bad temper and ask her to forgive you.

ANNE. Oh, I can never do that. You can punish me in any way you like, Marilla. You can shut me up in a dark, damp dungeon inhabited by snakes and toads and feed me only on bread and water. But I cannot ask Mrs. Lynde to forgive me.

MARILLA. We're not in the habit of shutting people up in dark, damp dungeons. But apologize to Mrs. Lynde you must and shall and you'll stay here in your room until you're ready to do it.

ANNE. I shall have to stay here forever then.

MARILLA. You'll have the night to think over your conduct and come to a better frame of mind.

(Exit. Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 8

(Lights up. The next evening, ANNE is still on her bed. MATTHEW is pretending to sleep. He watches MARILLA go out the kitchen door with a pail, then he crosses quietly to Anne's door. He taps gently and whispers.)

MATTHEW. Anne. *(He opens the door and peeks in.)* How are you making it?

ANNE. Pretty well. I imagine a good deal.

MATTHEW. Marilla's a dreadful determined woman—dreadful determined. Don't you think you'd better do it and have it over with?

ANNE. Do you mean apologize to Mrs. Lynde?

MATTHEW. Just smooth it over so to speak.

ANNE. I suppose I could do it for you—if you really want me to—

MATTHEW. It's been terrible lonesome downstairs all day without you. Just go and smooth things over—that's a good girl.

ANNE. It would be true to say I am sorry *now*. All right, I'll tell Marilla that I've repented.

MATTHEW. (*Beginning to exit:*) That's right—that's right, Anne. But don't tell Marilla I said anything about it.

(*He is heading for the kitchen, she goes to the door and whispers after him.*)

ANNE. Wild horses won't drag the secret from me. (*A beat. Whispers loudly:*) Matthew?

MATTHEW. (*Trying to get quietly back to his chair before MARILLA comes back. Whispers:*) Yes?

ANNE. How would wild horses drag a secret from a person anyhow?

MATTHEW. Well...I just don't know.

(*He gets to the chair just as MARILLA comes back into the kitchen and puts the pail back. ANNE hears her and calls quietly from the stairs.*)

ANNE. Marilla.

MARILLA. Well?

ANNE. I'm sorry I lost my temper and said rude things, and I'm willing to go and tell Mrs. Lynde so.

MARILLA. Very well. (*She gets her shawl and hat.*) Come along then. We'll go over right now.

ANNE. (*Entering the kitchen:*) Oh, could we wait for five minutes, please?

MARILLA. Whatever for?

ANNE. (*She floats toward the door in a reverie.*) I'm imagining out what I must say to Mrs. Lynde.

MARILLA. (*Pushing ANNE out:*) Ummmhhl!

(*Lights. Music tag.*)

Scene 9

(*Mrs. Lynde's garden. MARILLA and ANNE cross to her.*)

MARILLA. Rachel?

MRS. LYNDE. Yes?

MARILLA. Anne has something to tell you.

MRS. LYNDE. Very well. (*To ANNE:*) Well?

(*ANNE floats in, still in her reverie of planning her apology. MARILLA is unsure how this is going to go. ANNE doesn't look sufficiently penitent. She catches ANNE's eye and motions her to go ahead. ANNE immediately hangs her head and throws herself on her knees at MRS. LYNDE's feet. The women are astonished. This apology is not false in any way. It is romantic. It is hugely honest—larger than life.*)

ANNE. Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I am so extremely sorry. I have behaved terribly to you—and I've disgraced the dear friends, Matthew and Marilla, who have let me stay at Green Gables even though I'm not a boy. It was very wicked of me to fly into a temper because you told me the truth. My hair is red and I am freckled and skinny and ugly. What I said to you was true, too, but I shouldn't have said it. Oh, please, please, forgive me. If you refuse it will be a lifelong sorrow on a poor little orphan girl.

(*She raises her clasped hands in supplication and bows her head awaiting her judgment. The women look at each other, stunned. Finally.*)

MRS. LYNDE. There, there, get up, child. Of course I forgive you. I guess I was a little too hard on you, anyway. It can't be denied your hair is terrible red; but I knew a redheaded girl once whose hair darkened to a real handsome auburn when she grew up. I wouldn't be a mite surprised if yours did, too—not a mite.

ANNE. Oh, Mrs. Lynde! You have given me a hope.

MARILLA. All right, Anne. Run along now, and wait for me in the lane.

(*ANNE leaves. MARILLA turns back to face MRS. LYNDE.*)

Rachel...?

MRS. LYNDE. Now, Marilla... She's a real odd little thing, to be sure, but she may turn out all right after all, now that she's come to live among civilized folks. *(She takes MARILLA's hand.)* On the whole, I kind of like her.

(MARILLA pats her hand and crosses to ANNE. MRS. LYNDE exits.)

ANNE. I apologized pretty well, didn't I?

MARILLA. I hope you won't have occasion to make many more such apologies.

ANNE. It gives you a lovely, comfortable feeling to apologize and be forgiven, doesn't it? Aren't the stars bright tonight? *(They look at the stars together.)* If you could live in a star, which one would you pick? I'd like that lovely clear big one away over there above that hill.

MARILLA. *(Exhausted by it all.)* Oh, Anne, do hold your tongue. And let's go home.

(She starts off past her. ANNE takes her hand. MARILLA stops, a little surprised at the contact.)

ANNE. It's lovely to be going home and know it's home. *(Sound of wind.)* Oh, there's so much scope for imagination in a wind. I'll not talk anymore just now.

MARILLA. Thanks be to goodness for that.

(She considers half a second, then takes ANNE's hand and they exit. Lights.)

Scene 10

(Music out. Lights up. Kitchen at Green Gables, a week and a half later. MARILLA is helping ANNE into a dress. Other dresses lie about. ANNE regards them solemnly.)

MARILLA. Well? Do you like them?

ANNE. What I'll do is I'll imagine that I like them.

MARILLA. I don't want you to imagine it. *(Hurt and unwilling to show it.)* What is the matter with them? Aren't they neat and clean and new?

ANNE. Yes.

MARILLA. Then why don't you like them?

ANNE. They're—they're not—pretty.

MARILLA. Pretty! I don't believe in pampering vanity, Anne, I'll tell you that right off. I should think you'd be grateful to get most anything after those skimpy wincey things you've been wearing.

ANNE. *(Picking up the dresses.)* Oh, I am grateful. But I'd be ever so much graterfuller if—if you'd made just one of them with puffed sleeves.

MARILLA. I hadn't any material to waste on puffed sleeves. I think they are ridiculous-looking things anyhow.

ANNE. But I'd rather look ridiculous like everybody else than plain and sensible all by myself.

MARILLA. Trust you for that! *(Sends ANNE off with the dresses.)* Now, I've got some news for you. Diana Barry came home this afternoon. I'm going up to see if I can borrow a skirt pattern from Mrs. Barry, and if you like you can come with me and get acquainted with Diana.

(ANNE has reentered and is "thrilling" to the news.)

For pity's sake, if the child isn't actually trembling!

ANNE. Oh, Marilla, you'd be trembling, too, if you were going to meet a girl you hoped to be your bosom friend. And you said her mother might not like me!

MARILLA. Come on now. *(They start out the door.)* Just don't make any of those startling speeches of yours.

(Lights. Music tag takes them across stage to the Barrys' door.)

Scene 11

(Kitchen door and garden at the Barrys'. MRS. BARRY enters and meets them arriving.)

MRS. BARRY. Good afternoon. How do you do, Marilla?

MARILLA. Well enough, thank you.

MRS. BARRY. And this is the little girl you have adopted, I suppose?

MARILLA. Yes, this is Anne Shirley.

ANNE. Spelled with an E.

MRS. BARRY. *(Either ignores or doesn't hear the remark. Kindly.)* How are you?

ANNE. I am well in body although considerably ruffled up in spirit, thank you ma'am. *(Quickly aside to MARILLA.)* There wasn't anything startling in that, was there, Marilla?

MRS. BARRY. This is my little girl Diana.

(DIANA enters with a book and curtsies.)

Diana, you might take Anne out into the garden and show her your flowers. It will be better for you than straining your eyes over that book. Come in, Marilla.

(MARILLA exits with MRS. BARRY talking as they go off. DIANA rolls her eyes a bit to ANNE and leads her to the garden. Sound of birds.)

She reads entirely too much and I can't prevent her, for her father aids and abets her.

DIANA. I don't know why mother is always complaining about me reading books. I like stories. Don't you, Anne?

(ANNE nods. DIANA waits for more, then goes on.)

Anyway here is the flower garden. Mother does most of it, but I get to do this little patch myself. See? The daffodils were already here and the peonies, but I put in all the sweet clover and the bleeding hearts and...

ANNE. *(Taking her hand and cutting her off urgently and softly.)* Oh, Diana! Oh, do you think you can like me a little—enough to be my bosom friend?

DIANA. *(Laughing and turning ANNE's grip on her into a handshake.)* Why, I guess so. It will be jolly to have somebody to play with.

ANNE. Will you swear to be my friend forever and ever?

DIANA. *(A little shocked.)* Oh, I don't know. It's dreadfully wicked to swear.

ANNE. Oh no! Not my kind of swearing. There are two different kinds, you know.

DIANA. I never heard of but one kind.

ANNE. There really is another. It just means vowing and promising solemnly.

DIANA. Oh. Well, I guess I don't mind doing that. How do you do it?

ANNE. We must join hands—so.

(She takes DIANA's hand and looks around a little.)

It ought to be over running water. We'll just imagine this path is running water. I'll repeat the oath first.

(She intones a bit. Bird sounds shift. Sound of running water. Music. A magical moment. Maybe the lights make the path look a little like running water.)

I solemnly swear to be faithful to my bosom friend, Diana Barry, as long as the sun and moon shall endure. Now you say it and put my name in.

DIANA. *(Laughing a little, she tries to intone.)* I solemnly swear to be faithful to my bosom friend, Anne...

(A little puzzled but still solemn, she looks questioningly to ANNE. ANNE whispers.)

ANNE. ...Shirley.

DIANA. Anne Shirley, as long as... Ohhh.

ANNE. *(Whispers reassuringly.)* ...as long as the sun and moon shall endure.

DIANA. ...as long as the sun and moon shall endure.

ANNE. There!

DIANA. There. *(She laughs again.)* You are an odd girl, Anne. But I don't care. I think I'm going to like you real well.

(Takes ANNE by the hand and runs off with her.)

(Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 12

(Lights up. Kitchen at Green Gables. One week later, late afternoon. MATTHEW and ANNE enter from outside.)

ANNE. But will it rain, do you think, Matthew? What's your knee telling you?

MATTHEW. *(Checking his knee.)* Should be fine for at least a day or two.

(MARILLA enters.)

MARILLA. Anne, have you seen...

ANNE. *(Cutting her off.)* Oh, Marilla! There's going to be a Sunday-school picnic tomorrow—and there's going to be ice cream—think of it,—ice cream! Oh, Marilla, can I go?

MARILLA. Anne, have you seen anything of my amethyst brooch?

ANNE. I...I saw it this morning for just a minute. I went in to look at it.

MARILLA. Did you touch it?

ANNE. Y-e-e-s. I pinned it on just for a minute to see how it would look.

MARILLA. You had no business to do anything of the sort. *(Starting for the door.)* Where did you put it?

ANNE. Oh, I put it right back on the bureau.

MARILLA. *(Stopping.)* It isn't anywhere on the bureau. You've taken it out or something.

ANNE. I put it back! I'm perfectly certain I put it back.

MARILLA. Anne, the brooch is gone. By your own admission you were the last person to handle it. Now, what have you done with it? Tell me the truth at once.

ANNE. *(She takes a quick look to MATTHEW for strength.)* I never took the brooch out of your room and that is the truth, if I was to be led to the block for it—although I'm not very certain what a block is. *(Another look to MATTHEW.)* So there, Marilla.

MARILLA. Anne!

(She looks to MATTHEW—who is increasingly discomfited at being drawn into this—then back to ANNE.)

I believe you are telling me a falsehood.

(ANNE begins to object.)

There now, don't you say another word. Go upstairs and stay there until you are ready to confess.

ANNE. But the picnic is tomorrow, Marilla!

MARILLA. Picnics! You'll go to no picnics! Nor anywhere else until you've confessed.

ANNE. *(Running, sobbing out of the room.)* Oh, Marilla!

MARILLA. *(MARILLA turns to MATTHEW who is watching her.)* What?!

MATTHEW. Well...

MARILLA. Now, I'm not saying I think she meant to steal it or anything like that. She took it to play with or "imagine" things with.

MATTHEW. Well...

MARILLA. It's a dreadful thing, though, to think she tells falsehoods. I declare I feel worse about that than I do about the brooch.

MATTHEW. You're sure it hasn't fell down behind the bureau?

MARILLA. Oh, Matthew! What do you think?! I've moved the bureau and I've taken out the drawers and I've looked in every crack and cranny! It's gone and she's taken it and lied about it.

MATTHEW. Well now. What are you going to do about it?

MARILLA. What am I going to do about it?

(MATTHEW remains silent.)

She'll stay in her room until she confesses. Perhaps we'll be able to find the brooch if she'll only tell us where she took it.

(MATTHEW draws breath to speak, doesn't get the chance.)

But whether she does or whether she doesn't, she'll have to be severely punished, you know. Matthew?

MATTHEW. Well now, you'll have to punish her. (Heading for the door.) I've nothing to do with it, remember. You warned me off yourself.

MARILLA. Matthew Cuthbert! Where are you going?

MATTHEW. (As he exits.) Just taking my oar outside here.

MARILLA. Matthew!

(Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 13

(Lights up. Kitchen. Next day, noon. Barnyard sounds. MATTHEW enters from outside. MARILLA enters with lunch on a tray.)

MATTHEW. Anybody doing any confessing yet today?

MARILLA. I haven't seen her since this morning.

MATTHEW. Hmmph.

MARILLA. She will. In time.

MATTHEW. (Sitting.) Are you taking anything up to her?

MARILLA. I'm not in the habit of starving people into confessions, Matthew.

MATTHEW. Hmmph.

(MARILLA drops a plate for MATTHEW and then starts on a tray for ANNE. There is a tap at the hall door. ANNE looks in. She is dressed for the picnic. MARILLA shoots a glance at MATTHEW. Then to ANNE.)

MARILLA. Yes?

ANNE. Marilla, I'm ready to confess.

MARILLA. Ah.

ANNE. I took your amethyst brooch just as you said. I didn't mean to, but I was overcome by an irresistible temptation. It would be so much easier to imagine I was the Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald if I had a real amethyst brooch on. I took it to show Diana and when I was going over the bridge across the Lake of Shining Waters I leaned way over to take another look at it. And, just then, the clasp came undone. I grabbed at it, but it just slipped through my fingers and went down—down—down, all purply-sparkling, and sank forevermore beneath the Lake of Shining Waters. And that's the best I can do at confessing, Marilla.

MARILLA. Anne, this is terrible.

ANNE. Yes, I know. And I know I'll have to be punished. Won't you please get it over right away because I'll need to leave soon for the picnic and I'd like to go with nothing on my mind.

MARILLA. Picnic, indeed! You'll go to no picnic today, Anne Shirley. That'll be your punishment.

ANNE. Oh, Marilla, I have to go to the picnic. That was why I confessed. Oh, Marilla, please, please!

MARILLA. You are not going to the picnic and that's final. No, not a word.

(Realizing that MARILLA is not to be moved, ANNE runs out of the room with a cry of utter despair. To MATTHEW.)

And a fine lot of help you've been. I'm going over to Rachel Lynde's...

(She takes a shawl with some lace on it off a hook.)

...where, maybe I can hear some useful advice!

(She throws the shawl around her. The brooch drops off it and lands on the floor. They both stare at it.)

Dear life and heart, what's this?

MATTHEW. Hmmm.

MARILLA. Now I remember yesterday afternoon I did lay this shawl on the bureau for a minute.

MATTHEW. Hmmm.

MARILLA. What in the world did that girl mean by saying she took this and lost it?

MATTHEW. Hmmm.

MARILLA. *(Walks quickly to the door and calls to Anne's room:)* Anne Shirley! Come down here this very minute!

(ANNE enters, red-eyed.)

ANNE. Yes, Marilla.

MARILLA. Anne, I've just found my brooch hanging to the lace of my shawl.

ANNE. Oh! Marilla!

MARILLA. Yes. Now I want to know what that rigmarole you told me just now meant.

ANNE. *(Increasingly wrought up in the conflicting relief over the brooch being found and tension of the punishment, she is in tears by the end:)* Why, you said you'd keep me here until I confessed, and I decided I had to confess because I was bound to get to the picnic. I thought out a real interesting confession last night. And I said it over and over so that I wouldn't forget it. But then you wouldn't let me go to the picnic after all.

(MARILLA and MATTHEW are both trying not to laugh. They catch each other's eye and lose the struggle. They dissolve in laughter.)

MARILLA. Anne, you do beat all!

(She and MATTHEW exchange a look and a nod. MATTHEW grabs his hat and goes quickly out.)

I was wrong, Anne—I can see that now. I had no reason not to trust your word. Of course, it ~~was~~ very wrong for you to confess to a thing you hadn't done. But I drove you to it. *(She offers ANNE her hand.)* So if you'll forgive me, I'll forgive you and we'll start square again.

(ANNE shakes the proffered hand. She'd like to hug MARILLA, but refrains.)

And now let's get you ready for the picnic. Matthew's already gone to bring the buggy 'round. I'll fill a basket for you to take. You run on out and fill this bowl with strawberries.

ANNE. *(Hugging MARILLA:)* Oh, Marilla! Thank you!

MARILLA. *(Disengaging and patting ANNE—sending her toward the door:)* There, now. Never mind your hugging and kissing nonsense. Hurry on now!

ANNE. *(Stopping at the door before she exits:)* Oh, Marilla! Five minutes ago I was so miserable I was wishing I'd never been born and now I wouldn't change places with an angel!

(Lights. Music.)

Scene 14

(Music out. Lights cross fade. Several weeks later, Kitchen, Green Gables. MATTHEW is asleep with his newspaper on his chair. MARILLA and MRS. LYNDE at the table.)

MARILLA. Yes, she seems to be getting along just fine. She's such an odd girl sometimes. I couldn't imagine how she'd hold her tongue through a whole school day.

MRS. LYNDE. Seems to be real popular.

(Her voice wakes MATTHEW, who resumes reading.)

MARILLA. Oh, yes. *(Imitating.)* "Ruby Gillis gave me an apple and Sofia Sloane let me wear her bead ring all afternoon. And we had scrumptious fun playing at lunchtime!"

MRS. LYNDE. Scrumptious!

MARILLA. Yes! *(Continuing.)* "Oh! And, Marilla, Jane Andrews told me that Minnie MacPherson told her that she heard Prissy Andrews tell Sara Gillis that I have a very pretty nose!"

MRS. LYNDE. And so she does, if you don't count all the freckles.

(MATTHEW rolls his eyes.)

MARILLA. It troubles her some she's so far behind the others. She's in the fourth book, you know, and all her friends are in the fifth.

MRS. LYNDE. Well, she won't be alone for long. Gilbert Blythe'll be back soon.

MARILLA. Gilbert? He must be near fourteen. He's in the fourth class, too?

MRS. LYNDE. He didn't go to school while he was out in Alberta with his father.

MARILLA. That's right. John was sick for a time.

(MRS. LYNDE and MATTHEW share a look as MARILLA looks absently out the window.)

Oh! What in the world?

(ANNE slams into the room in a rage carrying all her school books and supplies.)

Anne Shirley! What on earth?!

ANNE. I'm never going back to that school again!

MARILLA. What?

ANNE. I hate Mr. Phillips and I'm never going back there again! Ever!

MARILLA. Nonsense.

ANNE. Don't you understand? I've been insulted!

MARILLA. Insulted, fiddlesticks! You'll go to school tomorrow as usual.

ANNE. Oh no. I'm *not* going back. I'll learn my lessons here and I'll try to hold my tongue and be good *all* the time. But I will *never* go back to that school, I assure you!

MATTHEW. Anne, what was it happened...

ANNE. That Gilbert Blythe!... *(Beginning to cry.)* Oh, I can't talk about it now! I can't... I can't see anybody now... I have to...

(She runs out of the room. MATTHEW starts to follow.)

MARILLA. No, Matthew. Perhaps we'd better...

MRS. LYNDE. *(Seeing DIANA, JANE, and RUBY, carrying their school baskets, approaching tentatively.)* Oh, good! Here're some of the girls. Maybe...

MARILLA. *(Waving them in quietly. MATTHEW hides in a corner.)* Oh, Diana, please come in. Jane... Ruby...

DIANA. Can we see Anne?

MARILLA. I'm afraid she doesn't want to see anyone.

JANE. I told you.

MRS. LYNDE. What happened, girls?

(The girls take a quick look at each other wondering if they should and who should begin.)

JANE. It was Gilbert.

RUBY. Gilbert Blythe.

JANE. It was his first day back.

RUBY. He'd been away all summer...

JANE. ...at his cousins' in New Brunswick.

RUBY. And this was his first day back.

JANE. I just said that.

RUBY. Oh.

(Music tag. Lights shift. The kitchen is dim, but still alive. ANNE is with the girls now in a flashback scene at the schoolhouse. GILBERT and MOODY enter at opposite side of the stage with lunch pails and books. They are occupied in an activity. The girls continue to narrate back to the kitchen. DIANA grabs ANNE's hand and whispers.)

DIANA. Anne, look! That's Gilbert Blythe with Moody. Just look at him and see if you don't think he's handsome.

JANE. He teases us girls something terrible.

RUBY. *(With a little relish.)* He just torments our lives out.

ANNE. Didn't somebody write his name up with... Yes, there! "Take notice! Gilbert Blythe plus Julia Bell!"

(MOODY crosses to the girls, GILBERT follows.)

MOODY. Diana! Gilbert's back!

DIANA. Morning, Moody. Gilbert.

GILBERT. Diana Barry, you little crow.

MOODY. *(To the other girls.)* Gilbert's back!

DIANA. Gilbert! How was your summer?

GILBERT. Oh, all right, I reckon... It was New Brunswick...

(He's been noticing ANNE since he came in. There is a moment when he almost speaks to her and she almost speaks to him. He almost touches his hat. Then JANE and RUBY run past him giggling and he follows. He turns back and winks at ANNE, then runs out.)

Jane Andrews, you little squirrel!

DIANA. I should have introduced you.

ANNE. Oh...

(JOSIE enters. Off stage we hear JANE squeal.)

DIANA. Morning, Josie.

JOSIE. Diana. *(To ANNE.)* Well, it won't be so easy to stay head of your class now, Anne. *(Exits.)*

ANNE. What...?

DIANA. You'll have Gilbert in your class after this.

(They look in the direction GILBERT has gone.)

He's ever so smart. I told you.

ANNE. Yes.

DIANA. Yes.

RUBY. *(Squealing, as she and JANE run back across the stage.)* Gilbert!

ANNE. *(ANNE and DIANA look at each other.)* I think your Gilbert Blythe is handsome, Diana. But I think he's very bold!

(Sound of school bell. The school room is set up. JANE and RUBY begin the narration from the blackboard. The students take their seats. ANNE [wearing a paper crown] and GILBERT are silently engaged in the spelling competition described. They urgently raise their hands. One is called on, rises and spells—shoots a look to the other and sits.)

MARILLA. But what happened?

JANE. Anne was spelling champion in the fourth class and Gilbert was trying to take her crown.

(ANNE can't spell a word. Reluctantly takes off the crown. GILBERT can't spell it either. They both sit.)

RUBY. Anne couldn't spell "epitome."

JANE. But Gilbert couldn't either.

DIANA. I'd never even heard of it.

JANE. So Mr. Phillips called them ties.

(ANNE is distressed over this fact. GILBERT is very pleased. He tries to get ANNE's attention. She won't look at him.)

He told them they'd both be moving into our class soon.

RUBY. *(Crossing to sit in front of GILBERT.)* Then he told us to work on our math problems silently while he did some special work with the Queens Academy scholars at the back.

JANE. Meaning some love poetry for Prissy!

MARILLA. Jane!

JANE. Well, Mr. Phillips starts droning this old poem:

(JANE crosses to the rear of the class and intones in Mr. Phillips' voice "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day..." As she does, GILBERT torments RUBY, then sneaks a look to the rear of the class and then begins to try to get ANNE's attention.)

RUBY. And Gilbert started to torment us again!

DIANA. *(Whispering and pointing over in GILBERT's direction.)* Anne!

(ANNE refuses to look directly at GILBERT. He makes faces. DIANA giggles. GILBERT smirks at ANNE and makes more faces. DIANA giggles again. ANNE is pointedly concentrated on her math. GILBERT reaches over and picks up one of ANNE's braids and whispers loudly.)

GILBERT. Carrots! Carrots!

ANNE. *(Rising in a fury.)* You mean, hateful boy! How dare you!

(She raises her slate high and cracks it over GILBERT's head. There is a moment when the whole schoolhouse says: "Ohhh!" and then GILBERT says: "Owww!" RUBY bursts into tears. JANE breaks the scene talking to MARILLA as she pushes ANNE center stage.)

JANE. Then Mr. Phillips made Anne go to the board and he wrote:

(She writes "Ann Shirley" on the board as she speaks.)

"Ann Shirley has a very bad temper."

(The girls chime in rapidly as the story builds in momentum.)

DIANA. He spelled it without an "E," Marilla!

RUBY. *(Entering with the cap which she puts on ANNE.)* And he made her put on the dunce cap.

(GILBERT stands and raises his hand.)

DIANA. Then Gilbert said it was *his* fault because he'd teased Anne.

(DIANA takes GILBERT by the collar and pushes him beside ANNE. Then she returns to her seat.)

JANE. And Mr. Phillips made him go up beside Anne and he wrote on the board:

(Writes "Gilbert Blythe" as she speaks.)

"Gilbert Blythe Must Tease his Ladyfriends more discreetly."

RUBY. Then he made Gilbert stand right beside Anne.

JANE. 'Cause there was only one cap and they had to share it.

RUBY. And he made Anne hold Gilbert's hand 'cause there was only one cap.

JANE. I just said that.

RUBY. Oh.

JANE. And Anne wouldn't.

RUBY. And he made her.

JANE. *(Writing as she speaks.)* And then he wrote a "plus" sign between their names on the board and said *(Mr. Phillips' voice)* "Now, as the two of you have succeeded in commanding the attention of the whole school...we have no choice but to... *(RUBY writes:)* "Take Notice."

(Pause. All are scandalized.)

JOSIE. Well, I guess she's at the head of the class now!

DIANA. It was awful!

RUBY. You should have seen her face. It was acksually *white*, with little red spots.

MARILLA. Oh!

MRS. LYNDE. Mercy!

DIANA. Then it was time. And we all picked up our things and started to leave.

(Over the above, the bell rings. ANNE erases the "Take Notice" and the "+" sign from the board and adds an "E" to the end of her name. GILBERT is trying to speak to her.)

GILBERT. I'm awfully sorry I made fun of your hair, Anne. Honest I am. Don't be mad for keeps, now. *(Pause.)* Anne?

(ANNE walks disdainfully to her desk. DIANA comes over to ANNE.)

DIANA. Oh how could you, Anne?

ANNE. I shall never forgive Gilbert Blythe.

DIANA. Gilbert makes fun of all the girls. You heard him call me a crow before school.

ANNE. *(Packing all her things into her school basket.)* I don't care. Gilbert Blythe and Mr. Phillips have hurt my feelings excruciatingly.

DIANA. Why are you taking all those things home?

ANNE. *(Exiting with all her things.)* I'll never go to school to that man again!

DIANA. Oh, Anne!

(Music tag. The school room is struck. Lights restore as the girls reenter the kitchen. To MARILLA.)

And she wouldn't even let me walk home with her.

(They all look to see how MARILLA will take this. After a pause.)

MARILLA. Anne'll come see you, Diana. When she's ready. You girls run on home now.

(The girls start dejectedly for the door.)

And thank you for coming over.

(Looking back toward Anne's room, the girls exit. MATTHEW comes out of hiding.)

MRS. LYNDE. Well.

MARILLA. Well. What would you advise, Rachel?

MRS. LYNDE. Since you've asked, Marilla, I'll tell you. I'd just humor her.

MARILLA. Rachel!

MRS. LYNDE. It's my belief that Mr. Phillips was in the wrong. Of course, it doesn't do to say so in front of the children.

MARILLA. No.

MRS. LYNDE. I wouldn't say "school" to her again until she said it herself. She'll cool off in a week and be ready to go back. But, if you were to make her go back right off, dear knows what tantrum she'd throw.

(She rises to leave. MARILLA follows her out. MRS. LYNDE keeps talking until she fades from view.)

MARILLA. I suppose you're right.

MRS. LYNDE. Course I am.

(MATTHEW looks after them, then up to where ANNE has exited. He exits. Lights. Music.)

Scene 15

(Lights up. Music out. Outside Green Gables, afternoon, two weeks later. ANNE and DIANA run on wearing very nice dresses.)

ANNE. ...yes and she said we could use the second-best tea service!

DIANA. Yea! When will she be back?

ANNE. Not till late. She's left me in charge of everything.

DIANA. Well, it's awfully nice of her to let you invite me to tea.

ANNE. Yes, Marilla is a very generous woman. She said we could have fruitcake and cherry preserves for tea. And she said we could have raspberry cordial to drink! I love bright red drinks, don't you? They taste twice as good as any other color.

(They are at the door. DIANA reaches for the knob. ANNE stops her.)

No. Wait here.

DIANA. What?

ANNE. Just wait here.

(She quickly opens the door, goes inside and shuts it. In a flash, she throws off her hat and shawl. She runs back to open the door.)

Now knock.

(She shuts the door.)

DIANA. What?

ANNE. *(Shouting through the closed door.)* KNOCK!

DIANA. Oh.

(DIANA knocks demurely. ANNE opens and very politely ushers DIANA in, helping her off with her hat and shawl.)

ANNE. Why Diana Barry, do come in. Here let me take that. How very nice of you to come for tea. How is your mother?

DIANA. You were just at our house, you just saw her.

ANNE. *(Encouraging, sotto voce.)* Diana!

DIANA. *(Catching on.)* Oh. Yes. She is very well, thank you. And Marilla?

ANNE. Oh, Marilla is in excellent health, thank you, Diana.

DIANA. I suppose Mr. Cuthbert is hauling potatoes to the ship this afternoon. Is he?

ANNE. Yes. Our potato crop is very good this year. I hope your father's crop is good too.

DIANA. It is fairly good, thank you.

ANNE. *(Rising and crossing to bring a plate.)* Now, Diana, if you'll please try one of these cookies, I'll bring the cordial.

DIANA. Why thank you, Anne.

(She takes a cookie as ANNE crosses out of the room for a moment. ANNE calls from off stage, disappointed.)

ANNE. Oh!

DIANA. What's the matter?

ANNE. Marilla said the cordial was on the second shelf of the pantry and I can't find... Oh! Here it is!

(She returns with a tray with 2 small tumblers and the bottle.)

It was way back on the top shelf. Now, please help yourself, Diana. I'm going to set our tea to draw.

DIANA. *(Pouring a some in the glass and admiring the color.)* Thank you. *(She drinks it down.)* Ooh. That's awfully nice raspberry cordial, Anne. I didn't know raspberry cordial was so nice.

ANNE. I'm real glad you like it. Take as much as you want.

DIANA. Well, it's so good, and I am awful thirsty.

(She pours a full glass and holds it up to admire it, then drinks it down at once.)

That is the nicest raspberry cordial I ever drank.

ANNE. *(Readying the tea.)* Marilla is a famous cook. She is trying to teach me to cook but I assure you, Diana, it is uphill work.

DIANA. Oh, Anne! I do wish you'd come back to school. I have to sit with Josie Pye now and she drives me crazy with her wiggling and squeaking her chalk on her slate.

(ANNE is about to remove the cordial. DIANA stops her.)

Maybe I'll just have one more. Are you sure you don't want any?

ANNE. No, please. Take all you want.

DIANA. (*Sloppily pours another full glass, then blurts:*) Last week Ruby Gillis charmed all her warts away.

ANNE. She didn't!

DIANA. She did, true's you live! With a magic pebble that old Mary Joe from the Creek gave her. And Charlie Sloane's name was written up with Em White's on the porch wall and Em White was awful mad about it.

ANNE. (*Giggling and taking the cordial away and crossing to the pantry:*) I imagine so!

(*DIANA drinks down the whole of the 3rd. As ANNE reenters, she blurts:*)

DIANA. Gilbert Blythe is head of the fourth class now and Mr. Phillips says...

ANNE. Diana, I don't want to hear anything about...that person.

DIANA. Oh, Anne.

(*ANNE is setting the tea things on a tray on the table. DIANA starts to stand up.*)

Here, let me help you with that. Oh!

(*She falls back into her chair.*)

ANNE. (*Overlapping:*) No, thank you... Oh! Diana! What is the matter?

DIANA. (*Putting her hands to her head:*) I'm—I'm awful sick. I—I—must go right home.

ANNE. Oh, you mustn't dream of going home without your tea. It's all ready. I'll pour it this very minute.

DIANA. No, I must go home.

ANNE. Let me get you something to eat anyhow. You'll feel better then.

(*DIANA struggles to get up. ANNE helps her.*)

DIANA. I must go home. I must go home. I must go home.

ANNE. All right, Diana. I'll take you home. Where do you feel bad?

DIANA. (*Stumbling as ANNE helps her out the door:*) Oh, Anne. I'm awful dizzy.

(*DIANA puts her hand to her mouth and runs off urgently.*)

ANNE. (*She collects Diana's hat and shawl and laments as she exits:*) Oh! I never heard of company going home without their tea.

(*Lights. Music tag.*)

Scene 16

(*Lights up. Kitchen, Green Gables. Two days later, early evening. MARILLA is on. ANNE enters in a state.*)

MARILLA. Anne, did Mrs. Lynde have the quilting frames I...

ANNE. (*Flopping in a chair:*) Ohhhh!

MARILLA. Whatever has gone wrong now?

ANNE. Mrs. Lynde said Mrs. Barry is in an awful state. She says that I set Diana drunk Saturday and sent her home in a disgraceful condition. And she says I am wicked little girl and she's never, never going to let Diana play with me again.

MARILLA. Set Diana drunk! What on earth did you give her?

ANNE. Not a thing but raspberry cordial.

(*MARILLA goes off to the pantry. ANNE calls after her:*)

I never thought raspberry cordial would set people drunk—not even if they did drink three tumblerfuls.

MARILLA. (*Exclaiming from off stage:*) Oh, no!

ANNE. What?!

MARILLA. (*Returning with the bottle in her hand, trying not to laugh:*) Anne, you certainly have a genius for getting into trouble. You went and gave Diana currant wine instead of raspberry cordial.

ANNE. I thought it was the cordial. *(Wails and falls to the floor.)* Mrs. Barry will never believe but what I did it on purpose.

MARILLA. I should think she would better punish Diana for being so greedy as to drink three glassfuls of anything. Don't cry, child. I can't see as it was your fault.

ANNE. I must cry. Diana and I are parted forever.

MARILLA. Oh, Don't be foolish. Mrs. Barry will think better of it when she finds you're not to blame. You'd best go up and tell her how it was.

ANNE. Oh, I couldn't. I wish you'd go with me.

(Getting Marilla's hat and shawl.)

She's more likely to listen to you than me.

MARILLA. Well, I will. Stop that crying now. It will be all right.

(They exit. Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 17

(Lights up. A little later, outside the kitchen door at Orchard Slope. MRS. BARRY is closing the door and MARILLA strides angrily toward ANNE who is waiting at a little distance.)

MARILLA. Of all the unreasonable women I ever saw she's the worst. Come along home.

(She takes ANNE by the hand and starts off. From inside we hear muffled, urgent conversation, including the phrase "One minute!" DIANA enters, throwing on her shawl. ANNE runs to her. The girls take each other's hands.)

ANNE. Diana!

DIANA. Oh, Anne. I've cried and cried and I told her it wasn't your fault, but it wasn't any use. She said I could only stay out here one minute and she's already turned over the timer.

ANNE. One minute isn't very long for an eternal farewell.

DIANA. No!

ANNE. Oh, Diana, will you promise faithfully never to forget me?

DIANA. Indeed I will.

ANNE. I know you'll have other friends after this, but will you...

DIANA. I'll never have another *bosom* friend, Anne. I couldn't love anybody as I love you.

ANNE. *(Taken aback.)* Oh. Oh. Oh, Diana. Do you love me?

DIANA. Why, of course I do. Didn't you know that?

ANNE. No, I knew you *liked* me of course but... Oh, Diana, I didn't think anybody could love me. Nobody ever has.

(In her place apart, we see MARILLA react.)

Oh, this is wonderful! Oh, just say it again.

DIANA. I love you devotedly, Anne, and I always will. Whatever Mother says.

ANNE. And I will always love you... *thee!* Diana, wilt thou give me a lock of thy jet-black tresses in parting to treasure forever?

DIANA. *(Wiping away a tear.)* Surely. Have you got anything to cut it with?

ANNE. Yes. I've got my patchwork scissors in my apron pocket.

(She solemnly clips one of Diana's curls. MRS. BARRY enters.)

MRS. BARRY. Diana!

DIANA. Oh!

(DIANA starts for the door then turns back.)

ANNE. Fare thee well, my beloved friend.

DIANA. *(Exiting in tears.)* Goodbye, Anne!

ANNE. *(Heaves a great sigh, then walks over to join MARILLA.)* It is all over. I'll never have another friend. Diana gave me a lock of her hair. I'm going to sew it up in a little bag and wear it around my neck all my life. Please see that it is buried with me, for I don't think I'm go-

ing to live very long. Maybe Mrs. Barry will let Diana come to my funeral.

MARILLA. I don't think there is much fear of your dying of grief as long as you can talk.

(ANNE Looks back at the house a moment. MARILLA takes her hand. She starts her off. ANNE stops MARILLA.)

ANNE. Marilla. I'm going back to school tomorrow.

MARILLA. Well, thank goodness for that, anyway.

(They exit. Lights. Music.)

Scene 18

(Music out. Lights up. At least a month later. Kitchen, Green Gables. Late evening. MATTHEW is dozing while seeming to read a paper near the stove. ANNE is doing schoolwork at the table.)

ANNE. Matthew, did you ever study geometry when you went to school?

MATTHEW. *(Waking up.)* Hmmm? Well now, no, I didn't.

ANNE. I wish you had. It's perfectly awful stuff. I can't make head or tail of it. And Gilbert—I mean some of the others are so smart at it. It is extremely mortifying.

MATTHEW. Well now, I dunno. Teddy Phillips told me last week that you was the smartest student in school and was making rapid progress. Said he'd only just moved you and Gilbert up to the fifth class and you were already fighting to be top of that class now!

ANNE. Well...

MATTHEW. That right? You and Gilbert?

ANNE. But there're so many new subjects now! Oh! We're studying agriculture now and I've found out at last what makes the roads red! It's the iron in the sandstone! Like the cliffs up by White Sands.

MATTHEW. Well, now!

ANNE. It's a great comfort. And we're studying government, too. We started early, Mr. Phillips says, 'cause of the Premiere making his

visit to Charlottetown. Oh, I wonder how Marilla and Mrs. Lynde are enjoying themselves at the rally. Mrs. Lynde says Canada is going to the dogs and if women were allowed to vote we would soon see a blessed change.

MATTHEW. *(Settling back.)* Well...

ANNE. Ruby Gillis says that when a man is courting he always has to agree with the girl's mother in religion and her father in politics. Is that true, Matthew?

MATTHEW. Well now, I dunno.

ANNE. Did you ever go courting?

MATTHEW. Well now, no, I dunno's I ever did.

ANNE. Ruby Gillis says when she grows up she's going to have ever so many beaux on the string and have them all crazy about her; but I think that would be too exciting. I'd rather have just one. And I think I'd rather he stayed in his right mind.

MATTHEW. *(A little confused and uneasy at the thought.)* Well...

ANNE. I think that... *(Pause—Gilbert?)* There are a great many things in this world that I can't understand very well.

MATTHEW. Well now, I dunno as I comprehend them all myself.

(The door bangs open and DIANA flies in; cold, scared and tired.)

DIANA. Anne!

ANNE. Oh! Whatever is the matter, Diana?

DIANA. Oh, Anne, do come quick. Minnie May is awful sick—she's got croup—Young Mary Joe says—and Father and Mother are away to town for the rally and there's nobody to go for the doctor. She's awful bad and Young Mary Joe doesn't know what to do—and oh, Anne, I'm so scared!

(Halfway through the above, MATTHEW has jumped up and thrown on his coat and hat. By the end he's at the door, exchanges a look with ANNE and goes out. ANNE starts putting on her own wraps.)

ANNE. Matthew's gone to harness the mare to go to Carmody for the doctor.

DIANA. Dr. Blair isn't in Carmody. He went to town and I guess Dr. Spencer would go too. Young Mary Joe never saw anybody with croup and Mrs. Lynde is away. *(Cries.)* Oh, Anne!

ANNE. Don't cry, Di. I know exactly what to do for croup. When you look after three pairs of twins you naturally get a lot of experience. Just wait till I get the ipecac bottle—you mayn't have any at your house. Come on now.

(She gets the bottle and bundles DIANA out the door. Fierce wind. Mare whinnies. She calls to MATTHEW.)

Matthew!

MATTHEW. *(Calling from a distance.)* Eh?

ANNE. Spencervale!

MATTHEW. Ayl!

(Sound of horse and buggy leaving at quick pace. Wind. ANNE and DIANA run off. Lights.)

Scene 19

(Lights up. Urgent music plays throughout the first, silent part of the scene. Orchard Slope. Later that night. Sound of baby crying and coughing. ANNE and DIANA cross in throwing off wraps. Series of crosses from where the baby is to the offstage kitchen. They start with the baby.)

ANNE flies across. DIANA crosses in same direction.

ANNE returns with bottle and spoon.

DIANA crosses with basin. Sound of whistling kettle.

ANNE crosses her on the way back to the kitchen.

ANNE returns with steaming kettle.

ANNE and DIANA come on together, ANNE sends DIANA ahead and returns.

DIANA returns with towels/rags.

Time passing. Baby crying gets softer.

ANNE sends DIANA across again. DIANA is slowing down.

As DIANA returns with more rags, ANNE runs on and takes them from her and returns.

DIANA is exhausted; sits and prays.

Baby crying fades out. Music shifts—softer, slower.

Suddenly, MRS. BARRY bursts in followed by "Doctor"—perhaps GILBERT or MOODY wrapped up in coat and muffler, not recognizable, carrying bag—and MATTHEW.

They run through to the other room. MRS. BARRY calls "Diana!" DIANA follows.

ANNE is propelled onstage. MATTHEW follows ANNE on.

Very tired, and a little distressed at being sent away by MRS. BARRY, ANNE lets MATTHEW put on her wraps and lead her back to the Kitchen at Green Gables. Lights shift to kitchen. Music out. ANNE is telling the story with the last of her energy. MATTHEW seats her and hangs up their wraps.)

ANNE. I gave her every drop of ipecac in the bottle and when the last dose went down I said to myself—not to Diana, of course, "This is the last lingering hope and I fear, 'tis a vain one." But in about three minutes she coughed up the phlegm and began to get better right away. You must just imagine my relief because I can't express it in words. You know there are some things that can't be expressed in words.

MATTHEW. Yes. You know, Anne, the doctor said it would'a been too late by the time he got there.

ANNE. He did?

MATTHEW. Aye. You saved that baby's life, he said.

ANNE. I'm real sorry now I was ever cross with Mrs. Hammond for having twins. But, oh, Matthew, I'm so sleepy.

MATTHEW. *(She practically falls into him. He gets her up and starts her upstairs.)* That's all right. I've got you now.

ANNE. I can't go to school. I just know I couldn't keep my eyes open. But I hate to stay home because Gilber—I mean—some of the others will get head of the class.

MATTHEW. Well now, I guess you'll manage all right with that. Let's just get you right to bed now and get you a good sleep.

(He gets her into bed and covers her. He speaks softly to her, asleep.)

Saved that baby's life.

(Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 20

(Lights up. The next afternoon. Kitchen, Green Gables. MATTHEW is asleep in his chair and MARILLA working at the sink. ANNE enters.)

ANNE. Good morning, Marilla.

MARILLA. Good afternoon, Anne.

ANNE. *(A little embarrassed.)* Oh. What time is it?

MARILLA. Nearly one.

ANNE. Oh. *(Sees MATTHEW and whispers.)* Is Matthew asleep?

MARILLA. *(Shooting him a suspicious look.)* You never can tell. He's plenty tired enough. Did all your chores for you this morning.

(ANNE walks quietly over and touches MATTHEW. As she walks away he opens one eye and watches her a second.)

Your dinner is on the stove. I guess you're hungry. Matthew has been telling me about last night.

(ANNE goes to get her plate from the stove.)

I must say it was fortunate you knew what to do. I wouldn't have had any idea myself, for I never saw a case of croup.

(ANNE returns to the table and is about to start talking.)

There now, never mind talking till you've had your dinner. I can tell by the look of you that you're just full up with speeches, but they'll keep.

(ANNE sits and starts eating.)

Mrs. Barry was here, Anne. She hopes you'll forgive her and be good friends with Diana again. You're to go over there... Now, Anne Shirley, for pity's sake don't fly up into the air.

ANNE. *(Who has flown up into the air.)* Oh, Marilla, can I go right now, this afternoon?

MARILLA. Certainly, after you finish your...

(Music. ANNE has bolted for the door at the word "Certainly." She is gone. MATTHEW is sitting up watching. MARILLA calls out the open door.)

Anne Shirley—are you crazy? Don't go without your dinner! Come back this instant and put something on you!

(To MATTHEW.)

Oh, you're awake, are you?

(Indicating ANNE. MATTHEW comes to the door to watch her.)

I might as well call to the wind. Look at her tearing through the orchard with her hair streaming.

MATTHEW. *(Crossing outside, he calls after her.)* Anne! *(Waves to her.)* Hurray!

(Music swells. Blackout.)

End of Act I

ACT II

Scene 1

(Music. Lights up. Late October afternoon. Kitchen, Green Gables. MARILLA and MATTHEW watching out the window. Outside, unheard by us, ANNE, DIANA, JOSIE, JANE, and RUBY are rehearsing their dance for "The Fairy Queenne.")

MARILLA. Look at them out there dancing around like ninnies. "Fairy Queen" fiddlesticks!

MATTHEW. Seems to like this new one, eh? This lady teacher?

MARILLA. Oh, well! Another of her "Kindred Spirits," I'd say.

MATTHEW. Hmmm.

MARILLA. *(Parroting ANNE:)* "Oh, I just love Miss Stacy! When she says my name I just know that she's spelling it with an E. She dresses so beautifully, Marilla, and, Oh! her puffed sleeves are bigger than anybody else's in Avonlea!"

MATTHEW. *(Confused, to MARILLA:)* Puffed sleeves?

MARILLA. Miss Stacy's got 'em traipsing around the woods for "field days" and reciting and so on. Rachel Lynde says it's a great waste of time.

MATTHEW. Puffed sleeves?

MARILLA. Oh, hush! And now this! ...This concert foolishness!

MATTHEW. *(Looking closely at the girls outside:)* There's something different about her.

MARILLA. What, Matthew? What are you talking about?

MATTHEW. Our Anne. There's something different from them others. What is it?

MARILLA. *(Looking more closely:)* She's wilder than the others. They've had good bringing up and know how to behave.

MATTHEW. Well...no, now. That's just the life in her.

MARILLA. Oh, I don't know.

MATTHEW. Something in her look. An' it's not just her red hair. I don't know what.

MARILLA. *(Leaving the window and returning to her work.)* Well I'm sure I don't either. You tell me when you find out.

MATTHEW. *(As the girls begin to come in, he starts from the window in terror.)* Oh! Oh, now!

MARILLA. What? Matthew!

MATTHEW. *(Looking for a way to escape.)* Oh, well now! Oh! They're coming in! All of 'em!

(Unable to decide which way to go, he is caught standing beside MARILLA as ANNE, DIANA, JANE, JOSIE, and RUBY burst into the room. They greet MATTHEW and MARILLA easily, unaware of his consternation. He stays frozen, watching. ANNE is rummaging through the shawls on a hook.)

JANE. No, Josie!

DIANA. No!

JOSIE. I don't see why.

ANNE. It has to be Ruby or Jane.

JOSIE. Why?

ANNE. Because.

DIANA. Hello, Marilla. Hello, Matthew.

(Overlapping, MATTHEW sort of nods and tries to vanish.)

MARILLA. Girls.

RUBY / JOSIE. Hello, Mr. Cuthbert. Hello, Marilla.

JOSIE. *(Back to business.)* Why can't I?

RUBY. Because it's ridiculous, Josie. You don't look like a Fairy Queen. You don't look like a fairy at all.

JOSIE. Well, Anne's one of the attendants! A redheaded fairy is just as ridiculous as a fat fairy!

ANNE. *(Pulling out a shawl.)* Here, Di. Will this do?

DIANA. Oh, yes! That'll be perfect.

RUBY. Good! Let's go try it again.

JANE. Come on!

(They start to exit.)

DIANA. And we'll tie some white roses in your hair.

(They are gone. MATTHEW has an epiphany, but has no language for it.)

MATTHEW. It's!... It's!... Ummm!...

MARILLA. What, Matthew?

MATTHEW. *(He mimes dresses, sleeves, etc. Pointing to ANNE and the others.)* It's her...uhh... They...those others...they have... Colors!... and... Things!

MARILLA. What?

MATTHEW. *(Throwing on his coat and hat and heading for the door.)* She...Marilla, our Anne's brighter'n all of 'em! Why do you put her in things like a...like a...mouse?

MARILLA. What are you talking about?

MATTHEW. *(Out the door, then back in. Finally got a word.)* Puffed Sleeves!

(He is gone. Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 2

(Lights up. A little later. The ladies notions section of a general store. MATTHEW is there, looking around utterly lost. RUBY and JOSIE giggle at him from a distance. A bell over the door rings as MRS. LYNDE enters.)

MRS. LYNDE. Matthew! Well, you're the last person I'd expect to find looking through the ribbons and thimbles.

MATTHEW. *(Greatly relieved to see her.)* Rachel! Oh... Well, now...

MRS. LYNDE. Matthew?

MATTHEW. Yes?

MRS. LYNDE. What is it you're wanting to buy?

MATTHEW. Oh... Oh, well, now...

MRS. LYNDE. Maybe I could help you.

MATTHEW. Oh! Oh, well, now! Well, I'm trying...that is...I'd like to find...

MRS. LYNDE. Yes?

MATTHEW. A... A dress...that is.

MRS. LYNDE. A dress?!

MATTHEW. Yes.

MRS. LYNDE. A dress.

MATTHEW. For Anne.

MRS. LYNDE. For Anne!

MATTHEW. Yes!

MRS. LYNDE. A dress for Anne.

MATTHEW. That's it!

MRS. LYNDE. You'd like me to help you pick out goods for a dress for Anne?

MATTHEW. That's it in a nutshell.

MRS. LYNDE. Well, I will.

MATTHEW. Thank you! Thank you!

(Starts to leave.)

MRS. LYNDE. Matthew? *(He stops.)* Have you something particular in mind?

(MRS. BARRY enters, unseen by MATTHEW from another part of the store.)

MATTHEW. Oh...well, now...

MRS. LYNDE. No? Well, I'll just go by my own judgment then. I believe a nice brown gloria would just suit Anne. When did you think you'd need it?

MATTHEW. Oh, well... I was thinking...Christmas.

MRS. LYNDE. Oh, now isn't that nice. Perhaps you'd like me to make it up for her, too.

MATTHEW. Well, now... Yes, I would. Are you sure it's not too much...

MRS. LYNDE. No, it isn't a mite of trouble. I like sewing.

MATTHEW. Well now, I'm much obliged...

MRS. LYNDE. Don't you mention it.

MATTHEW. ...and—and—I dunno—but I'd like—I think they make the sleeves different nowadays to what they used to be. If it wouldn't be asking too much I—I'd like them made in the new way.

MRS. LYNDE. Puffs? Of course. You needn't worry a speck more about it, Matthew. I'll make it up in the very latest fashion.

MATTHEW. *(Moving toward the door.)* Well, now. Thank you, Rachel. Thank you, very much.

MRS. LYNDE. Evening Matthew.

(He sees MRS. BARRY and shies as he exits. Bell rings. She speaks to MRS. BARRY.)

Well. It'll be a real satisfaction to see that poor child wearing something decent for once.

MRS. BARRY. And to think of Matthew taking notice of it!

MRS. LYNDE. That man is waking up after being asleep for over sixty years.

(Lights. Christmas music tag.)

Scene 3

(Lights up. Christmas night. Outside Green Gables. ANNE enters, dancing. She has a cape or shawl barely covering her new puffed sleeved dress. MATTHEW follows her, applauding, then MARILLA and DIANA.)

DIANA. You looked so smart, too, in your new dress! Didn't she, Marilla?

MARILLA. Hmmp.

DIANA. Matthew! It's so lucky you thought of that just in time for the Christmas concert!

ANNE. Yes. Thank you again, Matthew!

MATTHEW. Oh... Well, now...

ANNE. Marilla, you haven't said anything yet about the concert. Did you like it?

MARILLA. Oh, it was all right, I suppose—as those things go.

(They reach the door.)

ANNE. Oh, Diana, stay out here with me for just a minute before you go home.

DIANA. All right.

MARILLA. Such foolishness. You'll catch your death of cold. Both of you.

MATTHEW. *(Moving her inside. Lights up low on the kitchen.)* Marilla.

MARILLA. Don't be long, Anne. And let Diana get on home.

(MATTHEW shuts the door. He and MARILLA settle inside. These two scenes play in parallel.)

DIANA. Oh, it's been a brilliant evening!

ANNE. Yes?

DIANA. Yes!

ANNE. Your solo was perfectly elegant.

DIANA. Oh! Did you think so?

ANNE. Of course. Did I do all right, do you think?

DIANA. Oh, Anne! Your recitations just brought down the house.

ANNE. I was so nervous. Did I groan all right?

DIANA. Oh yes! You groaned lovely.

ANNE. Really?

DIANA. Really!

ANNE. Oh, it truly has been a memorable occasion.

(They muse together for a moment looking up at the sky. MATTHEW has lit a lamp and the lights come up on the kitchen. MATTHEW and MARILLA sit a little wearily.)

MATTHEW. Well now, I guess our Anne did as well as any of them.

MARILLA. Yes. Yes, she did.

MATTHEW. Yes.

MARILLA. She's a bright child. *(Slight pause, an admission.)* And she did look real nice, too, in that dress you got her.

MATTHEW. *(Accepting the compliment.)* Yes.

MARILLA. I've been kind of opposed to this concert scheme, but I suppose there's no real harm in it.

MATTHEW. No. *(Pause.)* She's a good teacher. Miss Stacy.

MARILLA. Yes, I guess.

MATTHEW. I guess Anne will need something more than Avonlea school by and by.

MARILLA. I suppose the best thing we can do for her will be to send her to Queen's for a teacher's certificate.

MATTHEW. Queens.

MARILLA. Yes.

MATTHEW. All the way to Charlottetown.

MARILLA. It's a while yet.

MATTHEW. Yes.

(Outside.)

DIANA. It was a romantic evening, wasn't it?

ANNE. Yes.

(Inside.)

MARILLA. Anyhow, I was proud of Anne tonight.

MATTHEW. Yes.

MARILLA. Though I'm not going to tell her so.

MATTHEW. Why? *(Short pause.)* Why, Marilla?

MARILLA. It's all very well for us to be proud of her. But she's quite proud enough as it is.

MATTHEW. Hmmph!

(Outside.)

DIANA. Wasn't the boys' dialogue fine?

ANNE. Oh, yes!

DIANA. Gilbert Blythe was just splendid.

(ANNE sniffs.)

I do think it's awful mean the way you treat Gil.

(ANNE turns away.)

Wait till I tell you. When you ran off the platform after the fairy dialogue one of your roses fell out of your hair, I saw Gil pick it up and put it in his breast pocket.

(ANNE looks back at her.)

There now! You're so romantic that I'm sure you ought to be pleased by that.

ANNE. It's nothing to me what that person does. I don't waste a thought on him.

DIANA. Oh!

MARILLA. *(Opening the door.)* You girls are going to turn blue out there. Anne, come in this minute and let poor Diana run on home.

ANNE. All right. *(She hugs DIANA.)* Good night.

DIANA. Good night.

ANNE. And it *was* perfectly romantic!

(DIANA runs off and ANNE enters the kitchen. She hangs up her hat and shawl and starts upstairs.)

MARILLA. Good night, Anne.

ANNE. Good night, Marilla. Good night, Matthew.

(She starts off.)

MATTHEW. Anne?

ANNE. Yes?

MATTHEW. You were real good tonight. Your Miss Stacy said you were the "bright particular star." *(Looks at MARILLA.)* Those were her words. An'—an' we was very proud of you, Anne. *(Beat.)* Both of us.

ANNE. *(Kissing him.)* Thank you, Matthew.

(She exits. MARILLA and MATTHEW share a look. Lights. Music.)

Scene 4

(Lights up. River sound. Summer. Banks of the Lake of Shining Waters. DIANA, JANE, and RUBY are preparing the funeral barge with a black shawl. ANNE enters and lies in it. They step back to admire.)

RUBY. Oh, she does look really dead.

JANE. Eww! Yes.

RUBY. It makes me a little frightened.

DIANA. Me too.

RUBY. Do you suppose it's really right to act like this? Mrs. Lynde says that all play-acting is abominably wicked.

ANNE. *(Still trying to appear dead, but trying to keep things proper.)* Ruby, you shouldn't talk about Mrs. Lynde. This is hundreds of years before Mrs. Lynde was born. *(Sitting up.)* Oh, Jane, you arrange this. It's silly for Elaine to be talking when she's dead.

JANE. All right, Anne

(ANNE shoots her a look.)

Elaine! Come on, girls.

(ANNE resumes her pose.)

Coverlet of gold?

(DIANA covers ANNE with a yellow shawl.)

One white lily?

(RUBY puts an iris in ANNE's hand. ANNE adjusts its angle to a more artistic one.)

Now, she's all ready. We must kiss her quiet brows.

(Whispers.)

Anne... Smile a little. Elaine "lay as though she smiled." *(ANNE smiles.)* That's good. Go on girls...your speeches...

DIANA. Sister, farewell forever.

RUBY. Farewell, sweet sister.

JANE. Now push the flat off.

(They push the boat gently offstage and wave sorrowfully.)

And then we run down to meet it as the Camelot people.

(As the boat is nearly off, ANNE raises her head and smiles her excitement to the girls. Just as the boat clears the stage there is a bump and a scraping sound.)

DIANA. What was that?

RUBY. The boat hit something. I think.

DIANA. Is Anne all right?

JANE. Ruby, run up the bank and look.

(RUBY runs off stage.)

DIANA. Anne? Anne?! Are you all right?

JANE. Shhh, Diana. She doesn't want to be called Anne just now.

DIANA. But I want to know if... Ruby, can you see her? Is she...

RUBY. *(Running back on.)* Oh, no!

DIANA. What?

RUBY. The boat! Oh, my!

DIANA. What, Ruby?!

JANE. Ruby, calm down and tell us...

RUBY. It's leaking! It's leaking! Oh, no!

(She falls in a faint.)

JANE. Oh! She's fainted!

DIANA. Anne!

JANE. Ruby, get up!

DIANA. She's on the shore. Worry about her later. Anne!

JANE. Anne!

DIANA. Anne, the boat's leaking!

JANE. It's sinking!

DIANA. *(Screaming.)* Anne!!

JANE. She's not getting up. You run down the bank to where the boat drifts up. I'll get Ruby and see if we can get some help.

DIANA. All right. Anne!

(Lights. Music tag. JANE helps RUBY off.)

Scene 5

(Lights up. River sounds continue. Sound of rowing. ANNE and GILBERT roll in, GILBERT rowing, ANNE is wet.)

ANNE. I had to drift down in the funeral barge—and it started to leak.

GILBERT. Why...

ANNE. We were playing Elaine.

GILBERT. Elaine?

ANNE. *(Dulh!h!)* The Lily Maid? From "The Idylls of the King"? Tennyson???

GILBERT. Ahh.

(They have landed. ANNE jumps out of the boat.)

ANNE. I'm very much obliged to you.

GILBERT. *(He jumps out as well.)* Anne, look here. Can't we be friends? I'm awfully sorry I made fun of your hair.

(ANNE turns away GILBERT takes her hand and stops her. She lets him hold her, but doesn't look at him.)

I only meant it as a joke. I didn't mean to make you mad. Besides, it's so long ago. I think your hair is awfully pretty—honest I do. Come on. Let's be friends.

(He drops her hand and offers his to shake. ANNE ponders a moment. Looks at GILBERT. Looks away. Ponders. Looks back at him. Remembers. Breaks away.)

ANNE. No, I'm never going to be friends with you, Gilbert Blythe. I don't ever want to be!

GILBERT. *(Backing away.)* All right!

(Jumps into his boat.)

I'll never ask you to be friends again, Anne Shirley.

(Rows angrily off.)

And I don't care either!

(He rows off stage. ANNE is left looking after him. She is about to cry. Almost calls him back. Changes her mind.)

DIANA. *(Calling from off.)* Anne! Anne!

ANNE. *(Calling to her.)* I'm here, Diana!

DIANA. *(Running on, out of breath. JANE follows shortly after.)* Oh, Anne! Oh, Anne—we thought—you were—drowned. Ruby is in hysterics. We sent her for Matthew and Marilla. Oh, Anne, how did you escape?

ANNE. I climbed up on one of the bridge piles.

DIANA. How did you get here?

ANNE. Gilbert Blythe came along and rowed me to land.

JANE. *(“How romantic!”)* Oh!

DIANA. Oh, how perfectly splendid of him!

JANE. Oh, it's so romantic!

DIANA. Oh, yes!

JANE. Of course you'll speak to him after this.

ANNE. Of course I will not. And I don't ever want to hear the word "romantic" again, Jane Andrews.

(Sound of horse and buggy driving up at a gallop.)

RUBY. *(Voice Off)* There they are! There they are!

MARILLA. *(Calling from off)* Anne! Anne!

ANNE. I'm here, Marilla!

(Sound of buggy stopping. JANE runs toward it.)

JANE. Here, Marilla! She's here!

DIANA. She's all right!

(MARILLA, MATTHEW, and RUBY run on.)

She held on to the bridge!

JANE. And Gilbert Blythe came along and rowed her to shore!

MARILLA. *(Touching ANNE's face)* Anne?

ANNE. I'm really all right, Marilla. I was scared for a while, but I'm all right. Matthew?

(MATTHEW nods at her, knows she's all right. MARILLA's fear turns to anger.)

MARILLA. Will you ever have any sense?!!

ANNE. Oh yes, Marilla, I think I learned a very valuable lesson today.

MARILLA. I don't quite see how!

ANNE. Well, every mistake I make helps cure some problem in me. And this one today is going to cure me of being too *romantic*.

MARILLA. I see.

ANNE. I'm done with romance. I'm quite sure you're going to see a much more sensible Anne from now on.

MARILLA. *(Skeptically)* Well, I certainly hope so. *(She takes the girls off)* Come on, Diana. Girls. We'll drive you home.

(Exit all but ANNE and MATTHEW. They look at each other for a moment. ANNE starts off. MATTHEW stops her briefly with a hand on her shoulder.)

MATTHEW. Don't give up all your romance. A little of it is a good thing. *(A quick look toward MARILLA.)* Not too much, of course—but keep a little of it, Anne.

(They exit. Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 6

(Lights up. September evening. Kitchen, Green Gables. MATTHEW is looking anxiously out the window. MARILLA is feverishly sweeping and looking angrily at MATTHEW. MATTHEW sits. MARILLA sweeps at his feet. He escapes and shoots her a look. Goes to the window again. Turns back to his chair.)

MARILLA. This is your doings, Matthew, and I wash my hands of it. If she catches pneumonia sleeping in a strange bed in Charlottetown, don't blame me.

MATTHEW. Hmmp!

(Sound of buggy pulling up. MATTHEW runs back to the window. ANNE runs in wearing coat and carrying bag. She hugs MATTHEW.)

ANNE. Matthew!

MATTHEW. Anne!

ANNE. Marilla!

(Running to hug MARILLA and stopping short as she sees she won't be hugged back. She dives into her report.)

Oh! It was splendid. Charlottetown was so big! And, oh! Diana said her Aunt Josephine Barry was rich, but her house! It was so beautiful! *(To MARILLA.)* We got to stay in the spare room—just like Miss Barry promised. And the fair! I never imagined anything so interesting. There were thousands of people there. And the next day we went for a drive in the park.

(Sits and luxuriates in the memory.)

And that night to a concert in the Academy of Music. Oh, Marilla, it was beyond description. I was so excited I couldn't even talk. *(She remembers a moment.)* Oh, it was so beautiful! I told Miss Barry I didn't see how I can ever to return to common life again after that! Miss Barry generally laughed at almost anything I said, even when I said the most solemn things.

MARILLA. Oh, did she?

ANNE. Yes. And she said I could come back and visit her any time I wanted!

MATTHEW. Well, now!

ANNE. I've had a perfectly splendid time.

MATTHEW. Sounds as if you had.

ANNE. Thank you *so much* for letting me go!

MARILLA. Hmmp!

ANNE. I feel that it marks an epoch in my life.

MARILLA. Marks a what?

ANNE. An epoch.

MARILLA. Ah.

ANNE. *(Settling herself between them.)* But the best of it all was the coming home.

MATTHEW. Ay.

MARILLA. It's been fearful quiet here without you.

MATTHEW. *(Chuckling.)* Never seen her in such a state.

MARILLA. *(Bristling.)* Thank you, Matthew. I think I can speak for myself.

MATTHEW. I was only...

MARILLA. I can see what you were "only" doing. *(To ANNE.)* And you! Take your things from the hall and put them away in your room before someone trips over them.

ANNE. *(Exiting quickly.)* All right.

MARILLA. *(Calling after.)* Then come back down here and help me get supper.

(MARILLA sweeps angrily in silence for a moment.)

MATTHEW. Why won't you tell the girl how you feel about her?

MARILLA. I suppose because you're so ready to do it for me!

MATTHEW. Marilla.

MARILLA. I don't do that...like you and Anne.

MATTHEW. What?

MARILLA. Oh, pat—and talk—and tell each other...

(MATTHEW looks at her.)

I don't know. Sometimes I think it's—sinful—somehow—to set your heart so on another human creature as...

(She stops, hearing ANNE come back in quietly. ANNE goes to the cupboard to get out dishes. MARILLA calls her over to the table.)

Anne?

ANNE. *(Sitting.)* Yes?

MARILLA. Miss Stacy came to visit while you were in town with Diana. She wants to organize an after-school class for some of her advanced students. What do you think? Would you like to go to Queen's and pass for a teacher?

ANNE. Oh! I'd love to be a teacher. But won't it be too expensive?

MARILLA. When we took you to bring up we knew we'd need to give you a good education. So you can join the Queen's class if you like.

ANNE. (*Hugging her, over MARILLA's slight reluctance.*) Oh, Marilla, thank you! I'll study as hard as I can and do my very best to be a credit to you. Though I warn you not to expect much in geometry.

MARILLA. Miss Stacy says you're diligent. You'll get along well enough I think, if you work hard.

MATTHEW. Well, now... She said more than that.

ANNE. What?

MARILLA. That's enough now. Anne, you run on back upstairs and finish unpacking your things.

ANNE. I can help with the...

MARILLA. No, now. You start school tomorrow and you'd best be fresh and ready. Go on. Off with you.

ANNE. Thank you, Marilla.

(*She starts to leave.*)

MARILLA. Welcome home, Anne.

(*ANNE shares a look with MATTHEW, then smiles and runs out. Lights. Music.*)

Scene 7

(*Benches are set. Music out. School bell. Lights up. The next June, last day of school. The Queens Class is facing us—ANNE, JANE, RUBY, JOSIE, GILBERT and MOODY. MISS STACY's voice is heard. They focus on her in the house. Rapid-fire questions.*)

VOICE OF MISS STACY. 1st July, 1867.

(*ANNE's and GILBERT's hands shoot up. This will happen with each question. Sometimes one is quicker than the other. Sometimes they tie. They are very much aware of each other. Other students are left in their dust. Occasionally someone else puts a tentative hand up, late.*)

Gilbert.

GILBERT. Confederation, Miss Stacy. The British North American Colonies Act creates the Dominion of Canada.

VOICE OF MISS STACY. Correct. 27th April, 1813.

(*Hands.*)

Anne.

ANNE. Second American invasion of Canada, Miss Stacy.

VOICE OF MISS STACY. Yes, which battle?

ANNE. Uh...

VOICE OF MISS STACY. Gilbert?

GILBERT. American troops burn our capital at Toronto...

ANNE. Then known as York...

ANNE/GILBERT. Miss Stacy.

VOICE OF MISS STACY. Correct, both. 25th March, 1807.

(*Hands.*)

Anyone besides Anne and Gilbert? Josie?

JOSIE. (*First checking with MOODY, who hasn't a clue.*) Ummm... Uh... First American invasion?

VOICE OF MISS STACY. I'm afraid not, Josie. 25th March, 1807. Gilbert.

GILBERT. Abolition of Slavery in Canada and all British colonies, Miss Stacy.

VOICE OF MISS STACY. Right. 13th November, 1775.

(*Hands.*)

Anne.

ANNE. (*A look to JOSIE.*) First American invasion, Miss Stacy. Capture of Montréal.

VOICE OF MISS STACY. 1st September, 1864.

(Hands. She begins to choose and is interrupted.)

Umm.

GILBERT. Beginning of Confederation Conference—

ANNE. *(Overlapping:)* Confederation Conference, Miss Stacy— Held in Charlottetown—

GILBERT. *(Overlapping:)* Charlottetown—

ANNE / GILBERT. Prince Edward Island!

VOICE OF MISS STACY. Thank you, Gilbert. Thank you, Anne. You two have certainly put on a fine display for our final class together. *(The class holds its breath.)* This year, that is. *(The class rejoices.)* You've all done very good work this year. And next year will be a hard pull, you know—the last year before the Entrance Exam. Now is your chance to get out there and play! You all deserve a good, jolly vacation.

(She rings the bell. The students jump up.)

ALL. Thank you, Miss Stacy. Have a wonderful summer. See you in September, etc.

(The students are up and heading for the door. JOSIE and MOODY exit together. GILBERT watches ANNE, RUBY, and JANE.)

JANE. I'm not even going to look at a schoolbook all summer.

ANNE. I think I'm going to lock mine away in a chest in the attic!

RUBY. Oh, Anne!

ANNE. I'm serious. I might even hide the key!

(The girls laugh together. GILBERT approaches. As he does, ANNE becomes quiet and turns away a little.)

GILBERT. What's so amusing over here?

RUBY. Oh, it's Anne!

JANE. She's been telling us...

(ANNE is turning back into the scene. Will she speak to GILBERT? He cuts JANE off.)

GILBERT. I see.

(Not pointedly, but effectively, he gives ANNE his back and addresses only the other girls.)

Could I escort you ladies part of the way home?

RUBY. Sure you can, Gilbert.

JANE. That'd be nice... I guess.

GILBERT. Let's see. I've got one arm for each. How convenient.

(They each take him by an arm and exit looking over their shoulders at ANNE. She watches and sighs. Lights. Music tag. ANNE turns into the next scene.)

Scene 8

(Lights up. The next April. Early evening. Kitchen, Green Gables. MARILLA enters with MRS. LYNDE.)

MARILLA. Yes, the doctor told him to avoid excitement. And that's easy enough!

(They chuckle.)

But he's not to do heavy work either and you might as well tell Matthew not to breathe as not to work.

(MRS. LYNDE chuckles. ANNE enters.)

ANNE. Good evening, Mrs. Lynde.

MRS. LYNDE. Anne. Well, I'll leave you, Marilla.

MARILLA. Thanks for stopping by, Rachel.

MRS. LYNDE. *(Exiting)* Evening Anne.

(ANNE holds the door for her.)

ANNE. What did Mrs. Lynde want?

MARILLA. Oh, I missed the Aid Society Meeting yesterday on account of Matthew's bad spell with his heart and you know Rachel.

ANNE. Oh, yes.

MARILLA. Had to find out what it was.

(ANNE sits with her book. The room is starting to get dark.)

Only two more months before the Entrance Exams.

ANNE. I wish it was June and it was all over. It haunts me. Sometimes I wake up in the night and wonder what I'll do if I don't pass.

MARILLA. Why, go to school next year and try again.

ANNE. Oh, I don't believe I'd have the heart for it. It would be such a disgrace to fail, especially if Gilbert—if the others passed. *(Short pause.)* I want so much to...

(She ponders.)

Jane and Ruby are just going to study to be teachers. That is the height of their ambition. Josie Pye says she is just going to college for education's sake, because she won't have to earn her own living. But she says of course it is different with orphans who are living on charity. Moody McPherson is going to be a minister. *(She giggles.)* The thought of it just makes me laugh, but perhaps he will be more intellectual looking when he grows up.

MARILLA. What is Gilbert Blythe going to be?

ANNE. I don't happen to know what Gilbert Blythe's ambition in life is—if he has any.

MARILLA. *(Knowingly.)* Oh.

(MARILLA's head hurts. ANNE notices.)

ANNE. But have I been talking too much? Does it hurt your head today?

MARILLA. No. It's better now. They're coming more often now, though. These headaches. I'll have to see a doctor about them. As for your chatter, I don't know that I mind it—I've kinda got used to it. You don't chatter half as much as you used to, nor use half as many big words. What has come over you?

ANNE. I don't know—somehow I don't want to talk as much, now. *(She glances at her book.)* I'm going to finish this in my room.

MARILLA. All right. I'll call you for supper.

(ANNE kisses her forehead, exits. MARILLA sits looking after her a moment and finds herself quietly crying. MATTHEW enters. He is clearly older and has a pain in his arm and chest. He sees her crying. She chuckles a bit at having been caught at it and waves him off.)

MARILLA. I was thinking about Anne.

MATTHEW. Ah.

MARILLA. She's got to be such a big girl—and she'll probably be away from us next winter. I'll miss her terrible.

MATTHEW. Well, now. The branch railroad will be built to Carmody by that time. She'll come home to visit often.

MARILLA. *(Heading for the pantry door.)* Oh, Matthew, it won't be the same! But there—men can't understand these things!

MATTHEW. Hmmmph!

(He looks out. Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 9

(Lights up. June, outside the Avonlea Post Office. ANNE and DIANA walk in.)

ANNE. Well, the girls all say they know they didn't pass. Except for Josie, of course. But I'm sure they did pretty well. Ruby was in hysterics.

DIANA. Oh, dear!

ANNE. *(She looks inside. Disappointed.)* Oh. It's not here yet. Mrs. MacDonell said she'd post it at once. *(Back to DIANA.)* Yes, Ruby discovered a terrible mistake she had made in her English paper. Moody "knows" he flunked history.

DIANA. How did... *(Gilbert—stops herself.)*

ANNE. What?

DIANA. Oh, never mind.

ANNE. (*Knows it's about GILBERT*;) Oh.

DIANA. You know you did well, though.

ANNE. Well, I'm pretty sure I did all right. But I won't really feel good unless I pass higher than... I want to get into the top ten, at least.

DIANA. You mean you want to beat Gilber...

ANNE. No, Diana, it's not just that. Matthew is sure I can "beat the whole island"—as he says. I just *have* to pass high. For his sake.

DIANA. All right, Anne.

ANNE. I'd feel so much better if you could stay with me. The paper will be in real soon.

DIANA. I've got to meet Father. I'll come back and stay with you if I can.

ANNE. All right. Please try.

DIANA. Do you want to ride home with us?

ANNE. No, Matthew and Marilla stopped at the Abbey Bank. I'll meet them here.

DIANA. (*Seeing JANE and RUBY entering*;) Oh, here're the girls. So you won't be alone, anyway. Good luck, everyone!

RUBY. Thanks, Diana.

JANE. Not in yet?

ANNE. No.

(DIANA *exits*.)

I'm glad you're here. I didn't want to see it alone.

RUBY. Well, you sure won't have to do that!

JANE. Of course there's no telling if it will even come in today.

JOSIE. (*Entering with MOODY*;) Haunting the Post Office again today, girls?

JANE. Same as you.

JOSIE. Oh, I don't need to be here. I know I did well enough to get in. But Moody wouldn't come on his own.

MOODY. Still not here?

ANNE. No.

(GILBERT *enters as MOODY is speaking*.)

MOODY. Oh, I can't take it! I'm going home! No, I'm going to Halifax! My uncle said he'd let me apprentice as a carpenter. That's got to be a lot easier than being a minister!

ANNE. Moody.

MOODY. I'm a disappointment to my parents, anyway. I know I won't get in!

ANNE. Moody!

MOODY. I may as well just go now!

ANNE. (*Taking him aside a bit*;) Now stop it! You're a very smart boy. You know you are.

RUBY. Sure you are, Moody.

ANNE. Remember how you helped me studying for Geometry.

MOODY. Well...

ANNE. Well, I probably wouldn't have passed if you hadn't helped me with that. You're a good teacher, Moody. And you'll be a very good minister, I think.

MOODY. Well...

ANNE. Besides, you owe it to Miss Stacy. She put so much work into getting all of us ready for the Entrance.

GILBERT. Buck up, Moody. You'll pass fine. (*Going inside*;) I'm going to check.

JOSIE. You know, Jimmy Glover and Ned Wright have a bet on it.

JANE. On what?

JOSIE. Who's going to win.

RUBY. What? *(She gets it.)* Oh.

JOSIE. I told Ned it was a waste of his money. There's no doubt in the world that Gilbert can beat Anne.

JANE. Oh, Josie!

(From off stage we hear DIANA calling.)

DIANA. Anne! Anne!

ANNE. Diana! *(To the others.)* Oh, my! Oh, my! She's got a paper!

(DIANA comes in breathlessly waving the paper.)

DIANA. Anne, you've passed! Passed the very first! Well, you and Gilbert both—you're ties—but your name is first!

(ANNE takes the paper. Everyone surges around to see. GILBERT enters and joins the throng.)

Oh, I'm so proud!

(They all tear at the paper. ANNE walks away from it in a daze.)

JANE / JOSIE / RUBY / GILBERT / MOODY. Look at that! There they are! Anne! Gilbert! Can you see me? There I am! Wait, am I on there? etc. etc.

DIANA. Father brought the paper from the train at Bright River. It won't be here till tomorrow by mail— You've all passed, every one of you! Won't Miss Stacy be delighted? Oh, Anne, what does it feel like to see your name at the head of a pass list like that?

ANNE. I'm just... I never thought I could... Yes, I did. Just once.

(She looks around.)

Excuse me a minute, Diana. I have to find Matthew.

JANE. *(Looking off.)* There they are, Anne. Matthew!

DIANA / RUBY. Matthew! Marilla!

(MATTHEW and MARILLA enter at a quick pace.)

MARILLA. What? What is it, Anne?

ANNE. I've passed! And I'm first... *(A quick look, not unkind, over to GILBERT.)* ...or one of the first! May I?

(She asks for the paper from GILBERT, who is holding it. He gives it to her. She shows it to MATTHEW and MARILLA who look at it closely. MATTHEW drops his end of the paper and takes ANNE by the shoulders.)

MATTHEW. Well now, I always said it. I knew you could beat them all—easy!

(MARILLA returns the paper. She hides her intense pride in ANNE.)

MARILLA. Well, we'd better be getting on. You've done pretty well, I must say.

MATTHEW. Pretty well? Pretty well?

(He looks over at the students who shout their congratulations to ANNE. MARILLA exits. MATTHEW escorts ANNE out.)

ALL. Congratulations, Anne! It's wonderful! We're so proud of you! You did so well! Hooray! Anne!

(Lights. Music. Exit.)

Scene 10

(Music continues under GILBERT in a tight spot performing "Bingen on the Rhine" at the White Sands Hotel concert.)

GILBERT. There's another,—not a sister: in the happy days gone by You'd have known her by the merriment that sparkled in her eye; Too innocent for coquetry,—too fond for idle scorning,— O friend! I fear the lightest heart makes sometimes heaviest mourning!

Tell her the last night of my life (for, ere the moon be risen, My body will be out of pain, my soul be out of prison),— I dreamed I stood with her, and saw the yellow sunlight shine On the vine-clad hills of Bingen,—fair Bingen on the Rhine.

(Applause. GILBERT turns to watch ANNE, his spot dims. The spot cross fades to ANNE on the other side of the stage, now dressed in long skirt—a young woman. She is completing her recitation at the White Sands Concert. She is very good.)

ANNE. Bessie came, with flying footsteps, eyes aglow with lovelight sweet;
Kneeling on the turf beside him, laid his pardon at his feet.
In his brave, strong arms he clasped her, kissed the face upturned and white,
Whispered, "Darling, you have saved me, curfew will not ring to-night."

(Large crowd applauds. Music fades out. She bows. The crowd yells "Encore!")

(Then, lights change, GILBERT exits and we are in the kitchen, Green Gables. Early September. Late evening. DIANA is there with MATTHEW and MARILLA. ANNE has just finished reciting for them. DIANA claps.)

DIANA. And then they made her do a second encore!

ANNE. *(Modestly)* Oh, Diana.

DIANA. Well, they did! All those Americans ladies in all their jewels! You should be so proud, Anne! It was wonderful, Marilla. The whole of the White Sands Hotel was shouting for Anne. Go on. Do the funny one!

ANNE. No!

DIANA. Please? Matthew would love it.

ANNE. *(Sharing a look with MATTHEW)* Not now, Di. And I've kept you here too long. Your mother is going to wonder where you are. *(Picking up her shawl)* Come on, I'll walk you home.

DIANA. No, not tonight. You have to leave tomorrow. Stay with Marilla and Matthew.

ANNE. *(Looking at them)* All right, Di, and thanks. I'll see you out.

DIANA. *(Putting on her shawl and heading for the door. To MATTHEW and MARILLA)* Good night. She really was wonderful.

MARILLA. *(Smiling a little)* Yes.

DIANA. *(The girls are outside.)* You know it was Gilbert that started everyone shouting "encore."

(ANNE looks off and doesn't speak.)

What are you thinking, Anne?

ANNE. Gilbert's taking the first class degree, too. I found out to-day.

DIANA. So you'll be in the same classes again.

ANNE. I suppose. One more year. It's funny, I don't think I'd know what to do without him there to battle. My friend the enemy.

DIANA. Yes. I suppose I'd better go.

ANNE. Yes.

DIANA. You'll stop by in the morning on your way?

ANNE. Of course.

DIANA. I can't believe you're really going.

ANNE. Oh, Diana! Don't start again. You'll just get me going too. I'll be back on the train almost every week. Go on now!

DIANA. Good night, Anne.

ANNE. Good night.

(DIANA exits and ANNE returns to the kitchen.)

I declare, my recitation has made you cry, Marilla. Now, that is something to be proud of.

MARILLA. *(Waving her off)* No, no I wasn't crying over your piece. I was just wishing for a moment you could have stayed a little... "little Anne"—even with all your odd ways back then. You're going away now and you look so tall and stylish—as if you didn't really belong in Avonlea at all.

ANNE. *(Trying to hug her)* Marilla!

MARILLA. (*Brushing it off--starting to exit.*) Oh! I just got lonesome thinking it all over.

ANNE. (*Taking her hand.*) Marilla! I'm not changed. Not a bit, really. I don't care how different I may look. I *am* still your little Anne—I always will be.

(*About to cry again, MARILLA exits. Leaving ANNE and MATTHEW looking at each other. Lights. Music.*)

Scene 11

(*The benches are moved to make a train compartment. Music out under train sounds. Lights up. Next April. The Queens students are dressed as young adults now and are going home to visit in Avonlea. ANNE, JANE, RUBY, and JOSIE are seated in one compartment. GILBERT and MOODY are in a nearby compartment. Train sounds out under the dialogue.*)

CONDUCTOR'S VOICE. Carmody! Next stop, Carmody!

JANE. Just ten more minutes!

RUBY. I'm so glad to get home.

ANNE. Oh, me too.

JOSIE. Homesick for pokey old Avonlea?

JANE. Oh, Josie, just stop it.

JOSIE. Hmmp!

JANE. (*To the other two.*) I've lost seven pounds in the last two weeks studying for finals.

RUBY. Yes, this has been so much harder than I thought.

JANE. Are you ready, Anne?

ANNE. I think so. Yes.

RUBY. I wish I had your confidence.

JANE. I wish I had your brain!

JOSIE. I don't really care. If I don't pass this year I'll just come back next. My father can afford to send me.

JANE. (*Turning the conversation away from JOSIE.*) Anne, are you writing an essay for the Avery Scholarship competition?

ANNE. Yes...yes I am.

JANE. Good! My English professor said he was sure you could win it if you tried!

JOSIE. Professor Tremaine said Emily Clay would likely win the Avery scholarship and that Gilbert Blythe was sure to get the medal for first in class.

RUBY. Oh, Josie!

JOSIE. Oh, Josie!

ANNE. I'll win it if hard work can win it. Matthew would be so proud to see me go on to Redmond for a BA.

RUBY. You can do it, I know, Anne.

JANE. Yes!

ANNE. I think Marilla would...

JOSIE. But Gilbert's awfully smart at...

JANE. Oh, Josie!

JOSIE. Oh, Josie!

RUBY. Gil really is pretty smart at English, though.

(*A short pause. GILBERT walks over to the compartment.*)

GILBERT. Evening, ladies.

(*ANNE nods, the rest respond.*)

RUBY / JOSIE / JANE. Good evening, Gil(bert).

GILBERT. Ruby, I wondered if you might enjoy some company on the walk home?

RUBY. *(A quick look to the others.)* Why, sure, Gil. I guess.

GILBERT. Well, good. I'll see you when we pull in.

(He returns to his seat. RUBY blushes a little and looks to the others.)

JANE. Well.

RUBY. Well.

JOSIE. Well.

JANE. Third time Gilbert Blythe has carried your satchel home, Ruby.

JOSIE. Hmmm.

RUBY. Oh, Gil is sweet. But I really don't understand half the things he says.

JANE. Oh.

RUBY. Frank Stockley has lots more dash and go.

JANE. Ah.

RUBY. *(Looking over at GILBERT.)* But he isn't half as good-looking as Gil.

JANE. Oh.

RUBY. I really can't decide which one of them I like best.

JANE. Well, Ruby, you be sure to tell us when you figure it out.

(A short pause. RUBY has been glancing over at GILBERT and now rises.)

RUBY. It's only a few more minutes. I think I'll go over and sit with Gil the rest of the way.

(She does. The girls watch her go. JANE speaks quietly.)

JANE. You know, I never would have thought that Ruby was the sort of girl that Gilbert would like.

(ANNE looks over at them. Train sounds up slowly.)

She told me once that Gil talked just like Anne Shirley did when she had a thoughtful fit on.

(ANNE looks at JANE, then back at GILBERT and RUBY.)

VOICE OF CONDUCTOR. Carmody! Station stop is Carmody!

(Lights. Train out under music.)

Scene 12

(June. A split scene. Commencement exercises at Queens Academy. Music out and spotlight up strongly on ANNE who is downstage reading the end of her essay. Lights up low on MATTHEW and MARILLA, seated in the kitchen of Green Gables with JANE, DIANA, and MOODY, who are reporting. GILBERT, RUBY, and JOSIE are on benches downstage at the commencement ceremony.)

ANNE. *(Reading.)* In conclusion, then: I believe that each of us is possessed of a need to be "of" somewhere. We want a sense of place—a place to call "home." Perhaps those of us for whom that need was not fulfilled until later in life feel it more keenly and cherish it more closely. I do not rightly know. I do know that I deeply cherish my home—my Canada; my beautiful Prince Edward Island—with the rich red of its winding roads, the brilliant emerald of its uplands and meadows and the glowing sapphire of its encircling sea. I know that my little town of Avonlea is the loveliest spot on this lovely Island and that our homestead is the finest corner of that fine place. I have seen little of the world as yet and know not whether I ever will see more. I do know now where I belong. My name is Anne Shirley and I am "of" Green Gables.

(Loud applause from the audience. She starts to collect her papers. Lights up in the kitchen. MOODY begins in the kitchen and walks down to ANNE as he speaks.)

MOODY. Then Dean Harcum came on and said:

(Lights up on the commencement scene. He is with ANNE now and his "Dean voice" stops ANNE as she begins to exit.)

"Thank you, Anne. Miss Anne Shirley reading her essay for English Composition."

JANE. *(As the girls laugh and applaud MOODY.)* Moody, that's perfect! That's old Harcum exactly!

DIANA. Oh, Marilla, we were so sorry you two weren't feeling up to the trip. She was just splendid!

JANE. Go on, Moody. Keep doing it like the Dean!

MOODY. *(Dean voice.)* Now, let me call up your classmate, Gilbert Blythe.

(GILBERT crosses to stand beside ANNE. Audience applauds.)

I understand that the two of you have been in competition for head of class for several years now. And, I must say, this year's contest was the closest we've ever seen at Queen's Academy.

(Tension in the air. GILBERT and ANNE look at each other.)

Well, this year the winner of the Gold Medal for Top in Class is Mr. Gilbert Blythe!

(As the audience starts to applaud, he stops them.)

But wait just one moment! If Mr. Blythe intends to continue this rivalry, he'll have to go to Nova Scotia next year. Because the winner of the Avery Scholarship to Redmond College is Miss Anne Shirley!

(Wild applause. Shouts of "Anne!" "Gilbert!" ANNE and GILBERT nearly embrace but stop themselves and shake hands. The worlds shift and DIANA, RUBY, JOSIE, JANE, and MOODY swarm around ANNE and GILBERT, ushering them offstage. MATTHEW and MARILLA are now alone in the kitchen.)

MATTHEW. Reckon you're glad we kept her?

MARILLA. *(Hits him.)* It's not the first time I've been glad. *(Stifles a sob.)* You do like to rub things in, Matthew Cuthbert.

(They take hands. Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 13

(Lights up. Afternoon a few days later, kitchen, Green Gables. MRS. LYNDE sits with MARILLA knitting and ANNE reading.)

MRS. LYNDE. *(With good nature, but pointedly.)* So now she's a famous scholar, she's just going to sit around and read books while everyone else does the work?

ANNE. No!

MARILLA. It's her first day home, Rachel. She's taking a well-deserved break.

ANNE. One day! And Marilla's making me. Starting tomorrow, I do all the chores until I leave for Redmond in September.

MRS. LYNDE. Well.

MARILLA. There, Rachel.

MRS. LYNDE. I'll have to tell you plain, Anne, I don't believe in the higher education of women.

MARILLA. Oh, Rachel.

MRS. LYNDE. Unfits 'em for a woman's true sphere.

MARILLA. Maybe a woman's sphere is just getting a little broader.

ANNE. Thank you, Marilla.

MRS. LYNDE. Hmmp! And all the way to Nova Scotia?

ANNE. Well, Gilbert Blythe is going there too.

MRS. LYNDE. No he isn't.

ANNE. Yes he is!

MRS. LYNDE. No he is not. His father can't afford to send him after all. He's going to have to work for a while to earn his way through. He's applied to teach at the school here for next year.

ANNE. No.

MRS. LYNDE. It's true, Anne.

ANNE. *(Very disappointed.)* Oh!

MRS. LYNDE. I didn't think you'd be so disappointed to see the back of him.

ANNE. *(Blushing.)* Oh, I'm not...but...

MRS. LYNDE. But...?

ANNE. But nothing.

(MRS. LYNDE and MARILLA exchange a look. ANNE sees MATTHEW come into the yard. Opportunity to change the subject.)

Oh, there's Matthew! Wasn't there something you were going to tell him...

MRS. LYNDE. *(Rising up.)* Oh, yes. About the Abbey Bank.

MARILLA. Oh, Rachel, I wouldn't. I passed on what you told me last week and he didn't want to hear it.

MRS. LYNDE. Well, he'd better hear this. *(Steps outside and exits calling.)* Matthew!

(They watch her go.)

ANNE. Marilla?

MARILLA. All we have saved is in that bank—every penny. I wanted Matthew to move it to the Savings Bank, but old Mr. Abbey was a great friend of father's and we've always banked with him.

ANNE. *(Looks out the window.)* Marilla, is Matthew well?

MARILLA. No. No, he isn't. He's had some real bad spells with his heart this spring and he won't spare himself a mite. I'm hoping he'll kind of rest and pick up now you're home. You always cheer him up.

(MRS. LYNDE enters in a huff, sits, and picks up her knitting. Meanwhile MATTHEW comes into the yard and greets the mare offstage. He is very tired.)

MRS. LYNDE. You can't tell the man a thing for his own good!

ANNE. *(Jumping up.)* I'll go out. Maybe after he's rested a bit...

MRS. LYNDE. Well, I wish her good luck.

(The women are quiet in the kitchen. ANNE crosses into the yard. MATTHEW sees her and beams.)

MATTHEW. Anne!

ANNE. *(She hugs him.)* You've been working too hard today, Matthew.

MATTHEW. Hmmph.

ANNE. Why won't you take things easier?

MATTHEW. Well now, I can't seem to. So much to get done.

ANNE. If you'd let me do some...

MATTHEW. Oh, I'm just getting old, and keep forgetting it.

ANNE. I could do...

MATTHEW. No. Now, I've always worked pretty hard and...and I suppose I'd rather drop in harness. *(Clicks for the mare, she whinnies back.)* Eh? *(She whinnies again.)*

ANNE. If I had been the boy you sent for I'd be able to help you so much now. I wish I was. I wish I was.

MATTHEW. Well now, I don't. I'd rather have you than a dozen boys, Anne. Just mind you that—rather than a dozen boys.

ANNE. Oh, Matthew.

MATTHEW. Well now, I guess it wasn't a boy that took the Avery scholarship, was it? It was a girl—my girl—my girl that I'm proud of.

(She hugs him. He hugs her back—just a little. She takes his hand and pulls him toward the house.)

ANNE. Rest now. Just a little. For me.

MATTHEW. Well... All right. For you.

ANNE. Your paper came. I put it in your room.

(They walk into the kitchen.)

MRS. LYNDE. Matthew...

MATTHEW. *(Cutting her off with a wave of his hand as he passes through and exits. There is pain in his left arm and chest.)* Any bank that Mr. Abbey runs is good enough for Green Gables!

MRS. LYNDE. Oohhh! There's just no talking to him.

MARILLA. Rachel.

ANNE. Let him rest a bit. I'll see if I can talk to him about it later.

MRS. LYNDE. I wish you good luck!

MARILLA. She's got a way with Matthew.

MRS. LYNDE. Oh, I'm sure she does.

MARILLA. *(With a wink to ANNE.)* She's well-educated, you see.

MRS. LYNDE. Hmmp!

MARILLA. Besides, they're "kindred spirits."

(She shares a look with ANNE. Off stage we hear MATTHEW shout.)

MATTHEW. No! Oh, no!

(The women jump up. MATTHEW appears holding on to the door, ashen, shaking, unable to breathe or speak. He is shaking a newspaper. We might be able to read "BANK FAILURE" on it.)

MARILLA. What?!

ANNE. Matthew?!

MATTHEW. The...Bank!...

(He gasps and falls. Outside the mare stamps and whinnies loudly.)

ANNE/MRS. LYNDE. Matthew! Matthew!

MARILLA. Matthew! Oh, my dear lord!

(They crowd around him. MARILLA is shaking him.)

Matthew! Are you sick? Matthew what is it?

MRS. LYNDE. *(Feeling his pulse.)* Marilla.

MARILLA. He's fainted! That's what it is!

MRS. LYNDE. Marilla.

MARILLA. Anne, quick run into town! Get the doctor!

(ANNE jumps up and starts for the door.)

MRS. LYNDE. Anne!

(ANNE stops. MRS. LYNDE turns and stills MARILLA.)

Marilla. There's nothing we can do for him now.

MARILLA. *(Falling on MATTHEW in tears.)* Oh no! Oh no! Oh! Matthew!

(ANNE moves quickly back to MARILLA and holds her as the bells toll and lights fade.)

(In transition the cast sings a verse of a funeral hymn. MRS. BARRY and DIANA enter wearing black shawls, etc., collect MRS. LYNDE, ANNE, and MARILLA and give them some black cover-up. At the end of the hymn, MARILLA moves into the kitchen and all the rest exit. Music tag. Lights.)

Scene 14

(Lights up. A few days later, early evening. Kitchen, Green Gables. MARILLA is at the table in the twilight with her head down. She holds new glasses. ANNE enters from the outside. She sees MARILLA and gets out a match to light the lamp.)

ANNE. Marilla?

(She doesn't move.)

Marilla? Was that Mr. Sadler I passed on the lane?

MARILLA. Yes, I suppose.

ANNE. (*Has the lamp lit.*) Are you very tired?

MARILLA. Yes—no—I don't know. (*She looks up and blinks in the light.*) I haven't thought about it. It's not that.

ANNE. (*Sees the glasses on the table.*) You saw the eye specialist?

MARILLA. I saw him.

ANNE. What did he say?

MARILLA. What did he say. He says—if I give up reading and sewing entirely, and if I'm careful not to cry. (*Putting the glasses on.*) And if I wear the glasses he's given me—he thinks my eyes may not get any worse and my headaches will go away. But if I don't he says I'll be stone-blind in six months.

ANNE. Oh!

MARILLA. Blind!

ANNE. (*Thinking fast.*) He has given you hope.

MARILLA. I don't call it much hope. Not read? Or sew? I might as well be blind—or dead.

ANNE. Marilla!

MARILLA. And I can't much help crying.

ANNE. I could help. I could do all the...

MARILLA. Oh, Anne, how could you... You'll be... But there, it's no good talking about it. If you'll get me a cup of tea I'll be thankful. I'm about done out.

ANNE. (*A pause then going to start the tea.*) What did Mr. Sadler want?

MARILLA. He wants to buy Green Gables.

ANNE. Buy it! Oh, you're not going to sell Green Gables!

MARILLA. I don't know what else to do. It won't bring much. But it'll be enough for me to live on, I reckon. I'm thankful you're provided for with that scholarship.

ANNE. You mustn't sell Green Gables.

MARILLA. Oh, Anne, I wish I didn't have to. But I can't stay here alone.

ANNE. You won't have to stay here alone. I'll be with you. I'm not going to Redmond.

MARILLA. What do you mean?

ANNE. I'm not going to take the scholarship. You don't think I could leave you alone, Marilla. I've been working on this all day. Mr. Barry wants to rent the farm for next year. And I'm going to teach. They've promised the school here to Gilbert so I've applied over in Carmody. I can drive myself there and back. I have it all planned out. And I'll read to you and keep you cheered up.

MARILLA. Oh, Anne, I could get on real well if you were here. But I can't let you sacrifice all your ambitions for me.

ANNE. I'm just as ambitious as ever. This is just a bend in the road, is all. I'm going to be a good teacher—and I'm going to save your eyesight. Besides, I'm still going to study at home and take a college course all by myself.

MARILLA. I don't think I ought to let you.

ANNE. You can't stop me. I'm seventeen and a half and "obstinate as a mule," as you used to tell me. Nobody could love Green Gables the way you and I do—so we must keep it! Together.

MARILLA. Oh, I ought to stick it out and make you go to college—but I know I can't, so I ain't going to try. I'll make it up to you though, Anne.

(*She reaches out for ANNE who comes to her.*)

I don't know what I'd do if you weren't here—if you'd never come. Oh, Anne, I know I've been kind of strict and harsh with you maybe—but you mustn't think I didn't love you as well as Matthew did, for all that.

ANNE. You don't need...

MARILLA. No, I want to tell you now when I can. It's never been easy for me to say things out of my heart, but at times like this it's easier. I love you as dear as if you were my own flesh and blood and you've been my joy and comfort ever since you came to Green Gables.

(MARILLA hugs ANNE tightly. Music and Lights.)

Scene 15

(Music out. Lights up. A few days later. Beautiful sunset. Porch outside Green Gables. MARILLA is sitting comfortably with ANNE at her feet leaning against her.)

ANNE. ...She told me yesterday she thought my hair was redder than ever, or at least when I wore black it looked redder.

MARILLA. Josie's a Pye, so she can't help being disagreeable. I suppose they serve some useful purpose, but I don't know what it is any more than I know the use of thistles.

(They laugh.)

ANNE. So. Back to the Aid Society tomorrow?

MARILLA. I suppose. Back to "normal."

(They look at each other.)

You won't mind staying here alone while I'm away, will you? There's ironing and baking to do.

ANNE. I'll be all right. Diana's coming over. I'll try not to get her drunk or starch the handkerchiefs.

MARILLA. Gracious, what a girl you were for making mistakes in them days, Anne.

ANNE. (Laughing with her.) Yes!

MARILLA. Half drownding in the pond and cracking your slate over boys' heads!

ANNE. Well...

MARILLA. (Watching her a moment.) So, Gilbert Blythe is going to take the Avonlea school.

ANNE. (Might say something else. Might not say anything, then.) Yes.

MARILLA. What a nice-looking fellow he is. I saw him in church looking so tall and manly.

(ANNE doesn't say anything.)

He looks a lot like his father did at the same age. John Blythe was a nice boy. We used to be real good friends, John and I. People called him my beau.

(ANNE looks up at her.)

Thought that might get your attention.

ANNE. Oh, Marilla—and what happened? —why didn't you—

MARILLA. We had a quarrel. I wouldn't forgive him when he asked me to.

(ANNE looks away.)

I was going to—after a while—but I wanted to punish him a little before I did. He never came back. The Blythes are all mighty independent. I was... I always kind of wished I'd forgiven him when I had the chance.

ANNE. So you've had a bit of romance in your life.

MARILLA. Yes, I suppose you might call it that. You wouldn't think so to look at me, would you?

ANNE. Oh, Marilla!

MARILLA. Everybody has forgot about me and John. I'd forgotten myself. But it all came back to me when I saw Gilbert looking at you in church the other day.

(ANNE looks at MARILLA. She might speak, then smiles and looks off. MRS. LYNDE enters and wearily drops on the bench beside them.)

MRS. LYNDE. Marilla. Anne.