Anne of Green Gables

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF L. M. MONTGOMERY

Lucy Maud Montgomery was one of Canada's most beloved and successful authors. Before Montgomery was two years old, her mother Clara died of tuberculosis. Her father Hugh soon remarried, and Montgomery was raised by her grandparents, the MacNeills, in nearby Cavendish. (Cavendish later became the basis for Avonlea in Montgomery's fiction.) Montgomery's childhood was lonely, and she found comfort in her imagination; she published her first poem at age 15. In 1894, she earned a teaching license and taught for one year, then studied at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. At the time, it was relatively rare for women to attend university. In 1901–2, she worked for the *Daily Echo* newspaper in Halifax. In 1909, *Anne of Green Gables*, which had originally been published as a Sunday School serial, became a bestseller, quickly garnering an international following. Montgomery followed it up with *Anne of Avonlea* and *Kilmeny of the Orchard* before marrying the Reverend Ewan Macdonald in 1911. They settled in Ontario, where Montgomery had three sons, Chester, Hugh, and Ewan. Their life could be difficult because both she and her husband struggled with depression. Despite her unhappiness, writing was Montgomery's solace, and she wrote prolifically—six more *Anne* novels, the *Emily of New Moon* trilogy, nine other novels, and more than 500 short stories. Montgomery received numerous honors during her lifetime, including Officer of the Order of the British Empire. She died a year before her husband, and both are buried in Cavendish, Prince Edward Island.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In the Victorian era, orphans and institutions that housed vulnerable children (called orphanages or "asylums" in the book) were more common than they are today—this was due to more widespread poverty and deadlier diseases in the 19th century, as well as 20th-century policy changes that moved away from institutional models in favor of foster care. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, in fact, over 100,000 children—orphans and children who'd been abandoned or were living on the streets—were actually sent from the British Isles to Canada, where it was believed they had a better chance for a good life. Often, these children were adopted by families hoping for help on their farms or around the house. (In the novel, Matthew initially considers adopting a "Home" boy, which refers to Dr. Barnardo's Homes, a British children's charity that still exists today—though it has given up its early, controversial policy of sending orphans overseas, sometimes into exploitative situations.) While the Cuthberts intend to provide their adopted child with room, board, schooling, and good "bringing-up," not all such orphans were warmly welcomed like Anne; some suffered overwork, abuse, and neglect instead of becoming integral to a loving family.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Anne of Green Gables is the first of 11 books featuring Anne; it's followed by *Anne of Avonlea* (1909), *Chronicles of Avonlea* (1912), and *Anne of the Island* (1915); the last of the series is *Anne of Ingleside* (1939). Montgomery's *Emily of New Moon* (1923) and its sequels are also well known; she wrote many other novels and hundreds of short stories. Though Anne's character was Canadian-born, Kenneth Bagnell's *The Little Immigrants: The Orphans Who Came to Canada* (2001) is a well-regarded historical account of the plight of England's "home children" who were adopted in Canada throughout the 20th century. Christina Baker Kline's *Orphan Train* (2013) is a work of feminist historical fiction which depicts the relocation of orphans to the American Midwest as part of the orphan train movement in the early 20th century. Finally, *Anne of Green Gables* was written during the so-called Golden Age of children's literature which, influenced by Romanticism, emphasized childhood ideals of innocence and imagination. Other works from this period include Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** Anne of Green Gables
- **Where Written:** Cavendish, Prince Edward Island
- **When Published:** June 1908
- **Literary Period:** Victorian
- **Genre:** Children's Fiction
- **Setting:** Prince Edward Island, Canada, in the late 19th century
- **Climax:** Matthew Cuthbert's death
- **Antagonist:** Earlier in Anne's life, loneliness, poverty, and ugliness; later, Gilbert Blythe
- **Point of View:** Third person omniscient

EXTRA CREDIT

Animated Anne. Though *Anne of Green Gables* has been translated into dozens of languages, it's especially popular in Japan, where it's titled *Red-haired Anne* and has inspired a popular anime adaptation.

Visit Green Gables. For a century, *Anne* has played a major role in Prince Edward Island tourism. Green Gables farm, owned by Montgomery's MacNeill relatives and the inspiration for the book's setting, began to attract tourists soon after the book's publication, and Prince Edward Island National Park grew up around the site in the 1930s. To this day, Green Gables Heritage Place lets visitors tour "Anne's Room," explore a 19th century farmyard, and wander down "Lover's Lane."

PLOT SUMMARY

One June day in Avonlea, Prince Edward Island, Mrs. Rachel Lynde notices her reclusive neighbor, Matthew Cuthbert, driving off in his buggy. Curious, she goes to visit her friend, Matthew's sister Marilla, who lives with him on Green Gables farm. To Rachel's shock, Marilla tells her that she and Matthew are adopting an orphan boy from Nova Scotia.

Meanwhile, at the train station, Matthew doesn't find the expected boy, but an 11-year-old girl with **red hair** instead. Matthew is thrown off guard by the sweet, talkative, big-eyed girl and can't bear to disappoint her, so he brings her back to Green Gables, where he and Marilla learn that her name is Anne. Anne is heartbroken that the Cuthberts might not keep her, but after hearing about Anne's lonely, orphaned childhood, Marilla comes around to Matthew's opinion—Anne might not be the "useful" boy they'd wanted to work on the farm, but she needs the Cuthberts' compassion. Anne is overjoyed to be allowed to stay.

Anne begins to get acquainted with the beauties of Green Gables, the household duties she'll have to fulfill, and the Christian beliefs she's expected to hold. There are frequent mishaps, like Anne's rage at Mrs. Lynde for criticizing her red hair, about which Anne is quite sensitive. However, even though Marilla often rebukes Anne for daydreaming and neglecting her chores, both she and Matthew find Anne's imaginative talk interesting and enlivening, and soon they can't imagine Green Gables without her.

Anne has always longed for a "bosom friend," which she soon finds in Diana Barry, a girl who lives on a neighboring farm, and they play together all summer. In the fall, Anne starts off well at Avonlea school, but then she's teased by Gilbert Blythe, a handsome boy in her grade, for her carrot-colored hair. In retaliation, Anne cracks her slate over Gilbert's head and gets in big trouble. Another day, her teacher, Mr. Phillips, scapegoats Anne when a crowd of students arrives late, and she's forced to sit next to Gilbert as punishment. Anne develops a fierce grudge against both Gilbert and the teacher, and Marilla humors her refusal to attend school for a while.

In a fateful episode, Anne invites Diana over for tea and, instead of serving her the raspberry cordial Marilla had set aside, she unintentionally gets Diana drunk on currant wine. Mrs. Barry then decides Anne is a wicked girl and forbids their friendship, prompting Anne to return to school in her desperation to see Diana. Though Diana can no longer play with her, Anne takes a renewed interest in her studies and a growing academic rivalry with Gilbert. One winter night, while most of the adults are attending a political rally, Anne saves the life of Minnie May, Diana's baby sister, because she knows the remedy for croup. In gratitude, Mrs. Barry allows Anne and Diana to be friends again. The two get into various adventures together, like accidentally terrifying Diana's visiting elderly Aunt Josephine, and convincing themselves that the nearby woods are haunted.

When a new minister comes to Avonlea, Anne quickly finds a "kindred spirit" and model in his warm-hearted wife, Mrs. Allan. The new schoolteacher, Miss Stacy, also becomes Anne's mentor and encourager, and Anne flourishes even more in school with poetry recitations and written compositions. Matthew, who indulges Anne more than Marilla does, gets Anne her long-coveted dress with fashionable puffed sleeves, and Anne forms a story club to help her friends cultivate their imaginations. Though Anne believes she's outgrowing her most glaring weaknesses, she still struggles with vanity over her red hair, leading to a disastrous dye job. Now 13, Anne even finds herself beginning to soften toward Gilbert Blythe—especially after he rescues her from drowning in Barrys' pond—though her stubborn pride keeps her from accepting his offer of friendship.

At the beginning of Anne's third school year in Avonlea, Miss Stacy organizes a class of her most promising students, including Anne, to study for the Entrance exam to Queen's Academy. Anne works hard and continues to thrive, and at the end of the school year, she and Gilbert tie for the highest exam scores in all of Prince Edward Island, broadening Anne's ambitions for the future. The following September, Matthew and Marilla, both tearful over Anne's growing up, say goodbye as Anne settles into Queen's for the year, along with a handful of Avonlea friends. Anne excels in an accelerated teacher licensing course, and though she's bested by Gilbert for the highest academic honor, she wins a prestigious scholarship to study English at Redmond College. She returns to Green Gables anticipating a glorious summer.

On Anne's second morning at home, however, Matthew abruptly dies of a heart attack, devasting both Anne and Marilla. Soon thereafter, Marilla sees a specialist and learns that unless she takes measures to preserve her eyesight, she'll be blind within six months. After wrestling with her dreams and her sense of duty, Anne decides to decline the Redmond scholarship in order to work as a schoolteacher and help Marilla at home. She expects to get a job in a neighboring village, but she soon learns that Gilbert has given up the position at Avonlea school so that Anne can teach closer to home. Walking home from Matthew's grave one day, Anne

comes upon Gilbert and shyly thanks him for this sacrifice. The two finally reconcile and agree to be good friends, talking easily and warmly together for the first time. Anne happily goes home to Marilla at Green Gables, full of contentment and hope for the future.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Anne Shirley – Anne Shirley, the protagonist, is an orphan girl with thick **red hair**, plentiful freckles, and big, expressive eyes. Anne was born in Nova Scotia to Walter and Bertha Shirley, who both died within a few months of her birth. After that, Anne was sheltered by Mrs. Thomas and then Mrs. Hammond until she was about 10 years old, caring for both families' smaller children. Then she lived in an overcrowded orphan asylum for a few months before being brought to Prince Edward Island by Mrs. Spencer. When Anne first arrives in Avonlea, she's a skinny, awkward 11-year-old. Though Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert originally sought to adopt a boy to help with farm work, Anne's whimsy and tenderheartedness win them over, and amid many mishaps, she slowly finds her place at Green Gables. Anne loves to talk, often using big words, and to imagine things. She often drifts into silent raptures over the beauty of nature. Anne is also very sensitive and inclined to strong emotional highs and lows. She is very particular about being called *Anne* with an *E*, instead of the unromantic "Ann" (though she wishes she could be called Cordelia instead). Though she's well-intentioned and a hard worker, Anne often gets into trouble because of her tendency to daydream while doing household chores. However, she's also a quick learner and proves to be steady and resourceful in a crisis. Diana Barry is Anne's first and dearest friend. Anne also carries a longstanding grudge against Gilbert Blythe for mocking her red hair (its color being her "lifelong sorrow"), even after Gilbert apologizes. After years of academic rivalry, she and Gilbert tie for the highest Entrance exam scores on Prince Edward Island; then Gilbert bests Anne for the Queen's gold medal. However, Anne wins the coveted Avery scholarship to study English at Redmond College. After Matthew dies and Marilla's eyesight begins to fail, Anne decides to give up her scholarship to help Marilla at home and teach at Avonlea school. Even though her ambitions have changed, she finds contentment in the prospect of remaining at her beloved Green Gables.

Marilla Cuthbert – Marilla is a woman in her 50s who lives with her brother Matthew on the family homestead, Green Gables. She's known for keeping a spotless home and being no-nonsense. Marilla is tall, thin, and rigid-looking, yet there's a subtly humorous shape to her mouth. She and Matthew decide to adopt a little orphan boy to help Matthew around the farm, and when Anne—a girl—is brought by mistake, Marilla first rejects Anne as being of little use. But after hearing about Anne's past neglect and observing that Anne is good-natured and teachable, she softens and agrees to accept her into their home. Marilla scoffs at Anne's romantic and imaginative daydreams, preferring to stick to what she sees as sensible and practical. Though she often scolds Anne for her forgetfulness and "nonsense," she often takes Anne's side and is not inflexible—for instance, letting Anne study at home after Mr. Phillips is unjust to her. Over time, she develops a tender affection for Anne and can't imagine life without her, though she refrains from showing it, for fear of spoiling Anne. After Matthew's death, Marilla finally tells Anne how much she loves her. Shortly thereafter, Marilla's eyesight starts to fail, and Anne decides to stay at home with her instead of moving away for college.

Matthew Cuthbert – Matthew is a shy man of 60 who seldom leaves Green Gables and hates having to talk, especially to women or girls. He is gangly with shoulder-length gray hair and a full beard. Matthew quickly warms to Anne and argues that the Cuthberts could be of help to her. In contrast to Marilla's reserve and strictness, Matthew is gentle, encouraging, and sometimes indulgent of Anne. Not wanting Anne to feel lonely or left out, he urges Marilla to allow her to do things like attend evening concerts, and he even buys her the dress with puffed sleeves that Anne's always wanted. In his last conversation with Anne, Matthew tells her that adopting Anne was better than getting a dozen boys. The next day, he dies suddenly of a heart attack.

Diana Barry – Diana is an 11-year-old girl who lives at Orchard Slope, next door to Green Gables. She has a number of little sisters, although only Minnie May is named. Diana becomes Anne's closest friend, or "bosom friend," as Anne likes to put it. Diana has black hair, rosy cheeks, and a happy expression. She loves to read books, though she is not as naturally imaginative as Anne. A loyal friend, Diana is cheerfully game for all of Anne's schemes and adventures. In a notable episode, Anne accidentally gets Diana drunk on Marilla's currant wine, leading Mrs. Barry to temporarily forbid their friendship. Though Diana doesn't have academic ambitions and doesn't attend Queen's Academy with Anne, the two remain faithful friends during Anne's year away from Avonlea.

Gilbert Blythe – Gilbert Blythe is Anne's main rival at Avonlea school and her nemesis through much of the book. He is tall, curly-haired, and hazel-eyed. He's infamous for teasing all the girls in school, and he develops a crush on Anne from the very first. Unfortunately, he gets on her bad side immediately by teasing her about her **red hair** in front of the entire school. Anne retaliates by smashing her slate over his head. Though Gilbert apologizes, Anne vows never to forgive him. She remains stubbornly resentful even after Gilbert rescues her from being stranded on Barrys' pond (though she starts to soften at this point). Gilbert and Anne are academic rivals throughout their years at Avonlea school and then at Queen's.

Gilbert wins the gold medal for the top grades at Queen's. Since he can't afford further schooling, Gilbert decides to teach at Avonlea school for a year. However, when he hears about Anne's decision to remain in Avonlea, he gives up the position for her sake. At the end of the book, Gilbert and Anne reconcile and warmly agree to be friends.

Mrs. Rachel Lynde – Rachel Lynde lives next door to Green Gables. She is known for her excellent housewifery, being active in the church, and also for keeping a sharp watch on all of Avonlea's comings and goings while sitting at her window and making quilts. She is married to Thomas Lynde, a meek man, and has raised 10 children. Mrs. Rachel is skeptical of the Cuthberts' decision to adopt Anne. In fact, Mrs. Rachel and Anne get off on the wrong foot when Rachel harshly criticizes Anne's looks, sending Anne into a rage, but Rachel is later won over by Anne's passionate apology. Despite her gossip and occasional sharp tongue, Mrs. Lynde remains a faithful friend and neighbor to Marilla, Matthew, and Anne.

Mrs. Allan – Mrs. Allan is married to the minister Mr. Allan. Mrs. Allan, a "kindred spirit," is the most significant person in Anne's religious upbringing. Anne is immediately drawn to her because she is pretty, wears fashionable puffed sleeves, and welcomes any questions during Sunday school. Anne also admires Mrs. Allan's joy, which makes her realize that being a Christian doesn't have to be a solemn thing all the time. Mrs. Allan often hosts Anne and other Sunday school girls for tea and confidential chats. Her sense of humor and sympathy save the day when Anne serves a cake flavored with liniment oil at the Allans' tea. Anne wants to be just like Mrs. Allan when she grows up, though she fears she will never be so "naturally good."

Miss Muriel Stacy – Miss Stacy is the Avonlea schoolteacher who takes Mr. Phillips's place and becomes Anne's beloved mentor. She has a knack for bringing out the best in her students and introduces classroom innovations like nature studies and putting on concerts. She especially encourages Anne's writing talent and coaches her through preparations for the Queen's Entrance exam.

Aunt Josephine Barry – Aunt Josephine is Diana's father's elderly, rich aunt, known to be very prim and proper. When Diana and Anne unknowingly leap into her guest room bed in the middle of the night, Aunt Josephine is infuriated by their indecorum. However, Anne's beseeching apology tickles her, and she quickly becomes fond of "that Anne-girl," prompting Anne to label her a "kindred spirit" after all. Anne and Diana visit her at her mansion in Charlottetown, and Anne often dines and attends church with her during her Queen's year.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Mrs. Alexander Spencer – Mrs. Spencer tells Marilla about the orphan asylum and, in a "providential" mistake, chooses Anne for the Cuthberts when she picks out her own little girl to adopt.

Jerry Buote – Jerry Buote is a little French boy who lives near Green Gables and works there as Matthew's farmhand.

Walter Shirley – Walter is Anne's father, husband of Bertha. He was a high school teacher in Nova Scotia and died when Anne was just a few months old.

Bertha Shirley – Bertha is Anne's mother, wife of Walter. She taught high school before her marriage and died within a few months of having Anne.

Mrs. Thomas – Mrs. Thomas used to work as the Shirleys' cleaning woman and took Anne home with her after Anne's parents died. Anne lived with the Thomases until she was eight years old, caring for the four younger children.

Mrs. Hammond – Mrs. Hammond took in Anne when the Thomas family no longer wanted her. She had eight children, including three sets of twins, whom Anne was expected to help raise.

Mrs. Peter Blewett – Mrs. Blewett is a sharp-tongued, stingy woman with a temper who offers to take Anne in order to help care for her children; this prompts Marilla to accept Anne instead.

Mrs. Barry – Mrs. Barry is Diana's mother. She is known to be very proper and strict with her children. When Anne accidentally gets Diana drunk, Mrs. Barry briefly forbids the girls' friendship, but after Anne saves Minnie May Barry's life, Mrs. Barry asks Anne's forgiveness.

Mr. Bell – Mr. Bell is the Avonlea Sunday School superintendent.

Mr. Phillips – Mr. Phillips is the Avonlea schoolmaster during Anne's first year there. He flirts with Prissy Andrews. He is a rather inept teacher who scapegoats Anne unfairly on a couple of occasions.

Prissy Andrews – Prissy is a sixteen-year-old student with whom Mr. Phillips flirts.

Charlie Sloane – Charlie is a classmate with a longstanding crush on Anne. After finishing school at Avonlea, he goes to Queen's Academy, hoping to become a politician someday.

Jane Andrews – Jane is a sensible schoolmate and good friend of Anne. After finishing school at Avonlea, she goes to Queen's Academy.

Ruby Gillis – Ruby is a classmate and friend of Anne's. Ruby is a good student and she attends Queen's, but she's most interested in boys and hopes to get married someday.

Minnie May Barry – Minnie May is Diana's little sister. When Minnie May gets very sick with the croup while the adults are away, Anne is the only one who knows how to save her life, leading Mrs. Barry to drop her grudge against Anne.

Mr. Allan – Mr. Allan is the young minister of the Presbyterian Church in Avonlea. Anne likes his interesting sermons and the

sincerity of his prayers. He is very much in love with his wife Mrs. Allan.

Josie Pye – Josie is an unpleasant classmate whom Anne can't stand. Josie dares Anne to walk across the Barrys' roof, resulting in a broken ankle. She looks for every opportunity to insult Anne. She also attends Queen's.

Mr. Barry – Mr. Barry is Diana's father.

Moody Spurgeon MacPherson – He is an Avonlea classmate who attends Queen's in hopes of becoming a minister someday (Moody and Spurgeon are the names of famous nineteenth century ministers).

Stella Maynard – Stella is Anne's friend at Queen's Academy. She is whimsical and filled with dreams like Anne.

Priscilla Grant – Priscilla is Anne's friend at Queen's Academy. She's mischievous and fun-loving.

The doctor A doctor who is extremely impressed by the way that Anne, though only just a girl herself, nurses Minnie May through the worst part of an attack of the croup.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

HOME AND FAMILY

In *Anne of Green Gables*, a middle-aged brother and sister, Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert, decide to adopt a young boy to help out around their Prince Edward Island homestead, Green Gables. By mistake, however, an 11-year-old girl named Anne is sent from the orphanage instead. Though Anne's liveliness and affection quickly win Matthew's heart, Marilla thinks that Anne won't be as "useful" as a boy would be and nearly sends her back to the orphanage. Over time, however, Anne's cheerful presence makes both Cuthberts realize that, while Anne certainly needed shelter and they needed an extra set of hands, they also needed Anne's love to make Green Gables a real home. Through Marilla's softening attitude towards Anne, Montgomery suggests that people—especially needy, vulnerable people like the orphaned Anne—should be welcomed for who they are instead of being viewed as assets.

When Anne first comes to Green Gables, Marilla thinks of Anne in terms of her potential utility to the household. Incredulous that Matthew proposes keeping Anne, Marilla asks her brother, "What good would she be to us?" Matthew replies, "We might be some good to *her*," but Marilla stubbornly maintains that "I don't want an orphan girl and if I did she isn't the style I'd pick out." Marilla still thinks of Anne in terms of her benefit to the Cuthbert household—and, not only that, she thinks of her as if she's an object she ordered from a store, only to receive the wrong item in the wrong style. Matthew, on the other hand, sees Anne as a person who needs *them*.

But when Mrs. Blewett, a neighbor with a reputation for strictness and temper, offers to take Anne, Marilla begins to change her mind: "if I take you you'll have to be a good girl, you know," Mrs. Blewett tells Anne, "good and smart and respectful. I'll expect you to earn your keep, and no mistake about that." Marilla then notices that Anne looks like "a helpless little creature who finds itself once more caught in the trap from which it had escaped" and decides she cannot "hand a sensitive [...] child over to such a woman." Like Marilla at the beginning of the novel, Mrs. Blewett believes that children must be useful and "earn [their] keep" through hard work. But now softened by Anne's plight and appreciating her tender-hearted personality, Marilla is beginning to see her as a person and not just a household asset.

When Marilla decides to keep Anne, Matthew is delighted, calling her "such an interesting little thing." Marilla replies, "It'd be more to the point if you could say she was a useful little thing [...] but I'll make it my business to see she's trained to be that." Matthew suggests that Anne won't be difficult to raise "if you only get her to love you." Matthew senses that care and affection are more important to helping Anne than strict training aimed at making her "useful," something that Marilla will realize, too, over time.

Over the years, Anne brings value to Green Gables that goes beyond Marilla's narrow ideas of usefulness, and Marilla embraces her as a full person and gift in her own right. A few weeks after Anne's arrival, Anne takes Marilla's hand, stirring up unexpected maternal feelings: "Something warm and pleasant welled up in Marilla's heart at the touch of that thin little hand in her own—a throb of the maternity she had missed, perhaps. Its very unaccustomedness and sweetness disturbed her." When she adopted Anne, Marilla wasn't seeking to feel or act maternally toward Anne whatsoever, yet that's exactly what Anne's affection is spurring—contrary to anything Marilla thought she needed.

More than a year later, when Marilla briefly thinks that Anne has been gravely injured, she realizes just how much Anne has come to mean to her. Before now, "she would have admitted that she liked Anne—nay, that she was very fond of Anne. But now she knew as she hurried wildly down the slope that Anne was dearer to her than anything else on earth." Though Marilla seldom expresses it and certainly never sought it, she's developed a deep affection for Anne that far surpasses what she expected when she first accepted the girl at Green Gables.

A couple of years later, when Anne is nearly grown up and preparing to leave Green Gables for teachers' college, Marilla becomes uncharacteristically tearful over Anne's mature

appearance, the memory of Anne as a child, and the imminent loneliness of Green Gables. Though Marilla had first rejected Matthew's attitude about adopting Anne, his words now sum up their shared perspective: "She's been a blessing to us, and there never was a luckier mistake [...] It was Providence, because the Almighty saw we needed her, I reckon." Where once Marilla could only think of Anne in terms of making her "useful," she's now grateful that Anne's love and joy have enlivened Green Gables in ways she didn't know she needed.

In the end, the story comes full circle: though the Cuthberts originally wanted a child who could help them in practical ways, they gained something they needed much more—a person who needed their love, and what's more, a person whom *they* needed to love. And though they originally chose to keep Anne at Green Gables, Anne ultimately chooses Green Gables for herself—deciding to stay and help Marilla instead of leaving Avonlea for college.

BEAUTY AND IMAGINATION

When she questions Anne about her past, Marilla observes that Anne is reluctant to talk about it: "evidently she did not like talking about her experiences in a world that had not wanted her." In fact, rather than dwelling on her unhappy childhood, Anne takes refuge in her imagination, finding comfort in nature's beauty and thereby being inspired to imagine better circumstances for herself. Sometimes her imagination wanders too freely and gets Anne into a variety of misadventures. But as Anne becomes more secure in her life at Green Gables, she learns to channel her imagination instead of stifling it, sharing her talent with others and discovering new ambitions. Through the maturing of Anne's imagination, Montgomery suggests that imagination is important for a person's growth and shouldn't be discouraged; instead, it ought to be used to benefit others and expand one's horizons.

Because Anne's early life has been bleak and lonely, Anne relies on the beauty of the natural world and her imagination in order to find hope. When Anne first takes in the beauty of Green Gables and its wooded surroundings, she's overwhelmed: "Anne's beauty-loving eyes lingered on it all, taking everything greedily in. She had looked on so many unlovely places in her life [...] but this was as lovely as anything she had ever dreamed." Because Anne has mostly seen "unlovely," poverty-stricken places, she has a hunger for beauty which Green Gables finally satisfies. Beautiful things, especially nature, provide firsthand what her imagination can only pretend.

When Matthew fetches Anne from the train station, she immediately gives him an example of imagination's role in her life: "What did that tree, leaning out from the bank, all white and lacy, make you think of? [...] Why, a bride, of course [...] I've never had a pretty dress in my life that I can remember—of course it's all the more to look forward to, isn't it? And then I can imagine that I'm dressed gorgeously. This morning when I left the asylum I felt so ashamed because I had to wear this horrid old wincey dress." Anne's imagination helps make up for experiences she's lacked and allows her to look forward to better experiences in the future—she's able to imagine that she isn't wearing tattered orphanage clothes and someday might have nicer clothes of her own. Anne's imagination helps her avoid self-pity and choose to be hopeful instead.

Sometimes, however, Anne's imagination carries her too far and gets her into trouble. Through the vivid details she imagines, Anne convinces herself that the nearby woods are haunted, to the point that she refuses to walk through them at night. This incident confirms Marilla's opinion that Anne's overactive imagination needs to be tamped down: "I've had my doubts about that imagination of yours right along, and if this is going to be the outcome of it, I won't countenance any such doings. You'll go right [...] through that spruce grove, just for a lesson and a warning to you." While imagination has its comforting and hopeful functions, it can also backfire, suggesting that Anne's imagination needs to be more carefully channeled.

As Anne settles into her life at Green Gables and no longer needs to rely on imagination for her happiness, her imagination matures and finds better outlets. She increasingly uses her imagination to help and encourage others instead of just comforting herself. Fiction comes naturally to Anne, so when she and her classmates are assigned to write stories at school, she helps her friends develop their storytelling abilities by forming a story club. Imagination is easy "if you'd only cultivate it," she tells her friend Diana. "Let's you and I have a story club all our own and write stories for practice. I'll help you along until you can do them by yourself." Instead of constantly losing herself in daydreams—whether good or bad—Anne begins to apply her imagination in more outward, helpful ways.

Anne's imagination also expands her horizons by helping her discover new ambitions. Because of Anne's imaginative abilities and way with words, she becomes celebrated in Avonlea school for her written compositions and recitations of dramatic poetry. Miss Stacy accordingly helps Anne prepare for the Queen's Academy Entrance exam—teacher's college being an opportunity Anne had never imagined for herself. The more Anne considers opportunities beyond Avonlea school, the harder she works and the more she achieves. Ultimately, she even wins an English scholarship to Redmond College, a rare achievement for a girl in Anne's day. Though Anne's imagination starts out as a way of coping with life's difficulties, it becomes an outlet for encouraging others and finally opens a path for new ambitions and dreams. Montgomery suggests that imagination, if carefully channeled, can be a fruitful resource throughout a person's life, not just a fanciful refuge in childhood.

FRIENDSHIP

Anne Shirley's favorite phrases include "bosom friends" and "kindred spirits." Though these terms are somewhat interchangeable for Anne, they refer to best friends and to people who share similar outlooks on life, respectively. When Anne comes to Green Gables, she makes her first "bosom friend" in Diana Barry, finding that friendship can come easily to open-hearted people who are willing to be loyal to one another. Over time, Anne also discovers that while not everyone can be her "bosom friend," her criteria for being a "kindred spirit" should be expanded, since one can't always identify such a person at first glance. Through Anne's journey from loneliness to gathering an array of friends, Montgomery suggests that while a "bosom friend" might be rare, "kindred spirits" can be found more readily than expected, and the key to finding both is keeping an open mind and heart.

Because Anne has grown up mostly caring for younger children and lacking friends her own age, she longs to find a true friend. Anne's past friends have been imaginary: a girl she called Katie Maurice (her reflection in the glass doors of a bookcase), and, later, an echo of her own voice in the woods that Anne called Violetta. In the past, Anne's only experiences of friendship have literally been extensions of herself.

Not long after her arrival at Green Gables, Anne asks Marilla, "do you think that I shall ever have a bosom friend in Avonlea? […] a really kindred spirit to whom I can confide my inmost soul. I've dreamed of meeting her all my life." Because Anne has never had friends, she longs for a real friendship marked by mutual devotion and loyalty; she also longs to be truly understood.

When Anne finally meets Diana, the girl who lives next door to Green Gables, friendship comes easily to them both. The first thing Anne says to her friend is, "Oh, Diana […] do you think you can like me a little—enough to be my bosom friend?" Diana cheerfully agrees on the grounds that "It will be jolly to have somebody to play with […] I've no sisters big enough." The girls accordingly swear an oath of loyalty and are soon absorbed in imaginative play together. Anne's and Diana's quick bond suggests that sometimes, openness, kindness, and imagination are sufficient grounds for a "bosom friendship."

In fact, kindred spirits—people who instinctively like and understand one another—aren't as rare as Anne first believed. When Anne and Diana accidentally frighten Diana's forbidding, elderly aunt, Josephine Barry, by jumping into her bed in the middle of the night, Anne's heartfelt plea for forgiveness draws unexpected warmth and humor from the old lady. Anne concludes, "You wouldn't think so to look at her, but she is [a kindred spirit]. You don't find it right out at first […] but after a while you come to see it. Kindred spirits are not so scarce as I used to think. It's splendid to find out there are so many of them in the world." As Anne encounters more people, she learns that genuine friendship is more common than her lonely childhood had led her to believe, and furthermore, a person can't necessarily judge a potential friend right away—a kindred spirit might be found beneath an unlikely exterior.

In a similar way, it takes Anne years to admit that her one-time enemy, Gilbert Blythe, could possibly be a friend, but as she grows up, she looks at him differently: "she had a vague consciousness that masculine friendship might also be a good thing to round out one's conceptions of companionship […] they might have had many and merry and interesting conversations about the new world that was opening around them." As Anne's outlook matures, her criteria for what counts as a "kindred spirit" evolves, too; she considers that a boy—even one who's been an annoying rival—might understand her better than she'd suspected.

From Anne's early friendless days to her happier teen years, surrounded by friends young and old, Anne's openness to other people remains constant. Montgomery suggests that this kind of willingness to trust and see the best in others is the key to finding genuine friends, no matter a person's circumstances.

MISHAPS, MILESTONES, AND GROWING UP

Much of *Anne of Green Gables* recounts Anne's mistakes and failed efforts to "be good." Sometimes these things happen because of simple inexperience, like accidentally getting Diana drunk on currant wine that Anne believed was raspberry cordial, or putting liniment oil into a cake instead of vanilla. Sometimes Anne's mistakes are the result of just indulging her imagination too freely, like reenacting a Tennyson poem and almost drowning in the pond, or sheer stubbornness, like accepting a dare to walk across a roof. These "scrapes" inevitably cause Anne a great deal of humiliation and self-reproach. Yet, over time, Anne recognizes that her mishaps teach her valuable lessons, and as she grows up, those lessons help her to overcome her weaknesses, become more resilient, and make better choices. Through Anne's mishaps and triumphs while growing up, Montgomery suggests that the most important part of coming of age isn't just about learning to "be good," but building resilience and the willingness to learn from one's mistakes.

Anne's mistakes are important for her development, because each mistake comes with a lesson that Anne is ready and willing to learn. When Anne, who's always hated her red hair, attempts to dye it black using cheap dye from a peddler, the result is disastrous, leaving Anne with greenish hair that eventually has to be cut short. She realizes she liked her old hair better than she thought, vowing to look at her pathetic short hair at every opportunity: "I'll do penance for being wicked that way […] I never thought I was vain about my hair, of all things, but now I know I was, in spite of its being red, because it was so long and

thick and curly." Anne's mistakes help her recognize her shortcomings, such as vanity, and to be more grateful for what she has.

After almost sinking a boat in the Barrys' pond, Anne reflects to Marilla that "Ever since I came to Green Gables I've been making mistakes, and each mistake has helped to cure me of some great shortcoming. […] The Haunted Wood mistake cured me of letting my imagination run away with me. The liniment cake mistake cured me of carelessness in cooking. Dyeing my hair cured me of vanity […] And today's mistake is going to cure me of being too romantic." Though Anne's conclusion is probably more hard-and-fast than reality (a single mishap usually doesn't "cure" a person of a fault), she recognizes the pattern that surviving humiliating ordeals tends to build up a person's character.

As Anne's character strengthens and she grows up, she doesn't just survive mishaps but gains resilience, which eventually helps her make mature decisions about her future. As Anne's academic ambition grows, she finds that trying and failing is its own reward, strengthening her resilience. Though this starts out as a way of competing with her enemy Gilbert Blythe, she eventually finds that pouring herself into her studies is reward in itself, even if she doesn't always succeed: "[I]t's not a great deal of difference whether I win the Avery [scholarship] or not. I've done my best and I begin to understand what is meant by the 'joy of the strife.' Next to trying and winning, the best thing is trying and failing." Anne doesn't just overcome youthful flaws, but moves beyond them to build her character, find inherent reward in striving toward goals, and build new dreams.

When Anne's dreams appear to be thwarted, the resilience she's gained through her striving helps her rethink her future. The greatest test of Anne's maturity comes after Matthew dies, and Marilla, whose eyesight is failing, is left alone to run their struggling farm. Anne decides to postpone her dream of college, earn money by schoolteaching, and help Marilla. "I'm just as ambitious as ever," she assures Marilla. "Only, I've changed the object of my ambitions […] I shall give life here my best, and I believe it will give its best to me in return […] I thought I could see along [the road] for many a milestone. Now there is a bend in it." After a lonely childhood and a youth marked by mishaps, Anne has not only become more resilient herself, but wiser in her outlook on life—she no longer strives just to improve herself, but also to care for others. If it weren't for Anne's hardships, Montgomery hints—even her humiliating mishaps—she wouldn't have developed the mature, loving character she displays at the end of the book.

BOYS AND ROMANCE

Though romance and courtship don't occupy a large role in *Anne of Green Gables*, boys remain an ongoing source of curiosity, fun, and occasionally torment for Anne and her friends at Avonlea school. Anne's imaginations about romance usually take the form of grand passions fraught with danger and tragedy; her firsthand experiences, however, contrast with this overblown reality. This is especially the case with her enemy, Gilbert Blythe, whom she meets when he humiliates her in front of the whole school. Despite Anne's resulting grudge, Gilbert spends the next few years being kind to her until Anne gradually softens and comes to appreciate and even care for Gilbert. Through her portrayal of Anne and Gilbert's conflicted relationship, Montgomery suggests that romance is not typically a matter of grand passion, but rather something that develops in gradual, even unlikely ways.

At first, Anne idealizes romance as grand passion. When Anne arrives at Avonlea school, romance is an undercurrent of student life—students teasingly writing boys' and girls' names together on the porch, hearing rumors of friends' older sisters having "beaus" and even getting married—but it all remains distant and abstract for Anne. Her naïve view of romance is exemplified by the romantic plots of her early story-writing efforts, like "The Jealous Rival," in which a girl murders a romantic rival, only to be driven insane when she watches the man she loves jump to his own death. Anne even tells Diana that in researching this story, she asked her friend Ruby what her older sister's marriage proposal was like, but decided that reality was insufficiently romantic, so she embellished it for her story. Anne's fictional exaggerations of romance show that she stubbornly hangs onto a notion of romance as grand passion even when it doesn't seem to match everyday experience.

Gilbert Blythe, however, punctures Anne's idealization of romance. When they first meet, Anne thinks Gilbert is handsome, but Gilbert, who's known for teasing girls he likes, tugs Anne's braid in front of everyone and compares its color to "Carrots!" Because her hair color is Anne's greatest shame in life, she immediately breaks her slate over Gilbert's head in rage. When she's unjustly punished for the entire incident, she ruthlessly holds it against Gilbert, vowing never to forgive or speak to him, even when he genuinely apologizes. Anne's relationship with Gilbert quickly shows her that her idealizations of relationships between boys and girls don't hold up to reality—in fact, affection can be expressed in infuriating and alienating ways.

Though Gilbert remains fond of Anne, Anne's stubborn grudge persists for years, even when Gilbert goes out of his way to show kindness. While acting out a romantic scene from a Tennyson poem, Anne gets stranded in the pond and Gilbert rescues her from drowning. When Gilbert takes the opportunity to apologize for his old joke again and offer friendship, Anne "had an odd, newly awakened consciousness under all her outraged dignity that the half-shy, half-eager expression in Gilbert's hazel eyes was something that was very good to see. […] But the bitterness of her old grievance promptly stiffened up her wavering determination." Anne is

beginning to notice that Gilbert is attractive and to enjoy the fact that he evidently likes her, yet she buries these new feelings underneath her old grudge. Again, Anne's playacting at romance is rudely and humorously undercut by the reality that romance isn't typically the stuff of poetic legend, but of real, often conflicted relationships.

In the end, the foundation of Anne's and Gilbert's romance is established through friendship, not passion. After years of academic rivalry, Gilbert demonstrates his continued regard for Anne by giving up the teaching post at Avonlea school so that she can have it, though he has no expectation of reward. In fact, though Gilbert tries to dodge Anne, assuming she'll still hate him, she unexpectedly extends kindness for the first time: "I forgave you that day by the pond landing, although I didn't know it. What a stubborn little goose I was." "We were born to be good friends, Anne. You've thwarted destiny long enough," Gilbert happily tells her in reply. After years of teasing, hostility, and rivalry, Anne's resistance to Gilbert is broken not by a grand, romantic gesture, but by a quietly sacrificial act that makes Anne realize how groundless and self-defeating her attitude toward him has been.

Though Anne and Gilbert don't begin an overt romance in this book, events at the end of the novel hint at the courtship and marriage that take place in later *Anne* novels. Marilla reveals to Anne that she once cared for Gilbert's father John, but that a foolish quarrel thwarted their promising romance. Not long after that, Marilla teases Anne about her lingering conversation with Gilbert by Green Gables' gate, suggesting that Anne's and Gilbert's long interest in one another—begun in hostility and finally blossoming into friendship—is fated to ripen into romance. Far from being a grand passion, Anne's and Gilbert's relationship undercuts Anne's dramatic notions in every way, but Montgomery suggests that it has the makings of a more real and enduring love than a passionate, idealized romance could offer.

GOD, PRAYER, AND CHURCH

Anne of Green Gables depicts Christian language, concepts, and morals with which many of its original readers would have been familiar. In Avonlea, community life largely revolves around the local church. When Anne comes to Green Gables, her guardians take for granted that she'll become an observant Presbyterian like them and most of their neighbors. At first, however, Marilla is scandalized by Anne's unfamiliarity with basic religious practices like prayer and tries to mold her offbeat ideas into more orthodox ones. Over time, as Anne attends church and gets to know older Christians, Anne develops an understanding of Christianity that's entirely her own instead of one that's imposed on her by well-meaning authorities. Though the novel doesn't challenge any mainstream religious ideas, Anne's growth suggests that religious devotion develops most authentically through trusted examples and firsthand experiences over time, not primarily through instruction. What's more, Anne learns that authentic devotion is even characterized by joy, not just fulfillment of expectations.

Anne's exposure to Christianity has mostly been secondhand, and her understanding is accordingly stunted. When Anne first arrives at Green Gables, Marilla is shocked to learn that Anne never says any bedtime prayers. In self-defense, Anne tells Marilla that someone told her "that God made my hair red *on purpose*, and I've never cared about Him since. And anyhow I'd always be too tired at night to bother saying prayers. People who have to look after twins can't be expected to[.]" Anne believes that God has arranged her life in such a way (having red hair; having to take care of small children) that she can't be expected to pray, at least not with any gratitude.

Anne further tells Marilla that she doesn't understand the purpose of traditions like kneeling to pray: "If I really wanted to pray [...] I'd go out into a great big field all alone [...] and I'd look up [...] into that lovely blue sky that looks as if there was no end to its blueness. And then I'd just *feel* a prayer." In other words, Anne associates prayer with the beauty of the world—the things that inspire wonder in her—and thinks that prayer is instinctively *felt* in such moments, not something that needs to be expressed in words or performed according to set traditions.

Firsthand experience is important to Anne's development of genuine religious belief. Marilla, though she's disturbed by Anne's lack of religious training, perceives that Anne "knew and cared nothing about God's love, since she had never had it translated to her through the medium of human love." Though Marilla disapproves of Anne's attitudes about prayer, she also believes that Anne can't be expected to know any better, when Christianity has only been presented to her as something abstract. Without having known human love, in other words, it's hard for a person to believe in divine love.

Accordingly, as Anne gets to know Christians she admires, she changes her outlook on religion. The kindly new minister's wife, Mrs. Allan, inspires Anne with her happiness: "I never knew before that religion was such a cheerful thing. I always thought it was kind of melancholy, but Mrs. Allan's isn't, and I'd like to be a Christian if I could be one like her [...] I'd dance and sing all day because I was glad of it [...] I can just feel she's glad she's a Christian and that she'd be one even if she could get to heaven without it." Even though Anne's understanding of Christianity is still rather simplistic—a matter of getting to heaven or not—it's based on the insight that genuine religious belief shapes a person's personality and behavior; it's something a person should want to pursue for its own sake and not just for its perceived benefits.

When Anne is older, and she earns the Island's top academic marks and entrance to teachers' college, she finds that prayer comes easily: "That night Anne [...] knelt sweetly by her open

window [...] and murmured a prayer of gratitude and aspiration that came straight from her heart. There was in it all the thankfulness for the past and reverent petition for the future[.]" Anne no longer has to be cajoled into prayer, and kneeling in gratitude and summoning words no longer feel forced; as she has matured in her outlook on her life overall, her religious feelings have deepened in sincerity, and even joy, along with it.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

RED HAIR

Having red hair is the greatest trial in Anne Shirley's life. Though worse things happen to Anne (like being orphaned and doing drudgery for a series of reluctant guardians), for Anne red hair seems to symbolize *all* difficult circumstances beyond her control. This explains why Anne calls her hair color her "lifelong sorrow" and denies that anybody with red hair can be truly happy; she even resents God for giving her such hair and finds this reason enough not to pray. Because Anne loves beautiful things so much, she feels especially burdened to have to live with a hair color she considers ugly, and she's wounded when Gilbert Blythe mocks her "carrot"-colored braids in front of Avonlea school—it reminds her of her deepest discontentment. As Anne grows up, she is gradually reconciled to her red hair, suggesting that she's also more secure in her life and grateful for what she has in general (though she's also relieved when told that her hair is darkening to auburn).

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Dalmatian Press edition of *Anne of Green Gables* published in 2011.

Chapter 2: Matthew Cuthbert Is Surprised Quotes

[...] [A] discerning extraordinary observer might have concluded that no commonplace soul inhabited the body of this stray woman-child of whom shy Matthew Cuthbert was so ludicrously afraid.

[...]

"I suppose you are Mr. Matthew Cuthbert of Green Gables?" she said in a peculiarly clear, sweet voice. "I'm very glad to see you. I was beginning to be afraid you weren't coming for me and I was imagining all the things that might have happened to prevent you. I had made up my mind that if you didn't come for me tonight I'd go down the track to that big wild cherry tree at the bend, and climb up into it to stay all night."

Related Characters: Anne Shirley (speaker), Matthew Cuthbert

Related Themes:

Page Number: 15

Explanation and Analysis

This quote introduces Anne's character as Matthew meets her at the train station for the first time. In particular, it shows how Anne's imagination helps her cope with new or strange situations in life—something she's had plenty of opportunity to practice as an orphan transferred from one temporary home to another. Here, she imagines scenarios that might have delayed Matthew's arrival, and then she imagines a whimsical solution in case she does find herself abandoned for the night. Though the content of Anne's imaginings is often fanciful, her schemes—like sleeping in a cherry tree—also hint at the tragedy in Anne's past. She's not used to feeling wanted, so she assumes Matthew might not come and she develops a contingency plan in case she needs to fend for herself. Yet, in spite of her difficult history, Anne approaches Matthew with openness and warmth, ready to extend friendship—suggesting that, indeed, she's not a "commonplace soul."

Chapter 3: Marilla Cuthbert Is Surprised Quotes

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

"Yes, there *is* need!" The child raised her head quickly, revealing a tear-stained face and trembling lips. "*You* would cry, too, if you were an orphan and had come to a place you thought was going to be home and found that they didn't want you because you weren't a boy. Oh, this is the most *tragical* thing that ever happened to me!"

Something like a reluctant smile, rather rusty from long disuse, mellowed Marilla's grim expression.

Related Characters: Anne Shirley, Marilla Cuthbert (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 30

Explanation and Analysis

When Anne arrives at Green Gables and learns that the Cuthberts were originally hoping to adopt a boy, she responds in typically dramatic fashion by bursting into tears. Her reasons are understandable—Anne has never had a real home before, so the last-minute dashing of her hopes is especially devastating. Her retort to Marilla is also telling. Though Marilla hoped to offer a better life to a needy child, her primary motivation for adopting was to gain a useful farmhand for Matthew. Like many people who adopted orphans at the time, she doesn't think of the adopted child fully as a member of the family, but as more of a useful asset for household work. Anne's outburst offers a subtle criticism of that way of thinking—she simply wants to be loved and welcomed and instead finds the opposite. Though Marilla's smile in response seems a bit cruel on the surface, it shows that she isn't completely resistant to Anne's charms and is capable of softening in response to her—something that will happen more often as their relationship develops.

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

Marilla's astonishment could not have been greater if Matthew had expressed a predilection for standing on his head.

"Well now, no, I suppose not—not exactly," stammered Matthew, uncomfortably driven into a corner for his precise meaning. "I suppose—we could hardly be expected to keep her."

"I should say not. What good would she be to us?"

"We might be some good to *her*," said Matthew suddenly and unexpectedly.

Related Characters: Matthew Cuthbert, Marilla Cuthbert (speaker), Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 36

Explanation and Analysis

The night Anne first arrives at Green Gables, Matthew, always shy of conflict, avoids telling Anne that he and Marilla weren't looking for a girl. After Anne learns the news from Marilla and tearfully goes to bed, Matthew is reluctant to concede that Anne must be returned to the orphanage. In a typically roundabout way, he argues against giving Anne back. Matthew admits that keeping her doesn't make much sense on the surface, yet he finally comes to his point in a few forthright words: that even if it's not clear that Anne would be much "good" to them, they might do *her* good. Much as Anne did earlier, Matthew subtly criticizes a common mindset about adoption at the time—that orphans were primarily meant to serve their adoptive household. In fact, once the Cuthberts both open their hearts to Anne, she will do them good as well, though not in the ways they expected.

Part of the "surprise" referred to in the chapter title is not just Marilla's surprise that Anne is a girl instead of a boy, but her surprise that Matthew speaks his mind. Matthew isn't accustomed to asserting himself, and he's always been rather fearful of women, including little girls. Anne overcomes Matthew's shyness and stirs an unlikely boldness in the shy old man.

Chapter 4: Morning at Green Gables Quotes

Anne dropped on her knees and gazed out into the June morning, her eyes glistening with delight. Oh, wasn't it beautiful? Wasn't it a lovely place? Suppose she wasn't really going to stay here! She would imagine she was. There was scope for imagination here. [...]

Anne's beauty-loving eyes lingered on it all, taking everything greedily in. She had looked on so many unlovely places in her life, poor child, but this was as lovely as anything she had ever dreamed.

Related Characters: Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 39

Explanation and Analysis

Though Anne doesn't yet know if she'll be allowed to remain at Green Gables, she can't help falling in love with the place. On her first morning there, she sits at her gable window and admires the beauty of the surrounding farm and woods. Anne's imagining is another example of her use of imagination to cope with unsettling circumstances. Even when facing the possible heartbreak of being sent back to the orphanage, Anne takes refuge in an imaginary future in order to give her courage and hope. Beauty plays an especially important role in Anne's imagination because she's seen so little of it throughout her life. Growing up poor, lonely, and neglected, she hasn't had the luxury of calling beautiful things and places her own. She drinks in the atmosphere of Green Gables as a kind of nourishment to fortify her imagination, especially in the event that, like previous homes she's known, this place will soon be lost to her.

Chapter 5: Anne's History Quotes

❝ Pity was suddenly stirring in her heart for the child. What a starved, unloved life she had had—a life of drudgery and poverty and neglect; for Marilla was shrewd enough to read between the lines of Anne's history and divine the truth. No wonder she had been so delighted at the prospect of a real home. It was a pity she had to be sent back.

What if she, Marilla, should indulge Matthew's unaccountable whim and let her stay?

Related Characters: Matthew Cuthbert, Marilla Cuthbert, Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 52

Explanation and Analysis

This quote shows a key development in Marilla's character. On the way to White Sands to see Mrs. Spencer about the orphanage mix-up (at which point Marilla was still inclined to send Anne back), she asks to hear about Anne's past. As Anne talks about her life as an orphan living with the Thomas and Hammond families and caring for their many children, Marilla "[reads] between the lines" to discern that Anne has never really been cared for herself. Though Marilla herself had been looking for household help, she begins to think of Anne less as a household asset and more as a child simply in need of love and nurturing. Not only does Marilla soften towards Anne as a person (even thinking of her primarily as a person with a history for the first time, instead of abstractly as an orphan), she also rethinks her entire approach to bringing an orphan into the Cuthberts' home. Matthew's whim seemed "unaccountable" at first, but as Marilla considers Anne's sad history, her capacity for pity deepens, leading to her eventual decision to let Anne stay.

Chapter 6: Marilla Makes Up Her Mind Quotes

❝ "Humph! You don't look as if there was much to you. But you're wiry. I don't know but that the wiry ones are the best after all. Well, if I take you you'll have to be a good girl, you know—good and smart and respectful. I'll expect you to earn your keep, and no mistake about that. Yes, I suppose I might as well take her off your hands, Miss Cuthbert. The baby's awful fractious, and I'm clean worn out attending to him. If you like I can take her right home now."

Related Characters: Mrs. Peter Blewett (speaker), Marilla Cuthbert, Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 58

Explanation and Analysis

After speaking with Mrs. Spencer, Marilla learns that her message requesting a boy from the orphanage had gotten garbled somehow. Another neighbor, Mrs. Blewett, comes by the Spencers' and offers to take Anne off Marilla's hands—she could use somebody to help with her children. Her appraisal shows how little she's interested in Anne as a person—Anne is "wiry" (lean and strong-looking), and that's all she needs to know in order to determine whether Anne is worth having around. Anne's temperament and character—to say nothing of her needs—don't enter into Mrs. Blewett's calculations. All she cares about is that Anne is obedient and "earns her keep." While not everyone thought about orphans like Mrs. Blewett does, her attitude reflects a subset of people who looked at adopting a child as something like acquiring a servant. Though Marilla had started off looking for a farmhand, Mrs. Blewett's attitude toward Anne is one of the things that helps her make up her mind to keep the girl, showing that she's more compassionate than she seems.

"It'd be more to the point if you could say she was a useful little thing," retorted Marilla, "but I'll make it my business to see she's trained to be that. And mind, Matthew, you're not to go interfering with my methods. Perhaps an old maid doesn't know much about bringing up a child, but I guess she knows more than an old bachelor[.]"

"There, there, Marilla, you can have your own way," said Matthew reassuringly. "Only be as good and kind to her as you can be without spoiling her. I kind of think she's one of the sort you can do anything with, if you only get her to love you."

Related Characters: Matthew Cuthbert, Marilla Cuthbert (speaker), Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 61

Explanation and Analysis

When Marilla makes up her mind to keep Anne, Matthew is delighted, calling Anne "an interesting little thing." Marilla's response—that she'd prefer Anne be *useful*—shows that even though she's softened toward Anne, she's still thinking of Anne in terms of what she is bringing to the household, and that "interesting" isn't practical enough. Matthew, on the other hand, has had a different perspective on Anne from the beginning. Instead of focusing on what Anne can do for them, he senses that Anne needs something from them that she hasn't received elsewhere—namely love. Matthew's comment that Anne is "of the sort you can do anything with" if she's simply loved means that, contrary to Marilla's focus on proper training, Anne will respond more naturally to love than to discipline. In other words, she'll flourish if she's given a nurturing environment. Even though Matthew is an "old bachelor" and he mostly stays out of Marilla's efforts at raising Anne, he has a more instinctive grasp of Anne's need for a home and a family.

Chapter 7: Anne Says Her Prayers Quotes

"Don't you know it's a terrible wicked thing not to say your prayers every night? I'm afraid you are a very bad little girl."

"You'd find it easier to be bad than good if you had red hair," said Anne reproachfully. "People who haven't red hair don't know what trouble is. Mrs. Thomas told me that God made my hair red *on purpose*, and I've never cared about Him since."

Related Characters: Marilla Cuthbert, Anne Shirley (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 63

Explanation and Analysis

Soon after Anne arrives at Green Gables, Marilla discovers that Anne has never said bedtime prayers. Marilla assumes that Anne simply neglects her prayers, but Anne explains that she doesn't pray because God gave her red hair, which she sees as an unforgiveable injustice. According to Mrs. Thomas, red hair was exactly what God intended for Anne, and Anne doesn't see why it's worth praying to a God who could be so cruel. Though Anne's explanation is humorous, it's also meant to illustrate the lack of religious teaching in her life. As Marilla realizes, Anne hasn't been taught that God loves her—at least not by anyone who provided a human example of such love. Because she doesn't understand that God loves her, Anne's only notion of God is that he's the cause of her life's unfortunate circumstances—red hair being the chief example, in Anne's mind. This exchange supports Montgomery's argument that before a person's understanding of God can fully mature, they must experience faith firsthand. Until that happens, a person will fall back on childlike views that limit their gratitude for God's gifts.

Chapter 8: Anne's Bringing-Up Is Begun Quotes

"Marilla," she demanded presently, "do you think that I shall ever have a bosom friend in Avonlea?"

"A—a what kind of a friend?"

"A bosom friend—an intimate friend, you know—a really kindred spirit to whom I can confide my inmost soul. I've dreamed of meeting her all my life. I never really supposed I would, but so many of my loveliest dreams have come true all at once that perhaps this one will, too. Do you think it's possible?"

Related Characters: Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 72

Explanation and Analysis

As Anne settles into life in Avonlea, one of her first and dearest wishes is to make a friend—what she calls, in some of the book's best-known phrases, a "bosom friend" or "kindred spirit." Though Marilla is bemused by the odd expression, when Anne refers to a "bosom friend" she simply means a heartfelt friend. A "kindred spirit" is more or

less the same thing—a trusted confidant who sees the world as Anne does. Anne's memorable phrases suggest that she's gotten many of her ideas about friendship from sentimental books, since she didn't grow up with real friends of her own. At the same time, they're just fanciful expressions for something ordinary (close friendship) that Anne has lacked and been forced to supply through imagination, like many other things that most children can take for granted. For Anne, a "bosom friend" belongs to the realm of daydreams, just like having a home and family to call her own. Now that the latter dream has come true, Anne begins to hope that friendship could be within her reach, too.

Chapter 10: Anne's Apology Quotes

"It's lovely to be going home and know it's home," she said. "I love Green Gables already, and I never loved any place before. No place ever seemed like home. Oh, Marilla, I'm so happy. I could pray right now and not find it a bit hard."

Something warm and pleasant welled up in Marilla's heart at the touch of that thin little hand in her own—a throb of the maternity she had missed, perhaps. Its very unaccustomedness and sweetness disturbed her.

Related Characters: Anne Shirley (speaker), Marilla Cuthbert

Related Themes:

Page Number: 95

Explanation and Analysis

As Anne and Marilla walk home from Mrs. Lynde's one evening, Anne is in high spirits. She has seldom had the experience of coming home, since she grew up without a place that really belonged to her. The experience prompts a prayerful attitude from Anne—which is another way of saying she feels gratitude. This represents a development in Anne's attitude about religious faith—earlier, she didn't see the point of prayer, since she didn't see much in her life worth praying about, and she blamed God for her misfortunes. Now she finds that prayer springs up naturally, not just when she has things she wants, but when she's truly thankful for them. Marilla, too, experiences novel emotions when Anne affectionately takes her hand. A lifelong spinster, Marilla is startled by the warmth she feels in return—a feeling she never expected or sought. She tries to stifle the feeling with her usual brisk demeanor. However, its existence shows that her heart has opened to Anne in spite of her reserved, relentlessly practical outlook on adopting Anne.

Chapter 16: Diana Is Invited to Tea, with Tragic Results Quotes

"Oh, Mrs. Barry, please forgive me. I did not mean to—to intoxicate Diana. How could I? Just imagine if you were a poor little orphan girl that kind people had adopted and you had just one bosom friend in all the world. Do you think you would intoxicate her on purpose? I thought it was only raspberry cordial. I was firmly convinced it was raspberry cordial. Oh, please don't say that you won't let Diana play with me any more. If you do you will cover my life with a dark cloud of woe."

This speech, which would have softened good Mrs. Lynde's heart in a twinkling, had no effect on Mrs. Barry except to irritate her still more. She was suspicious of Anne's big words and dramatic gestures and imagined that the child was making fun of her.

Related Characters: Anne Shirley (speaker), Mrs. Barry

Related Themes:

Page Number: 160

Explanation and Analysis

When Anne is allowed to invite Diana to tea in Marilla's absence, one of her most notorious "scrapes" ensues. She unknowingly serves Diana some old currant wine instead of the intended raspberry cordial, and Diana gets very drunk. Mrs. Barry is furious, believing Anne did this on purpose, so Anne tries to explain and apologize in person, but the attempt backfires. Anne's tendency to use big words and dramatic gestures (the result of years spent reading and playing alone instead of with children her own age) looks strange on an 11-year-old. Mrs. Barry interprets Anne's behavior as mocking instead of sincere, and her determination to keep Anne and Diana apart remains intact. The "raspberry cordial" scene is one of the funniest and best known in the book, though the outcome is humiliating and crushing for Anne. It's also an example of Anne's background as a limitation—she eagerly tries to catch up on those parts of life she's missed (like friendship and tea parties), only to blunder into well-meaning mistakes and misinterpreted motives. Yet Anne shows her resilience by not giving up hope, and her friendship with Diana is able to be revived not much later.

Chapter 18: Anne to the Rescue Quotes

"That little redheaded girl they have over at Cuthberts' is as smart as they make 'em. I tell you she saved that baby's life, for it would have been too late by the time I got here. She seems to have a skill and presence of mind perfectly wonderful in a child of her age. I never saw anything like the eyes of her when she was explaining the case to me."

Related Characters: The doctor (speaker), Mrs. Barry, Minnie May Barry, Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 178

Explanation and Analysis

These are the words of the doctor who checks on Diana's baby sister, Minnie May, after Anne nurses Minnie May through the worst part of an attack of the croup. Most of the adults in Avonlea had traveled overnight to a political rally, so Anne is the only person around who knows how to help Minnie May through the crisis. If it hadn't been for Anne's experiences nursing her former guardian's babies through the same illness, and her presence of mind under pressure, the crisis would have had a different outcome. Anne's experience is an example of her background as an asset instead of a hindrance. Most children her age would be helpless in a situation like this, but Anne's knowledge, and her quickness to rise to the occasion, show that she's no typical child. Her heroic actions also change Mrs. Barry's mind about Anne—she now believes that Anne is a suitable playmate for Diana to have around, which leads to the restoration of their friendship.

Chapter 19: A Concert, a Catastrophe, and a Confession Quotes

"Remember, you Anne-girl, when you come to town you're to visit me and I'll put you in my very sparest spare room bed to sleep."

"Miss Barry was a kindred spirit, after all," Anne confided to Marilla. "You wouldn't think so to look at her, but she is. You don't find it right out at first, as in Matthew's case, but after a while you come to see it. Kindred spirits are not so scarce as I used to think. It's splendid to find out there are so many of them in the world."

Related Characters: Anne Shirley, Aunt Josephine Barry (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 197

Explanation and Analysis

After a "catastrophic" introduction—accidentally jumping into the wrong bed in the middle of the night—Anne befriends Diana's great-aunt Josephine with a humorously overwrought apology that delights the old lady. At first, Anne found Aunt Josephine forbidding and scary—not at all the kind of person she would suspect of being a "kindred spirit," or someone Anne finds easily relatable and sympathetic. But Anne's sincerity cracks through Josephine's seemingly humorless exterior, and the experience teaches Anne that one can't judge a possible "kindred spirit" by external appearance alone. Sometimes a bond is formed instantly, as in Matthew's case or Diana's, but other times, it takes a little while to understand what a person is really like and to discover the potential for friendship. After her lonely childhood, Anne is comforted to learn that there are many more kindred spirits in the world than she had once thought.

Aunt Josephine's remark about putting Anne in her "very sparest spare room" reflects Anne's childish aspiration to someday merit the "honor" of sleeping in someone's spare room.

Chapter 21: A New Departure in Flavorings Quotes

"I never knew before that religion was such a cheerful thing. I always thought it was kind of melancholy, but Mrs. Allan's isn't, and I'd like to be a Christian if I could be one like her, I wouldn't want to be one like Mr. Superintendent Bell [...] he doesn't seem to get any comfort out of it. If I could be good I'd dance and sing all day because I was glad of it. I suppose Mrs. Allan is too old to dance and sing and of course it wouldn't be dignified in a minister's wife. But I can just feel she's glad she's a Christian and that she'd be one even if she could get to heaven without it."

Related Characters: Anne Shirley (speaker), Mrs. Allan

Related Themes:

Page Number: 211

Explanation and Analysis

When Anne meets the new minister's wife, Mrs. Allan, her understanding of religion develops. Besides being one of

Anne's "kindred spirits," Mrs. Allan represents a warmer, more appealing kind of Christianity than Anne has experienced before. Previously, Anne associated Christianity with formality and "melancholy," or sadness, but Mrs. Allan seems to find joy and delight in her faith, which Anne wants to emulate. For Mrs. Allan, faith is something worth cultivating for its own sake and not just for the sake of "getting to heaven." For Anne, this is a step beyond the catechism and prayers she's studied in the past. Mrs. Allan's firsthand example teaches her something beyond that rote foundation, including the new idea that religion can be a joyful thing, not simply a duty.

Later, Anne softens in her opinion of Sunday school Superintendent Bell, too, when he visits her while she's injured. She realizes that someone can be a sincere Christian even if their temperament isn't outwardly cheerful, like Mrs. Allan's.

Chapter 22: Anne Is Invited Out to Tea Quotes

❝ Marilla felt this and was vaguely troubled over it, realizing that the ups and downs of existence would probably bear hardly on this impulsive soul and not sufficiently understanding that the equally great capacity for delight might more than compensate. Therefore Marilla conceived it to be her duty to drill Anne into a tranquil uniformity of disposition as impossible and alien to her as to a dancing sunbeam in one of the brook shallows. […] Marilla had almost begun to despair of ever fashioning this waif of the world into her model little girl of demure manners and prim deportment. Neither would she have believed that she really liked Anne much better as she was.

Related Characters: Anne Shirley, Marilla Cuthbert

Related Themes:

Page Number: 220

Explanation and Analysis

Marilla is a steady, sedate person, so Anne's emotional ups and downs have always baffled her. She worries that with Anne's tendency to fall into despair over relatively small disappointments, Anne might be in for a difficult life. Because Marilla isn't much like Anne, she doesn't recognize that Anne's capacity for grief is balanced by an even greater capacity for joy. This explains why Marilla has a tendency to try to quell Anne's emotions and make light of her outbursts. Though it seems hard-hearted, it's Marilla's way of trying to train Anne for a world that expects girls to be more conventionally polite and reserved. Not only does it backfire, but deep down, it isn't what Marilla really wants, either. As Anne grows up, Marilla gradually recognizes that Anne learns and matures more through weathering various mishaps than from being forced into a mold. As Marilla accepts this more, it appears that Marilla has learned from Anne, too, even though Anne hasn't become "sensible" in precisely the way Marilla sought at first.

Chapter 27: Vanity and Vexation of Spirit Quotes

❝ "Please cut it off at once, Marilla, and have it over. Oh, I feel that my heart is broken. This is such an unromantic affliction. The girls in books lose their hair in fevers or sell it to get money for some good deed, and I'm sure I wouldn't mind losing my hair in some such fashion half so much. But there is nothing comforting in having your hair cut off because you've dyed it a dreadful color, is there? I'm going to weep all the time you're cutting it off if it won't interfere. It seems such a tragic thing."

Related Characters: Anne Shirley (speaker), Marilla Cuthbert

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 270

Explanation and Analysis

Anne's red hair has been the bane of her existence, so when a peddler visits Green Gables and offers her a bottle of cheap black dye, Anne believes her problem is solved. However, the outcome isn't the gorgeous "raven" hair she has always dreamed of, but a sickly green mess. Marilla sees no solution but to cut off most of Anne's hair. Because she tries to find a redeeming moral in each of her mishaps, Anne decides that this episode is meant to cure her of her lifelong vanity concerning her hair. There's not even any comfort to be found in her usual refuge of imagination—Anne finds it "romantic" in stories when girls lose their hair because of illness or charitable intentions, but each time she sees her appearance, she's forced to remember that her own pride led to this "tragedy." What's more, Anne discovers that she really *had* been proud of the length and thickness of her curly hair, even though she hated its color. The whole catastrophe teaches Anne that she doesn't always appreciate the goodness of what she has until it's gone. It's another example of how Anne learns and matures through her own mistakes more readily than she learns through abstract moralizing from others.

Chapter 28: An Unfortunate Lily Maid Quotes

❝ For a moment Anne hesitated. She had an odd, newly awakened consciousness under all her outraged dignity that the half-shy, half-eager expression in Gilbert's hazel eyes was something that was very good to see. Her heart gave a quick, unfamiliar little beat. But the bitterness of her old grievance promptly stiffened up her wavering determination. That scene of two years before flashed back into her recollection as vividly as if it had taken place yesterday.

Related Characters: Gilbert Blythe, Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 279

Explanation and Analysis

This passage describes one of the few hints of future romance between Anne and Gilbert Blythe. More significant is the fact that Anne shows any softening at all toward her avowed enemy. Anne has gotten herself stranded on the bridge on Barrys' pond while acting out a scene from a Tennyson poem with her friends. Gilbert happens to row by and rescue her, and he takes the opportunity to apologize for teasing Anne about her hair two years ago and to offer friendship. Anne, 13 at this point, notices something different about Gilbert's expression and finds it intriguing, even attractive, for the first time. But the feeling is too new and fleeting to overpower the strength of her old grudge, and she angrily rejects Gilbert's truce. Not much later, Anne feels inexplicably sorry about her behavior toward Gilbert and realizes that her bitterness is fading. Overall the quote sums up the complex dynamic between the two—Anne's red hair is such a sore spot that she can't yet let go of the humiliation Gilbert caused her, yet her resentment is all the greater because, deep down, she has romantic feelings toward him that she's not ready to acknowledge even to herself.

❝ "I've learned a new and valuable lesson today. Ever since I came to Green Gables I've been making mistakes, and each mistake has helped to cure me of some great shortcoming [...] And today's mistake is going to cure me of being too romantic. I have come to the conclusion that it is no use trying to be romantic in Avonlea. It was probably easy enough in towered Camelot hundreds of years ago, but romance is not appreciated now."

[...]

"Don't give up all your romance, Anne," [Matthew] whispered shyly, "a little of it is a good thing—not too much, of course—but keep a little of it, Anne, keep a little of it."

Related Characters: Matthew Cuthbert, Anne Shirley (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 281

Explanation and Analysis

After the mishap on Barrys' pond, Anne decides she is done with romance for good. Each of her catastrophes has taught her a lesson, she believes, and nearly drowning while reenacting a Tennyson poem has taught her not to indulge her imagination too much. In particular, she shouldn't think about "romance" so much—by which Anne refers broadly to imaginative, often fantastical scenes that wouldn't happen in reality (like sailing dramatically across the pond in a leaky rowboat). However, Matthew gently encourages Anne not to abandon this part of herself completely.

This also suggests that while a person is growing up, their awareness of that process is limited. That is, Anne can see how she's grown and changed for the better in some ways, but she lacks the perspective to realize that growing up doesn't mean getting rid of *all* one's old characteristics; it simply means maturing in them. Matthew, who's appreciated Anne's imagination from the start, can see that if Anne lost her "romance," she'd no longer be Anne.

Chapter 31: Where the Brook and River Meet Quotes

"You don't chatter half as much as you used to, Anne, nor use half as many big words. What has come over you?"

[...]

"I don't know—I don't want to talk as much," she said, denting her chin thoughtfully with her forefinger. "It's nicer to think dear, pretty thoughts and keep them in one's heart, like treasures. I don't like to have them laughed at or wondered over. And somehow I don't want to use big words any more. It's almost a pity, isn't it, now that I'm really growing big enough to say them if I did want to. It's fun to be almost grown up in some ways, but it's not the kind of fun I expected, Marilla."

Related Characters: Marilla Cuthbert, Anne Shirley (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 315

Explanation and Analysis

As Anne becomes a teenager, Marilla appreciates the ways Anne has matured during her time at Green Gables. In particular, she notices that Anne has gotten quieter and less dramatic in her way of speaking. Anne reflects that she has come to enjoy keeping her thoughts to herself more often. When she was a child, she said whatever was on her mind, and adults often reacted to her fanciful ideas or big words with condescension or bafflement. Anne would rather avoid that, and what's more, she no longer feels the need to express herself in such ways—the content of her ideas has become more interesting to her than using fancy language, a sign of maturity. Anne also observes that growing up is different than she thought—she'd imagined using big words to her heart's content, but such things have lost their appeal. This is characteristic of getting older in general—its enjoyments are subtler than Anne imagined them to be when she was a little girl.

Chapter 32: The Pass List Is Out Quotes

That night Anne, who had wound up the delightful evening with a serious little talk with Mrs. Allan at the manse, knelt sweetly by her open window in a great sheen of moonshine and murmured a prayer of gratitude and aspiration that came straight from her heart. There was in it thankfulness for the past and reverent petition for the future [...] her dreams were as fair and bright and beautiful as maidenhood might desire.

Related Characters: Mrs. Allan, Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 327

Explanation and Analysis

After Anne takes the consequential Entrance exam for Queen's Academy, she learns that she has tied for the highest score in all of Prince Edward Island. It's a turning point in her life, as she looks back on her schoolgirl successes and anticipates a more ambitious future than she'd dreamed possible. In a natural response to the news, she prays that night in gratitude for the past and hope for the future. When Anne first came to Green Gables, she saw little reason to pray, but now she genuinely *wants* to pray in the way Marilla tried to teach her back then—giving thanks for her blessings and offering petitions for her future. As Montgomery suggests throughout the book, religious beliefs ripen through personal experience on top of instruction, not through precepts alone.

In a way, too, Anne's prayer doesn't totally depart from her childhood conception of what makes a good prayer. She used to think that prayers were best "felt" among the beauties of nature; kneeling in the moonlight and overlooking Green Gables, she combines both her childhood and more conventional ideas about pious prayer.

Chapter 34: A Queen's Girl Quotes

Anne sat down on Marilla's gingham lap, took Marilla's lined face between her hands, and looked gravely and tenderly into Marilla's eyes. "I'm not a bit changed—not really. I'm only just pruned down and branched out. The real *me*—back here—is just the same. It won't make a bit of difference where I go or how much I change outwardly. At heart I shall always be your little Anne, who will love you and Matthew and dear Green Gables more and better every day of her life." [...]

[Marilla] could only put her arms close about her girl and hold her tenderly to her heart, wishing that she need never let her go.

Related Characters: Anne Shirley (speaker), Matthew Cuthbert, Marilla Cuthbert

Related Themes:

Page Number: 343

Explanation and Analysis

After about five years at Green Gables, Anne is preparing to leave soon to study at Queen's Academy. At one point, Marilla uncharacteristically breaks down in tears at the memory of 11-year-old Anne. Anne comforts Marilla with the promise that no matter how much she grows and changes outwardly, she'll still be that same "little Anne." Whether it's true that Anne has merely "pruned down and branched out," or whether in fact she's changed in more substantial ways that aren't obvious to her, the most important thing in Anne's mind is that she's still "Anne of Green Gables" and will remain so forever. Green Gables is the place where Anne found a home and family identity for the first time, so she will always be loyal to it and to Matthew and Marilla, who gave her that chance. This suggests that even if a person can't perceive all the ways they're growing up, family identity remains one of the most enduring traits. Marilla's deep emotion is also noteworthy—she has never let Anne seen such a display of affection before, since she feared it would spoil Anne.

"Well now, I guess she ain't been much spoiled," he muttered proudly. "I guess my putting in my oar occasional never did much harm after all. She's smart and pretty, and loving, too, which is better than all the rest. She's been a blessing to us, and there never was a luckier mistake than what Mrs. Spencer made—if it *was* luck. I don't believe it was any such thing. It was Providence, because the Almighty saw we needed her, I reckon."

Related Characters: Matthew Cuthbert (speaker), Mrs. Alexander Spencer, Marilla Cuthbert, Anne Shirley

Related Themes:

Page Number: 343

Explanation and Analysis

Before Anne goes to Queen's, Matthew, too, has an emotional moment. Marilla has tried to monopolize Anne's "bringing up," warning Matthew against "putting in his oar" by interfering and likely spoiling Anne. Ironically, even Matthew's more indulgent interferences, like buying Anne a dress with puffed sleeves and offering her unrestrained praise and encouragement, are more helpful to Anne in some ways than Marilla's stricter methods. More readily than Marilla, Matthew has always understood how much Anne simply craved love and affection. That's why Matthew argued for keeping Anne in the first place, and now, as Anne is getting ready to leave Green Gables, Matthew looks back on that decision with gratitude. Mrs. Spencer bringing Anne from the orphanage instead of a boy wasn't an accident, he now believes, but "Providence," or God's will. As he sees it now, not only did Anne need *them*, but he and Marilla needed Anne's love, tenderness, and beauty in their lonely lives.

Chapter 36: The Glory and the Dream Quotes

"If I had been the boy you sent for," said Anne wistfully, "I'd be able to help you so much now and spare you in a hundred ways. I could find it in my heart to wish I had been, just for that."

"Well now, I'd rather have you than a dozen boys, Anne," said Matthew, patting her hand. "Just mind you that—rather than a dozen boys. 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."

Related Characters: Matthew Cuthbert, Anne Shirley (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 363

Explanation and Analysis

This quote is Anne and Matthew's last conversation before Matthew's sudden death of a heart attack. Home from Queen's, Anne notices how tired Matthew is from the farm work at Green Gables and regrets that she wasn't the boy they'd originally sent for, able to spare Matthew over the years. In his shy, awkward way, Matthew assures Anne that she is exactly what he needed after all. A boy might have been able to labor on the farm, but he wouldn't have been Anne, the amazing person Matthew has loved and been proud of all these years. Though it didn't seem practical at the time, Matthew sensed this deeper need before anyone else did. Matthew's words support Montgomery's argument that people should be welcomed and embraced for who they are instead of viewed as assets. They also comfort Anne, who treasures the memory of this conversation after Matthew's death. She and Matthew have always understood one another more instinctively than other characters.

Chapter 38: The Bend in the Road Quotes

"I'm just as ambitious as ever. Only I've changed the object of my ambitions. I'm going to be a good teacher—and I'm going to save your eyesight. Besides, I mean to study at home here and take a little college course all by myself. Oh, I've dozens of plans, Marilla. I've been thinking them out for a week. I shall give life here my best, and I believe it will give its best to me in return. When I left Queen's, my future seemed to stretch out before me like a straight road. I thought I could see along it for many a milestone. Now there is a bend in it. I don't know what lies around the bend, but I'm going to believe that the best does."

Related Characters: Anne Shirley (speaker), Marilla Cuthbert

Related Themes:

Page Number: 378

Explanation and Analysis

After Marilla finds out that her eyesight is threatened and that she won't be able to manage Green Gables's upkeep without help, Anne forms a new plan for her life. She gives up her scholarship to study English at Redmond College (a relatively rare opportunity for a young woman in the late 19th century) in order to stay at Green Gables, teach school in Avonlea, and continue her studies in her spare time. When Marilla protests that Anne shouldn't sacrifice for her, Anne argues that she hasn't abandoned her old ambitions, she has simply redirected them. Even though her future appears less clear than it did when she graduated from Queen's, Anne comforts herself with the belief that the "bend in the road" (this unexpected turn of events) has many good things beyond it. Anne's positive attitude about life demonstrates her maturity and resilience, suggesting that the many challenges of growing up have prepared her for this change of plans. Out of love for Marilla and Green Gables, she is willing to set aside her expectations for the future and embrace a different duty.

Anne's horizons had closed in since the night she had sat there after coming home from Queen's; but if the path set before her feet was to be narrow she knew that flowers of quiet happiness would bloom along it. The joy of sincere work and worthy aspiration and congenial friendship were to be hers. Nothing could rob her of her birthright of fancy or her ideal world of dreams. And there was always the bend in the road!

"God's in His heaven, all's right with the world," whispered Anne softly.

Related Characters: Anne Shirley (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 384

Explanation and Analysis

These closing sentences of the novel encapsulate Anne's attitude about the future. The past few years of Anne's life have been marked by academic striving and ambition, but since Marilla needs her at Green Gables now, Anne's attitude has made a marked shift toward home, duty, and more modest goals. Yet Anne believes that if she continues to look for good in life, she can expect to find it; and anyway, nothing can take away the comfort of her imagination or the hope for new directions in the future. The closing quotation is a line from Robert Browning's poem "Pippa Passes." Browning's 1841 verse drama describes an innocent young girl having an unconscious influence for good on the people she passes. Thus the closing line of the book expresses Anne's faith in God and contentment with the way her life is unfolding, and also hints that, like the poem's heroine, Anne herself will continue to have a warm, loving influence on the people around her simply by being herself. It's a fitting conclusion for Anne's story, as she has found joy in life at Green Gables and also brought unexpected happiness to many.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

CHAPTER 1: MRS. RACHEL LYNDE IS SURPRISED

Mrs. Rachel Lynde lives just off Avonlea's main road and keeps a careful eye on all the town's comings and goings. One afternoon in early June, she is sitting by her window when she sees Matthew Cuthbert driving his buggy through the hollow, dressed in his best outfit. Matthew is such a shy man that he seldom goes anywhere without good reason. Mrs. Lynde decides she must visit Matthew's sister Marilla, who lives with him, in order to satisfy her curiosity.

Montgomery begins her story through the eyes of the town gossip, allowing the reader to get an outside perspective on brother and sister Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert, who will occupy the center of the novel. Matthew's unusual errand establishes an air of mystery and hints that the Cuthberts' lives are about to change.

After tea Mrs. Rachel heads up the road to Green Gables, the big house set back from Avonlea's main road and surrounded by orchards where the Cuthberts live. Mrs. Rachel thinks it's no wonder Matthew and Marilla are thought to be a bit strange, living in this isolated house among the trees. She walks across the tidy backyard of Green Gables and is soon welcomed into its spotless kitchen, where Marilla sits knitting. Immediately, Mrs. Rachel observes that the table is set for three, but the dishes and dessert indicate that only ordinary company is expected.

Matthew and Marilla live an isolated life even by rural Avonlea standards. In particular, Marilla's life seems to revolve around impeccable housekeeping, even though people seldom come to Green Gables. Mrs. Lynde's observations suggest that the Cuthberts' life is rather lonely. Yet the mystery of Matthew's errand deepens, because it seems that somebody is expected for dinner.

Marilla and Rachel don't have much in common—Marilla is tall, thin, and angular, with a stark knot in her hair and a rigid expression, yet a suggestion of humor around her mouth. Despite their differences (Mrs. Lynde is plump and laughs more readily), the two have always been friends. Mrs. Rachel sits down and gets straight to the point—where is Matthew off to? Marilla knew Rachel would show up with questions. Matthew, she explains, has gone to the train station; they're adopting a little boy from an asylum in Nova Scotia.

Marilla and Rachel Lynde are the book's first example of friendship. Their differences suggest that people don't have to be very similar in order to form a genuine, enduring bond; being neighbors and learning each other's habits, as Marilla and Mrs. Lynde have clearly done, is sometimes enough. "Asylum" is an archaic way of referring to an orphanage.

Mrs. Rachel is briefly dumbstruck, but Marilla is serious. Rachel doesn't approve of Matthew and Marilla adopting a boy—especially without asking her advice. Marilla explains that Mrs. Alexander Spencer told them about the asylum, and they figured that Matthew, who's now 60 and suffers from heart trouble, could use a little boy's help. So they've asked Mrs. Spencer to pick out a boy of 10 or 11 for them.

In Canada in the late 1800s, it wasn't uncommon to adopt a child from an orphanage in hopes of getting help around one's house or farm. Situations varied, but in this case, the Cuthberts aren't primarily interested in offering a child a home and family—they really need someone to help Matthew with daily chores.

Mrs. Rachel tells Marilla she's being foolish—they don't know anything about this little boy or his background. What if he sets Green Gables on fire or poisons the well? She read in the newspaper about a little orphan girl doing that. Unfazed, Marilla points out that there are risks in everything, and anyway, she isn't adopting a girl. Mrs. Rachel heads out to share the news with her other neighbors, feeling sorry for any orphan who's going to be raised by the Cuthberts.

Mrs. Lynde is afraid the Cuthberts don't know what they're getting themselves into. Newspaper stories sensationalize orphans' crimes, suggesting that these children were sometimes stigmatized. Marilla's dry humor comes through in her response to Rachel, as well as her sensible nature. At the same time, Mrs. Lynde isn't wrong—the Cuthberts don't know what, or who, is waiting for them.

CHAPTER 2: MATTHEW CUTHBERT IS SURPRISED

Matthew, an awkward man with shoulder-length gray hair and a full beard, drives his buggy to Bright River. He enjoys the trip, except for the moments when he passes ladies and must nod to them in greeting—Matthew is terribly self-conscious around women, except for Marilla and Mrs. Rachel. When he reaches the train station, he sees nobody except for a girl sitting on a pile of shingles and looking intently at him. When he questions the stationmaster, Matthew learns that the little girl has been dropped off for him. Matthew is shocked, baffled, and unsure what to do.

Matthew, like Marilla, is set in his ways and doesn't venture away from home very often. He's especially unprepared for what awaits him at the train station. The story's first conflict is established—who is the girl, and why has she been unexpectedly sent to the Cuthberts, disrupting their plan to adopt a boy?

The girl is about 11 years old, wearing a shabby yellowish-gray dress. She wears thick red braids down her back and has big, expressive eyes. As Matthew hesitantly approaches, the girl jumps up and asks if he's Matthew Cuthbert. She explains that if he hadn't shown up, she was going to sleep in a nearby cherry tree. Seeing her bright eyes, Matthew decides he must take her home and let Marilla rectify the mix-up.

The little girl who awaits Matthew is out of the ordinary—bold enough to approach Matthew instead of waiting for him to speak to her, and imaginative enough to hatch a plan (even a dubious one!) in case she's abandoned for the night. At the same time, Anne's contingency plan suggests that she's used to having to fend for herself.

The girl chatters cheerfully as they walk towards the buggy. She says that she's never belonged to anyone before, and that her four months in the asylum were worst of all: there was no "scope for the imagination" there. As Matthew drives the buggy away from the station, the girl breaks some blossoms off a tree and says they remind her of a bride. She longs to own a pretty dress of her own someday—she's never had nice clothes, but she can always *imagine* that she does.

The orphan girl has never had a home. Yet her interest in "imagination" suggests that imagination serves as a way of coping with difficult circumstances, whether it's a lonely asylum or a lack of nice clothing. Her ability to pretend is not just a form of escapism, in other words, but a way of helping her face reality more courageously.

The girl asks Matthew what makes Prince Edward Island's roads red, and since he doesn't know the answer, she decides it's something to find out someday. The world wouldn't be nearly so interesting, she says, if she knew everything—then there'd be no place for imagination. She offers to stop talking if it's bothering Matthew, but to his surprise, he doesn't mind. This girl is different from the timid, "well-bred" children of Avonlea. The girl is glad to keep talking. She's used to being told that "children should be seen and not heard" and laughed at for using big words.

The girl uses her imagination to help her face the world's mysteries, making these unknowns interesting instead of threatening. Matthew, normally fearful of girls, likes hearing what this girl has to say, and his welcoming attitude is a novelty for her, too. The Victorian maxim that children should be "seen and not heard"—should stay silent, in other words—has been used to stifle her talkative personality.

After Matthew tells her some details about Green Gables, the girl says she feels nearly perfectly happy. She can't be *completely* happy, she explains, because that's impossible for anybody with **red hair**. She can imagine away other details, like her freckles and skinny figure. But her hair is her "lifelong sorrow."

Imagination has its limits, and this girl's red hair defies her ability to pretend things are different. Her attitude about her hair also shows her flair for the dramatic—having hair that she considers ugly can't truly be that bad.

Suddenly, as they enter the Avenue of Newbridge, the girl is overwhelmed by the canopy of apple blossoms overhead, through which the sunset is visible. She falls silent for about three miles, then tells Matthew that it was the first thing she's ever seen that couldn't be improved by her imagination—it gave her a "funny ache." She decides the place ought to be called "the White Way of Delight." She always renames things or people if their real names aren't imaginative enough. As they come within view of Barrys' pond, filled with shifting colors and singing frogs, the girl decides that it ought to be called the Lake of Shining Waters. Matthew points out Orchard Slope, the Barrys' house, where a little girl of 11, Diana, lives.

Besides having an active imagination, the girl is sensitive to natural beauty. Inventing names for things is a way of claiming them for her own—allowing her to lay claim to things she loves despite owning very little. Because the girl assumes she is coming to Green Gables to stay—Matthew having declined to tell her the truth—this is also a way of laying claim to her new home.

When they come within view of Green Gables, the girl wants to guess which house is theirs for herself, and she correctly picks out the farmstead nestled among the orchards and woods off in the distance. Matthew is delighted. She explains that Mrs. Spencer hadn't described the house, but that she just *felt* it was home. She's been pinching herself all day about finally getting to go home. Matthew feels dread, glad that Marilla will be the one to break the bad news to the little girl. He can't bear the thought of this innocent child being disappointed.

The girl has an instinctive sense of where home is, and indeed Matthew, having bonded with her, seems to have nearly forgotten that they didn't intend to adopt a girl in the first place. He already feels affection toward this open-hearted, needy girl, despite the fact that he wasn't looking for her specifically and wasn't intending to open his heart to any child.

CHAPTER 3: MARILLA CUTHBERT IS SURPRISED

When Marilla sees that Matthew has brought in a strange girl with **red hair**, she's baffled. The girl listens silently as Marilla questions Matthew about the mix-up. Suddenly she drops her bag and springs toward them with clasped hands, crying, "You don't want me because I'm not a boy! I might have expected it." She flings herself down at the table and weeps. She adds that this is the most "tragical" thing that has ever happened to her.

The girl is used to feeling unwanted, but it's especially devastating to be brought to what she thinks is home, only to face rejection on such grounds.

Smiling a bit, Marilla tells her that she can stay for tonight. She asks the girl's name. At this, the girl asks if she could be called Cordelia, though she reluctantly admits that it's not her real name—she's really Anne, which is sadly "unromantic." Marilla retorts that Anne is a nice, sensible name. Anne agrees to give up being called "Cordelia" as long as Marilla makes sure to call her *Anne* instead of *Ann*—she thinks it looks much more distinguished.

Much as she imagines new names for places and other people, Anne even renames herself to something more "romantic"—another way of imagining herself into different circumstances. But if she must be just "Anne," it's important that other people know the correct spelling. Though Anne's insistence on "Anne with an E" is one of her humorous trademarks, it's also a way that she hangs onto ownership of her name in a world where she has little else.

Anne doesn't know how the mix-up at the orphanage happened. When Mrs. Spencer came to get Lily Jones, the five-year-old she's adopting, she was certain that the Cuthberts wanted a girl, too. Marilla explains that a girl "would be of no use to us" on the farm. Anne quietly sits down with the Cuthberts for dinner but only pecks at her food, explaining that she's "in the depths of despair."

Marilla thinks of adopting a child in terms of that child's usefulness to her and Matthew, not primarily in terms of providing love and a home, so there's no room for Anne in her plans. Though Anne is no doubt devastated, she uses big words and ideas to help her cope with sadness.

After dinner, Anne listlessly follows Marilla up to the east gable room where she'll sleep. The walls and floor are painfully bare, with an old-fashioned bed and plain mirror and basin. Anne quickly changes and dives under the covers, finding the room cold and uninviting. When Marilla returns for her candle, she picks up Anne's discarded clothes and bids her goodnight. Anne retorts that it's the worst night she's ever had.

The bare coldness of the gable room reflects the cold reception Anne has received from Marilla; she isn't wanted or expected here. This is another circumstance so extreme that Anne can't simply imagine it away. When her imagination fails, she doesn't shrink from telling the truth baldly and confronting Marilla about the pain she has caused.

Marilla returns to the kitchen, where she finds Matthew thoughtfully smoking his pipe. She says she plans to see Mrs. Spencer tomorrow and figure things out—Anne will need to be sent back to the orphanage. When Matthew is reluctant, Marilla asks what good Anne could be to them. "We might be some good to *her*," Matthew says. He finds Anne interesting, and he figures he could hire a local boy to help him instead. Marilla thinks Anne talks too much. Unsettled, the two drift off to bed. Upstairs, Anne cries herself to sleep.

Marilla remains committed to her original plan, thinking of Anne in terms of what "good" she can be to the Cuthberts. She thinks of Anne mainly as a household asset, in other words, instead of as a person to be loved. Matthew's mindset, on the other hand, has already changed—he thinks of how the Cuthberts can help Anne. If it's farm help he needs, he's willing to pay for it. Anne, he senses, deserves something better.

CHAPTER 4: MORNING AT GREEN GABLES

Anne wakes up the next morning and remembers the awful truth of what happened last night. But the cherry tree blooming outside is so beautiful that she kneels by the window, admiring the orchard, brook, and hills of Green Gables, and imagining that she'll get to stay here. She has seen many "unlovely places" in her life, and she can't stop drinking in the beauty around her—until Marilla enters the room and startles her with a hand on her shoulder.

Even in the midst of disappointment and heartache, Anne's heart is open to the beauty around her, and she uses her imagination to comfort herself. Though Anne has not typically gotten to enjoy loveliness in her life, her imagination and her awareness of beauty have remained sharp, suggesting that she has a rare capacity for such things.

Marilla interrupts Anne's chatter about the beauties of Green Gables and orders her downstairs for breakfast. Anne has a better appetite, saying that the sunny morning is helping her endure "affliction" cheerfully. Marilla tells her she talks too much, so she eats breakfast silently, gazing at the sky out the window. She offers to wash the dishes and accomplishes the task well enough, but then refuses to go outside when Marilla lets her; there's no use in loving Green Gables, she says, if she isn't going to live here.

Anne is resilient, finding reasons for happiness and hope in the face of her likely return to the orphanage. Marilla's scolding, though it sounds cruel, also seems to be a way of distancing herself from Anne so as not to become attached to her and make her reconsider her decision to send Anne back. Similarly, fearing the grief of leaving Green Gables behind, Anne refrains from becoming too attached to its beauty.

Anne names the geranium on the windowsill "Bonny" and the cherry tree at her window "Snow Queen," explaining that she likes for the things she loves to seem like people. Marilla has to admit to herself that Anne is interesting, as Matthew says—she seems to be "casting a spell" over them both.

Despite her distaste for anything she considers nonsense, Marilla enjoys hearing what Anne has to say. When Anne names familiar objects, it's as if she is bringing fresh life to Green Gables.

That afternoon Matthew hitches the mare into the buggy so that Marilla can see Mrs. Spencer at White Sands and settle the matter of Anne. As she and Anne set off in the buggy, he quietly tells them that he's planning to hire a little boy, Jerry Buote, to work for him for the summer. He lingers at the gate, watching the two wistfully as they go.

Matthew, in his quiet way, takes initiative to circumvent Marilla's plans by hiring a farmhand—that way, Marilla has one less excuse to send Anne back to the orphanage. Matthew has clearly made up his mind that Anne belongs at Green Gables.

CHAPTER 5: ANNE'S HISTORY

As they travel to White Sands, Anne tells Marilla that she's determined to enjoy the trip by admiring her surroundings. A wild rose prompts a digression about the color pink and how people with **red hair** can never wear it. When Marilla says she doubts that Anne's hair will ever be less red, Anne quotes a line from a book, that her "life is a perfect graveyard of buried hopes." She says that romantic lines like that cheer her up.

Many passages in the book are long digressions like this one, giving Anne's ideas and perspectives on events without describing them directly. Especially early in the book, this is meant to endear Anne to readers (and to other characters) by instilling a sense of her imagination and quirks. Here, Anne's quote suggests that she often uses melodramatic language to help her cope with sadness, so her extreme declarations shouldn't always be taken at face value.

Marilla says that if Anne is going to talk for the entire five-mile journey, then she might as well tell Marilla about herself. Reluctantly, Anne begins to talk about her birth in Nova Scotia. She was the daughter of two high school teachers, Walter and Bertha Shirley. When they were young and poor, the Shirleys lived in a tiny yellow house, which Anne has always pictured being surrounded by flowers. Anne was born in the house, but her parents both died of fever within a few months.

The journey to White Sands gives Anne an opportunity to acquaint Marilla and readers with her backstory. It's a very sad one; Anne lost the only home and family she has ever known when she was still too young to remember them. Thus she fills in the unknown details with her imagination, and her life since has been spent longing for a permanent home.

After that, nobody knew what to do with Anne; neither of her parents had any living relatives. Finally, Mrs. Thomas, the woman whom the Shirleys had hired to clean, took Anne to live with her. Mrs. Thomas was even poorer than the Shirleys, and her husband was often drunk. Anne lived with the Thomases until she was eight years old and spent her time looking after the four younger Thomas children. After Mr. Thomas died, his relatives didn't want Anne, so a local woman named Mrs. Hammond took Anne in to help raise her eight children, including three sets of twins.

Anne doesn't remember a time in her life when she was genuinely wanted for her own sake; she's always been expected to earn her keep by working hard and helping raise other people's children. As a consequence, she's never had much of a childhood of her own. Anne's history explains some of her oddness; her articulate use of words and ideas is mature for her age, yet her exuberance and imagination remain childlike.

After Mr. Hammond died, the children were divided among relatives, and there wasn't anywhere for Anne to go, so she wound up at the overcrowded Hopeton orphan asylum, spending four months there until Mrs. Spencer showed up. At this, Anne sighs with relief. She evidently doesn't enjoy talking about her past. To Marilla's further questioning, she says that though her schooling has been spotty, she can read well and recite lots of poems from memory.

While Anne could talk all day about her imaginings, she apparently doesn't enjoy talking about her own history, suggesting that her imagination provides a way of avoiding the sorrowful parts of her life. Reading and poetry serve a similar function.

Marilla asks if Mrs. Thomas and Mrs. Hammond were good to Anne. Anne isn't sure what to say. She's sure that the women *intended* to be kind, but they both had a lot to deal with. Anne slips back into daydreams, and Marilla pities her. She realizes Anne's life has been filled with neglect and that she's been starved of love. What if Matthew were right? After all, Anne isn't rude or disrespectful, and she could be trained to talk less. Anne breaks her silence to admire the beach at the base of the cliffs they're driving along. She dreads arriving at Mrs. Spencer's—it feels like it will be "the end of everything."

Anne tries to speak well of the women who gave her shelter in the past, but it's clear to Marilla that those women never really loved or cared for Anne. After hearing the story of Anne's childhood, she is beginning to soften toward Anne and to reconsider her attitude about adoption altogether. She begins to picture what providing a home and family environment for Anne might actually look like.

CHAPTER 6: MARILLA MAKES UP HER MIND

When they reach Mrs. Spencer's, Marilla gets directly to the point: she'd told Mrs. Spencer's brother that they wanted a little boy, but somehow the message got garbled. Mrs. Spencer says it must have been the fault of her "flighty" niece, Nancy. Marilla concedes it was the Cuthberts' fault for not bringing the message themselves. They discuss sending Anne back to Nova Scotia, and Mrs. Spencer says it might be unnecessary: Mrs. Peter Blewett has been looking for a girl to help with her large family.

Marilla's discussion with Mrs. Spencer shows how it's taken for granted that orphans will be useful to the families that adopt them. Because Anne was expected to serve a particular function at Green Gables and isn't the kind of child they expected, she has become a problem to be solved. Anne is forced to listen to such negotiations unfold, probably not for the first time in her life.

Though Mrs. Spencer calls this development "providential," Marilla, to her surprise, feels uneasy. Mrs. Blewett is rumored to be hard-driving, ill-tempered, and stingy. Marilla shrinks from surrendering Anne to such a person. Just then, Mrs. Blewett happens to come up the Spencers' lane. As the guests sit in the parlor, Anne regards Mrs. Blewett worriedly and tries not to cry.

A short time ago, Mrs. Blewett's arrival would have been welcomed by Marilla as an easy solution to the problem of Anne. Now that she's gotten to know Anne a little and pictures her being put to work in yet another loveless household, however, Marilla rethinks the whole "problem."

When Mrs. Spencer explains the situation, Mrs. Blewett looks Anne over sharply. She concludes that Anne looks delicate but "wiry," and that the wiry ones are often the best. If Anne lives with her, she warns, Anne will have to "earn [her] keep." Since she's exhausted with caring for her baby, she agrees to take Anne home. But Marilla looks at Anne's helpless face and says that she and Matthew will have to discuss the matter further.

Mrs. Blewett looks Anne over in a disturbingly objectifying way—defining her in terms of her surface characteristics and the expectation that Anne will justify her presence in the household. This is the opposite of being welcomed into a family. In contrast to her feelings just a day ago, Marilla realizes this and retreats from her plan to dispose of Anne.

Anne's expression is slowly transformed from despair to hope. When the other women step out of the room, she rushes to Marilla in joy, but Marilla warns her that nothing's decided yet, and scolds Anne for criticizing Mrs. Blewett's looks (though she hides a smile of agreement). She tells Anne she'd better sit down and behave, and Anne says she'll do whatever Marilla wants, if only Marilla will keep her.

Anne realizes that her hopes for a home and family may not be lost. Even if Marilla has partly decided, however, she maintains a strict exterior around Anne. Anne's heartbreaking willingness to be agreeable and obedient shows how desperately she longs for acceptance.

Later, back at Green Gables, Matthew and Marilla discuss Anne while milking the cows. Marilla has no idea how to raise a girl, and she's afraid she'll mess it up, but she has decided that Anne can stay. Matthew's face lights up; he finds Anne so "interesting." Marilla says it'd be better if Anne were *useful*, but she can be trained—and Matthew had better not interfere. Matthew agrees, but he urges Marilla to be good to Anne—he thinks Anne will be teachable if she feels loved.

Even though Marilla has softened toward Anne and is reconsidering her view of an adoptive child's role in the household, she still expects Anne to contribute to life at Green Gables by being "useful." Though Matthew doesn't completely disagree, he has a more instinctive understanding of what Anne really needs—to be loved. If that happens, he senses that everything else will fall into place for Anne.

CHAPTER 7: ANNE SAYS HER PRAYERS

That night in the east gable room, Marilla tells Anne to say her prayers before going to sleep. When Anne explains that she never says her prayers, Marilla is horrified—doesn't Anne know who God is? Anne replies that "God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable," as she learned in the asylum Sunday school. Somewhat relieved, Marilla says it's nevertheless "wicked" to neglect one's nightly prayers. Anne says it's easier to be wicked with **red hair**—and besides, she was once told that God gave her red hair *on purpose*, so she doesn't think she should be expected to pray.

Anne quotes the Westminster Shorter Catechism, a document listing important Christian doctrines in question and answer format. Presbyterian children were often taught to memorize the Catechism. In Anne's case, the Catechism answers are all she knows of religion; she doesn't have a concept of relating to God more directly and personally. This is partly because she doesn't believe a God who gave her red hair could be worth talking to.

Marilla rejects this excuse, though teaching Anne to pray feels awkward. She tells Anne she must kneel down to pray, and Anne complies, though she doesn't see the point—she'd rather go into a big field or the deep woods and simply "*feel* a prayer." Marilla realizes that Anne hasn't experienced human love, so she can't be expected to understand God's love. She finally tells Anne to just thank God for her blessings and ask for the things she wants. Anne obediently thanks God for things like the White Way of Delight and the Lake of Shining Waters. She also prays that she'll be allowed to stay at Green Gables—and that God will make her good-looking someday. She closes the prayer, "Yours respectfully, Anne Shirley." As Marilla leaves the room, Anne remembers that perhaps she should have said "Amen" instead.

Lacking conventional religious training, Anne doesn't understand the point of traditions like kneeling to pray—it makes more sense to her that prayer is instinctively "felt" in a place where she experiences beauty and delight. Marilla realizes that Anne can't be blamed for these beliefs; her human relationships have been so lacking that developing a relationship with God doesn't make sense to her. Anne's humorous prayer, sounding more like a polite letter than a devout prayer, is a good example of where she is in her religious development.

Downstairs, Marilla staunchly informs Matthew that it's time Anne was taught something—she's practically a "heathen." Tomorrow, she's sending Anne to the minister for the *Peep of Day* series, and she's getting Anne enrolled in Sunday school as soon as possible. It will be a lot of work, but Marilla figures life has been easy for her up to now, and she'll just have to make the best of this new challenge.

The Peep of Day *series was a highly popular series of religious education books by Favell Lee Mortimer, meant to prepare children to read the Bible for themselves. At 11, Anne would be considered too old for the simple lessons, showing how little religious teaching she's received in her life.*

CHAPTER 8: ANNE'S BRINGING-UP IS BEGUN

The next day, Marilla keeps Anne busy with household tasks and observes that she's hardworking and a fast learner—her weakness is her tendency to drift into daydreams and forget what she's doing. After Anne washes the dinner dishes, Marilla finally breaks the news: she and Matthew have decided to keep her, as long as tries to be good. Anne immediately bursts into tears of joy. Marilla tells Anne to sit down and try to calm herself—she laughs and cries too easily.

Marilla doesn't waste any time getting Anne used to the role that will be expected of her at Green Gables. Though she's not being asked to "earn her keep" like Mrs. Blewett wanted, she will have to contribute to the upkeep of her new home, and to "be good," an expectation Anne takes seriously as she grows up. Marilla is uncomfortable with Anne's easily moved emotions and tries to tamp them down.

Marilla says that Anne must simply call her "Marilla"—she doesn't want to be called "Miss Cuthbert," because she's not used to it, or "Aunt Marilla," because she's not Anne's aunt and won't pretend she is. Anne is shocked that Marilla never imagines. Marilla says she doesn't believe in imagining that things are different from the way God has made them. She sends Anne into the sitting room to find the copy of the Lord's Prayer on the mantel; she must memorize it this afternoon.

Imagination has been key to Anne's survival as a lonely orphan, but Marilla cannot understand this; to her, trying to imaginatively improve on life is suspect at best, ungrateful at worst. Because imagination is Anne's way of coping with hardship, this suggests that Marilla simply hasn't needed her imagination to the degree Anne has.

Anne doesn't reappear, and when Marilla goes to investigate, she finds Anne staring at a picture on the wall, *Christ Blessing the Little Children*. Anne tells Marilla she was imagining that she was one of the children in the picture—the lonely-looking little girl standing apart from the group, hoping that Christ will notice her. She imagines how the little girl must have felt while she waited in trepidation, and the joy she must have felt when she was kindly noticed.

This scene is an example of Anne and Marilla's different views on imagination. Marilla wants Anne to memorize The Lord's Prayer, seeing this as sufficient religious instruction for now. For Anne, though, imagining herself into a biblical scene is just as effective, and perhaps even more, for learning about Christ.

Marilla interrupts Anne's digression, finding it unseemly, and tells her that when she's asked to do something, she needs to obey immediately. Anne finally settles down to study the prayer. She interrupts her study to say that she finds the prayer beautiful; in the asylum Sunday School, the superintendent prayed "mournfully," as if it were a "disagreeable duty." But this prayer sounds like poetry.

Marilla feels that Anne's imaginative approach to a biblical story might be sacrilegious. But for Anne, imagination and "poetry" deepen her appreciation of religion, making it easier for her to relate to. Since much of Anne's life has been taken up with "disagreeable duty," it's not surprising that this would be an unappealing view of religion.

After another period of silence, Anne asks Marilla if she thinks that Anne will ever have a "bosom friend" in Avonlea. By this she means an "intimate friend" or "kindred spirit" in whom she can confide anything. Marilla mentions that Diana Barry, who lives at Orchard Slope, the neighboring farm, might be a good playmate. She also assures Anne, who's worried that Diana might also have **red hair**, that Diana has black hair and, more importantly, she is smart and well-behaved.

"Bosom friend" and "kindred spirit" are somewhat interchangeable terms that Anne uses for close, heartfelt friendships—something Anne has never had before. Marilla tries to redirect Anne from her preoccupation with the "tragedy" of red hair; it's what's inside that counts, though Anne finds this hard to believe.

Anne disregards Marilla's attempt to teach a moral and says that having a beautiful bosom friend would be almost as good as being beautiful oneself. When she lived with Mrs. Thomas, she named her reflection in the bookcase "Katie Maurice" and talked to Katie about her life, imagining that someday she could step through the enchanted bookcase and join Katie in a happy land forever. When Anne moved in with Mrs. Hammond, she discovered an echo in the valley and named her Violetta, becoming nearly as attached to her as to Katie Maurice. Marilla dryly observes that it will be good for Anne to have a real friend and sends her upstairs to finish learning the prayer.

Because of her troubled childhood, Anne's only friends in life have been imaginary—just her own reflection and the echo of her voice. (Lucy Maud Montgomery, herself a lonely child, had an imaginary friend named Katie Maurice.) She longs for a real, tangible friendship that isn't a mere extension of herself.

Up in her room, Anne imagines different décor and furnishings for the spartan bedroom—velvet carpet, silk curtains, and gold and silver tapestries. She also imagines that she's wearing a white lace gown, has black hair, and is named Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald. But then she catches a glimpse of her reflection and reminds herself that she's just "Anne of Green Gables"—which is so much nicer than being Anne of nowhere in particular. Then she sits at the window and blows kisses to the Snow Queen, the trees, Diana's house, and even Katie Maurice and Violetta.

Anne still tends to disappear into elaborate daydreams, transforming her surroundings and her own identity to suit her imaginings. Yet, as she feels more at home at Green Gables, she starts to feel less of a need to do this—her real surroundings and identity begin to feel like enough. But that doesn't mean she has to let go of her imagination entirely.

CHAPTER 9: MRS. RACHEL LYNDE IS PROPERLY HORRIFIED

After Anne has been at Green Gables for two weeks, Mrs. Rachel Lynde visits her, having been prevented by the grippe from coming sooner. She's heard many rumors about Anne and is eager to see the girl for herself. Though kept busy around the house, Anne has spent the past weeks becoming intimately familiar with Green Gables' orchards, hollows, and woods and happily talking to Matthew and Marilla about her discoveries—prompting smiles from Matthew and occasional scolding from Marilla, who secretly finds her interesting, too.

"Grippe" is an archaic term for the flu. Mrs. Lynde, who's been skeptical about Anne all along, arrives disposed to criticize the newcomer. Anne, meanwhile, has found little to discourage her as she's felt more and more at home; she's felt welcomed and accepted. She and Mrs. Lynde are set for a clash.

While Anne plays in the orchard, Rachel visits with Marilla, detailing her illness and questioning Marilla on her surprising decision to keep Anne. Marilla admits that Anne's presence has already made the house "a different place." Mrs. Rachel looks skeptical—there's no telling how such a child might turn out, she warns Marilla.

Already, Marilla feels that Anne has brought more to Green Gables than mere usefulness—she's transformed the place in a way that's hard to quantify. Mrs. Rachel still believes that an orphan is intrinsically suspect.

Marilla calls Anne inside to meet Rachel. Fresh from her wanderings, Anne looks awkward—she's still wearing her ill-fitting orphanage dress, her freckles stand out, and her **red hair** is ruffled. Mrs. Rachel greets her with the comment, "they didn't pick you for your looks, that's sure." Furthermore, she's "skinny and homely," and Mrs. Rachel has never seen such freckles before—or hair as red as carrots! She tells Anne to come closer.

Anne's introduction to Mrs. Lynde could hardly be more unfortunate. She looks as disheveled as possible, and Mrs. Lynde is primed to see her faults. It must wound Anne dearly to have a stranger affirm that she is ugly, since that's one of Anne's deepest insecurities.

In response, Anne leaps across the room and stamps her foot, crying, "I hate you!" with each stamp. She tells Mrs. Rachel that she's a "rude, impolite, unfeeling woman" for speaking to her this way. How would Mrs. Rachel like to be told that she's fat, clumsy, and without imagination? Anne says she will never forgive Rachel for hurting her feelings like this. Shocked, Marilla orders Anne to her room, and Anne goes, crying and slamming her door.

Anne is keenly sensitive about her looks, and Mrs. Rachel's abrupt criticism comes as a shock. Her words feel like a rejection, and Anne can't restrain the hurt she feels in response.

Mrs. Rachel, collecting herself, tells Marilla she doesn't envy her bringing up such a child. To Marilla's own surprise, she tells Rachel that she shouldn't have made fun of Anne's looks. She doesn't excuse Anne's behavior, she continues, but Rachel should remember that Anne has never been taught what's right. As Mrs. Rachel angrily leaves, she sarcastically says that she'll be more mindful of "the fine feelings of orphans" from now on, and she advises Marilla to give Anne a "talking to" with "a fair-sized birch switch," the only language she thinks Anne will understand. It worked on her own 10 children, after all.

Marilla surprises even herself by hurrying to Anne's defense, showing how sympathetic she really is toward Anne. Mrs. Rachel just sees Anne as an "orphan" whose personality and struggles she doesn't yet appreciate, and to whom she thinks her own childrearing experience ought to apply.

Marilla slowly goes to Anne's room, wondering what to do; she doesn't believe she could follow Mrs. Rachel's advice to hit Anne. Finally she faces a tear-stained Anne and tells her she's ashamed of her behavior, which Mrs. Rachel will soon repeat everywhere. Anne miserably tells Marilla that Mrs. Rachel's criticisms enraged her—imagine being told to your face that you're ugly. This suddenly reminds Marilla of being a small child, called "a dark, homely little thing" by an aunt. Marilla sympathizes, admitting that Rachel was too outspoken. But Anne must go to Mrs. Rachel and apologize for her temper and ask for forgiveness. Until she does that, Anne will have to stay in her room. In that case, Anne says, she'll have to stay in her room forever. Marilla leaves Anne to think about it overnight, but as she goes downstairs, she pictures Mrs. Rachel's face and has a terrible urge to laugh.

The way Marilla deals with Anne's misbehavior shows some important developments in Marilla's character. For one thing, even though Anne's outburst will inevitably fuel gossip in Avonlea, Marilla refuses to be intimidated by Mrs. Rachel's angry opinions. She also shows herself capable of deep empathy, having endured cruel remarks as a child herself. Finally, Marilla has an unexpected sense of humor about the situation, though she doesn't let Anne see it. Despite her strictness and rigidity in many things, Marilla is supportive and even tender towards Anne in her own way.

CHAPTER 10: ANNE'S APOLOGY

The next morning Marilla tells Matthew what happened, and he thinks it's a good thing that Mrs. Rachel "got a calling down." He tells Marilla not to be too hard on Anne. Marilla duly carries Anne's meals up to the east gable, but Anne doesn't seem to touch the food. That night, while Marilla is out tending to the cows, Matthew sneaks inside and slips upstairs to Anne's room. He finds Anne sitting sadly by the window and gently asks her how she's doing. Bravely, Anne says she is imagining in order to pass the time. Matthew encourages Anne to just apologize and get it over with—Marilla is stubborn, too, after all.

Unsurprisingly, Matthew sides with Anne. However, he also ventures beyond this, despite his promise that he won't interfere with Marilla's efforts at raising Anne. Because he has a special sympathy and connection with Anne, Matthew's encouragement goes a long way toward softening her stubbornness. In this way, Matthew's tenderness complements Marilla's sternness. Anne also has stubbornness in common with Marilla.

Anne says she could apologize to please Matthew. What's more, she *does* feel a little sorry—her anger dissipated overnight, and she feels ashamed of herself. Matthew tells her it's too lonely in the house without her. Anne agrees to apologize, and Matthew tells her not to tell Marilla that he talked to Anne. He flees to the pasture so his sister will never suspect him.

Matthew's earlier prediction to Marilla proves accurate—that Anne will be motivated by love more than anything else. Though Anne regrets her actions, it's Matthew's tenderness that gets her to apologize.

Anne calls to Marilla over the banister and says she's ready to apologize to Mrs. Rachel. Marilla is relieved—she'd secretly been worrying about what to do if Anne remained stubborn. That evening, she and Anne walk to Mrs. Lynde's. Though Anne starts out looking gloomy, her expression brightens as they walk. She tells Marilla she's imagining what she's going to say in her apology. Marilla begins to worry—this is supposed to be a punishment, after all.

Everyone at Green Gables is learning as they go—Anne is learning how to be part of a family and community, and Marilla is figuring out how to raise a child one challenge at a time. Imagination helps Anne face difficult moments, and the dread of apologizing to Mrs. Lynde is no different.

When they reach Mrs. Lynde's, Anne suddenly drops to her knees and extends her hands to the surprised lady. In a quivering voice, she says she cannot possibly express all her sorrow, she has disgraced Green Gables, and she deserves to be ostracized by respectable society. Mrs. Lynde was right in all she said. Anne begs her forgiveness—she wouldn't want to withhold it from a poor orphan girl, would she? Though Anne's tone is sincere, Marilla knows Anne is getting some enjoyment out of this.

Though Anne is sincere in her apology, she draws on her imagination to help her navigate this embarrassing scenario, and the outcome is more dramatic than necessary. Anne sometimes copes with difficult moments by imagining they're bigger calamities than they really are.

Mrs. Lynde kindly urges Anne to get up. She forgives her and says she was too hard on Anne. Anyway, she once knew a girl with **red hair** whose color later darkened to a lovely auburn—maybe the same will happen to Anne. Anne is delighted—Mrs. Lynde has given her hope that will help her to endure her hair color.

Despite her sharpness toward Anne earlier, Mrs. Lynde has a sense of humor about the incident and offers Anne hope that she might outgrow her hated hair color. This is a positive outcome for everyone involved.

Anne is dismissed to the garden while Marilla and Mrs. Rachel talk. Mrs. Rachel still thinks Anne is a strange child, but there's something appealing about her, and she understands a little better why the Cuthberts kept her—she'll probably turn out well in the end. Later, as Marilla and Anne walk home, Marilla refrains from laughing at the drama of Anne's apology and warns her to control her temper better in the future. She also says Anne shouldn't think about her looks so much. Anne says that she loves beautiful things and hates to be ugly; she's not convinced of Marilla's claim that "handsome is as handsome does."

For Anne, red hair is a matter of vanity about her looks, but it's more than that, too. In her lonely, deprived childhood, Anne has often found comfort in beautiful things, so it's difficult for her to accept that she *isn't beautiful (in her own eyes, at least). What's more, her appearance is something else in her life that's beyond her control and beyond even her imagination's ability to change.*

As they approach Green Gables in the starry, breezy evening, Anne suddenly takes Marilla's hand and says that Green Gables is the first place that's ever felt like home. She could even pray with full sincerity right now. Marilla feels a sudden warmth, but she subdues it by telling Anne that if she's always good, then she'll always be happy and find it easy to say her prayers. Anne objects that saying one's prayers isn't the same as praying. But for now she'd rather imagine that she's the wind blowing over Green Gables—she'd rather not talk anymore. Marilla breathes a sigh of relief.

Green Gables feels like a home for the first time in Anne's life, stirring gratitude in Anne as well as spontaneous affection toward Marilla. Marilla is unused to maternal stirrings in herself and covers them up with a moralizing statement, which comes more naturally to her. But she's growing in love for Anne, despite her reluctance to accept a child who wasn't "useful" at first.

CHAPTER 11: ANNE'S IMPRESSIONS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL

Marilla has made Anne three new dresses for Sunday school: a "serviceable" gingham, a black-and-white checked sateen, and an ugly, stiff blue. The dresses are very plain in all details. Marilla asks Anne how she likes the dresses, and Anne replies that she'll *imagine* she likes them, but they aren't pretty. Marilla is offended—dresses should be sensible, and Anne should be grateful. Anne says she *is* grateful—but fashionable puffed sleeves would make her *more* grateful.

Anne finds beauty inspiring, and though she hasn't owned much clothing in her life, she doesn't hesitate to admit that she'd be happier to own prettier *clothing, no matter how this affronts Marilla. The ornate, puffy sleeves, popular in the late 1800s, will have to be left to her imagination.*

The next day Marilla is too sick with a headache to go to church, so Anne heads off alone in her plain dress and hat. On her way, she picks some buttercups and roses to decorate her hat. Avonlea has already heard interesting rumors about Anne, so when she arrives at church in her festooned hat, she draws much curiosity from the other girls, but nobody approaches her. Anne is placed in Miss Rogerson's Sunday school class. Miss Rogerson's teaching method consists mostly of question-and-answer drills. Anne knows the answers, thanks to Marilla, but she doesn't understand much—and she is the only girl who lacks puffed sleeves. She feels dreadful.

Especially in the Victorian period of the late 1800s, Sunday school was a major part of church life for young Protestant Christians—not just as an educational program, but as the center of social life for church youth. Anne stands out and doesn't fit in with the other girls, an awkward introduction to Avonlea beyond Green Gables. Her lack of puffed sleeves (not to mention her flowered hat) symbolizes her different past and inability to fit in.

When Anne gets home, she tells Marilla that she hated Sunday school. Marilla is appalled. Anne explains that she behaved herself well during the opening part of the service, but she was bored—partly because Mr. Bell, the Sunday school superintendent, didn't seem very interested in his own prayer. Then, in Sunday school, she was the only one of the 10 girls who didn't have puffed sleeves. She also thought it was unfair that Miss Rogerson got to ask all the questions. Finally, church was difficult because the minister's sermon was too long and lacked imagination. Marilla finds it hard to scold Anne, because she's secretly had the same thoughts about both the minister and Mr. Bell.

From Marilla's point of view, a good girl would enjoy and benefit from Sunday school. Anne, however, feels that some of the formalities of Sunday school don't match the heartfelt sincerity she associates with real prayer. She stood out from the other girls, and there just wasn't enough room for imagination. In a way, though, Anne's "outsider" observations just bring out what others have always thought, but—being more accustomed to social expectations—are afraid to say aloud.

CHAPTER 12: A SOLEMN VOW AND PROMISE

The following Friday, Marilla hears from Mrs. Lynde about Anne's flower-decorated hat and scolds her for drawing attention to herself. Anne starts to cry—she didn't think she'd done anything wrong; lots of girls had artificial flowers on their hats, after all. Marilla comforts Anne with the news that Diana Barry is home from a trip, so Anne can meet her today.

Marilla sees Anne's impulsive behavior as reflecting poorly on Marilla herself. For her part, Anne doesn't understand why she has to conform exactly to the other girls' behavior. She's not used to Avonlea's small-town atmosphere—where anyone who sticks out is talked about—or to others' lack of originality.

Right away Anne begins shaking with nervousness and excitement. She worries that Diana won't like her. Marilla says Anne should worry about Mrs. Barry instead—she'll expect Anne to be perfectly polite, or else she won't let Diana play with her. They walk to Orchard Slope, where Anne nervously greets Mrs. Barry. Diana, a black-haired girl with a cheerful expression, is reading a book on the couch. Mrs. Barry tells them to go outside—Diana strains her eyes too much over books, she says, so perhaps a playmate will get her outdoors more.

Always inclined to extremes of emotion, Anne lets her imagination run away with her as she thinks of possible outcomes of meeting Diana for the first time—what if they aren't bosom friends after all? Since she's never had a real-life friend before, there's lots of pressure on this first meeting.

In the Barrys' lush garden, Anne and Diana look at each other shyly. Finally, Anne asks Diana if she thinks she could like Anne enough to become her "bosom friend." Diana laughs, as she often does, and says she thinks so—she's glad Anne has come to Green Gables, because there are no other girls nearby, and Diana's sisters are too little. Anne asks Diana if she'll swear to be friends forever. Diana is shocked, but Anne explains that by "swearing," she just means "vowing and promising solemnly."

In Anne's mind, becoming a "bosom friend" isn't a complicated matter—it's mainly a question of one's sincerity and openness to friendship. Since Diana is an open-hearted person who simply desires a playmate, the two are a good match, even before they know much about each other.

Diana agrees, so they join hands, and Anne solemnly swears to be Diana's bosom friend forever. Diana laughingly repeats the oath and says that Anne is as strange as she's heard, but she thinks she'll like her a lot. By the end of the visit, the two girls are walking arm in arm. As she and Marilla walk home, Anne says she's the happiest girl on the Island and chatters happily about all the plans she and Diana have made. Marilla just reminds her that she can't play all the time; she'll have her chores to do, too.

Anne and Diana's friendship gets off to a promising start—Diana is ready to like Anne, no matter what strange things she's heard about her, and to cheerfully go along with Anne's imaginative fancies. Because of their mutual openness, the foundation for their friendship is already strong, and there's every indication that the friendship will live up to Anne's cherished hopes for a "bosom friend" of her very own.

When they get home, they discover that Matthew has bought Anne chocolates. Anne happily plans to share half with Diana. Though Marilla grumbles about the candy, she privately admires Anne's generosity. She also tells Matthew that even though Anne has only lived here for three weeks, it feels like she's been here forever. She's glad she kept Anne—but she warns Matthew to stop "looking I-told-you-so."

More and more, Marilla is warming up to the strange orphan girl she never wanted or expected—showing that even in an orderly household that's stuck in its ways, "family" can be a surprisingly flexible concept.

CHAPTER 13: THE DELIGHTS OF ANTICIPATION

One August afternoon Marilla sternly summons Anne inside—she played with Diana too long, and now she's chatting with Matthew instead of doing her sewing. Anne bursts indoors with the news that there's going to be a Sunday school picnic next week, including ice cream—can she go? Marilla scolds Anne for coming in 45 minutes late, she but agrees that Anne can go. Anne joyfully kisses Marilla's cheek, and Marilla covers up her delight by ordering Anne to do her patchwork.

Life is filled with exciting new experiences for Anne, for whom Sunday school social events—and delights like ice cream—have previously been subjects for imagination, not reality. These exciting experiences often distract Anne from paying attention to the duties of the moment, which frustrates Marilla as she tries to teach Anne responsibility. Yet Marilla isn't untouched by Anne's warmth, either.

As Anne reluctantly tackles her sewing, she talks to Marilla about Diana. Diana doesn't have as much imagination as Anne, but she's perfect otherwise. The two have made a playhouse in a circle of birch trees on Mr. William Bell's land. They have mossy stones for chairs, boards for shelves, and broken dishes, and they've called the spot Idlewild.

Anne's friendship with Diana continues to grow—Anne has plenty of imagination for both of them. Anne has a way of enchanting her environment, as she sees imaginative potential in nature and even in discarded objects.

Over the next week, Anne thinks and talks constantly of the Sunday school picnic. On the way home from church, Marilla warns Anne that she sets her heart on things too much and will suffer many disappointments in life. That day Marilla is wearing her amethyst brooch to church as usual, an inheritance from her mother. Anne loves the brooch and asks to hold it for a minute—she thinks amethysts might be "the souls of good violets."

Marilla mostly sees the downside of Anne's active imagination and worries that it sets Anne up for heartbreak in her life. A brooch is a piece of jewelry, much like a pin, that is often worn just beneath the throat. Anne's fascination with the brooch, combined with her anticipation of the picnic, sets up the coming conflict.

CHAPTER 14: ANNE'S CONFESSION

The next day, Marilla can't find her amethyst brooch; it isn't stuck in her pincushion as usual. When she asks Anne about it, Anne admits that she'd spotted the brooch in Marilla's room earlier and briefly tried it on. However, she insists that she put it back where it belonged. Marilla checks her room again, but the brooch isn't anywhere. When Anne maintains her innocence, Marilla thinks she's being defiant and sends her to her room. She's troubled by Anne's lie and worries that she can't trust her.

Knowing Anne was fascinated with the brooch, Marilla fears that Anne is now being dishonest with her about not having taken it. This is a good reminder that she's still getting to know Anne and trying to figure out how best to interpret and deal with Anne's behavior.

The next morning, Marilla tells Matthew that she's searched everywhere for the brooch, and that since Anne continues to deny having taken it, she'll have to stay in her room until she confesses. That means missing the Sunday school picnic, too. Anne is devastated. The next morning, when Marilla brings Anne's breakfast upstairs, Anne says she's ready to confess. Anne claims that when she put on the brooch, she decided to go to Idlewild and pretend she was the Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald. But on the way, while she was crossing the bridge over the Lake of Shining Waters, she took off the brooch for another look and accidentally dropped it into the water.

Given Anne's impulsive and whimsical behavior, her "confession" of having borrowed and lost the brooch is believable enough—yet given her eagerness to attend the picnic, its timing is rather suspicious, too.

Angry, Marilla tells Anne what her punishment will be—she can't go to the Sunday school picnic. She's unmoved by Anne's passionate tears and spends the morning fiercely scrubbing the house. After dinner—when Marilla is irked that Matthew thinks she's being too hard on Anne—she goes up to her room to look for a lace shawl that needs mending. When she looks in her trunk, she finds the amethyst brooch attached to a thread of the shawl. She suddenly remembers laying her shawl on the bureau, where the brooch must have gotten caught on it.

Anne's confession backfires, leading to dismay all around. The rediscovery of the brooch makes clear, however, that the entire crisis has been for nothing—the brooch was never truly lost, and Anne wasn't responsible for its disappearance.

Marilla takes the brooch to Anne's room and demands an explanation. Anne, worn out from crying, explains that she'd confessed in hopes of being allowed to go to the picnic. She invented a story, made it as interesting as possible, and memorized it. Marilla can't help laughing. She admits that she shouldn't have doubted Anne, who's never lied to her before, and that she drove Anne to tell the story. She says that if Anne forgives her, she'll forgive Anne—and now Anne had better get ready for the picnic; it's barely started, so she won't have missed much. Anne is ecstatic.

Like Marilla, Anne is still figuring out what it means to function as part of a family, too. Because of her experience with Mrs. Lynde—agreeing to apologize got her out of trouble—it makes sense to her that a confession (even a false one) would get her out of this mess, too. Despite her strictness, Marilla is capable of admitting her mistakes and even has a sense of humor about them, deepening trust between her and Anne.

That night Anne is exhausted and completely happy. She tells Marilla all about the picnic, including a boat ride on the lake, and the indescribable ice cream. That night Marilla tells Matthew the whole story about the brooch. She admits that she's learned a lesson from the whole episode. Anne is hard for her to understand sometimes, but Marilla thinks she'll turn out well in the end—and life with her certainly isn't dull.

The picnic lives up to Anne's joyful imagination. For her part, Marilla continues to find that Anne doesn't fit into her preconceived notions of raising a child, but she is getting to understand Anne better a little bit at a time, and their family bond strengthens accordingly.

CHAPTER 15: A TEMPEST IN THE SCHOOL TEAPOT

Anne and Diana are walking to school by way of some of their favorite wooded paths. They emerge onto Avonlea's main road and climb the hill to the school, a whitewashed building with big windows and old-fashioned desks covered with generations of student carvings. After school, Marilla's fears about Anne's behavior at school are calmed—the first day went well. Anne enjoyed herself, though she thinks the teacher, Mr. Phillips, spent too much time flirting with Prissy Andrews, a 16-year-old student. Marilla scolds Anne for disrespecting the schoolmaster by spreading rumors.

It's worth noting that the Avonlea schoolmaster might very well be a teenager himself (as Anne herself becomes a young teacher in later books) and not much older than his eldest pupils; at the same time, different social expectations in the late 1800s meant that Mr. Phillips's flirtation, though maybe not considered "proper," wouldn't have been viewed as scandalous as it would be today.

Anne assures Marilla that she was a good girl in school. She's behind most of her peers in her studies, but she feels her superior imagination makes up for it. She received several little gifts and compliments from new friends, even overhearing that she has "a very pretty nose." (Marilla agrees, but she won't flatter Anne's vanity by telling her so.) The first three weeks of school pass uneventfully.

Anne is beginning to find her place among her peers in Avonlea. Her neglected childhood means that she's lacked academic advantages, yet her imagination helps compensate for the lack. She is also beginning to make more friends.

One September morning, Diana tells Anne that Gilbert Blythe, a handsome boy who teases all the girls, is back from a summer in New Brunswick. Anne recognizes the name—it was written up along with a girl's name on the school porch with "Take Notice" printed above. Anne thinks the "Take Notices" are silly, though part of her regrets that there's no danger of *her* name ever appearing that way. Diana says that isn't true—Charlie Sloane is "dead gone" on Anne—and anyway, she's rumored to be the smartest girl in school. Anne would rather be pretty—though she *does* like being the head of her class.

The "Take Notice" custom is a teasing way of suggesting that certain kids are a couple or ought to be. Though Anne is just 11, she imagines being the object of someone's crush and assumes she'll never be beautiful enough. Anne's quick mind allows her to catch up rapidly in school, but right now, she'd rather be considered pretty than intelligent. ("Dead gone" is slang used in the book to mean that someone has a big crush on someone else.)

Diana warns Anne that Gilbert will be joining her class—though he's nearly 14, he spent a few years in Alberta where he didn't attend school much—and that Anne will find it difficult to maintain her lead. Anne says she looks forward to the challenge. In class, Diana points out Gilbert sitting across the aisle. He's tall, curly-haired, hazel-eyed, and has a teasing smile. After pranking another girl, he winks at Anne. Anne tells Diana that Gilbert is handsome, but she thinks he has bad manners.

Though she doesn't know it yet, Gilbert will become a major factor in Anne's life at Avonlea school. In fact, at first, she even finds him somewhat appealing; his intelligence doesn't intimidate her. However, his arrogant, teasing manner is off-putting to her.

That afternoon, while Mr. Phillips is preoccupied with Prissy Andrews, the rest of the students are doing what they like. Gilbert is trying to get Anne's attention, but she stares out the window, lost in daydreams. Gilbert isn't used to being ignored by girls. He reaches across the aisle and holds Anne's long braid aloft, loudly whispering, "Carrots!" Anne jumps to her feet, calls Gilbert a hateful boy, and cracks her slate over his head.

Gilbert is used to getting the attention he wants from girls. When Anne seems to be resistant to his charms, Gilbert unknowingly resorts to the worst possible way of getting her attention. While many girls would just laugh or ignore the teasing, Anne promptly retaliates, wounded by the mockery of her hated red hair.

The entire school watches with shock and delight as Mr. Phillips demands an explanation. Gilbert speaks up to take the blame for teasing Anne, but Mr. Phillips ignores him. He accuses Anne of "temper and […] vindictive spirit," and he makes her stand in front of the blackboard for the rest of the day. Above her head he writes, "Ann Shirley has a very bad temper. Ann Shirley must learn to control her temper." Anne stands there bravely all afternoon, red-faced with anger and resentment. She refuses to look at Gilbert. After school, Gilbert tries to whisper an apology to Anne, but she acts like she doesn't hear him. She tells Diana she'll never forgive Gilbert.

To Gilbert's credit, he's willing to take the blame for the incident, but Mr. Phillips cruelly scapegoats Anne for the entire thing (even spelling her name wrong in the process). Far from being shamed by this punishment, Anne finds that it just hardens her hatred and resentment of Gilbert for hurting her feelings and exposing her to ridicule.

During the noon hour, students often climb the trees in Mr. Bell's spruce grove and pick nuts of gum to chew. At the end of the hour, they have to race back to the school in order to be in their seats before Mr. Phillips returns. One day, Anne is wandering at the grove's far end with a lily-wreath on her hair, and she's among the last into the school. Though she arrives among a crowd of boys, Mr. Phillips picks her as a scapegoat and makes her sit with Gilbert Blythe for the rest of the day, since she's "so fond of the boys' company." To Anne, this is the worst of insults. She buries her head in her arms all day. At one point Gilbert slips a candy heart under her arm, which Anne pointedly crushes with her shoe.

Mr. Phillips seems inclined to scapegoat Anne unfairly for things because of the way she stands out from the crowd. Because she hates Gilbert so much, being forced to sit with him would be further humiliating and enraging. She continues to resist Gilbert's efforts to reconcile.

At the end of the day, Anne takes everything out of her desk and tells Diana she isn't returning to school as long as Mr. Phillips is there. Marilla calls this nonsense, but she's struck by the stubborn look on Anne's face and decides to ask Mrs. Rachel for advice. As expected, Mrs. Rachel has already heard the whole story—and she loves being asked for advice. She advises Marilla to humor Anne for the time being. It wasn't right for Mr. Phillips to single Anne out, she says, and it was immodest to make her sit with a boy. So Marilla decides not to make a fuss. Anne happily studies at home, does her chores, and plays with Diana after school. She continues to hate and ignore Gilbert.

Marilla's reaction to Anne's resistance to school is telling. It shows that Marilla is already learning the importance of understanding Anne's stubborn feelings and not forcing her into situations against her will—this is much better for Anne in the long run. Indeed, Anne thrives at home where she doesn't have to face Gilbert and Mr. Phillips every day. (Formal schooling probably wasn't compulsory or closely regulated in rural Canada at this time, hence Anne's flexibility to study at home.)

One evening, Marilla finds Anne weeping by her window. Anne explains that she loves Diana so much that she can't bear the thought of someday losing her—she hates whomever her husband will be one day. Marilla tries to keep a straight face, but soon collapses into a chair, laughing heartily. If Anne must borrow trouble, she should borrow it closer to home—she has quite an imagination!

As Anne's friendship with Diana deepens, her imagination runs ahead to the day things will inevitably change. Marilla finds humor in Anne's ability to become emotional about future events—though sometimes Anne's sensitivity should be indulged, like the school situation, sometimes it causes her needless distress about things.

CHAPTER 16: DIANA IS INVITED TO TEA, WITH TRAGIC RESULTS

It's a brilliant October day, and Marilla has to go to an Aid Society meeting in a nearby town. Anne will have to get supper for Matthew and Jerry the farmhand. In the meantime, she's allowed to invite Diana over for afternoon tea. She can even use the leftover raspberry cordial she'll find in the cupboard. Anne rushes over to Orchard Slope to tell Diana, and shortly after Marilla drives off in the buggy, Diana appears at Green Gables in her second-best dress. The girls sit in the sitting room, asking about each other's families and farm crops, until Anne forgets to be formal, and they decide to pick apples in the orchard. They spend most of the afternoon there, Diana catching Anne up on all the Avonlea school gossip.

As Marilla kindly perceives, having tea together is a chance for the girls to pretend to be "grown up," as well as an opportunity to catch up on some of what Anne's been missing at school. Marilla's gesture—including the fact that she entrusts Anne with making supper—also indicates that she's growing in her trust of Anne.

When Diana mentions Gilbert Blythe, Anne changes the subject by suggesting they go inside and have some raspberry cordial. But when she looks in the pantry where Marilla had said the cordial would be, she doesn't see it. Then she finds a bottle of red liquid hidden on the top shelf and offers Diana a tumbler full, declining to drink any herself, since she's too full of apples. By the time Anne gets back from the kitchen, Diana has drunk two additional glasses of the raspberry cordial. Anne goes off on a long digression about her various cooking fiascoes, and by the time she's finished, Diana has risen from the table shakily, holding her head. She tells Anne she feels "awful sick" and must go home. Anne fails to dissuade her and finally accompanies her dizzy friend back to the Barrys', weeping with disappointment as she walks home to ready Matthew's tea.

Anne continues to stubbornly ignore any mention of the hated Gilbert. Then, something goes awry with tea, as Diana has an unexpected reaction to the "raspberry cordial." Anne is grieved that her elegant tea with Diana is abruptly cut short by the sudden "sickness."

Two days later, Anne returns from an errand to Mrs. Lynde's in tears. She confesses to Marilla that Mrs. Barry told Mrs. Lynde that Anne had sent Diana home in bad shape the other day—Diana was *drunk*. Anne is a terrible little girl, Mrs. Barry went on, and Diana will never be allowed to play with her again. Marilla, baffled, goes to the pantry to investigate. When she sees the bottle Anne had poured, she is shocked to recognize her three-year-old currant wine. She remembers that she'd actually put the raspberry cordial in the cellar. She tries not to laugh as she explains the matter to Anne.

Because of Marilla's mistake with the raspberry cordial, Anne accidentally got Diana drunk on wine instead. Mrs. Barry believes this was intentional on Anne's part. Marilla sees the humor of the situation, further showing that she's softening where Anne is concerned and taking a more humorous attitude toward life in general.

Anne recoils at facing Mrs. Barry, so Marilla agrees to speak to her instead. When Marilla returns from Orchard Slope, however, she's furious. Mrs. Barry refused to believe Marilla, and she criticized her for making such strong wine. Marilla had retorted that a greedy child like Diana ought to be spanked for drinking three glasses of anything. That evening, Anne sneaks over to Orchard Slope and timidly begs Mrs. Barry's forgiveness. Mrs. Barry isn't as easily softened as Mrs. Lynde, however, and suspects Anne is making fun of her by using big words like "intoxicate." That night, Marilla has a good laugh while telling the whole story to Matthew, but when she checks on Anne in her bedroom, she can't help but kiss the tear-stained sleeping face.

Marilla's anger shows that she's defensive on Anne's behalf, not just her own, and that she sees Anne as being fully part of her family. Mrs. Barry's refusal to believe Anne brings out Marilla's protective side—and also her tenderness, as she kisses the sleeping girl. When Anne tries taking things into her own hands, however, it backfires: Mrs. Barry doesn't understand Anne's tendency to be dramatic and interprets it as mockery.

CHAPTER 17: A NEW INTEREST IN LIFE

The next day, Anne glances outside and sees Diana beckoning to her from afar. She rushes down to the hollow and listens in dismay as Diana explains that her mother is unrelenting—the two girls are never to play together again. Weeping, they promise to remain one another's "bosom friend" no matter what. When Diana says she could never love anybody as much as Anne, Anne is overcome—she thought Diana merely liked her. She never believed that anyone could *love* her. With her patchwork scissors, she cuts off a lock of Diana's hair to remember her by.

As Marilla had predicted, Mrs. Barry is strict with her children and thinks Anne is a bad influence on Diana—a hard blow for both of them, especially for Anne, who believed she'd found her bosom friend at last. Anne's childhood was so lonely that she isn't used to hearing that she is loved, so Diana's words come as a genuine surprise.

The following week, to Marilla's surprise, Anne appears with an armload of books and announces she is returning to school—at least she can *see* Diana there. Anne is warmly welcomed by her other friends, receiving fruit, flowers, and fond notes from the other girls. After the dinner hour, she returns to her seat to find a beautiful apple. Just before taking a bite, she remembers that this type of apple only grows in the Blythe orchard. She drops the apple instantly. In pointed contrast, she graciously accepts a decorated pencil from Charlie Sloane.

The forced estrangement from Diana leads Anne to return to school. But her faithfulness to Diana is matched by her stubborn hatred of Gilbert—even her willingness to provoke him by pointedly accepting the attentions of a boy she doesn't especially like instead.

Diana is silent at school. But the next morning Anne receives a note from her, explaining that her mother has forbidden her to speak to or play with Anne at school. But she encloses a handmade bookmark and promises her faithful friendship. Anne sends back a note of thanks, understanding that Diana has to obey her mother and adding that their "spirits can commune."

Anne and Diana don't try to resist Diana's obligation to obey her mother (an example of Montgomery's upholding of virtues like obedience and "being good" throughout the novel). From Anne's perspective, "bosom friends" are so joined in spirit that they can remain connected even when circumstances prevent them from connecting in life.

Marilla expects Anne to get into further trouble at school, but to her surprise, Anne begins to thrive. She gets along better with Mr. Phillips and, motivated by the desire to beat Gilbert Blythe, throws herself into her studies. A rivalry develops. Though Gilbert sees the rivalry as friendly, Anne sees it as an extension of her grudge. She won't even admit that he's her rival, because she's still determined to ignore his existence. But the class honors alternate between the two of them—including one day, mortifying to Anne, when their names appear together in a tie.

When Anne returns to school on her own terms, she does better there. She also copes with her dislike of Gilbert by seeing him primarily as an academic rival instead of simply as a hated enemy. Still, there's no question that the rivalry is motivated by resentment, at least on her side.

By the end of the term, both Anne and Gilbert are promoted into the next class, and Anne begins struggling with geometry, lamenting to Marilla that "Gil—I mean some of the others" are so good at it. And she continues to be grieve the distance from Diana. Yet the world is so interesting that she can't stay sad for long.

Anne thrives academically despite her earlier disadvantages, showing that in addition to her stubbornness, she has grit and determination. She also copes with the difficulties in life, like her estrangement from Diana, by finding new interests, not simply by escaping into imagination.

CHAPTER 18: ANNE TO THE RESCUE

The Premier of Canada travels to Prince Edward Island to address his supporters in Charlottetown, 30 miles away. Most of Avonlea attends the rally. Mrs. Lynde doesn't support the Premier, but she's so interested in politics that she doesn't believe a rally can take place without her, so she goes also, taking Marilla along. Anne and Matthew will be alone at Green Gables overnight. While Matthew dozes over a newspaper, Anne struggles with her geometry and glances wistfully at a novel her friend Jane Andrews has lent her.

Marilla continues to gain trust in Anne, willing to leave the household partly in her hands while going on an overnight trip. Though she still struggles with distractions, Anne has matured a lot over the past year and has adapted to life at Green Gables and to the challenges of student life.

Anne distracts herself by chatting with Matthew. They talk about politics—Matthew votes Conservative so Anne decides she's Conservative, too. It's a good thing, she says, because "Gil—because some of the boys […] are Grits." Anne has heard people say that when a boy goes courting, he should agree with the girl's mother in religious matters and with the father in political matters. She asks Matthew if he's ever gone courting. The idea seems never to have occurred to Matthew. Anne talks about some of her friends' older sisters who are courting and finds it all pretty interesting, but she figures she won't want more than a single "beau" when she's older.

Though Anne is too young to "go courting" herself, the subject is interesting to her—and it's obvious that Gilbert is often on her mind, suggesting that her interest in him goes beyond rivalry and dislike, even if she's not fully aware of the fact herself.

Just as Anne is coming up from the cellar with some apples for a snack, Diana rushes into Green Gables' kitchen, and Anne drops everything, candle and all, in shock. Diana's little sister Minnie May is very sick with the croup, the babysitter is helpless, and Diana doesn't know what to do. Matthew immediately goes outside to harness the mare and search for a doctor. Anne cheerfully bundles up while reassuring her friend—she took care of Mrs. Hammond's twins, all of whom had croup often. She gets a bottle of ipecac, and the girls hurry across the snowy fields to Orchard Slope. Anne can't help feeling delighted to be sharing this adventure with her estranged friend.

"Croup" is a respiratory infection common in children. Ipecac syrup was a once-common cough medicine used to help clear mucus from the airways. Because of her background caring for children, Anne quickly rises to the occasion and knows how to deal with the crisis at the Barrys'. She's even confident enough in the outcome to enjoy the occasion, after not being allowed to talk to Diana for so long.

Three-year-old Minnie May is feverish, her breathing labored. Anne assesses the situation and immediately puts Diana to work heating water. She forces down many doses of ipecac, and, by three o'clock in the morning when Matthew arrives with a doctor, Minnie May is sleeping calmly. Anne tells them both that she'd nearly given up; she'd never seen a sicker child, but the last dose of ipecac finally brought up the choking phlegm. The doctor looks at Anne in wonder, later telling the Barrys that Anne saved their daughter's life—Anne is a remarkable girl.

While Anne's orphan background been a setback in certain ways, it has also armed her with knowledge and ability that many children her age wouldn't necessarily have, and she saves Minnie May's life because of it. Besides her childlike and awkward ways, Anne's background has also given her a maturity beyond her years.

Anne stays home from school and sleeps for most of the day. When she comes downstairs, she asks Marilla about the political rally. Marilla waits until Anne has eaten some dinner and then tells her that Mrs. Barry stopped by. Mrs. Barry told Marilla that Anne saved Minnie May's life, and she apologized for being so unreasonable about the currant wine incident. She hopes Anne will forgive her and that she and Diana will be close again. Marilla indulgently lets Anne skip washing the dishes, and Anne runs exultantly out of the house to reunite with Diana.

Anne's rescue of Minnie May changes Mrs. Barry's mind about her—she realizes that Anne is competent and kind-hearted after all, and Anne's and Diana's friendship is able to be fully restored.

Anne comes home at twilight, telling Marilla she is "perfectly happy," even in spite of having **red hair**. Mrs. Barry had tearfully kissed and apologized to her, and she had a lovely time visiting Diana—Mrs. Barry even let them use nice china for their tea. Anne felt so grown up and she imagines that being a real grown-up must always be so nice. She tells Marilla that after such a night, she truly feels like praying.

Even though there are some things in Anne's life that she's powerless to change—like her red hair—there are other areas where she's capable of taking initiative in her life, like nursing Minnie May—and these can have consequences even beyond what she'd hoped. Such things draw deep, genuine gratitude from Anne.

CHAPTER 19: A CONCERT, A CATASTROPHE, AND A CONFESSION

One February evening, Anne is desperate to go to Diana's. She explains to Marilla that they've devised a system of signaling to each other from their windows by passing cardboard back and forth in front of a candle to make flashes. Diana has just flashed five times, meaning she has something important to tell. Though she thinks the system is silly, Marilla gives Anne 10 minutes to talk to Diana. When Anne gets back, she tells Marilla that she's invited to spend the night with Diana for her birthday tomorrow and to attend a Debating Club concert along with Diana and her visiting cousins.

For all her complaints about Anne's silliness, Marilla is fairly indulgent of her—although Diana's invitation, to a more "grown-up" outing, will challenge that.

Marilla thinks Anne is too young to start going out to concerts in the evening. Anne protests that the poetry recitations will have good moral lessons, and the patriotic songs will be nearly as good as hymns—even the minister will be making a speech. But her arguments are to no avail, and she goes to bed in tears. Matthew, who appeared to be asleep during the whole exchange, says that Anne ought to be allowed. Marilla, however, maintains that Anne will catch a cold and be unsettled for days by all the excitement.

Anne tries to make the case that the concert outing will be edifying, and Matthew characteristically takes her side. But Marilla, always concerned about Anne's tendency to let her excitement and imagination run away with her, tries to nip the idea in the bud.

The next morning, on his way to the barn, Matthew again tells Marilla that he thinks Anne should be allowed to go. Marilla seethes for a moment, then agrees, since Matthew won't be content with anything else. Anne flies joyfully from the pantry with a wet dishcloth in hand, oblivious to Marilla's scolding. She has always felt so left out when other schoolgirls talked about going to concerts, and it was an awful feeling. Matthew understood, and it's nice to be understood.

Matthew, though he's more indulgent than Marilla, also sees that Anne has been left out of many things in life, and that finally getting to participate in things like the concert, like other girls her age, is encouraging to her. Marilla's emphasis on responsibility and restraint tends to balance out Matthew's more indulgent approach, both emphasizing things Anne needs to learn or experience while growing up.

At school, the students can talk of nothing but the concert. The Avonlea Debating Club often puts on public events, but this one, supporting the library, will charge an admission fee of ten cents. Many students have older siblings who are participating in the entertainment. After school, Anne and Diana have tea at her house and then retire to Diana's room to dress. They spend a long time arranging their hair, and Anne imagines that she has fancier clothes. Then they crowd into a sleigh with Diana's cousins, flying off to the concert with bells tinkling and a brilliant sunset over the sea.

Outings like the concert are a big part of the social life of Avonlea youth, and the experience of getting dressed up and attending an evening performance is a big growing-up moment for Anne—even when she has to fall back on her imagination to "improve" certain details.

At the concert, Anne is the most easily thrilled audience member. She delights in the poetry recitations, songs, and sketches. But when Gilbert Blythe recites "Bingen on the Rhine," Anne pointedly reads a library book instead, and refuses to clap when he's finished. When the happy concertgoers get home, Anne and Diana talk over everything while changing by the fire. Diana tells Anne that when Gilbert came to the line, "There's another, *not* a sister," he looked straight at her. Anne refuses to hear about it.

"Bingen on the Rhine" is a poem by 19th century English poet Caroline Norton, an emotional, romantic piece about a dying soldier's last words. After sending messages to his mother and sister, the soldier speaks tenderly of his beloved ("You'd have known her by the merriment that sparkled in her eye"). By directing these lines to Anne, Gilbert shows that he already has strong romantic feelings for her. Anne convinces herself that she couldn't care less.

The two girls race to the spare bed in which they'll be sleeping. As they leap into bed, however, something moves underneath them, and they hear a muffled voice exclaim, "Merciful goodness!" Before they know it, the girls are flying upstairs in the cold and dark. Laughing helplessly, Diana explains that it's Aunt Josephine, though she doesn't know why she was sleeping in the spare bedroom—she'll be furious. Aunt Josephine is her father's elderly aunt who is very proper and will scold them terribly about this. They hear nothing at breakfast the next morning, however.

Though they're starting to participate in more "grown up" outings, Anne and Diana are very much still like little girls in other respects—such as racing and jumping into bed, which quickly turns into another mishap.

Later that afternoon, Anne stops by Mrs. Lynde's house. Mrs. Barry stopped by a few minutes ago, Rachel tells her, and said that Aunt Josephine was terribly angry about what happened last night. Aunt Josephine was supposed to stay for a month, but she's threatening to return to Charlottetown tomorrow and to revoke the gift of music lessons for Diana, since Diana's proven to be a "tomboy." Aunt Josephine is wealthy, and the Barrys have tried to stay on her good side.

Aunt Josephine thinks that the two girls are terribly childish and unladylike in their behavior. As in the situation with Mrs. Lynde, Anne has offended someone through her impulsiveness, but this time, it has consequences for somebody besides herself.

Anne is dismayed, wondering how she keeps getting not just herself, but also people she loves into trouble. Mrs. Lynde tells her it's because she's too impulsive and never stops to think before she speaks or acts. Sadly, Anne walks to Orchard Slope and, to Diana's horror, says that she's going to speak to Aunt Josephine herself—last night was her fault, after all. With her hands clasped beseechingly, Anne approaches Aunt Josephine and begs for forgiveness. They were only trying to have fun, and the blame should fall on Anne, not Diana, whose heart is set on music lessons. Aunt Josephine's fierce gaze softens, but she still scolds Anne for frightening her like that. Anne says she can *imagine* how Aunt Josephine felt, and asks Aunt Josephine if she can imagine the fright she and Diana felt. And they'd so been looking forward to the honor of sleeping in the spare bedroom.

Though Anne keeps getting herself and others into trouble, she also shows her maturity in that she's willing to take responsibility when she gets into trouble. In such cases, her tendency to offer humorously dramatic yet heartfelt apologies works to her advantage, often winning even hard-hearted people's sympathy.

At this, Aunt Josephine actually bursts out laughing. She admits that her imagination has grown rusty from disuse and invites Anne to sit down and introduce herself. Anne explains that she has to go home to Marilla, but she hopes that Aunt Josephine will stay in Avonlea. Aunt Josephine agrees, as long as Anne visits her sometimes. That night, Aunt Josephine gives Diana a bracelet and says she wants to stay and get better acquainted with that amusing "Anne-girl." Before the end of her stay, she makes Anne promise to come and visit her in Charlottetown. Anne tells Marilla that Aunt Josephine "was a kindred spirit after all."

Sure enough, Anne's sincerity wins over even Aunt Josephine and straightens out the tension in the Barry household. From this experience, Anne discovers that even someone who didn't seem like a kindred spirit might be one after all. In other words, while some people (like Diana) are clearly meant from the start to be "bosom friends," one can't always tell right away if someone who appears unfriendly might actually become a dear friend.

CHAPTER 20: A GOOD IMAGINATION GONE WRONG

The "reluctant Canadian spring" finally comes to Green Gables. Anne happily chatters to Marilla about a student outing to gather mayflowers. Some students offered each other mayflowers (Anne was offered some, but "rejected them with scorn"), and everyone marched home singing afterward. Soon after, Violet Vale becomes filled with violets. When Anne spends time there, she doesn't worry "whether Gil—whether anybody" beats her in class, but when she's in school, she cares more than anything. There are "a lot of different Annes" in her, and she thinks that's why life is so confusing.

The rejected mayflowers were obviously offered by Gilbert, against whom Anne maintains a steadfast resentment. Anne continues to find joy and room for imagination in nature, while her horizons are also expanding—she's finding greater satisfaction in academic rivalry and achievement. All these competing emotions and priorities are a part of growing up, and Anne's character is deepening and becoming more expansive.

One evening in June, Anne sits by her gable window, daydreaming. Marilla bustles in with some freshly ironed aprons, feeling weary in the aftermath of a headache. Anne expresses sympathy, and Marilla says Anne's housework was helpful enough today, although it wasn't necessary to starch Matthew's handkerchiefs or burn the pie to a crisp. Anne is sorry—she'd meant to stay focused on facts, but she felt "an irresistible temptation" to imagine she was a princess waiting for a knight to rescue her. And she'd meant to be especially good today because it's the anniversary of her coming to Green Gables, the most important day of her life. Marilla admits that she isn't sorry that Anne came to Green Gables, while privately thinking that she doesn't know how she lived before Anne's arrival.

Though Marilla's perspective on adopting Anne has shifted—from almost rejecting her for not being "useful" to beginning to accept her for who she is—Anne has become a great help to Marilla over the past year at Green Gables, practically as well as emotionally. And though Marilla can't help covering up her warmth with a sarcastic edge, she acknowledges to herself that life has changed for the better since Anne became a member of the household.

Marilla asks Anne to go to Orchard Slope to get a sewing pattern from Mrs. Barry, but Anne hesitates, explaining that she can't walk through "the Haunted Wood"—the spruce wood along the brook. She and Diana imagined it because the idea of a haunted wood is so "romantic." They've imagined that a wailing white lady walks beside the brook at night, and there's also the ghost of a murdered child, and a headless man. When Marilla insists there is no such thing as ghosts, Anne objects that plenty of respectable and religious people believe in them, but Marilla won't hear of it.

In contrast to her maturity over the past year, Anne still tends to overindulge her imagination—her vivid imaginings sometimes going overboard and causing her real fear. To Marilla, this is the very worst that Anne's imagination can do—prevent her from carrying out her responsibilities.

Marilla tells Anne to walk to the Barrys' through the spruce grove to teach her a lesson. Anne is genuinely terrified and resists, sobbing, as Marilla walks her down to the brook. Finally, though, she stumbles up the path, shrinking from every noise and shadow. By the time she reaches the Barrys', she has started running so fast she's out of breath. On the way home with the sewing pattern in hand, she rushes over the bridge with her eyes closed for fear of seeing a ghost. Her teeth chattering, she tells Marilla that from now on, she'll be content with ordinary places.

Marilla insists on Anne facing her fears. The terrifying experience teaches Anne that indulging her imagination too much can turn familiar places into forbidding obstacles, and she decides that from now on, she won't let her imagination run rampant in this way.

CHAPTER 21: A NEW DEPARTURE IN FLAVORINGS

On the last day of school, Anne comes home with red eyes. She didn't like Mr. Phillips that much, yet she couldn't help crying over his farewell speech when the other girls did. She's excited about summer vacation and the prospect of meeting the new minister and his wife. The minister's wife is pretty, and she even wears puffed sleeves. Jane Andrews called such sleeves "worldly," but Anne longs for them herself and feels one should make allowances for a new minister's wife.

It's a time of transition for Anne, as she finishes her first school year in Avonlea and meets someone who will be especially consequential in her life—the minister's wife. Anne can't help feeling a little conflicted about her, since she's always longed for fashionable puffed sleeves, yet she supposes that a minister's wife ought to be above such things.

The old minister, a widower named Mr. Bentley, had resigned the previous February, followed by a long period of candidates taking turns preaching each Sunday. Anne had strong opinions about each of these. She is pleased that Mr. Allan has been chosen, because she thought his sermon was interesting and that "he prayed as if he meant it," not just out of habit. Mrs. Lynde has also interrogated the new minister on his theology and is satisfied that his wife is a good housekeeper.

While Mrs. Lynde upholds more conventional standards, Anne thinks that sincerity—not just acting out of habit, but really "meaning it"—is the most important thing about a person's religious faith, and she perceives that Mr. Allan meets that standard.

The new minister and his wife are enthusiastic young newlyweds, and Avonlea embraces them both instantly. In Mrs. Allan, Anne quickly discovers a "kindred spirit." She becomes Anne's Sunday school teacher, and she invites the girls to ask as many questions as they like. Anne is also inspired by Mrs. Allan's cheerfulness—it contrasts with Mr. Bell's solemnity. Mrs. Allan seems happy to be a Christian, making Anne realize that religion doesn't have to be a melancholy thing.

Mrs. Allan becomes the next "kindred spirit" in Anne's life. For Anne, there's a slight distinction between a bosom friend and a kindred spirit—while a bosom friend is more like a best friend, a kindred spirit is someone who sees the world in a similar way. Mrs. Allan also gives Anne a warm, personable vision of Christianity that she is happy to aspire to, unlike the more solemn, remote ones she's mostly witnessed in the past.

When Marilla plans to have the Allans over for tea, Anne begs for permission to bake a special cake for the occasion, and Marilla agrees, since Anne's baking has improved over the past year. Anne relishes the whirlwind of preparations for this important visit. She tells Diana of the various jellies, pies, preserves, cakes, and biscuits they've been making. She's frightened that her cake will turn out poorly.

In a small town like Avonlea where most people's lives revolve around the local church, inviting the minister's family over for tea would be a landmark event. Anne wants to do her part to impress the Allans.

On the day of the Allans' visit, Anne wakes up with a bad cold from playing at the spring the night before, but her excitement is undiminished. After breakfast she bakes her cake, and to her delight, it turns out beautifully. She even wins Marilla's permission to decorate the table with ferns and roses, and she is ecstatic when she sees Mrs. Allan's approving smile. Even shy Matthew, gently coaxed by Anne, comes to the table and talks with the minister.

The Allans' visit seems to be going as well as Anne could hope for—her cake is a success, and her kindred spirit, Mrs. Allan, approves of her efforts. It seems to be the rare occasion when everything is going just right for Anne.

When it's time for cake, Marilla encourages the guests, though they're stuffed from the other food, to try some for Anne's sake. Mrs. Allan cheerfully takes a slice, but as soon as she tastes it, her expression turns strange. Nevertheless she keeps eating. Marilla quickly samples the cake and demands to know what Anne put into it. Blushing, Anne insists it was only vanilla. Indeed, when she checks the pantry, she finds a clearly-labeled bottle of vanilla. But when Marilla opens it, she immediately smells that it's actually anodyne liniment—she'd broken the liniment bottle last week and poured the remainder into an old vanilla bottle. Anne couldn't smell it because of her cold.

Just as things appear to be going without mishap, however, it becomes clear that something has gone awry with Anne's cake—it's flavored with liniment oil, a topical medicine for use on aches and pains.

Anne flees to her room in tears. When she hears footsteps approaching, Anne wails that she'll never live down this catastrophe. And she'll never be able to face Mrs. Allan again. But when she hears a cheerful voice say, "Suppose you jump up and tell her so yourself," she sees that Mrs. Allan has come to check on her. Mrs. Allan is troubled by Anne's distress and assures her it was only a mistake. She coaxes Anne downstairs to show her the flower garden, and in the end, Anne enjoys the visit. Later, Anne reflects to Marilla that it's comforting to know she never makes the same mistake twice, and eventually she'll have to run out of new ones. Marilla tells her to feed the remaining cake to the pigs.

Because Anne has wanted so much to impress Mrs. Allan, this catastrophe is particularly embarrassing. But Mrs. Allan is indeed a kindred spirit—she has the sympathy, kindness, and sense of humor to put Anne at ease over the mistake. For her part, Anne is beginning to understand the potential value of mistakes—they help a person learn how to do better the next time, and ideally a person will be able to avoid the same mistakes in the future.

CHAPTER 22: ANNE IS INVITED OUT TO TEA

One August evening Anne dances home from an errand, full of news—she's invited to tea at the minister's house tomorrow. She shows Marilla the invitation from Mrs. Allan; it's the first time she has ever been addressed as "Miss." Marilla tells Anne she needs to take things more calmly. Marilla is troubled that Anne feels both good and bad so intensely, fearing this sensitivity will cause her difficulties in later life. She doesn't understand that Anne's capacity for joy makes up for her capacity for sadness. And deep down, she really prefers Anne as she is.

Anne is delighted by the "grown-up" invitation to tea. Marilla worries that Anne's fluctuating emotions will be difficult for her to control as she grows up, but as much as she wishes Anne would show more of a decorous, ladylike balance, she is growing to love and embrace Anne as she is.

The next day, Anne is so happy that she says she could be a "model child" if only she were invited to tea daily. But she's also nervous that she'll misbehave or commit a breach of etiquette. Marilla says she shouldn't think so much about herself, but should just think about Mrs. Allan and what would be nicest for *her*. Anne gets through tea just fine, and she tells Marilla all about it that night.

Montgomery often uses the technique of telling certain episodes in Anne's words instead of directly narrating them—thereby giving more of Anne's colorful perspective. Marilla's advice is often idealized and not necessarily what best serves a situation—but in this case, it's actually good advice that helps Anne navigate a new situation more calmly.

Anne rapturously describes Mrs. Allan's beautiful dress. She says she'd like to be a minister's wife someday, but she supposes it won't work because she isn't "naturally good," unlike Mrs. Allan, who doesn't appear to have to work at being good. There was another little girl at tea, from the White Sands Sunday school. After the other girl went home early, Anne and Mrs. Allan had a long talk. Anne told Mrs. Allan everything about her life and history, and Anne was encouraged to hear that Mrs. Allan, too, had once struggled with geometry. Just before leaving, Mrs. Lynde stopped by the Allans' with the news that a new teacher has been hired for the school: Miss Muriel Stacy. Mrs. Lynde thinks a lady teacher is "a dangerous innovation."

Anne associates maturity with "being good" and sees Mrs. Allan as the epitome of this, although as she grows older, Anne comes to see maturity as having more to do with overcoming obstacles and learning from one's mistakes. Nevertheless, Anne finds comfort in looking up to someone like Mrs. Allan who represents the kind of goodness and gracious attitude she strives for herself. And the new teacher will likewise prove to be an encouraging influence in Anne's life—Mrs. Lynde's disapproval notwithstanding.

CHAPTER 23: ANNE COMES TO GRIEF IN AN AFFAIR OF HONOR

A week later, Diana gives a small party for the girls in her class. After tea, the girls wander into the garden and begin "daring" each other, a fashionable game in Avonlea in that period. Dares usually involve innocuous things like climbing a tree or hopping around the garden on one foot. Anne dares Josie Pye, whom she can't stand, to walk the top of the fence, which Josie handily does. Then Josie dares Anne to walk the ridgepole of the Barrys' roof. The girls give a gasp of horror as Anne walks toward a ladder. Diana begs her not to accept such a dangerous dare, but Anne says her honor is at stake. If she dies, Diana can have her favorite ring.

One of Anne's faults is her pride, and as the rivalry with Gilbert has shown, she especially can't bear being shamed in front of someone she doesn't like. And her imagination gives her an exaggerated, romantic sense of "honor" that makes her more likely to get into mishaps.

Anne climbs onto the roof, gains her balance, and begins tentatively walking the ridgepole. She finds that having a good imagination isn't much help in this scenario. After a few steps, she sways and loses her balance—soon sliding down the side of the roof as the girls scream. Thankfully, she falls on the less steep side of the roof and into a tangle of vines, but she looks very pale. It becomes clear that her ankle is broken, so Mr. Barry carries her to Green Gables with all the girls trailing behind.

Though Anne's imagination got her into this situation, she quickly finds that imagination has its limits when she's faced with a scenario that calls for physical skill. Unfortunately, this is also a situation that involves genuine danger, not imaginary threats.

When Marilla sees Mr. Barry approaching with a limp Anne in his arms, she feels such fear that she realizes that Anne is "dearer to her than anything else on earth." Anne lifts her head and tells Marilla to look on the bright side; she might have broken her neck instead. Then she faints. Later that day, after the doctor's visit, Anne sadly tells Marilla that she lacked the strength of mind to resist Josie Pye's dare, and that this accident is punishment enough. She'll have to stay at home for weeks and will miss the new teacher's start.

Despite Marilla's gruff exterior and inability to show her love openly, she has developed a deep love for Anne by this time; her fear for Anne makes this clear. Though the incident turns out to be much less of a disaster than it could have been, it's yet another mishap that teaches Anne about one of her shortcomings—in this case, the folly of misplaced pride.

Anne's imagination, as well as many visits from school friends, does her good over the next seven weeks. Mrs. Allan visits her 14 times, and Anne is grateful that she doesn't moralize about Anne's accident, unlike Mrs. Lynde. But Anne can't wait to return to school. Diana reports that Miss Stacy has the biggest puffed sleeves in Avonlea and often holds classroom recitations or field trips for nature study. Mrs. Lynde thinks such suspicious innovations are what comes of hiring a lady teacher, but Anne is sure that Miss Stacy will prove to be a kindred spirit.

By this time, Anne has developed many good and faithful friends in Avonlea who help her through the weeks of injury and isolation. Even without having met Miss Stacy, Anne suspects that, considering her puffed sleeves and imaginative ideas in the classroom, Miss Stacy is sure to be another such friend.

CHAPTER 24: MISS STACY AND HER PUPILS GET UP A CONCERT

In October, Anne returns to school and happily rejoins Diana at their shared desk. Miss Stacy is a young woman with a knack for connecting with her students and encouraging them; Anne blossoms especially. She tells Marilla and Matthew that she can just feel that Miss Stacy is calling her "Anne with an E." Miss Stacy has also told Anne that she writes the best compositions in class, and she even makes geometry easier to grasp.

If Anne blossomed even under a mean and uninterested teacher like Mr. Phillips who acted unjustly towards her, she thrives all the more under Miss Stacy, who genuinely understands her and encourages her in her strengths and helps her in her weaknesses.

In November, Miss Stacy and her students begin planning a fundraising concert to be held on Christmas night, with the goal of purchasing a flag for the schoolhouse. Marilla finds it all foolish and needlessly distracting, but Anne is committed to the belief that patriotism and fun go together. She will participate in two dialogues, a tableau, and will give two recitations. Marilla quickly tires of hearing Anne talk about nothing but the recital, but Matthew warmly encourages her. He's thankful that Marilla is in charge of Anne's upbringing, leaving him free to "spoil" her to his heart's content. His encouragement of Anne is just as beneficial as discipline.

The concert is another occasion on which Marilla's and Matthew's approaches to raising Anne contrast. Marilla has a low tolerance for anything she considers to be foolish or time-wasting, whereas Matthew looks for any chance to encourage Anne in the areas where she's enthusiastic and gifted. Montgomery suggests that both methods are effective in Anne's case—with Matthew often becoming useful where Marilla is lacking.

CHAPTER 25: MATTHEW INSISTS ON PUFFED SLEEVES

One December evening, Matthew is taking off his boots in the kitchen when he hears Anne and her friends practicing their "Fairy Queen" dialogue in the next room. He's too shy to walk in on a group of girls, so he shrinks out of sight. While he waits for the other girls to leave, he notices that there's something that differentiates Anne from her classmates. All evening Matthew somberly smokes his pipe as he tries to put his finger on what it is. Suddenly he realizes that Anne dresses differently—Marilla always puts her in drab dresses. Matthew wonders what the harm would be in buying Anne one pretty, fashionable dress.

In his own way, Matthew is more attentive to Anne's needs than Marilla is. Though he doesn't know the first thing about girls or fashion, his love for Anne helps him recognize areas where she might be feeling left out. Clothing is one such area, since Marilla's efforts to keep Anne looking plain and humble cause Anne to stand out from her peers.

The next day Matthew goes to Carmody to buy a dress, visiting Samuel Lawson's store instead of William Blair's, where he normally goes. He dreads having to deal with Blair's daughters behind the counter and assumes a man will wait on him at Lawson's. But when he walks in, he's alarmed to see a fashionable lady clerk behind the counter. He's immediately overcome with shyness and awkwardness. When she asks how she can help him, Mathew falteringly asks to see some garden rakes, then some hayseed, and finally some brown sugar. Breaking out in a sweat, he asks for 20 pounds of brown sugar. Back at home, Marilla is baffled and critical of the unreasonable stockpile of sugar.

This humorously awkward scene nevertheless brings out Matthew's great love for Anne—he's willing to put himself in one of the most uncomfortable situations imaginable for a shy, reclusive man just to help her feel pretty and accepted by her peers. Still, purchasing material for a dress proves to be beyond him—he can ask for rakes, seed, or sugar from a lady clerk, but not a dress.

Matthew finally decides he must rely on a woman's help, and since Marilla would never agree, he approaches Mrs. Lynde, the only other Avonlea woman he's not afraid of. She immediately understands his plan and agrees to buy and sew a dress as a Christmas surprise for Anne. Matthew specifically asks for puffed sleeves. Mrs. Lynde is relieved that Anne will finally have a nice dress, having feared that Marilla's attempt to keep Anne humble would only make her envious of others in the long run. She can't believe Matthew had the idea, though—she thinks he's "waking up after being asleep" for 60 years.

Together Matthew and Mrs. Lynde perceive that Marilla's strategy to build humility in Anne is likely to backfire—there's no advantage in dressing her in drab fashions when nobody else does. Mrs. Lynde also notices how Anne is stirring Matthew's imagination in ways that would never otherwise have happened, showing the transforming effect of Anne's love on the household.

On Christmas Eve, Mrs. Lynde delivers the new dress. Marilla thinks it's a pointless extravagance—the sleeves are wasteful, and Anne will become vain. But she doesn't resist. Anne wakes up to a snowy Christmas morning and runs downstairs joyfully. Matthew greets her with the dress, and Anne gazes at it in stunned silence—the soft brown color, the frilly skirt, ruffle of lace on the collar, and puffed elbow sleeves. Her eyes fill with tears as she tells Matthew how much she loves it.

Anne finally achieves her dream of owning a dress with puffed sleeves. Ultimately, it's not the fashionable dress that matters most—it's the knowledge that Matthew, of all people, saw and understood Anne's desire and made the dream come true for her. Thus it's another symbol of how love can transform people in unexpected ways.

After breakfast, Diana runs down to Green Gables with a gift from Aunt Josephine. It contains a Christmas card to "the Anne-girl," and inside is a delicate pair of leather slippers that will work perfectly for the concert tonight. The concert is a success, and everyone agrees that Anne was the star. She was frightened before her recitation, but she knew she had to live up to her puffed sleeves. Diana tells her that Gilbert picked up a rose that had fallen out of Anne's hair onstage, but Anne says she has no interest in "that person."

It's a triumphant Christmas for Anne, not only because of the loving gift and the inspiration it gives her, but because of her first successful public recitation. The only thing that can spoil it is the reminder of Gilbert, who despite Anne's stubborn scorn, continues to feel affection for her.

That night, after Anne has gone to bed, Matthew and Marilla talk about the concert (their first such outing in 20 years). Marilla admits that Anne did well and that the concert wasn't such a bad idea. She's proud of Anne, though she doesn't intend to tell her that. The Cuthberts agree that they should set aside some money for further schooling for Anne, though she's not yet 13.

Marilla still maintains that showing too much pride or affection spoils a young girl, even though she has softened on the subject of the concert. Higher education for girls—especially in rural Prince Edward Island—was not the most common thing in the Victorian period, so the Cuthberts are forward-looking in this respect.

CHAPTER 26: THE STORY CLUB IS FORMED

After the concert, life seems terribly dull to Anne. Aside from some quarrels and rivalries sparked by the event, however, life in Avonlea school soon returns to normal. Later that winter, Anne turns 13. She and Diana walk to school through the woods, wondering what it will be like to be "really grown up" in two years. Two years after that, the girls will be considered old enough to wear their hair up, in adult style. They continue to chat and gossip about their classmates and hopes for the future. Anne has to remind herself not to make "uncharitable speeches" about the classmates she dislikes, like Josie Pye. Mrs. Allan says people should never speak uncharitably of one another, and Anne wants to be just like Mrs. Allan.

Though it still sounds quite young and not particularly "grown up," fifteen marked the age at which young people began to date, participate more in social activities, and begin to think about life beyond school—hence Anne's and Diana's eager daydreams about it at age 13. Mrs. Allan continues to be Anne's model for what she wants to be like when she's grown up—showing that for Anne, being grown up isn't simply a matter of being able to go courting or wearing one's hair up, but of aspiring to good character as well.

The girls take note of their surroundings as they walk—they're assigned to write a nature-themed composition for Miss Stacy. But Miss Stacy is also requiring them to write an original story soon, and Diana dreads this because she thinks she has no imagination. Anne, on the other hand, has already written her story ("The Jealous Rival; or, In Death Not Divided") about two maidens named Cordelia and Geraldine. In the story, a handsome young man named Bertram saves Geraldine's life and proposes to her. (Anne asked her friend Ruby about her older sister's marriage proposal but decided it was insufficiently romantic, so she made Bertram's much more flowery.) Meanwhile, Cordelia is secretly in love with Bertram and one day pushes her rival to her death in a river. When Bertram jumps in to save Geraldine, they drown in each other's arms. Cordelia then goes insane and spends the rest of her life in an asylum.

Under Miss Stacy's tutelage, Anne's imagination receives a more suitable channel: story-writing. Though Anne's hilariously dramatic story of Cordelia and Geraldine isn't particularly vital to the plot, it's a good example of how Anne's imagination works at this point—it's vivid and detailed, but still overdramatic (and not showing a very mature understanding of romance, to say the least).

Diana is deeply impressed by Anne's story and wishes she had such an imagination. Anne encourages her with the hope that she could cultivate one. She decides they should start a story club in order to practice. At first it's just the two of them, but eventually it expands to include Jane Andrews, Ruby Gillis, and a few others. Each girl writes one story per week, then reads her story aloud for the others to critique. Anne tells Marilla that she usually has to give the others ideas. Ruby's stories always have too much romance, Jane's are too sensible, and Diana's have too many murders, since she doesn't know what else to do with her characters. Marilla thinks this all sounds like nonsense, but Anne assures her that the stories are always wholesome and that she insists on putting a moral into each one. (The Allans agree, although when Anne read them her story, they laughed at the wrong moments.)

From her own experience as an orphan, Anne cultivated her own imagination. Now she encourages her friends to do the same, showing that she's able to direct her imagination in useful ways toward others. The girls' stories are still quite immature and silly (hence the Allans' inability to withhold laughter).

The club also sent four of the best stories to Aunt Josephine, who said she'd never read anything so amusing. The girls were confused by this reaction, since they'd been trying to be "pathetic." Anne says that at least she knows the story club is doing something good for the world, which Mrs. Allan says should be everyone's goal. Anne tells Marilla that Mrs. Allan got into lots of mischief when she was a little girl, and that knowing this encourages her; maybe someday she, too, will be good like Mrs. Allan. Marilla tells her to stop chattering and finish washing the dishes.

Anne uses "pathetic" in the sense of pathos, *or a sad, pitiful quality—one that can be quite funny when overdone, as Aunt Josephine's reaction suggests. Still, Anne achieves her goal of making others' lives better through the use of her imagination. She is also encouraged to learn that, although she's always thought of Mrs. Allan as being "naturally good," Mrs. Allan also had to make mistakes and grow just like Anne does, which gives Anne hope.*

CHAPTER 27: VANITY AND VEXATION OF SPIRIT

Marilla walks home from an Aid meeting one spring evening feeling content and looking forward to the warm fire and tea awaiting her at Green Gables. When she arrives, however, she finds the kitchen cold, with no fire or meal. Annoyed, she starts preparing it herself, figuring Anne is off writing stories or wasting time with Diana. Mrs. Allan might say that Anne is "the brightest and sweetest child," but Marilla still thinks Anne's head is too full of "nonsense." Even so, she never thought Anne would be neglectful of her duties like this.

Though she's grown more trusting and appreciative of Anne's place at Green Gables, Marilla still tends to be excessively strict with Anne, a bit too ready to assume Anne is being irresponsible when there might be another explanation.

At suppertime, there's still no sign of Anne. When Marilla goes upstairs to borrow Anne's candle, she's surprised to find Anne herself, huddled despairingly in bed. Anne begs Marilla to go away, but Marilla insists on knowing what's wrong, so Anne finally gets out of bed and tells Marilla to look at her hair. Lifting the candle, Marilla sees that Anne's **red hair** has turned an ugly, dull green. As they go downstairs, Marilla gets the story out of Anne: she dyed her hair, fully knowing it was a "wicked" thing to do. She'd been told it would turn "a beautiful raven black."

Anne's latest disaster involves one of her most enduring griefs: her red hair. Her vanity has gotten the better of her at last, leading to an even worse result than she could have imagined.

Anne admits that a peddler had stopped by the house that afternoon and touched her heart with his story of trying to earn enough money to bring his wife and children to Canada from Germany. She noticed the hair dye among his offerings, and the peddler promised it wouldn't wash out. He sold it to Anne for 50 cents. She used up the whole bottle immediately, but as soon as the saw the color of her hair, she repented her actions. Marilla says she hopes Anne sees where her vanity has brought her.

Anne's softheartedness, gullibility, and vanity have combined to bring about the hair-dying catastrophe. She's so desperate for a solution to her greatest sorrow (the color of her hair), that she's willing to try anything—even if it's a sketchy solution that backfires terribly.

Anne scrubs her hair vigorously, but the dye doesn't wash off. She says she'll never live down this mishap—it's worse than the liniment cake, the raspberry cordial, or yelling at Mrs. Lynde, because it makes her look disreputable. After a week of daily washings, Marilla concludes that there's no hope but to cut Anne's hair. Anne laments this "unromantic affliction"; at least girls in books lose their hair from fevers or cut it off to sell for charity.

Though Anne's past catastrophes have often involved simple mistakes or split-second reactions, the hair-dying incident puts Anne's vanity on display for everyone to see, making the whole thing feel even more shameful. Even Anne's romantic imagination can't redeem this scenario.

When the haircut is finished, Anne's new look isn't flattering. At first she turns her mirror to the wall, but then she decides she needs to see her reflection regularly as a reminder of how vain she was. She now realizes that despite her hatred of her **red hair**, she was nevertheless vain about its length and thickness and curl. When she returns to school, nobody can guess the reason for Anne's haircut, and she even bears Josie Pye's insults patiently. She has decided to put all her energy into being good from now on and to stop worrying about being beautiful.

Anne discovers that her vanity ran deeper than she ever suspected—she actually liked certain things about her hair, despite its color. It's only after ruining its color that she discovers this truth and has to face it daily by looking at her unflattering haircut. This latest mistake, like her previous ones, makes Anne face and overcome yet another shortcoming.

CHAPTER 28: AN UNFORTUNATE LILY MAID

Anne, Diana, Jane Andrews, and Ruby Gillis are planning to reenact a scene from Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. The others talk Anne into being Elaine since, despite her **red hair**, Anne is the only one who isn't afraid to float on the pond. The girls are gathered beside the pond at Orchard Slope. Last term they'd studied Tennyson's poem in school, and they've discovered that if Mr. Barry's little dory boat is pushed off from the dock, the current will carry it under the bridge until it's beached on a headland further down. Anne assigns Ruby and Jane their roles in the drama and then lies in the boat under a black shawl, a flower clutched in her folded hands.

In Arthurian legend, Elaine dies of a broken heart (Sir Lancelot doesn't love her back) and is floated to Camelot on a barge. Though Anne and her friends still enjoy elements of make-believe play, their games have matured a bit as they act out the literature they're studying at school.

In character, the girls take turns kissing Anne farewell, then they push the dory off from the dock. It scrapes over a stake in the ground, but they don't notice; they just wait for the current to catch the boat, then run off to meet it on the headland below. Anne, meanwhile, enjoys the romantic scenario. But all of a sudden, she realizes the dory is leaking; a hole has been torn in its bottom. The boat is going to sink, and Anne has no means of steering. She later tells Mrs. Allan that she prayed desperately that God would let the boat drift against the bridge pilings so she could climb out. Sure enough, the boat bumps against one of the pilings, and Anne scrambles out. But now she's stranded on the piling; there's enough of a ledge for her to cling to, but she can't climb up or down.

Anne's imagination goes awry once more, as she and her friends didn't foresee a disaster like this one. Presumably she can't swim very well, so she finds herself helpless as the old boat takes on water.

Down at the headland, Diana, Ruby, and Jane don't know what's happened. When they see the dory sinking in the distance, they think Anne has drowned and run screaming through the woods for help. In their panic, they don't even glance toward the bridge, where Anne still clings desperately. Just as Anne's imagination is running away with her and she fears her fate, someone rows underneath the bridge—it's Gilbert Blythe. Amazed, he pulls his boat against the pilings and helps her down. Anne is furious, but she has no choice but to accept his help. Refusing to look at Gilbert, she explains what happened and asks him to return her to the dock.

Just as Anne fears dropping into the water and drowning, she's rescued by the last person she would have hoped to see in this moment—her longtime nemesis. The indignity of her position is made worse by the necessity of accepting Gilbert's help; she has no other choice.

Before she can scramble out, Gilbert touches Anne's arm. He asks if they can be friends—he didn't mean to upset her with his joke about her hair (which he now thinks is pretty). Anne hesitates for a brief moment. Gilbert's shy, eager look makes her heart skip a beat—something she's never felt before. But then she replays the "carrots" joke in her mind and feels a fresh wave of resentment. She hates Gilbert and will never forgive him. She tells him she'll never be his friend, and he angrily rows away. Anne feels a twinge of regret and an odd impulse to cry.

Despite Anne's determined hatred, Gilbert has remained fond of Anne all these years and now extends an offer of friendship. For the first time, Anne softens somewhat toward this—yet it only takes a moment's recollection of her humiliation two years ago for her to renew her hatred. But afterward she feels regret, showing that Anne's feelings toward Gilbert are conflicted, and that there's beginning to be the faintest suggestion of romance between them.

Further up the path, Anne meets the rest of the girls and explains how she was rescued. They think Gilbert's rescue was "romantic," but Anne never wants to hear that word again. That night (after having a good cry in private), Anne tells Marilla that after this, she believes she might become "sensible" after all. Every mistake she makes cures her of a particular shortcoming. Today's has cured her of romance. Marilla hopes so, but Matthew gently encourages her to "keep a little of it."

Just as the hair dye incident supposedly cured Anne of vanity, this incident cures her of her remaining romance—or so she tells herself. More than anything, she's embarrassed and perplexed over her reaction to Gilbert. But Matthew, ever one to see the best in Anne, encourages her not to give up what makes her unique—such things need to mature, not be cut out of one's personality.

CHAPTER 29: AN EPOCH IN ANNE'S LIFE

One beautiful September evening, Anne leads the cows down the path at Green Gables, reciting her favorite lines from a Walter Scott poem, when Diana runs toward her with news. Aunt Josephine has written with an invitation for the two of them to visit her in Charlottetown for the Exhibition. Anne is delighted but afraid that Marilla won't let her go "gadding about," so Diana says she'll get her mother to speak to Marilla about it. Anne hopes she can go so that she can wear her new coat to town—Marilla always lets her dress fashionably these days, so that Matthew won't go behind her back about it.

Marilla has softened even more towards Anne—under Matthew's gentle prodding, she even lets Anne dress like other girls her age. An out-of-town overnight visit is another matter, though. Better understanding how to handle Marilla's doubts these days, they decide to let Mrs. Barry handle the invitation.

Marilla agrees that Anne can go to Charlottetown. It's 30 miles from Avonlea, so Mr. Barry drives Anne and Diana there early in the morning. Around noon they reach Aunt Josephine's shady, rambling old mansion. Aunt Josephine greets them, telling Anne she's much prettier than she used to be. The girls are awed by the splendid mansion filled with velvet and silk decorations, though Anne decides that such luxury leaves little room for the imagination.

Sure enough, Marilla agrees to the Charlottetown trip. Despite her excitement at getting to stay with Aunt Josephine, Anne discovers that one of the joys of lacking luxury is that one can imagine it. When a person has everything they dream of, there's less to hope for an imagine.

The next day, the girls attend the Exhibition, where they enjoy the exhibits of horses, flowers, and needlework; a few Avonlea folks take prizes in different contests. They even attend the horse races (though Anne refuses to place a bet, wanting to be able to tell Mrs. Allan everything later) and have their fortunes told. Sleeping in the spare room isn't quite the thrill Anne has always imagined it would be: "the worst of growing up," Anne decides, is that childhood dreams don't seem nearly so wonderful when they're actually fulfilled. They finish off the visit by hearing a *prima donna* sing at the music academy and having late-night ice cream. Anne decides that city life isn't really for her. She also dislikes the way Aunt Josephine laughs at even her most solemn statements. But she loves the old lady and boldly kisses her cheek before they leave. Aunt Josephine is a selfish old lady who mostly looks at other people as sources of amusement, but she realizes that if she had someone as sweet as Anne around, she'd be "a better and happier woman."

The "Exhibition" is something akin to an Island-wide agricultural fair. One of the greatest excitements of the visit is the delight of being hosted in a spare bedroom—though Anne discovers this isn't as exciting as she'd imagined it to be when she was younger. But growing up involves the realization that sometimes, dreams aren't quite what one has always hoped they'd be. Nevertheless, the visit is a delight, for Aunt Josephine most of all—Anne's sweetness disrupts her typically selfish attitudes about people.

Anne and Diana enjoy reliving the whole trip during the drive home, but the Green Gables homecoming is the biggest joy to Anne. Marilla has a nice supper waiting for Anne and admits she's been lonely for the past four days. Anne tells Marilla and Matthew all about the trip and says it "marks an epoch in my life." But coming home was the very best of it.

The whole trip to Charlottetown, despite the many delights it held for Anne, has made her realize that certain things are even better than adventure and imagination: the familiar comforts of home. Now that home is a reality for her, she doesn't have to rely on imagination as much as she once did.

CHAPTER 30: THE QUEEN'S CLASS IS ORGANIZED

One dark November evening, Marilla lays her knitting aside; her eyes grow tired easily these days. Anne is curled up in front of the fire, her book fallen to the floor. Marilla watches the daydreaming girl with tenderness. She refrains from "indulging" Anne by being demonstrative; indeed, Anne isn't even sure that Marilla loves her. Marilla fears it isn't right to love a human being so intensely and compensates for her affection by being stricter than necessary.

Though Marilla's restraint toward Anne can be difficult to understand, it was typical of an age in which affection could be seen as a spoiling indulgence of children. Marilla loves Anne so much, in fact, that she overcorrects by being far too strict.

Marilla tells Anne that Miss Stacy stopped by this afternoon. Anne is interested, but goes on a digression describing her wanderings in the woods with Diana that afternoon. She and Diana no longer talk about childish things, she says—they're almost 14. In fact, the other day, Miss Stacy took all the teenage girls for a walk and talked to them about the importance of developing good habits now, since their characters will already be formed by the time they are adults. After that, she and Diana resolved to become as sensible as possible.

Even as she grows up, Anne still has a difficult time not wandering off into flights of imaginative fancy. Her description of Miss Stacy's serious discussion with the girls, urging them to focus on developing their characters, is in amusing contrast to Anne's inability to focus on the matter at hand.


Marilla tries to get a word in edgewise, but when Anne hears that Miss Stacy stopped by to discuss *her*, she feels a pang of conscience. She explains that Miss Stacy caught her reading *Ben-Hur* during Canadian history yesterday. She'd gotten to the chariot race scene during the dinner hour, and she couldn't bear to set it aside, so she tucked the novel inside her history book. When Miss Stacy discovered this, she was very disappointed. She kept Anne inside during recess and rebuked her both for wasting time and for deceiving her, but then she readily forgave Anne.

Anne still has a tendency to get into trouble at times because of her curiosity and imagination. Lew Wallace's Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ, *a story of an early Christian charioteer, was a bestselling historical fiction novel in the 1880s.*

Marilla says Miss Stacy never mentioned this story and that when *she* was young, she wasn't even allowed to look at novels. Anne says *Ben-Hur* shouldn't really be considered a novel when it's such a religious book. Anyway, she no longer reads books that both Miss Stacy and Mrs. Allan wouldn't approve of. One day Miss Stacy found her reading a "lurid" mystery book and told her it was unwholesome, but Anne wants so much to please Miss Stacy that she happily gave it up.

Anne places a great amount of stock in both Miss Stacy's and Mrs. Allan's opinions. Although novels were more widely considered to be disreputable in earlier generations, those with "wholesome" themes, like Ben-Hur, *can be distinguished from those that are merely "lurid."*

Marilla says that Anne clearly isn't interested in Miss Stacy's news, so Anne promises to stop talking so much. Marilla explains that Miss Stacy wants to organize a class to study for the Queen's Entrance exam and she asks if Anne wants to go to Queen's and become a teacher. Anne says it's been her dream over the past few months, but she thought it would be too expensive. Marilla says she doesn't need to worry about that; she and Matthew have been setting aside money for her education. Marilla believes that a girl should be able to earn a living. She can always live at Green Gables, but she wants Anne to be able to support herself just in case. Anne hugs Marilla and promises to work hard.

When Marilla finally tells Anne her news, it's even better than Anne imagined: Anne has the opportunity to try to study at Queen's, a teacher's college (and thus one of the most likely avenues for a young woman to have a career in this era). Marilla actually has a forward-looking attitude about Anne's education—knowing that she and Matthew won't be around forever, she wants Anne to be in a position to be able to work and support herself financially someday.

Marilla says she's sure Anne will do well, though she doesn't tell Anne just how highly Miss Stacy praised her. The Entrance exam isn't for another year and a half, so she tells Anne not to study excessively hard. Anne is happy to have a worthy goal in life—Mrs. Allan says everyone should—and she likes the idea of being a teacher like Miss Stacy someday.

Anne is surrounded by women who are each encouraging her growth in different ways—Marilla in providing for her and making sure she gets schooling, Mrs. Allan in encouraging her aspirations, and Miss Stacy in helping her prepare for college and a career.

Soon the Queen's class is organized, including Anne, Gilbert, Ruby Gillis, Jane Andrews, Josie Pye, Charlie Sloane, and Moody Spurgeon MacPherson. Diana's parents don't plan to send her to Queen's, so it's the first time the two of them have been separated in school. But Anne is excited about the Queen's class for its own sake.

Going to Queen's is a selective process that involves a separation between Anne and Diana for the first time—another part of growing up. Anne is beginning to develop aspirations beyond having a home and best friend, even though that doesn't mean leaving other things aside.

Some of the girls intend to earn their living by teaching, some just want an education and hope to marry. Moody Spurgeon wants to be a minister, and Charlie wants to go into politics. But Anne doesn't know or care what Gilbert's goals are. They're locked in a rivalry for the first place in their class. Ever since the incident on the pond, Gilbert has steadfastly ignored Anne. Anne finds this isn't so pleasant, but she tries to tell herself she doesn't care. Her resentment has faded. She realizes she's forgiven Gilbert—but it's too late.

Preparation for Queen's doesn't mean that Anne and Gilbert leave their rivalry behind. At this point, Gilbert seems to have given up hope of winning Anne over, but this doesn't please her as she thought it would; deep down, she doesn't mind him anymore, but it seems to be too late for their friendship to go anywhere.

The winter passes pleasantly, as Anne is an eager, engaged student. She loves reading books, singing in the Sunday school choir, and visiting Mrs. Allan on Saturday afternoons. As spring comes to Avonlea, Anne's enthusiasm for studying wanes, but Miss Stacy encourages the Queen's class to have a relaxing vacation with lots of outdoor time. Anne decides to put her books away for the summer, since it might be her last summer as a "little girl," and she might not even believe in fairies next year.

The pacing of the novel picks up as Anne grows and prepares for the next steps in her life. The major pieces of Anne's life have fallen into place—home, school, and friendship—and her mishaps are fewer and farther between. Indeed, Anne herself suspects that within a year's time, she will be more of a young woman than a girl, meaning that even her cherished imagination won't be the same anymore.

The next day Mrs. Lynde drops by. Marilla has been anxious about Matthew's more frequent bad spells with his heart. It seems that he works too hard. As they drink tea together, Mrs. Rachel observes that Anne has turned out to be much smarter and more helpful than she seemed at first. Marilla agrees that Anne has turned out to be steady and trustworthy. Rachel gladly admits she was mistaken about Anne—she was an odd child to whom the rules that work with other children don't seem to apply.

Anne has grown up to be more of an asset to Green Gables than anyone expected—but underneath this assessment, Mrs. Lynde's and Marilla's affection for Anne can be detected. She's not just useful and trustworthy, but a joy to Green Gables and Avonlea. At the same time, keeping Anne rather than sending for a boy has meant that Matthew has had to work harder than he should—a moment of foreshadowing what's to come.

CHAPTER 31: WHERE THE BROOK AND RIVER MEET

Anne savors a glorious, mostly outdoor summer with Diana. Marilla gladly indulges this—earlier, when Minnie May was sick, the doctor sent Marilla a note warning her to let Anne get as much fresh-air exercise as possible for the sake of her strength and health. When September returns, Anne is delighted to open her books again. She confides in Marilla that she also wants very much to be "good." She thinks about it often and makes resolutions to improve, especially when she's with Mrs. Allan or Miss Stacy. But when she's around Mrs. Lynde, her good intentions dissolve. Does that mean she's bad? Marilla laughs and admits that she often feels the same way around Rachel.

Anne has learned that "being good" is often a matter of influence as much as one's own best intentions. Though people like Miss Stacy and Mrs. Allan bring out the best in her, sometimes the more outwardly moralizing types of people, such as Mrs. Lynde, cause good intentions to backfire.

Anne decides she won't let this trouble her anymore. There are enough things to worry her—always something new, it seems. Growing up is difficult, especially because a person only gets one chance to do it well, but she is glad to have people like Marilla, Matthew, Mrs. Allan, and Miss Stacy to help her.

Growing up is a challenging process that seems to bring one challenge after another, and it's best tackled with the loving support of people who bring out the best in a person.

Miss Stacy is back at Avonlea school, helping the Queens students prepare for what's known as "the Entrance" next summer. The exam haunts Anne's thoughts and dreams, but she enjoys her studies and continued classroom rivalry. Marilla even lets Anne go to occasional social outings and parties now.

Anne continues to push for her dream of entering Queen's, with more and more of her life oriented around her academic ambitions, even while getting to do more of the grown-up kinds of activities she once dreamed of doing.

Anne grows rapidly, giving Marilla ambivalent feelings—she loves this growing girl, yet also feels a sense of loss. One winter night, to Matthew's astonishment, she weeps as she thinks of Anne growing up and going away. She's noticed that Anne even talks less these days. Anne admits that, more and more, she prefers keeping her nicest thoughts to herself, and she doesn't feel the need to use big words anymore. Growing up is fun, but not in the way she expected—there's always so much to learn and think about. The story club doesn't even meet anymore; Miss Stacy trains her students to criticize their own compositions, and Anne would rather learn to write well than focus on silly melodramas.

Though she keeps her emotions to herself, Marilla grieves the thought of losing the little girl Anne. For her part, Anne finds herself less impulsive and forthcoming with her thoughts—growing up is surprising in that it involves so much learning, changing, and searching one's own heart. Even her imagination doesn't go overboard the way it used to.

Anne tells Marilla that as she anticipates the Entrance, she alternates between hope and fear. She still stumbles over geometry and sometimes has nightmares about failing the whole exam. Marilla says in that case, she can try again next year, but Anne thinks she'd be too heartbroken to try—or to enjoy life at all.

For Anne, the Entrance exam is an all-or-nothing event. She has become a much more focused and ambitious young woman than the talkative, unpredictable little girl who came to Green Gables a few years ago.

CHAPTER 32: THE PASS LIST IS OUT

June feels like the end of an era: Miss Stacy says farewell to Avonlea school, and most of the Queens scholars don't expect to come back next year. On the last day, Anne and Diana walk home in tears. Diana is confident that Anne will pass the Entrance exam in Charlottetown, since she did so well on Miss Stacy's practice version, but Anne is still worried.

Even school has been a fleeting phase of growing up. No matter what happens with the Entrance exam, things will no longer be the same after this year—Miss Stacy will be moving on, and Anne won't be returning to Avonlea school.

In town, Anne stays at Aunt Josephine's house. She writes to Diana to tell her all about it. She's very lonely without Diana and struggling not to cram for her exams, but she promised Miss Stacy she wouldn't. Students from all over Prince Edward Island have come to take the exam. There are exams for different subjects each morning and afternoon; Anne feels she does well on English and history but dreads geometry.

Anne goes to Charlottetown for the exam, which is taken by students from all over the province and covers all academic subjects. Simply taking the exam shows how much Anne's horizons have expanded since she first arrived in Avonlea.

However, Anne survives the exams and reunites jubilantly with Diana at the end of the week. She still doesn't know if she passed geometry or not; they'll have to wait two weeks for the results to be published. Anne says she'd rather not pass at all than rank low on the list. Diana knows Anne means that she will feel like a failure unless she beats Gilbert in the rankings. Everyone in Avonlea wonders which of the two will triumph. But Anne also wants to distinguish herself for Marilla and Matthew's sake.

Anne's and Gilbert's rivalry has become legendary in Avonlea by this time. Though Anne can't pretend indifference to it, there's also the deeper motivation of wanting to please the Cuthberts who've done so much for her.

One evening, after more than three weeks have passed, Diana comes running down from Orchard Slope with a newspaper in her hand. Anne knows immediately what that means and feels faint and unable to move. Diana bursts into her room and announces that Anne and Gilbert tied for first place on the whole Island. Anne hadn't dared to hope for that result, and she immediately runs to show Matthew. Matthew isn't surprised, and Marilla says, with an effort at restraint, that Anne has done "pretty well." Mrs. Rachel tells her she's "a credit to her friends."

Anne's result surpasses her dreams, as she and Gilbert distinguish themselves above all other students on Prince Edward Island, bringing pride to Green Gables and her neighbors.

That evening Anne has a serious chat with Mrs. Allan, and before going to bed that night, she prays sincerely and with gratitude, giving thanks for the past and petitioning God for her future.

When Anne first arrived at Green Gables, she had no notion of how to pray. Now, gratitude and hope spill out of her in a spontaneously heartfelt prayer.

CHAPTER 33: THE HOTEL CONCERT

Diana is in Anne's room, helping her get dressed up. The gable room has changed a lot over the past four years: there's no gold or silver to be seen, but there are pretty curtains, apple-blossom wallpaper, and a few pictures, including a photograph of Miss Stacy, before which Anne keeps fresh flowers. Anne is getting ready to recite at an amateur concert at the White Sands Hotel. Diana has developed a reputation for fashion, and she makes sure that Anne's dress, hair, and necklace are just right. She admires Anne's natural style and grace—she feels like "just a dumpling" next to her friend, though Anne envies Diana's dimples.

As Anne has grown up, her tastes have matured beyond the rather fantastical ones of her girlhood. Before moving on from Avonlea for college, she gets to recite publicly at a concert like the ones she used to love attending. Like her talents and aspirations, her beauty has also matured and blossomed.

Marilla gives grudging approval to Anne's look, though she thinks organdy is "unserviceable"—Matthew just buys anything pretty for Anne nowadays, no matter what Marilla advises. Anne says she's not at all nervous to recite "The Maiden's Vow" that night. She and Diana ride to White Sands in a wagon with some other girls; Billy Andrews, a reticent 20-year-old, insists that Anne sit up front with him because he admires her, although he's too shy to say much.

Anne and Matthew have completely won over Marilla when it comes to beautiful dresses. Anne also gets to go on the grown-up outings that Marilla never would have allowed just a couple of years ago, and Anne is admired wherever she goes.

At the hotel, Anne suddenly feels like a country girl among the other performers; some of the other women are dressed in silks and diamonds. Out in the concert hall, the electric lights and buzz of the crowd unnerve her. Onstage, she sits between a stout lady in a pink dress and a tall, scornful girl in a white dress. The stout lady scrutinizes Anne, and the tall girl keeps commenting on the "country bumpkins" in the show.

The White Sands concert is, nevertheless, a more highbrow affair than Avonlea concerts, and Anne stands out as a country schoolgirl among the more seasoned, self-assured performers.

A professional elocutionist is slated to recite, and she brings the house down. Anne covers her face as the audience applauds—she can't bear to follow that performance. Unfortunately, it's her turn. She suffers an attack of stage fright for the first time; the Debating Club concerts were always attended by friendly neighbors. She stands paralyzed for a few moments, until she spots Gilbert Blythe smiling near the back. Anne thinks he looks taunting, but he's really just admiring Anne. In any case, she refuses to fail in front of Gilbert. Her mind clears, and she recites confidently. She even gets an encore.

Under the pressure of a fancier setting, Anne almost fails to recite her poem, but her old rivalry with Gilbert comes to the rescue—she can't humiliate herself in front of him. Though the tactic is effective, she still doesn't recognize the real nature of his feelings for her; she thinks he's disdainful the way she once was.

It turns out that the lady in the pink dress is a millionaire's wife. After the concert, she takes Anne backstage and introduces her to everyone, including the professional elocutionist. The night is a triumph, and she and her friends happily relive the event during the ride home. Diana overheard someone in the audience say that Anne has "Titian hair." Anne explains that it refers to her **red hair**.

Titian was an Italian Renaissance painter whose works sometimes featured vividly redheaded subjects. Now that she's nearly grown up, Anne has learned to recognize admiration for her hair when she encounters it and to hate the color less herself.

Anne tells her friends she feels as rich as the diamond-clad ladies they saw that night. They're all 16-year-old girls with imaginations and beautiful Avonlea to live in. Anne doesn't need diamonds; she'd rather be "Anne of Green Gables, with a string of pearl beads."

Anne has a hopeful future ahead of her and, what's even more important, a home she loves, whereas a few years ago she was still a rootless orphan. That's more important to her than any riches could be.

CHAPTER 34: A QUEEN'S GIRL

The next three weeks are spent making arrangements for Queen's. Matthew has made sure Anne will be well outfitted, and Marilla doesn't protest. She even plans a pretty evening dress for Anne, with material Mrs. Allan picked out. When the dress is finished, Anne tries it on and recites "The Maiden's Vow" for Marilla and Matthew in the kitchen. It reminds Marilla of Anne's first night at Green Gables, and she starts to cry. Anne sits on Marilla's lap and assures her that she hasn't really changed at heart—she'll always be their little Anne. Marilla just embraces her wordlessly. Matthew, hiding his tears, wanders outside, reflecting that the "mistake" at the orphanage four years ago was really "Providence."

Now that Anne is growing up, Matthew and Marilla are there primarily to support her, not to raise her. This fact is emotional for them, and Marilla is demonstrative in her feelings for the first time. From Anne's perspective, she hasn't really changed and never will, at least not inwardly. Whether that's completely true or not, it shows how central Green Gables is to her identity. Matthew believes that God sent Anne to them as a blessing, even though it seemed like a mistake at the time.

One September morning, Matthew drives Anne to Charlottetown. Though Anne's and Marilla's farewell was calm and practical on Marilla's side, Marilla spends the day in furious housework, and she cries herself to sleep that night. Anne's day, on the other hand, is filled with the busy excitement of learning her way around the Academy. Like Gilbert Blythe, she'll be starting Second Year work, an accelerated course for the teacher's license. As she sits in one of her huge classes, she can't help but feel glad that Gilbert is here—without their rivalry, she'd hardly know how to motivate herself.

Anne's departure changes Green Gables forever, and her absence is deeply felt. For Anne, it's a time of new beginnings, though some things remain the same—like her reliance on Gilbert's competition to help motivate her academically. Gilbert has been a constant in Anne's life and she values him, whether she admits that to herself or not.

That night in her boarding house room—a narrow, pictureless, dull little room—Anne is filled with homesickness for Green Gables. Just as she's starting to cry, Josie Pye appears. Even Josie Pye's face is welcome in this lonely place. Jane and Ruby show up soon after, and the group shares some of Marilla's cake among them. Anne blushingly admits that she's thinking of trying to win the Queen's medal that year. She also learns that an Avery scholarship will be available to a Queen's scholar. Suddenly, Anne's ambitions shift. If she won the scholarship in English, she could go to Redmond College for a real Bachelor's degree. Ambition, Anne decides, is delightful—as soon as one ambition is achieved, another one appears on the horizon.

Even if it's the right place for Anne, Queen's can never be the same as Green Gables or Avonlea. Still, old friends help her with the transition—and even while homesick, she doesn't abandon ambition, which has been an important part of her maturity. When she learns that a goal beyond the Queen's medal is available—the chance to get a full college degree in addition to teaching licensure—she is quick to embrace it.

CHAPTER 35: THE WINTER AT QUEEN'S

Anne's homesickness soon wears off, as she takes the train home most weekends along with the other Avonlea students. Diana and other friends meet them at the station, and they walk home as a merry group in the autumn evenings. Anne notices that Gilbert walks Ruby Gillis home and carries her bag for her. She can't help thinking it would be pleasant to have a friend like Gilbert to walk and chat with. What's more, she knows that she and Gilbert have ambitions in common; Ruby doesn't seem to have any. Anne has never had trouble gathering female friends around her, and she's not sentimental about boys. Yet she has a vague desire for a male friend to broaden her horizons, and Gilbert seems like the kind she'd enjoy.

Anne maintains her links to Green Gables and her Avonlea friends, showing that ambition hasn't changed what's most important to her. She's aware of other things, too—like the fact that the idea of Gilbert's friendship isn't repugnant to her, and that she's even a little envious that he's no longer offering it. Even though her feelings aren't exactly romantic in nature, she still feels that friendship with Gilbert would be different from what she enjoys with her female friends, and the idea is desirable.

At Queen's, Anne makes two good friends, Stella Maynard (a fanciful, daydreaming girl) and Priscilla Grant (a fun and mischievous girl). After Christmas, however, everyone at Queen's has to buckle down to work. Anne, Gilbert, and a boy named Lewis Wilson are acknowledged as the front-runners for the Queen's medal. Anne continues to view Gilbert as her rival, yet she no longer feels bitter toward him; he just seems like a worthy opponent. Anne often enjoys visiting Aunt Josephine and attending church with her. Aunt Josephine finds Anne as colorful "as a rainbow" and easy to love, even though she's no longer an "amusing" little girl.

Anne's love for home doesn't stop her from expanding her horizons of friendship at Queen's, even as she focuses most of her energies on pursuit of the highest marks in competition with Gilbert. Now that she's grown up, she values his rivalry as a useful spur to achievement and not as a reflection of her bitterness towards him.

Spring brings harried exam preparations and speculation over who will win the medal and scholarship, though Anne feels that as long as the violets and ferns are blooming at Green Gables, the exam outcome doesn't make much difference. Anyway, the effort of trying is most satisfying of all. She's optimistic about the future—there seem to be endless years and possibilities stretching before her.

Though academic achievement remains important to Anne, she also has a mature, balanced perspective—the beauty of the world, especially of her home, remains one of her chief joys. Not only that, but the effort of striving has become its own reward, representing a step beyond the years of competition with Gilbert.

CHAPTER 36: THE GLORY AND THE DREAM

Anne and Jane walk down the street together on the day the exam results are supposed to be posted; Anne is pale and anxious. Anne has little hope of winning the Avery scholarship; she's so nervous that she makes Jane promise to look up her results while she hides in the girls' dressing room. But as they approach Queen's, they see Gilbert being hoisted on his friends' shoulders while they shout, "Hurrah for Blythe, Medallist!" No sooner does Anne's disappointment sink in than she hears, "Three cheers for Miss Shirley, winner of the Avery!" She's soon surrounded by a jubilant group of congratulating friends.

Anne doesn't achieve her goal of beating Gilbert for the Queen's medal, but she achieves an arguably better one—a college scholarship, surpassing the goals and dreams she'd initially brought with her to Queen's. Unlike most girls of the time, Anne has doors open to her even beyond a teaching career—a full college degree.

Marilla and Matthew attend Commencement to see Anne honored and hear her read her prizewinning essay. Matthew asks Marilla, "Reckon you're glad we kept her?" Marilla tells her brother to stop rubbing it in. That night, Anne happily breathes in the familiar sights, smells, and atmosphere of Green Gables. She and Diana get reacquainted, and Diana teases Anne about replacing her with her new Queen's friends. Anne pelts Diana with flowers and assures her that Diana is still her dearest friend.

For Matthew and Marilla, keeping Anne has become the most important choice of their lives—she has brought them tremendous love, joy, and pride. The value of having her around has long ceased to be a matter of her usefulness to the household. Back home, it seems like Green Gables is the same place it's always been and that life this summer promises to go on much as before.

Anne is going to enjoy three months of vacation before starting college at Redmond in September. Jane, Ruby, and Gilbert are going to be schoolteachers. Gilbert can't afford additional college, so he'll likely teach at Avonlea school in order to earn a salary. Anne hears a pang at this news—what will college be like without a rival to motivate her?

Anne realizes that things are going to change more than she'd realized—Gilbert's presence as a valued rival, something she's taken for granted for years now, will soon be gone. She wonders if she'll be able to remain motivated without him.

The next morning at breakfast, Matthew looks a bit gray. Marilla tells Anne that Matthew has had bad spells with his heart but refuses to slow down his work. Anne thinks Marilla looks tired, too, and promises to do the chores this summer so Marilla can rest. Marilla says it's a problem with her eyes; she'll have to see the doctor about them soon. Marilla also mentions a rumor about the Abbey Bank, where all the Cuthberts' money is stored. Mr. Abbey was their father's good friend, but the bank has been shakier under the younger generation. After Marilla heard that, she wanted Matthew to withdraw all their money from it, but someone reassured him that all was well.

Though at first it looked as if nothing had changed at Green Gables, Anne realizes that's not quite true. Both Matthew and Marilla have aged and they struggle to keep up with things at Green Gables as they used to. The news of instability at the bank is likewise ominous.

Anne has a wonderful, carefree day revisiting all her favorite spots around Green Gables. That evening, as she and Matthew bring the cows in, Anne tells him he's working too hard. Anne says if only she'd been the boy they originally sent for, then she could be of much more help to Matthew. Matthew says he'd rather have Anne than a dozen boys. After all, it wasn't a boy who won the Avery scholarship; it was *his* girl. Anne treasures his words, and she always remembers that happy day.

Despite the obvious changes, Anne treasures her reunion with Green Gables. Even after all these years, she does hold onto a bit of guilt about the fact that she couldn't be what Matthew and Marilla originally sought in an adopted child. Yet Matthew reassures her that she *is what they really wanted and needed all along.*

CHAPTER 37: THE REAPER WHOSE NAME IS DEATH

The next morning, Anne comes through the hall with an armful of flowers, hearing Marilla speaking anxiously to Matthew. When she reaches the door, she sees Matthew, gray-faced, with a newspaper in his hand. Before she or Marilla can reach him, he faints across the threshold. Anne sends the hired man for the doctor, and soon Mrs. Lynde arrives to help. She listens to Matthew's heart and tearfully tells Marilla she doesn't think there's anything they can do. Anne looks at Matthew's still face and sees Mrs. Lynde is right.

Anne's joyful homecoming is soon followed by tragedy as Matthew dies of a heart attack, changing life at Green Gables and Anne's hopes for the future suddenly and shockingly. Matthew's tender affirmation of Anne turns out to have been his last words to her.

The doctor determines that Matthew probably died painlessly from some great shock. The source of the shock is found to be the news of the Abbey Bank's failure. All day friends and neighbors visit Green Gables. Anne tucks Matthew's favorite flowers around his casket, feeling unable to cry. Diana offers to spend the night at Green Gables, but Anne feels she needs time alone to try to come to terms with Matthew's death. Marilla has been weeping stormily, in sharp contrast to her lifelong reserve.

Anne struggles to come to terms with her tremendous grief, finding that unlike her younger self, she can't express her emotions freely. Marilla's and Anne's contrasting reactions show how grief can be displayed in unexpected ways.

Finally, in the middle of the night, Anne wakes up remembering Matthew's last words to her—"My girl that I'm proud of"—and cries at last. Marilla comes in and comforts Anne. She says they'll help each other now. She knows she's been strict with Anne in the past, but she wants to tell her while she can: she loves Anne as if she were her own flesh and blood, and she's been the joy of Marilla's life since she first came.

The loss of Matthew prompts Marilla to be honest and open with Anne about her love for her, in case Anne has ever been unaware. Her strictness, in its own way, has been an expression of that love. All this time, however, Anne has been a source of joy that Marilla never imagined when she first sought to adopt a child.

After Matthew's funeral, life in Avonlea and Green Gables begins to go back to normal. At first, Anne feels almost ashamed to find pleasure and beauty in life again, but Mrs. Allan reminds her that Matthew loved to hear Anne laugh, even though it feels "unfaithful" to Matthew to regain interest in life. After visiting Mrs. Allan, Anne walks home slowly and finds Marilla sitting on the front steps. Marilla explains that she needs to get her eyes examined by a visiting specialist tomorrow, so she'll need Anne to look after the place for the day. They laugh together over the memory of some of Anne's youthful mishaps. Anne ruefully recalls her childish preoccupation with her **red hair** and freckles. The latter are gone, and most people tell Anne that her hair is auburn nowadays.

One of the difficulties of grief is transitioning back into normal life and finding beauty and joy in the areas that have always meant so much to Anne.As they look toward the future and consider Marilla's health, Anne and Marilla remember some of Anne's youthful foibles. Now that Anne is grown up, it's easier to laugh about her old mishaps and to see how she's grown and matured beyond them.

As they talk about the plans of several of Anne's friends, the conversation drifts to Gilbert Blythe, and Marilla tells Anne that she once dated Gilbert's father John. It all ended over a silly, stubborn quarrel—Marilla wouldn't forgive John for something, and she's always sort of regretted it.

Marilla's experience dating John Blythe is surprisingly reminiscent of Anne's longstanding resentment of Gilbert. Whether or not Marilla knows this to be the case, her words prompt Anne to think about things between her and Gilbert.

CHAPTER 38: THE BEND IN THE ROAD

The next evening, Anne returns from a visit to Diana's and finds Marilla sitting at the kitchen table looking depressed. Concerned, she asks what the oculist had to say. Marilla explains that, according to the doctor, if she gives up anything that strains her eyes—like reading, sewing, or crying—and wears special glasses, her eyesight might be saved, and her headaches will go away. But if not, she'll be blind within six months. After a moment of shock, Anne tells Marilla that there's still hope. She fixes Marilla tea and sends her off to bed. Anne cries at her window for a while, thinking about how much has changed since her triumphant return from Queen's. But by the time she goes to sleep, her heart is at peace, as she's come to terms with her duty.

Now that Marilla is in need, there's a role reversal—Anne takes charge of comforting her in crisis and considering what her possible blindness might mean for her and Green Gables' future. In fact, it might change Anne's future, too. Though she'd arrived home from Queen's knowing exactly what the future held for her, or believing she did, she now has to rethink everything—a major step in growing up.

A few days later, Anne sees Marilla talking with a man from Carmody in the yard. When she comes inside, there are tears in her eyes. She tells Anne that she's planning to sell Green Gables. She doesn't know what else to do: she can't run the house without her sight, and if Green Gables falls into disrepair, nobody will ever buy it. If she sells the house, at least she'll have something to live on. She starts to cry.

Marilla's vision trouble could mean the end of Green Gables. Within a short time of her arrival back home, Anne is faced with the possibility of losing most of what she loved there.

Anne tells Marilla she can't sell Green Gables: Anne is going to decline her Redmond scholarship and stay home. She decided this after Marilla's oculist appointment. She can't abandon Marilla after all she's done for Anne, and she's made a plan. Mr. Barry hopes to rent their farm, so they will have all the money they need. And Anne will find a teaching job, probably at Carmody. She and Marilla will live comfortably together, and Anne will make sure Marilla is cared for and that her eyes have a chance to heal.

Anne's thoughts about the future have changed. She's been thinking ahead to what she can do to help Marilla and save Green Gables, setting aside the college ambitions she'd brought home with her. Anne's change of heart suggests that maturity means having the foresight, resilience, and courage to redirect one's hopes in order to sacrifice for loved ones—much as the Cuthberts did for her.

Marilla is reluctant to let Anne sacrifice for her, but Anne says losing Green Gables would be far more painful for her. She's made up her mind, and she's not giving up her ambitions: she's simply changed them. She wants to be a good teacher, save Marilla's eyesight, and do some college coursework from home. It's just a bend in the road, and Anne is determined to make the best of it. Marilla gives in, feeling that Anne has given her new life.

Though Anne could feel self-pity about the unexpected direction her life has taken, she chooses instead to reframe her circumstances as merely "a bend in the road"—a new direction for her ambitions in stead of an abandonment of them. She'll get out of life what she puts into it—an attitude that further demonstrates her maturity.

When rumors of Anne's decision circulate in Avonlea, some people think she's being foolish. Mrs. Allan is moved by Anne's choice, however, and Mrs. Lynde is glad Anne's giving up the foolish idea of college—women don't need to study Latin and Greek, she huffs. Anne laughs and tells her she'll be studying in the evenings anyway. Then Mrs. Rachel tells Anne the happy news that Anne is being offered the job at Avonlea school. When Gilbert heard about Anne's situation, he withdrew his application and took a job at White Sands instead. Mrs. Lynde says it's a big sacrifice for Gilbert, since he'll have to pay for board and won't be able to save up for college.

Anne pursues her new ambitions without regard for what others will think, confident in what she's decided for herself. But the surprises aren't over—it turns out that Gilbert has been thinking of Anne and deciding to make a sacrifice for her, too.

Just then Diana flashes her old candle signal from Orchard Slope, so Anne runs over to talk to her. Watching her, Mrs. Lynde remarks that there's still a girlishness about Anne. Marilla retorts that she's very much a woman in other ways. But Marilla is no longer as brusque and sarcastic as she used to be. That night, Mrs. Lynde tells her husband that Marilla "has got *mellow*. That's what."

Though Anne has changed since she first came to Green Gables, Marilla has changed much more. This shows that Matthew was right; the Cuthberts needed Anne as much as Anne needed them.

On her way home from a lingering visit to Matthew's grave, Anne drinks in the beauty of Avonlea. As she passes the Blythe homestead, Gilbert comes out of the gate and abruptly stops whistling when he sees Anne. He is about to pass without a word, but Anne, blushing, stops him. She tells Gilbert she appreciates him giving up the Avonlea job for her. He tells her he was happy to do it, and he asks if they can now be friends. Anne tells him she forgave him long ago and apologizes for being so stubborn. Gilbert happily tells her they're destined to be friends. He walks her home, and they talk at the Green Gables gate for half an hour. When Anne finally comes in, Marilla teases her about her long talk with Gilbert—she didn't know the two were such good friends. Anne says she didn't realize they talked so long—it felt like just a few minutes. After all, they have five years' worth of conversation to catch up on.

Gilbert still assumes that Anne will reject him, showing how unselfish his action in giving up the Avonlea job really is—he doesn't expect any thanks from Anne for it. But when she shows her gratitude and regret for her past treatment of him, a new future opens up for the two of them. Though they describe it as friendship only, Marilla's teasing suggests that in time, it might ripen into more.

That night, Anne sits at her window, feeling content as she overlooks Green Gables. Her horizons have narrowed since the beginning of the summer, and yet she trusts her path will be a happy one—she'll never stop dreaming. And there might yet be another bend in the road.

As Anne overlooks her beloved Green Gables, she is happy—though her ambitions will not be realized in the way she dreamed of, she is where she truly belongs.

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