

ANNE OF GREEN GABLES

By Justin Arnold

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From the novel by Lucy Maud Montgomery

SYNOPSIS: Meet Anne with an E! Elderly siblings Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert asked the orphanage for a boy. What they got was Anne Shirley—a plucky redhead with a huge imagination (and an even bigger temper!) Soon, Anne burrows her way into the hearts of the Cuthberts, and the residents of Avonlea, as she grows from a hysterical twelve-year-old to a whip smart young woman who burns with ambition.

Adapted with the greatest of care and love for the material, this Canadian classic keeps a cinematic pace as it faithfully follows Anne's journey through all of her iconic moments, including ones that many stage versions often leave out. This script also more deeply explores the enemies-to-friends-to-future-lovers relationship between Anne and Gilbert that will please even the most purist 'Anne' fan.

DURATION: 100 minutes.

TIME: The early 1900s.

SETTING: Avonlea, a small community on Prince Edward Island, Canada.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(13-16 females, 5-7 males, 0-1 extra)

ANNE SHIRLEY (f).....	An imaginative and fiery orphan. Ages 13 to 16 during the play. <i>(290 lines)</i>
MARILLA CUTHBERT (f)	Stern, no nonsense lady of Green Gables. An old maid. <i>(188 lines)</i>
MATTHEW CUTHBERT (m)	Soft spoken old bachelor and Marilla's brother. <i>(63 lines)</i>
DIANA BARRY (f)	Mild mannered girl of Avonlea. <i>(64 lines)</i>

GILBERT BLYTHE (m)	The most popular boy of Avonlea. Handsome and a tease. (44 lines)
RACHEL LYNDE (f)	Out spoken and nosy neighbor to the Cuthberts. Marilla's friend. (70 lines)
MRS. HAMMOND (f).....	Anne's former keeper. Miserable and cruel. (8 lines)
MR. PHILLIPS (m).....	Pretentious, ill equipped schoolmaster. (9 lines)
MISS STACY (f)	Caring new teacher to Avonlea. (21 lines)
MRS. SPENCER (f).....	Makes a mistake in bringing Anne from the orphanage. (27 lines)
MRS. BLEWETT (f).....	Frightening woman who wishes to adopt Anne. (5 lines)
RUBY GILLIS (f).....	Silly schoolgirl. (14 lines)
JOSIE PYE (f).....	Anne's schoolyard rival who pines for Gilbert. (27 lines)
CHARLIE SLOAN (m)	Schoolboy. (2 lines)
PRISSY ANDREWS (f)	Giggly girl who has a secret romance with Mr. Phillips. (5 lines)
MOODY SPURGEON (m).....	Another school boy. Gilbert's best friend. (4 lines)
MINNIE MAY (f).....	Diana's baby sister. (2 lines)
MATRON (f)	Matron of the orphan asylum. (8 lines)
MRS. BARRY (f)	Citizen of Avonlea. (32 lines)
MRS. ALLAN (f).....	Citizen of Avonlea. (31 lines)
MISS HARRIS (f).....	Citizen of Avonlea. (12 lines)
STATION MASTER (m).....	Citizen of Avonlea. (4 lines)
DOCTOR (m)	(1 line)
MARY JOE (f).....	(Non-Speaking)

OPTIONAL DOUBLING

STATION MASTER, DOCTOR and MARY JOE can be doubled with other characters.

PRISSY, MRS. BLEWETT, and MATRON can all be played by the same actress.

MRS. HAMMOND and MISS STACY can be played by the same actress.

SET

The stage is set simply, with large framed paintings of Avonlea, a quaint community on Prince Edward Island. There is a road in the woods, a school house, church, and of course Green Gables. The action of the play flows around these “locations.”

COSTUMES

All costumes should be early 1900s dress and suitable for everyday life. The story spans multiple years, so feel free to update costume items to reflect the passage of time. Character specific costumes that are referenced in the script are listed below:

ANNE SHIRLEY – plain dress, red braids, hat, green wig, dress with puffed sleeves

MATTHEW CUTHBERT –suit

MARILLA –hat and shawl

MR. PHILLIPS – trousers and shirt.

DIANA –coat

GILBERT –cap

PRODUCTION NOTE

RIVER SCENE: For the original production the ‘boat’ was made from putting four chairs in a tight circle with a LED rippling light effect for the water. Chairs were removed with each new line. When the final was removed, a splash sound played as the lights went down.

PROPS

- ☐ carpet bag
- ☐ well-worn book
- ☐ prayer card
- ☐ sewing box
- ☐ amethyst brooch
- ☐ three plain, but new, dresses (one is unfinished)
- ☐ school books
- ☐ paper wad
- ☐ school slates
- ☐ chalkboard and chalk
- ☐ towel
- ☐ ribbon
- ☐ three sets of male under clothes
- ☐ 2 identical bottles (one for the Raspberry Cordial, one for the Currant Wine)
- ☐ tea set for two
- ☐ cherry preserves
- ☐ fruitcake
- ☐ 2 letters
- ☐ red bookmark
- ☐ plum sauce in dish with ladle
- ☐ dead mouse
- ☐ plates
- ☐ cake
- ☐ pipe
- ☐ bottle of ipecac
- ☐ rag
- ☐ fishing basket
- ☐ rake
- ☐ 20 pounds of brown sugar
- ☐ money
- ☐ small box with white organdy
- ☐ framed photograph of Matthew
- ☐ wreaths of flowers
- ☐ documents

PREMIERE PRODUCTION

ANNE OF GREEN GABLES premiered at Red Hen Theatre Company, Georgetown, KY, with the following cast:

ANNE	Ellie Mook
DIANA.....	Lily Johnson
GILBERT.....	Michael Butts
MARILLA	Beth Stone
MATTHEW	Stephen Lanham
MRS. LYNDE.....	Cynthia Lanham
MRS. BARRY	Michele Bamber
MRS. ALLAN.....	Kitty Jo Arnold
MRS. SPENCER.....	Juanita Butts
MR. PHILLIPS/STATION MASTER/DOCTOR.....	Brady Parks
RUBY GILLIS.....	Katelyn Thatcher
CHARLIE SLOAN.....	Walker Nipper
MOODY SPURGEON	Mox Francis
PRISSY/MATRON/MRS. BLEWITT.....	Caroline Dahl
MINNIE MAY	Lily Thompson
MISS STACY/MRS. HAMMOND.....	Catherine Foust
JOSIE PYE/MRS. HARRIS.....	Amy Curtis
MARY JOE.....	Ava Goodman
STUDENTS	Clay Arnold, Sophia Brock, Ava Goodman, Elyssa Noah

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

AT START: *The stage is set simply, with large framed paintings of Avonlea, a quaint community on Prince Edward Island. There is a road in the woods, a school house, church, and of course Green Gables.*

MRS. ALLEN, MRS. BARRY, MRS. SPENCER, and RACHEL enter. They sense that strangers are in their town (the audience), but they are friendly folk, happy to welcome viewers to their world.

MRS. ALLAN: 1908.

MRS. BARRY: In the little community of Avonlea—

MRS. SPENCER: On Prince Edward Island—

MRS. ALLAN: A simple, sleepy little community, set in our ways—

MRS. BARRY: And our lives.

MRS. SPENCER: Simple, no nonsense. On the most beautiful earth God created.

MRS. ALLAN: A land of little hollows, fringed with alders and ladies' eardrops—

MRS. BARRY: With intricate brooks, with dark secrets of pool and cascade, where it reaches Lynde's Hollow, where it is quiet—

RACHEL: Suspiciously quiet! Nothing can get past Mrs. Rachel Lynde's door without due regard for decency and decorum. For Mrs. Lynde was a creature capable of managing their own concerns and those of other folks. Anyone in and out of Avonlea had to pass over my hill and run the gauntlet of my all-seeing eye.

MATTHEW enters with his head down, bumping into RACHEL.

MATTHEW: Sorry—

RACHEL: Matthew Cuthbert!

MATTHEW: Morning, Rachel. (*Exits quickly.*)

RACHEL: Where could Matthew Cuthbert be going? He never goes into town this time of year, and he's wearing a suit.

MRS. ALLAN: (*A joke.*) Maybe he has a lady friend.

RACHEL: Don't be ridiculous! Oh, my afternoon is spoiled! I won't have peace of mind until I know what's going on. I shall speak with Marilla about this! (*Exits.*)

MRS. ALLAN: Yes, just what was it that had taken Matthew Cuthbert out of Avonlea today?

MRS. BARRY: Just what?

MRS. SPENCER: Or who?

Lights down on Avonlea. MRS. HAMMOND half runs in, a look of misery stamps her face. Slowly ANNE, a plucky girl with red braids and a carpet bag, follows MRS. HAMMOND in. She is lost in a reverie, taking in each and every tree, cloud, and blade of grass she passes, reading aloud from a well-worn book.

ANNE: Willows whiten. Aspens shiver.

The sunbeam showers break and quiver.

In the stream that runneth ever

By the island in the river

Flowing down to Camelot.

MRS. HAMMOND: ANNE SHIRLEY!

ANNE: Coming, Mrs. Hammond!

MRS. HAMMOND: Don't straggle, I've got enough to worry over. Come on, we're here.

ANNE stops and stares ahead. The orphan asylum.

ANNE: Four gray walls, and four gray towers

Overlook a space of flowers,

And the silent isle imbowers

The Lady of Shallot.

MRS. HAMMOND: ANNE!

ANNE hurries to catch up with MRS. HAMMOND.

MRS. HAMMOND: Give me that! *(Snatches the book from ANNE.)*

In another stage area the Green Gables kitchen is revealed. MARILLA CUTHBERT is working when RACHEL LYNDE sweeps in.

RACHEL: Marilla! I just saw your brother leaving town. What is it? What is going on?

MARILLA: Oh, I'm fine, Rachel, good to see you. And how are all the Lyndes?

RACHEL: He was wearing a suit.

MARILLA: He went to Bright River. We're getting a little boy from an orphan asylum in Nova Scotia and he's coming on the train tonight.

RACHEL: (*Stunned.*) Are you in earnest?

MATRON enters and crosses to ANNE and MRS. HAMMOND.

MATRON: What is your name, and how old are you?

ANNE: Couldn't I tell you what I imagine my name to be?

MRS. HAMMOND: Anne Shirley. She's thirteen years old.

MATRON: And what of your background, child?

ANNE: I'm afraid it isn't a very good story. But if you allow me to tell you what I imagine my background to be, you may find it most entertaining.

MRS. HAMMOND: She's been in and out of orphan asylums since she can remember. Mr. Hammond passed away recently, and I can't keep her anymore. I have my own youngins to worry about.

ANNE: Three sets of twins.

MATRON: We are overcrowded as it is, and I'm afraid we just can't take her right now.

MRS. HAMMOND: You have to take her! I have a train to catch.

MATRON: It would be at least three weeks before—

MRS. HAMMOND: She's not my problem anymore. She can sleep in the yard if she has to. Goodbye!

MRS. HAMMOND rushes out, MATRON runs after her.

MATRON: Mrs. Hammond! Mrs. Hammond! Come back here!

ANNE looks about herself, all alone.

ANNE: No time hath she to sport and play
a charmed web she weaves always
a curse is on her if she stay
her weaving either night or day
to look down on Camelot.

RACHEL: I shall be surprised at nothing after this! Nothing!

MARILLA: We've been thinking about it for some time—all winter in fact. Mrs. Spencer was here and said she was going to get a little girl. So Matthew and I talked it over off and on, and as he's getting up in years, his heart troubles him, so we sent word to Mrs. Spencer to get us a little boy while she was at it.

RACHEL: Do you have any idea what kind of little boy?

MARILLA: Oh, we figured about ten or eleven. Old enough to do chores, young enough to raise up proper.

RACHEL: You know what I meant! It's a mighty foolish thing to do!

In ANNE'S world, some time has passed.

ANNE: (*Speaking to a window.*) Oh, Katie, these times of trial are a burden upon my soul. I am trying to be noble. But I fear that even Lady Elaine could not have—

MATRON: Anne Shirley! What are you doing?

ANNE: I'm talking with my window friend. Her name is—

MATRON: Nevermind, I haven't the time for your nonsense.

MARILLA: I knew you'd approve, Rachel.

RACHEL: Why, I read about a case over in Carmody, where a family took in a little boy, and he set fire to the house and burnt them to a crisp in their beds!

MARILLA: I doubt we'll get that kind of boy.

MATRON: An elderly household on Prince Edward Island has sent word they would like a little girl. I think you will do.

RACHEL: And I also heard about this one just last week! Over in New Brunswick, here an orphan asylum child put strychnine in the well, and the whole family died in fearful agonies. Only, it was a girl in that instance.

MARILLA: Well, we're not getting a girl.

A whistle blows. Green Gables retreats into the background as the road to Avonlea comes forth. The train station. ANNE sits with her carpet bag and waits anxiously. MATTHEW enters and approaches the STATION MASTER.

MATTHEW: Was that the 5:30 from Nova Scotia?

STATION MASTER: It was the six o'clock.

MATTHEW: I see. Um, I'm Matthew—

STATION MASTER: Cuthbert? Yes, what you came for was dropped off at the 5:30. She's just over there.

MATTHEW: She? It's a boy I've come for.

STATION MASTER: We only have one orphan, sir.

MATTHEW: But we sent for a boy—

STATION MASTER: Perhaps they were out of the brand of boy you wanted. I dare say she'll be able to explain. She's got a tongue of her own.

STATION MASTER laughs as he exits. MATTHEW timidly gets closer to ANNE. She is looking out into the audience. Just as ANNE notices him, MATTHEW turns around and takes a deep breath. He turns back to her and she stands.

ANNE: Are you Matthew Cuthbert? (*MATTHEW nods.*) Oh, I'm glad. I was beginning to worry you weren't coming, and I imagined all the things that must have happened. So I had made up my mind that if you didn't, I would go across to that cherry tree and sleep until morning. It would be terribly romantic to sleep in a cherry tree, all white with bloom in the moon's light, don't you think?

MATTHEW: I'm sorry I was late. (*Starts to take ANNE'S bag.*)

ANNE: I'll carry it, Mr. Cuthbert. If you don't hold it just right the handle pulls out and I've got the knack of it. It's an extremely old carpet bag.

ANNE crosses with MATTHEW to a separate bench—the buggy—placed in front of the painting of the road.

ANNE: We've got to drive a long piece, haven't we? I'm glad. It seems so wonderful that I'm to live with you. I've been pinching myself, because I am certain it is all just a dream! I asked Mrs. Spencer about your Green Gables, and it sounds so magical! And I asked her about each tree in your yard, and I was so elated to learn you have plenty of trees. I just love trees. Oh, the roads are so red here! I asked Mrs. Spencer "what makes the roads so red?" And she said she didn't know and "for God sakes stop talking." Am I talking too

much now? Would you rather I don't talk? If you say so I'll stop. I can stop when I make up my mind to it.

MATTHEW: Talk as much as you like. I don't mind.

ANNE: I think we're going to be fast friends, Mr. Cuthbert. I can't believe I am leaving the orphan asylum. It is more horrible than you can imagine. Mrs. Spencer said it was wicked to say that, but I didn't mean to be wicked. It's easy to be wicked without knowing it, isn't it? If you had the choice to be divinely beautiful, dazzlingly clever, or angelically good, which would it be?

MATTHEW: I don't know.

ANNE: I suppose for me it'd have to be dazzlingly clever. I know with my temper I'll never be angelically good. And I can't be divinely beautiful because—(*Indicating her hair.*) What color would you call this?

MATTHEW: Red?

ANNE: Red. I know I'm skinny and freckled. And I can imagine that away. I can imagine I have dimpled elbows and a rosy complexion, but I cannot imagine my red hair away. It will be lifelong sorrow. Have you ever imagined what it would be like to be divinely beautiful?

MATTHEW: Well, no.

ANNE: I'm certain I never will be, and Mrs. Spencer says—oh, Mr. Cuthbert! These are the bloomiest trees I have ever seen! What do they call this place?

MATTHEW: The Avenue.

ANNE: No! You can't call a place such as this "The Avenue!" There's no magic in a name like that. I'll call it the White Way of Delight.

MATTHEW: Pretty, ain't it?

ANNE: Pretty isn't the right word! Nor beautiful. They don't go far enough! Oh! And what is that water of there?

MATTHEW: Barry's pond. Mr. Barry and his family, they live on it.

ANNE: The name doesn't fit. It's... it's the Lake of Shining Waters. I know that's the right name because of the thrill it gives me! Do things ever give you a thrill?

MATTHEW: Well, I reckon it gives me kind of a thrill to see them ugly white grubs spade up in the cucumber beds.

ANNE: Yes... I suppose that could be quite thrilling, Mr. Cuthbert.

MATTHEW: Matthew's fine.

ANNE: Matthew.

MATTHEW: There's Green Gables yonder.

ANNE: Oh, Matthew! I'm overwhelmed! It is even more beautiful than even I could have imagined!

Lights shift to the kitchen of Green Gables. MARILLA is setting three places for supper. MATTHEW helps ANNE out of the "buggy" and inside.

ANNE: Listen to the trees talking in their sleep. What nice dreams they must have at Green Gables.

MARILLA, at the sound of ANNE'S voice, turns curiously as they enter the kitchen.

MARILLA: Matthew Cuthbert, who is this? Where is the boy?

MATTHEW: Wasn't any boy. Just her. I figured we couldn't just leave her there.

MARILLA: Well, this is a fine kettle of fish.

ANNE: You don't want me? Because I'm not a boy? No one ever did want me. I might have known this was all too wonderful to be true.

MARILLA: Come now, no reason to cry about it.

ANNE: It's the most tragical thing that ever happened to me!

MARILLA: We're not going to turn you out of doors tonight. You'll stay here while we sort this out. What is your name?

ANNE: Could you call me Cordelia?

MARILLA: Call you Cordelia? Is that your name?

ANNE: No, but I would love to be called Cordelia. It's a perfectly elegant name.

MARILLA: Your name, and no nonsense.

ANNE: Anne Shirley. Plain, unromantic Anne Shirley.

MARILLA: Fiddlesticks, Anne is a perfectly sensible name and hardly one to be ashamed of.

ANNE: Oh, I'm not ashamed. But if you must call me Anne, be sure to spell it with an "E."

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

ANNE: It makes such a difference! Print out A-N-N and it looks absolutely dreadful! But Anne with an “E” is quite distinguished. So if you’ll only spell it with an “E,” I’ll try to reconcile myself to not being called Cordelia.

MARILLA: Very well, Anne with an “E,” can you tell us how this came to be that you are here and not a boy?

ANNE: If I was divinely 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.

ANNE: I could imagine I were a boy.

MARILLA: Take off your hat. You may as well have supper.

ANNE: I can’t eat. I’m in the depths of despair.

MARILLA: The depths of despair?

ANNE: Can you eat when you’re in the depths of despair?

MARILLA: I’ve never been in the depths of despair.

ANNE: Couldn’t you imagine you were in the depths of despair?

MARILLA: I could not. To despair is to turn your back on God. If you’re not going to eat, then you may as well go to bed. Up the stairs, door at the end of the hall.

ANNE solemnly starts off.

MARILLA: Goodnight, Anne with an “E.”

ANNE: How could you call it a good night when you know it’s the worst I’ve ever had?!

MARILLA: You come back—

MATTHEW: Let her alone. She’s had a hard time.

MARILLA: She has to go back.

MATTHEW: I suppose.

MARILLA: You suppose? I can see plain as plain you want to keep her.

MATTHEW: I could hire a boy. And she could be company for you.

MARILLA: I’m not suffering for company. She’s no good to us, Matthew.

MATTHEW: I just thought—maybe we could be of some good to her.

MARILLA: I won’t keep her.

MATTHEW: As you say. As you say.

MATTHEW and MARILLA exit. Enter MRS. ALLAN and MRS. BARRY.

MRS. ALLAN: That night, Green Gables was almost silent.

MRS. BARRY: Almost.

MRS. ALLAN: Except for Matthew's snoring.

MRS. BARRY: Marilla's pacing.

MRS. ALLAN: And the sounds of Anne Shirley—

MRS. BARRY: Crying herself to sleep.

Lights out.

SCENE 2

AT START: MARILLA enters in her hat and shawl, walking as a woman on a mission.

MARILLA: Come along, Anne!

ANNE rushes in. She is in her hat, carrying her carpet bag solemnly.

ANNE: I was trying to memorize Green Gables so that I will never forget it.

MARILLA: You'd do better to forget it. Come, we must see Mrs. Spencer.

ANNE: *(To herself.)* I suppose really it's only a house.

MARILLA stops and eyes ANNE.

MARILLA: Anne, how many houses have you stayed in?

ANNE: Quite a lot. My parents died of fever when I was three months old. Their names were Walter and Bertha Shirley. Aren't those perfectly lovely names?

MARILLA: Doesn't matter what a person's name is if they behave.

ANNE: I don't know. I read in a book once that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but I couldn't believe that. A rose couldn't smell as sweet if it were a skunk cabbage.

MARILLA: And you've been to many homes since.

ANNE: I started with Mr. and Mrs. Thomas. They had four children younger than I to look after. And Mr. Thomas died when he fell under a train. Mrs. Thomas didn't want me after that. I ended up with the Hammonds. It was a lonesome dark place, surrounded by stumps. Eight children and three sets of twins. When Mr. Hammond died—well, now I'm here.

MARILLA: Did they treat you well? The Thomases and the Hammonds?

ANNE: (*A beat.*) As well as they could manage.

MRS. SPENCER enters.

MRS. SPENCER: Ms. Cuthbert! What a surprise. I trust you're getting Anne settled in nicely.

ANNE: As nicely as can be expected.

MARILLA: I'm afraid there has been a mistake, Mrs. Spencer. We had told Roberta for you to send us a boy.

MRS. SPENCER: You don't say! But—Roberta specifically said you wanted a girl.

MARILLA: It's all my fault for not going myself.

MRS. SPENCER: But you know, as luck would have it, I know a woman who just the other day mentioned that she'd wished she had sent for a girl! She has quite a large family and needs the help.

MRS. BLEWETT: (*Offstage.*) Mrs. Spencer!

MRS. SPENCER: Why! If it isn't Mrs. Blewett now! How positively providential!

MRS. BLEWETT enters. She is hard of face and everything about her terrifies ANNE.

MRS. SPENCER: Over here, Mrs. Blewett! You've arrived at the perfect time. Ms. Cuthbert here received this girl by mistake. And you just mentioned you needed one!

MRS. BLEWETT: Ms. Cuthbert.

MARILLA: Mrs. Blewett.

MRS. BLEWETT: How old are you, girl?

ANNE: Th-Thirteen.

MRS. BLEWETT: Not much to you. But you're wiry and I don't know why but the wiry ones work the hardest. I'll expect you to earn your keep, no mistake in that. I expect you to act smart and be respectful! I'll take her.

ANNE shyly looks at MARILLA and begins to cross. MARILLA catches her arm and holds her back.

MARILLA: Well, now, I didn't say I was going to get rid of her. I reckon I—I better talk to Matthew. Think it over. Come along, Anne. Good day, Mrs. Spencer. Mrs. Blewett. *(Leads ANNE away.)*

MRS. BLEWETT: Well!

MRS. BLEWETT and MRS. SPENCER exit.

ANNE: Did you say what I think you did, or did I only imagine it?

MARILLA: I said I would think it over. Wouldn't give a dog I hated to that Blewett woman.

ANNE: I would rather go back to the orphan asylum than live with her. She looks exactly like a gimlet.

MARILLA: You should be ashamed to speak of an elder that way! Hold your tongue and behave yourself.

ANNE: I'll do whatever you like. If only you'll keep me.

Lights out.

SCENE 3

AT START: *The kitchen of Green Gables is set. MRS. BARRY, MRS. ALLAN, and MRS. SPENCER enter.*

MRS. SPENCER: The next morning, the news of what happened had crossed the entire town. Mrs. Spencer told Mrs. Allan—

MRS. ALLAN: Who told Mrs. Barry—

MRS. BARRY: Who then, of course, told—

RACHEL: *(Offstage.)* THOMAS! *(Darts across the stage.)* THOMAS! Mind the stew! I must see Marilla! Marilla! Marilla Cuthbert!

ALL exit. MARILLA is in the kitchen with ANNE.

MARILLA: What do you mean, you never say your prayers?

ANNE: Mrs. Thomas told me that God made my hair red on purpose, and I haven't cared for him since.

MARILLA: While you're under my roof, you will say your prayers.

ANNE: If you want me to. How does one do it?

MARILLA: Well, you—you kneel on the floor.

ANNE: (*As she kneels.*) Why must people kneel to pray? If I really wanted to pray, I would go out to a great big field all alone, and I'd look up into the lovely blue sky, and I'd just feel the prayer. Well, what am I to say?

MARILLA: You're old enough to make your own prayer. Thank God for his blessings, and ask humbly for the things you want.

ANNE: Gracious heavenly Father...

MARILLA: Go on.

ANNE: I thank thee for The White Way of Delight, and The Lake of Shining Waters. For Bonny and the Snow Queen—

MARILLA: Who?

ANNE: The two trees outside my window.

MARILLA: (*A sigh.*) Continue.

ANNE: As for the things I want, they're so numerous it would take a great deal of time to name them all, so I will only mention the two most important. Please let me stay at Green Gables. And please let me be beautiful when I grow up. Yours Respectfully, Anne Shirley. (*Turns to MARILLA.*) How was that?

MARILLA: Fine, if you were writing the catalog.

ANNE: I should have said "Amen."

MARILLA: You're right next door to a perfect heathen. (*Grabs a card from the table.*) Here, I want you to learn this prayer.

ANNE: (*Reading.*) "Our father who art in Heaven," how lovely!

RACHEL: (*Offstage.*) MARILLA! YOO HOO!

MARILLA: Of course, Rachel Lynde. She knows by now. Anne, go into the parlor and memorize that prayer, and when you come back in be on your best, most quiet behavior. I don't want her to know that you're a heathen!

ANNE: Yes, Mrs. Cuthbert!

ANNE reads diligently as she exits. RACHEL enters, looking about the room as though she expects to see the “orphan girl” at any second.

MARILLA: Morning, Rachel.

RACHEL: Well, where is she?

MARILLA: I'm fine. Headaches from my eyesight, but nothing I can't manage.

RACHEL: Marilla Cuthbert, don't keep me in such suspense!

MARILLA: What you've heard is all there is to it.

RACHEL: But you don't know anything about children, how do you think you'll—

ANNE enters, trying very hard to be angelically good. RACHEL eyes her, up and down, then turns to MARILLA.

RACHEL: Can't you send her back?

MARILLA: We've put her on a trial. Still considering.

RACHEL: Well, what's there to consider? She's terribly skinny and homely, Marilla.

MATTHEW enters.

MATTHEW: Morning, Rachel.

RACHEL: Come here, child.

ANNE takes a hesitant step forward.

RACHEL: Lawful heart, her hair is as red as carrots!

ANNE is suddenly angry. Her temper has quickly gotten the better of her.

ANNE: How... dare you?! Skinny, and ugly, and—and—CARROTS! You are a rude, impolite, unfeeling woman, and—I HATE YOU!

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! I hope I hurt your feelings as you've hurt mine! I HATE YOU—I HATE YOU—I HATE YOU!

ANNE runs to the sofa and throws herself down.

MARILLA: Anne Shirley, you apologize at once!

RACHEL: Well, I don't envy you the job of bringing that up! That's the kind puts strychnine in the well!

MARILLA: You shouldn't have twitted her about her looks—I'm not defending her, she's never been taught what is right, and you were too hard on her, Rachel.

RACHEL: Well, I see I shall have to be careful what I say after this. Oh, I'm not vexed, Marilla. I'm too sorry for you to leave any room for anger in my mind. I hope you'll come down and see me as often as usual. But don't expect me here again if I'm to be insulted in such a fashion! (*Nods to MATTHEW.*) Matthew.

RACHEL storms out. MARILLA slowly crosses to ANNE.

MATTHEW: Marilla—

MARILLA: —I want no interference, Matthew. I don't know much about children, but I know far more than an old bachelor like you!

MATTHEW: As you say. As you say.

MARILLA: Anne... aren't you ashamed of yourself?

ANNE: She had no right to call me those things.

MARILLA: You hadn't any right to fly into such a fury.

ANNE: How would you feel if someone called you ugly?

MARILLA: I've been called ugly.

ANNE: Then you must know how I feel!

MARILLA: You've done a very wrong thing. Mrs. Lynde is our neighbor, your elder, and my friend. And you must go to her and apologize.

ANNE: You can shut me up in a dark, damp dungeon inhabited by snakes and toads and feed me only on bread and water. I shall not complain. But I cannot ask Mrs. Lynde to forgive me.

MARILLA: Then you cannot stay at Green Gables. Soon all of Avonlea will hear of this. I won't have us disgraced.

MARILLA storms out. MATTHEW seems unsure of what to do, but slowly sits next to ANNE.

MATTHEW: Marilla's a dreadfully determined woman. Don't you think you ought to have it over with?

ANNE: I cannot apologize. I'm not sorry! I'm sorry I vexed Marilla, and I'm sorry I flew into a temper. But I'm not sorry for what I said.

MATTHEW: Can't—can't you just sort of smooth it over?

ANNE: Matthew... you don't want me to go. Do you? (*MATTHEW shakes his head.*) Very well. I'll apologize. But only for you.

ANNE hugs MATTHEW. He is taken aback, but then returns the embrace. Like a father and daughter. They hear MARILLA returning and MATTHEW quickly stands and goes to the table. MARILLA enters.

ANNE: I am ready to apologize to Mrs. Lynde.

MARILLA: Well. See, Matthew? I told you. If we left her alone, she'd come to her senses. Come along, Anne.

ANNE and MATTHEW exchange a look and fight the urge to laugh. MARILLA opens a sewing box and takes out a fine amethyst brooch, which she pins to herself.

ANNE: Oh, Ms. Cuthbert! That is perfectly elegant!

MARILLA: I wear it on Sundays only—that and important calls.

ANNE: I think it's just sweet. An amethyst is what I used to think diamonds were like. I read about them and tried to imagine what they would be like. Then I saw real diamond and was so disappointed I almost cried—

MARILLA: —Hold your tongue, child! And use the silence to think up what you are to say to Mrs. Lynde!

MARILLA exits and ANNE rushes to follow. MATTHEW finally bursts into a fit of laughter. Lights out.

SCENE 4

AT START: *Lights up. RACHEL sits in a chair on her porch. MARILLA and ANNE enter.*

MARILLA: Good afternoon, Rachel.

RACHEL: Marilla.

MARILLA: Anne has something that she would like to say to you.

MARILLA nudges ANNE forward. ANNE falls to her knees and clasps her hands together.

ANNE: Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I am so extremely sorry. I behaved so terribly to you—and I've disgraced my dear friends, Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert, you have let me stay at Green Gables even though I am not a boy. What you said about me was true. I am skinny, and my hair is red. What I said about you was true, too, only I shouldn't have said it. Oh Mrs. Lynde, please, please forgive me. If you refuse it will be a lifelong sorrow to me. You wouldn't like to inflict a lifelong sorrow on a poor little orphan girl, would you, even if she did have a dreadful temper? Please say you forgive me, Mrs. Lynde!

MRS. LYNDE is unsure what to think, but finds herself quite flattered.

RACHEL: There, there, get up, child. Of course I forgive you. I guess I was a little hard, but I always speak my mind. Don't I, Marilla? (*MARILLA rolls her eyes.*) You mustn't mind me. I pride myself on speaking my mind! And as for your hair, I once knew a girl whose hair was every mite as red as yours when she was young, but when she grew up it darkened into a real handsome auburn.

ANNE: Oh, Mrs. Lynde! You have given me hope. I shall always feel that you are a benefactress!

RACHEL: And while she's staying, Marilla, you really ought to put the girl in school. Be around children her own age.

MARILLA: You're right, Rachel. I suppose I should.

RACHEL: Those children will be a good influence.

MARILLA: Quite right.

ANNE: I'm overwhelmed!

MARILLA: Don't get too excited. It's just as easy to take you out as put you in.

ANNE: It's just, children my own age. A real friend! I've always wanted a bosom friend.

RACHEL: A what?

ANNE: A bosom friend. A real kindred spirit. I've only ever had Katie. My window friend.

MARILLA: Window friend?

ANNE: My reflection. I made her as a friend at the Thomases. She lived in the bookcase glass. The only glass left unsmashed by Mrs. Thomas's intoxicated husband.

RACHEL and MARILLA look at each other darkly.

MARILLA: I don't want you speaking to anymore window friends.

RACHEL: I will speak with Mrs. Barry. Her daughter Diana is about your age. And she's quite mannered.

ANNE: Oh, thank you, Mrs. Lynde! Thank you, Ms. Cuthbert!

MARILLA: You may call me Marilla.

ANNE: Could I call you Aunt Marilla?

RACHEL: Aunt...

MARILLA: I am not your aunt.

ANNE: But couldn't you imagine you're my aunt? Don't you ever imagine things differently than they are?

RACHEL: Marilla?! Imagination?! Ha!

MARILLA: No. I do not imagine things.

ANNE: Oh, Marilla, how much you miss.

Lights out.

SCENE 5

AT START: *The Green Gables kitchen. Two plain, but new, dresses hang on the chairs. MARILLA is holding up a third unfinished one to ANNE.*

MARILLA: You'll wear that one there for Sundays, and these others will be your school clothes. How do you like them?

ANNE: I could imagine I love them.

MARILLA: I beg your pard—

ANNE: Oh, I don't mean that I don't like them!

MARILLA: Then what it is it? Aren't they neat, clean, and new?

ANNE: Yes.

MARILLA: Then what?

ANNE: They—They're not pretty.

MARILLA: Pretty... I won't pamper your vanity. These are good and sensible dresses, and they'll get you through the year. I should think you'd be grateful after the one dress you came in.

ANNE: Oh, I am grateful! But I'd be ever so much gratefuller if you make just this one with puffed sleeves. It would give me such a thrill to wear a dress with puffed sleeves!

MARILLA: You'll just have to go without the thrill. I won't waste material on those ridiculous-looking things.

ANNE: I'd look rather ridiculous when everyone else is wearing them and I'm plain and sensible all by myself.

MARILLA: Trust you for that.

MARILLA rummages in her sewing box. Then she notices something wrong.

MARILLA: Anne, have you seen my amethyst brooch?

ANNE: Yes.

MARILLA: Where?

ANNE: This afternoon when you were at the Aid Society. I passed the basket when I saw it on the cushion, and I went to look at it. I—I was so smitten that I held it up to catch the light. Then I couldn't resist pinning it on myself to see how it would look.

MARILLA: You had no business touching my things.

ANNE: I'm terribly sorry. I put it back on the cushion almost immediately!

MARILLA: You did not. For it is gone. By your own admission, you were the last person to handle it. Did you take it out and lose it?

ANNE: No, ma'am.

MARILLA: You are telling me a falsehood. I demand to know what's happened to my brooch at once.

ANNE: I told you all I know!

MARILLA: Stop lying. You will go up to your room and stay there until you are ready to confess. Even if it takes a month of Sundays!

ANNE: But how will I ever make a bosom friend?!

MARILLA: That brooch is a priceless family treasure. It meant a great deal more to me than a bosom friend. Go, until you confess!

ANNE starts to go. Stops.

ANNE: I took it, just as you said. It was so beautiful. I pinned it on my breast and was overcome by irresistible temptation. I imagined how perfectly thrilling it would be to play that I was Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald, and I took it out to the Lake of Shining Waters. When I leaned over the water to see my reflection—it slipped down, down, down into the purple sparkling water evermore. And that's the best I can do at confessing.

MARILLA: You are the wickedest girl I ever heard of. Go to your room, Anne. And pack your things.

ANNE: But you said if I confessed—I—but I can't possibly imagine what happens—

MARILLA: What you can do, is imagine your life with Mrs. Blewett! Go!

ANNE runs out in tears.

MARILLA: I'm going to see Mrs. Spencer, and I trust you'll be ready to go when I return!

MARILLA lifts her shawl to wrap around herself. When she does there is a thunk. She bends down and picks up—the brooch. She sighs.

MARILLA: Anne, come back, please.

ANNE slowly returns. MARILLA shows her the brooch.

MARILLA: I've found the brooch. What is that rigmarole you just peddled?

ANNE: You said I couldn't leave my room until I confessed. So I imagined what might have happened if I'd taken it.

MARILLA: But it was a lie.

ANNE: You wouldn't believe the truth.

MARILLA: Anne, you do beat all. But I was wrong—I see that now. I shouldn't have been so quick to judge your word when I've never known you to lie. I drove you to it. If you forgive me, I'll forgive you. We'll start square.

ANNE: I forgive you, Marilla.

MARILLA: Well, don't stand there like a martyr, go wash up for supper. You start school in the morning.

ANNE excitedly exits.

MARILLA: Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald...?

Lights out.

SCENE 6

AT START: *Lights up on the school yard. JOSIE PYE, PRISSY ANDREWS, RUBY GILLIS, CHARLIE SLOAN, MOODY SPURGEON, MINNIE MAY, and GILBERT BLYTHE populate it. ANNE enters with DIANA BARRY, a mild mannered dark haired girl.*

ANNE: I've been given instructions not to talk your head off, Diana. I'm afraid I do have a habit of chattering on. If I could imagine myself as a bird, I do believe it would be a magpie. As it is, I shall imagine myself as a nun, taking the vow of silence. (*Shuts her mouth tight.*) Oh, a beautiful nun! A young woman who has resigned herself to a life in a convent, after the end of a tragical romance.

DIANA laughs. ANNE spots the schoolyard.

ANNE: Oh, Diana! I've always imagined what the inside of a school house looked like! And all the people my own age!

DIANA: Would you like to meet them?

ANNE: Not just yet. I'm rather nervous.

PRISSY giggles.

DIANA: That's Prissy Andrews. She's studying her entrance to Queens College and—(*Drops her voice to a whisper.*) Mr. Phillips is dead gone on her. Quite a scandal! (*Points to the boys.*) That's Moody Spurgeon and Charlie Sloan. I would ignore them when you can. Boys are dreadfully ignorant, don't you think?

ANNE notices GILBERT. He spots her, smiles.

GILBERT: Diana! Who's your friend?

DIANA: (*Snooty.*) Anne Shirley.

ANNE and GILBERT make eye contact. He winks at her. ANNE immediately puts her nose up. GILBERT shrugs, turns away.

ANNE: Your Mr. Blythe is very forward to wink at a strange girl.

DIANA: Don't you think he's handsome? I wish he would wink at me.

His father was ill and he's been gone from class for three years.

ANNE: Good. I mean, I don't want to be the only one behind.

JOSIE: Oh, Gil-bert!

GILBERT goes to JOSIE, they flirt.

DIANA: That's Josie Pye. She's spoken for Gilbert and moons over him terribly. It's too bad you weren't at the Sunday School picnic. She fell from her row boat—on purpose to show off—and nearly drowned! It was hysterical.

ANNE: I wish it were me. It would be so romantic to nearly drown!

DIANA: I'd heard you were a strange girl, Anne Shirley. But I think we're going to be fast friends!

MR. PHILLIPS, a pretentious and snobby teacher, enters in a whirlwind.

MR. PHILLIPS: Children! Children, to your seats! (*Stops at ANNE.*)
And you are?

ANNE: Anne Shirley.

MR. PHILLIPS: Ah. Yes. The orphan girl. Well, as you must know, Miss Shirley, I pride myself on scholastic achievement—(*ALL STUDENTS twitter with laughter.*) Silence! I expect you to meet our standards.

ANNE: I'm sure I will! I've taught children younger than myself to read before. I'm certain we will find ourselves in equal company. (*MR. PHILLIPS is highly offended.*) But before we go further, I would like to ask you to please spell my name with an "e." That is, unless you would like to call me by my inner name.

MR. PHILLIPS: Your inner name?

ANNE: For my inner self, of course. How I imagine myself to be. You could call me Cordel—

MR. PHILLIPS: Have a seat with Miss Barry.

ANNE: Oh, thank you, Mr. Phillips! Diana is my bosom friend!

MR. PHILLIPS is exasperated with the school day already. As ANNE sits, he paces the aisle.

MR. PHILLIPS: Alright, children. Please turn to page thirty-four and read your lesson. Silently! I must work with my Queens Student now.

PRISSY giggles as he joins her at her seat. DIANA immediately starts whispering something salacious to ANNE, who suppresses her giggling. She turns to her lesson. She looks back at MR. PHILLIPS, and on the way catches the eye contact of GILBERT. He winks again and she turns away. He tosses a paper wad at her. She doesn't respond.

GILBERT: Psst! (*No response.*) Psst!

When ANNE makes a point of not looking at him, he leans over and pulls on her braid.

GILBERT: Hey, Carrots! Carrots!

ANNE sees red. She stands and raises her slate over GILBERT'S head.

ANNE: HOW DARE YOU?!

CRACK! She breaks the slate on his head. There is an uproar in the schoolroom as MR. PHILLIPS flies to ANNE and takes her by the arm to the front of the class.

MR. PHILLIPS: Anne Shirley, what does this mean?!

GILBERT: It was my fault, sir. I teased her.

MR. PHILLIPS: Sit down, Mr. Blythe! *(On the chalkboard, he writes:)*
“Ann Shirley has a very bad temper.” You will stand in front of this for the rest of the day. Silence! To your lesson! Prissy, resume!

MR. PHILLIPS returns to PRISSY. When he isn't looking, ANNE lifts a piece of chalk and adds the “e” at the end of her name. Lights out.

SCENE 7

AT START: *MRS. BARRY, MRS. ALLAN, RACHEL, and MRS. SPENCER enter.*

MRS. BARRY: Never before had Mr. Phillips—

MRS. ALLAN: Or Avonlea—

MRS. BARRY: Seen a pupil with such a temper and vindictive spirit!

RACHEL: Many found it strange, that Marilla Cuthbert should find herself with the Anne girl—

MRS. SPENCER: For she, too, had been a tempered youth.

MRS. BARRY: And stranger still—that the boy should be Gilbert Blythe, son of John Blythe.

MRS. SPENCER: Who'd had his own dealings with young Marilla Cuthbert.

MRS. ALLAN: Indeed, it seemed as though history were playing before our eyes.

ANNE crosses with DIANA. GILBERT catches up with her.

GILBERT: Anne, wait! I'm sorry for teasing you about your hair. Don't be mad at me for keeps.

ANNE ignores him. GILBERT exits.

DIANA: You've some nerve! Gilbert never apologizes, and you ignore him?

ANNE: I shall never forgive Gilbert Blythe. Never!

DIANA and ANNE exit.

MRS. SPENCER: Such a repetition of the past spread quickly of course. From Mr. Phillips to Mrs. Spencer—

MRS. BARRY: From Mrs. Spencer to Mrs. Barry—

MRS. ALLAN: Mrs. Barry to Mrs. Allan, who then told Rachel Lynde—

RACHEL: And, of course, I had the solemn duty to inform Marilla!

MRS. SPENCER, MRS. BARRY, MRS. ALLAN, and RACHEL exit as MARILLA enters the kitchen of Green Gables in a fury.

MARILLA: ANNE SHIRLEY! You come down here at once!

ANNE: (*Offstage.*) Leave me be, Marilla! I'm in the depths of despair!

MARILLA: Fiddlesticks, I demand you come downstairs, or I'll—

ANNE enters—a towel hiding her head. She fumbles her way to the table and sits.

MARILLA: Heaven's sakes, child, what are you doing?

ANNE: I can never show myself again, Marilla. It shall be a lifelong penance on my vanity.

MARILLA: Don't play victim, what do you mean by breaking a slate over some boy's head?

ANNE: He called me carrots!

MARILLA: I don't care what he called you, now take that thing off—

MARILLA yanks off the towel.

ANNE: No!

MARILLA: Child! What have you done?!

ANNE'S hair has gone from its carrot-red to a sickly shade of green.

ANNE: I thought having red hair was terrible, but green is so much worse. You little know how wretched I am.

MARILLA: I little know how you got into this fix. But I demand you tell me.

ANNE: I dyed it.

MARILLA: Dyed it?!

ANNE: He told me it would turn my hair a beautiful raven black.

MARILLA: He? Who?

ANNE: The peddler we met on the road today.

MARILLA: I absolutely forbid you to—

ANNE busts into sobs. MARILLA softens at this.

MARILLA: Well, I hope you've learned now where vanity can lead you.

ANNE: Gilbert Blythe had no right to tease me.

MARILLA: Blythe, eh? And you really broke the slate on his head? Hard?

ANNE: Very hard, I'm afraid.

MARILLA suppresses a smile.

MARILLA: I should be furious. What a way to behave! But, if you assure me that something like this will never happen again, I won't bring it up.

ANNE: What do you mean, Marilla?

MARILLA: I mean... your trial is over. You will stay with us at Green Gables.

ANNE: Oh, Marilla! You mean it?

MARILLA: On the condition we fix that shrub growing from your head. Dyed it. It'll have to come off.

ANNE: Cut my hair?!

MARILLA: It'll grow back.

ANNE: If it means I may stay at Green Gables, I'll cut it off myself if I have to.

MARILLA: Well, let's get on with it. *(Takes a step away. Stops.)* You may be a kindred spirit after all.

Lights out.

SCENE 8

AT START: *MRS. ALLAN, MRS. SPENCER, MRS. BARRY, and RACHEL enter.*

RACHEL: The thing about Avonlea is that time here seems to flow on—

MRS. SPENCER: Like a brook, babbling in the woods.

MRS. BARRY: It is autumn, and before you've finished your needle point, the snow fall has begun.

MRS. ALLAN: It seems Christmas is hardly over and comes the spring with its rain.

RACHEL: And the earth grows back.

MRS. SPENCER: The blades of grass grow back.

MRS. BARRY: The leaves grow back—

MRS. ALLAN: And your hair grows back.

MRS. SPENCER: The skinny orphan girl you brought on the train was springing up with the lilies. Fourteen years old, and already becoming a young lady—

RACHEL: I'll miss those braids.

MRS. ALLAN, MRS. SPENCER, MRS. BARRY, and RACHEL exit as the sounds of hysterical sobbing ring offstage. It is PRISSY, who runs in with JOSIE and RUBY comforting her. ANNE and DIANA enter from the opposite side. ANNE is now wearing her hair down with a ribbon.

PRISSY: HE CAN'T LEAVE! HE SIMPLY CAN'T! HE MUSTN'T!

DIANA: What's happening?

JOSIE: Haven't you heard?

RUBY: Oh, I can't say! It's a sin to gossip!

ANNE: It's not gossip to clue us in.

JOSIE: Isn't it a relief that people are talking about something that finally isn't your fault?

ANNE: I suppose it would be a relief to small minded silly girls. Don't you agree, Josie?

JOSIE: Just for that, I'll only tell Diana.

DIANA: What is it?

JOSIE: Mr. Phillips is leaving Avonlea.

ANNE: Leaving?! Why?

JOSIE: I'm only telling Diana!

DIANA: Why is he leaving?

RUBY: Guess.

PRISSY: I'LL POSITIVELY PERISH WITHOUT HIM! HE'S THE FINEST TEACHER I'VE EVER HAD! SO, SO SMART AND, AND—oh, Josie, his hair!

JOSIE: I suppose.

PRISSY: And the way his trousers fit. So—So—picturesque. So—So—devilish. SO MANLY.

ANNE: Mr. Phillips?

MR. PHILLIPS runs in and goes to PRISSY.

MR. PHILLIPS: No, Priscilla, we mustn't have tears! We must be brave. I shall return to you. You shan't wither on the vine.

PRISSY: I shall wait for you, dear Mr. Phillips.

MR. PHILLIPS: Please. Call me Angus.

MR. PHILLIPS kisses PRISSY'S hand and exits. PRISSY is smitten.

PRISSY: Your name is Angus? ANGUS! DON'T GO!

PRISSY runs out after him.

ANNE: I never pegged Mr. Phillips as the sort to have a tragical romance.

JOSIE: What do you know about boys?

DIANA: I'll bet Anne knows a lot! She reads romances!

JOSIE: She can read, so what? You know nothing of the boys on the island.

ANNE: I could imagine that I would, if I cared for any of the boys on the island.

DIANA: And we all know who Josie cares for.

JOSIE: Diana!

RUBY: I hear Gilbert Blythe is down by the brook. Shall we go take a peek and see how he looks when he swims?

JOSIE: Ruby! No!

DIANA: Ruby Gillis, that's sinful!

RUBY: Sometimes I don't care!

JOSIE: We can't go, Ruby. I believe he's out there with Moody Spurgeon!

ANNE: Ruby! You're fond of Moody?

RUBY: Don't be so innocent. We all know Charlie Sloan is dead gone on you!

ANNE: ME?

DIANA: I wish he was dead gone on me!

JOSIE: He will be, once he realizes Anne would marry a book if she could.

ANNE is about to respond when GILBERT, CHARLIE, and MOODY enter. They carry wet underclothes, having been swimming.

GILBERT: Afternoon, ladies.

CHARLIE: It's awful hot out, care for a swim? Ruby? Diana? Anne?

ANNE: I—I'm afraid I cannot swim.

CHARLIE: I'll teach you.

MOODY: Come on in, Ruby, the water's great!

MOODY wrings out his shirt over RUBY, who squeals in horror. The BOYS flick their wet clothes at the GIRLS, laughing. JOSIE goes to a nearby log and stands on top.

DIANA: Stop this instant!

JOSIE: Oh Gil-bert! I'll go for a swim.

GILBERT: Are you sure you could manage?

JOSIE: I believe I can be athletic.

JOSIE balances on the log and jumps into GILBERT'S arms.

ANNE: I suppose some think it to be an accomplishment to walk a little log. Why, I knew a girl once in Nova Scotia who could walk the ridgepole of a roof!

JOSIE: You're lying. You certainly couldn't, Little Miss Bookworm.

ANNE: Couldn't I?

JOSIE: I dare you! I dare you to walk the ridgepole of the school house roof.

ANNE: Very well.

DIANA: Anne!

ANNE: What?

GILBERT: It's just—it's a little dangerous, don't you think?

ANNE: Is it, Mr. Blythe?

Challenged, ANNE walks out with dignity. The BOYS and GIRLS form a small crowd and look up into the sky.

DIANA: She was determined.

MOODY: Climbing up the rain drain with fast ease, and balancing on top as though it were nothing.

RUBY: She stuck her arms out for balance, and looked down on us—

GILBERT: On me. Looked down right at me.

JOSIE: And she stuck her nose in the air and started to walk. Slowly.

DIANA: A quarter way. Then half the way, and then—

RUBY: She swayed!

MOODY: She wobbled.

JOSIE: *(With delight.)* And then—

We hear ANNE scream, and a thump on the ground. The BOYS and GIRLS shout and scream as they run about. DIANA is hysterical, and she runs out, coming in with a limping ANNE around her shoulder.

DIANA: Oh, Anne! Please don't be killed! Please—please tell me if you're killed!

ANNE: Not killed. But I think I've been rendered unconscious.

JOSIE: I told you! I told you, you'd never make it!

GILBERT: Josie, please! (*Crosses to ANNE.*) Let me help you.

ANNE: That will not be necessary, Mr. Blythe. Diana, help me walk to Green Gables.

DIANA: I really could use the help with you—

ANNE: Shh!

DIANA and ANNE start the limp out. CHARLIE, MOODY, GILBERT, RUBY, and JOSIE exit.

ANNE: It is the beginning of our school holiday. I won't be laid up in bed for a week, knowing that Gilbert Blythe is out there bragging about his rescue of me.

DIANA: Gilbert isn't the type to brag.

ANNE: And I'm not the type to give him satisfaction. All school year he's made it a competition to show me up, and then to find out we'd tied for first. Tied! After all my work.

DIANA: Gilbert wants to learn too, Anne. And he doesn't mind that he tied. Why, I heard that he found out, he was honored, and he told Moody Spurgeon that being smart was far better than being pretty.

ANNE: How dare he?!

DIANA: He didn't mean it as an insult.

ANNE: I'm sure he did. And I'll never forgive him! Never!

They exit. Lights out.

SCENE 9

AT START: *The kitchen of Green Gables. MARILLA is preparing to leave when ANNE enters.*

MARILLA: I'm off to the Ladies Aid Society. Wish me luck, we're to take the matter of the woman's vote to the Premiere when he comes touring at the end of the year.

ANNE: Give them the good what-for, Marilla! (*MARILLA gives ANNE a look.*) I'm sure you'll be absolutely eloquent.

MARILLA: And how is your ankle?

ANNE: Perfectly healed. I am sure I will be the perfect hostess for my tea guest. Oh Marilla, may I use the rosebud set?

MARILLA: No, the brown set will do for your company. But! You may have the cherry preserves. And the fruitcake, and there is a bottle of Raspberry Cordial in the pantry that the two of you may share.

ANNE: I've never had Raspberry Cordial! Could you possibly imagine how elated I am? Just last night, I was imagining what it must be like to be Lady Elaine in Camelot, sharing a glass of cordial with a handsome knight—

MARILLA: Well, it's evident that the fall didn't injure your tongue. I expect you and Diana to behave yourselves. And mind you don't be too greedy with the sweet and get stomach aches.

ANNE: We will be the epitome of lady likeness.

There is a knock and DIANA enters.

MARILLA: You're company has arrived, Lady Elaine. Good afternoon, girls.

MARILLA nods and exits. ANNE and DIANA immediately pretend they are high society.

ANNE: May I take your coat, milady?

DIANA: I would be much obliged, miss.

ANNE takes DIANA'S coat.

ANNE: How is your mother?

DIANA: Quite well, thank you. And I suppose Mr. Cuthbert is hauling potatoes to the Lily Sands this afternoon, is he?

ANNE: Indubitably. Our crop is quite right this year. I do hope yours is as well.

DIANA: Fair. Have you picked many of your apples yet?

ANNE can't contain herself anymore.

ANNE: Ever so many! And Marilla said we could have the fruitcake and the cherry preserves! And! And! And! I have a surprise!

DIANA plops herself on a chair while ANNE goes to the pantry. There are two bottles, but both of them have nearly illegible labels. She considers them both and presents one to DIANA.

DIANA: Raspberry Cordial!

ANNE: You mean you've had it?

DIANA: Of course, haven't you?

ANNE: I confess I have not. *(Puts the bottle and a glass in front of DIANA.)* But you have as much as you like. *(Back to high society.)* I mustn't forget my duties as hostess.

ANNE begins preparing the tea set and cutting up the sweets as DIANA pours herself a glass and takes a sip. It is strange to her, but tasty. She doesn't know it yet, but she is actually drinking Currant Wine.

DIANA: It's ever so nice! Much better than Mrs. Lynde's. She brags about hers all the time.

ANNE: Marilla is a famous cook. I'm not surprised. She's trying to teach me to cook, but it's all uphill. There is no scope for the imagination. You must follow the recipe exactly. Last time I made a cake I forgot to put in flour!

DIANA has finished her glass and pours more. ANNE is getting lost in a reverie over her sweets and tea.

ANNE: I forgot because I began to imagine the loveliest story about you and I. You had become desperately ill with smallpox and everybody deserted you.

DIANA finishes her second glass and is feeling very relaxed. She pours herself another.

ANNE: I went boldly to your bedside and I nursed you back to life. And then I took the smallpox and died—

DIANA giggles softly as she drinks even more wine. She is quite tipsy by now.

ANNE: And you never forgot the friend of your youth who sacrificed her life for you. Oh, it was such a pathetic tale, Diana.

DIANA has finished the wine and is getting drunk. She starts to life.

DIANA: Oh, no Anne! You—ha—you didn't—ha ha! You died! Ha, ha, ha! Died of—smallpox—ha, ha!

ANNE: I suppose it could have been humorous...

DIANA: It's just—oh! Ha! Ha! That's so—ridiculous!

ANNE: Tears rained down my cheeks as I mixed the cake and forgot to put flour in. I guess that's the funny part.

DIANA: It's not—funny—ha, ha, ha. *(Suddenly solemn.)* I don't feel so good.

ANNE: Oh no. It's the start of the smallpox epidemic! *(Crosses to DIANA'S side.)* I won't desert you.

DIANA: I gotta go home.

ANNE: You've only just arrived! Here, have a piece of cake.

ANNE offers DIANA a plate. DIANA tries to take a bite but drops the piece.

DIANA: I'm sick, I gotta go home.

MARILLA enters with MRS. LYNDE, MRS. BARRY, and MRS. ALLAN.

MARILLA: Terribly sorry, but I won't be a moment, ladies. Hello girls, I'm afraid I left my brooch. I don't know how I could forget.

ANNE: Marilla...

DIANA: I gotta go home! (*Spots her mother and wobbles to her.*) Hello, Mommy.

MRS. BARRY: Diana?

RACHEL: Land's sake! She's drunk!

DIANA vomits on the floor.

MRS. BARRY: My Diana. Drunk! And Mrs. Lynde the head of the Ladies Temperance Society!

MARILLA: Anne Shirley, what is the meaning of this?

ANNE: I only gave her raspberry cordial!

MARILLA: Fiddlesticks! (*Picks up the bottle and sniffs.*) Anne! This is Currant Wine, can't you tell the difference?

ANNE: I've never tasted either!

MRS. BARRY: You are a wicked, wicked girl, Anne Shirley! I ought to have known better than to let my daughter associate with a common orphan!

MRS. ALLAN: Now, Mrs. Barry, we are all God's children and it's clear she made a mistake.

MARILLA: I'm afraid it's all mine. I must have stored the cordial in the cellar by mistake.

MRS. BARRY: Nevertheless, I'll thank you to keep that devil away from my girl!

DIANA: Anne's my friend! (*Wobbles against the wall.*)

ANNE: Here, Diana, I'll help you home!

MRS. BARRY: You keep away from her! My daughter will never speak to the likes of you again!

MARILLA: If I had a child who was so greedy as to drink an entire bottle of anything, I'd sober her up with a darned good spanking!

MRS. BARRY: I never!

RACHEL: It's your own fault, Marilla! I warned you of the dangers of making that demon spirit!

MARILLA: My Currant Wine is famous all over the Island, Rachel Lynde, as you well know! Mrs. Allan, does not your husband, Reverend Allan enjoy a glass when he comes calling?

MRS. ALLAN: He does.

MARILLA: And making a little wine for refreshment and sickness is far less sinful than MEDDLING IN OTHER PEOPLE'S AFFAIRS!

RACHEL: Well! Come along, ladies, it seems Marilla has some cleaning up to do!

MRS. BARRY takes DIANA and helps her out, RACHEL follows.

RACHEL: Mrs. Allan?

MRS. ALLAN: I think this is out of hand. The entire town doesn't need to know—

RACHEL storms out. ANNE has broken down into sobs on the sofa.

MARILLA: Of all the unreasonable, pig-headed, self-important women that I have ever met, they are the worst!

MARILLA and MRS. ALLAN sit with ANNE.

ANNE: I don't think God himself would entirely meet with their approval.

MARILLA: Anne, you mustn't say things like that. Especially in front of the minister's wife. But, if you left God out of it, you'd have it just about right.

Lights out.

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