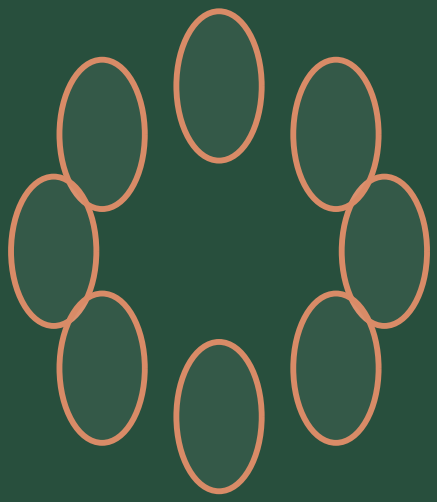
L M MONTGOMERY

ANNE OF GREEN GABLES



When elderly siblings Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert decide to adopt an orphan boy, they expect someone strong enough to help on their farm, Green Gables, in the quiet community of Avonlea on Prince Edward Island. Matthew drives to the station and instead finds Anne Shirley, a thin, red-haired eleven-year-old girl overflowing with imagination and words. Anne has endured neglect, hard work, and a lonely life in foster homes and an orphan asylum. She has protected herself by inventing beauty wherever she could. Matthew is immediately won over, but Marilla insists that a mistake has been made.

On the journey back to the orphanage, Marilla begins to recognize how much Anne wants a permanent home. She also learns that sending Anne to another household may expose her to more exploitation. Marilla agrees to keep her, intending to provide firm discipline, while Matthew quietly becomes Anne's devoted ally. Anne renames ordinary places—the Avenue becomes the White Way of Delight, and Barry's Pond becomes the Lake of Shining Waters—revealing how imagination can transform a landscape into a home.

Anne's arrival disrupts Avonlea's settled expectations. When outspoken neighbour Rachel Lynde criticizes her red hair and appearance, Anne explodes with an elaborate insult. Marilla requires her to apologize, beginning a long education in self-control. Anne is impulsive and theatrical, but she is also honest about her feelings and capable of genuine remorse. Rachel eventually becomes fond of her, as do many adults who first mistake Anne's intensity for bad character.

Anne's closest friendship is with Diana Barry. They solemnly promise eternal devotion and fill their days with stories, secret places, and romantic language. Their friendship nearly ends when Anne accidentally serves Diana currant wine instead of raspberry cordial, leaving Diana intoxicated. Mrs. Barry forbids the girls to meet. Anne is heartbroken, but later saves Diana's little sister Minnie May during a dangerous attack of croup, using knowledge learned while caring for children in a former foster home. Her calm competence restores Mrs. Barry's trust.

At school, Anne meets Gilbert Blythe, who teasingly calls her “Carrots” and pulls her braid. Humiliated by the feature she hates most, Anne breaks her slate over his head and refuses his apology. Gilbert becomes both rival and secret source of motivation. Anne competes fiercely with him for academic honors, discovering that disciplined study can direct the same energy that once produced only daydreams and disasters.

Those disasters remain an important part of her growth. She and Diana frighten themselves while imagining that a local wood is haunted. Anne flavors a cake with liniment instead of vanilla when a visiting minister and his wife come to tea. She falls from a roof after accepting a dare to walk along its ridge. While pretending to be Elaine from a poem, she lies in a leaking boat and must be rescued by Gilbert. Each episode is comic, but each also teaches Anne to connect imagination with judgment.

Anne thrives under the encouraging teacher Miss Stacy, who introduces new methods, outdoor lessons, compositions, and preparation for entrance examinations. Anne joins a group of ambitious students hoping to attend Queen's Academy. Her friendship with Diana must change because Diana does not plan to continue her education, but their affection survives their different paths. Anne earns first place jointly with Gilbert in the entrance results and later wins the Avery Scholarship, which would allow her to attend college.

During these years, Green Gables becomes a true family. Matthew gives Anne the fashionable dress with puffed sleeves that she has long desired, understanding that beauty and belonging matter to her even when Marilla considers such wishes frivolous. Marilla gradually becomes less severe and more openly loving. Anne, once desperate to escape ordinary reality, begins to see that duties, relationships, and familiar places can possess a beauty deeper than fantasy.

The novel's greatest sadness arrives when Matthew dies suddenly after learning that the bank holding the Cuthberts' savings has failed. Marilla's eyesight is also deteriorating, and she may have to sell Green Gables. Anne abandons her immediate college plans and chooses to teach nearby so she can remain with Marilla. The decision is not presented as the destruction of her future. Anne has learned that love may redirect ambition without extinguishing it.

Gilbert, having secured the Avonlea school, gives up the position so Anne can teach close to home. She finally recognizes the generosity beneath their rivalry and offers friendship. Their reconciliation opens the possibility of a new relationship founded on mutual respect. Anne looks ahead to a smaller life than she once imagined, but not an empty one. The road now bends, hiding what comes next, and she trusts that the unseen future may contain its own happiness.

Anne of Green Gables is a story about the creation of belonging. Anne is not rescued by becoming quiet or conventional. She matures while retaining the imagination, enthusiasm, and emotional honesty that make her distinctive. Green Gables changes her, but she also changes Green Gables, awakening tenderness in Matthew, flexibility in Marilla, and warmth throughout Avonlea.

The story opens by introducing Avonlea through Mrs Rachel Lynde, a neighbor who notices nearly everything that happens along the road. She is astonished to see the shy Matthew Cuthbert driving away from Green Gables in his best clothes. Marilla explains that she and Matthew have decided to adopt an orphan boy from Nova Scotia. Matthew is getting older, the farm needs help, and neither sibling has

children. Mrs Rachel responds with a catalogue of possible disasters, but the Cuthberts have already made arrangements through acquaintances. This opening establishes the community's habits of observation and judgment. Green Gables is peaceful and respectable, but it has become emotionally quiet. Matthew and Marilla have organized their lives around work, routine, and mutual dependence. Their decision appears practical, yet it creates an opening through which affection and unpredictability will enter. Mrs Rachel's reaction also anticipates Anne's relationship with Avonlea: the child will be examined, discussed, criticized, and eventually loved by a community that is far more flexible than it first appears.

At Bright River station Matthew finds no boy. Instead, an eleven-year-old girl waits with a battered carpetbag, determined to remain hopeful. Matthew is too gentle to tell Anne immediately that a mistake has occurred, so he brings her home. During the drive, Anne talks almost without pause. She describes the loneliness of waiting, celebrates the landscape, and renames an avenue of apple trees the White Way of Delight. Barry's Pond becomes the Lake of Shining Waters. Matthew, ordinarily uncomfortable with women and girls, discovers that listening to Anne requires no social performance. Her imagination fills the silence he normally prefers. Anne confesses that she has always wanted to belong somewhere and hopes Green Gables will finally be home. Matthew begins wishing that the adoption had not been a mistake. The ride presents Anne's speech not as empty chatter but as the record of a mind trained to create companionship when none was available. She makes beauty because beauty has rarely been provided for her.

Marilla is dismayed when Matthew arrives with a girl. Anne understands immediately that she is unwanted and collapses into grief. She had allowed herself to imagine a permanent room, family, and future, and the loss feels unbearable. Marilla tries to remain practical, arranging to investigate how the error happened. Anne spends her first night in the east gable room, noticing every feature because she expects to lose it. In the morning, the beauty of the orchard restores some of her wonder. Marilla cannot understand how a child can move so quickly between despair and delight, but she begins to recognize that Anne's emotions are sincere rather than manipulative. Matthew quietly argues that they could be of use to Anne even if Anne is not useful to them. His statement changes the moral question. Adoption is no longer about obtaining labor; it is about whether two adults with a secure home will accept responsibility for a vulnerable child.

On the journey to consult Mrs Spencer, Marilla asks about Anne's history. Anne was born to Walter and Bertha Shirley, schoolteachers who died when she was an infant. She passed between households where she cared for other people's children, including two sets of twins, before being sent to an orphan asylum. Her romantic vocabulary exists beside precise knowledge of exhaustion, quarrels, illness, and insecurity. When Mrs Spencer proposes transferring Anne to Mrs Blewett, a severe woman looking for help with children and housework, Marilla sees Anne's fear and understands what the placement may mean. She takes Anne back to Green Gables and later announces that she may stay. Anne's joy is enormous, but Marilla immediately begins setting rules. Love at Green Gables will not be sentimental indulgence. Marilla believes that reliability, truthfulness, useful work, education, and religious instruction will give Anne the stability her early life lacked.

Anne's first lessons reveal the difference between obedience and belonging. Marilla tells her to pray, but Anne has never learned a formal prayer. She improvises one, thanking God for the White Way of Delight and asking to become pretty. Marilla is startled by Anne's theology but also saddened by the neglect it exposes. Anne dislikes her plain clothes and red hair, yet she is delighted to have regular duties and possessions of her own. She gives poetic names to places around the farm and talks to her reflection or to imagined friends when alone. Marilla tries to restrain exaggeration but gradually understands that imagination has kept Anne emotionally alive. The challenge is not to destroy it but to connect it with truth and responsibility. Matthew's quiet approval balances Marilla's discipline. Anne begins interpreting their different forms of care: Matthew offers immediate sympathy, while Marilla creates the dependable structure within which Anne can finally relax.

Mrs Rachel visits Green Gables and bluntly calls Anne skinny, homely, and red-haired. Anne retaliates with an elaborate attack on Rachel's appearance. Marilla is horrified and orders an apology. Anne initially argues that Rachel deserved the truth, revealing how readily she uses honesty as a defense when hurt. Confined to her room, she eventually agrees to apologize, but her performance is so dramatic that Matthew and Marilla can barely maintain seriousness. She kneels before Rachel, confesses in extravagant language, and asks forgiveness. Rachel accepts, predicting that Anne's hair may darken. The episode teaches several things at once. Anne must learn that pain does not authorize cruelty. Marilla must acknowledge that an adult behaved insensitively toward a child. Rachel discovers that Anne's temper coexists with charm and remorse. Apology becomes not humiliation but a way to repair community. Anne's emotional intensity, guided rather than crushed, begins turning conflict into relationship.

Anne finds Avonlea Sunday school disappointing because the minister lacks imagination and the lessons feel lifeless. Her hat, decorated with wildflowers, attracts attention she did not intend. More important is her meeting with Diana Barry, the dark-haired girl who lives at Orchard Slope. Anne asks Diana to become her bosom friend, and they swear lasting devotion beside the garden. Diana offers something Anne has never had: a friendship based on choice rather than

obligation. Their games transform woods, paths, and spare rooms into romantic settings. Anne's language influences Diana, while Diana anchors Anne within ordinary family life. At school Anne encounters a crowded social world of alliances and rivalries. Her intelligence, storytelling, and eagerness attract attention. She wants desperately to be admired but is equally capable of generosity. School becomes the main place where she learns that identity is negotiated among peers rather than invented alone.

Gilbert Blythe returns to school and tries to attract Anne's notice. When she ignores him, he pulls her braid and calls her Carrots. Red hair is the center of Anne's deepest shame, and she responds by breaking her slate over his head. The teacher punishes her publicly and later seats her beside Gilbert, which Anne experiences as another humiliation. Gilbert apologizes, but she refuses to forgive him. Her resentment becomes a long rivalry. She leaves school temporarily and studies at home rather than accept the embarrassment. Yet Gilbert's academic ability gives Anne a productive challenge. She decides that she will equal or surpass him in every subject. The conflict reveals both her strength and limitation. Pride converts injury into disciplined effort, but it also prevents reconciliation. Gilbert, meanwhile, learns that teasing can wound more deeply than intended and that charm cannot demand forgiveness on schedule.

When Marilla allows Anne to invite Diana to tea, Anne carefully imitates adult hospitality. She intends to serve raspberry cordial but accidentally gives Diana several glasses of currant wine. Diana becomes intoxicated and returns home in a confused state. Mrs Barry assumes Anne acted deliberately and forbids the friendship. Anne's grief is intensified because the disaster occurred while she was trying to behave responsibly. She and Diana exchange a farewell at school, imagining permanent separation. The episode is comic for readers but devastating to Anne, who still fears that any mistake can cause her to lose love. Marilla investigates and believes Anne's explanation, showing how trust has grown between them. Anne's private life now matters enough that Marilla advocates for her. The separation also directs Anne more strongly toward study, and Gilbert's rivalry becomes a new intellectual interest even while she refuses personal friendship.

During an evening when the adults are away, Diana arrives in panic because her little sister Minnie May has croup. Anne immediately recalls caring for children in a former foster home. She directs Diana to heat water, administers ipecac, and remains calm through the crisis until a doctor arrives. Her difficult past, which seemed only a history of neglect, has given her practical knowledge that saves a life. Mrs Barry's judgment changes completely. She apologizes and permits Anne and Diana to resume their friendship. Avonlea begins seeing Anne not merely as the impulsive orphan responsible for unusual incidents but as a capable member of the community. Anne herself discovers that competence can be more powerful than performance. She does not rescue Minnie May through fantasy; she does it through memory, courage, and focused action. The reconciliation is therefore earned by character rather than sentiment.

Anne and Diana's imagination sometimes exceeds their judgment. They turn a nearby stand of trees into the Haunted Wood, inventing ghosts until Anne becomes frightened to cross it after dark. Marilla insists that Anne walk through the wood as a cure for self-created terror. In another adventure, Anne and her friends dare one another to dangerous feats. Anne walks along the ridgepole of a roof to defend her honor and falls, breaking her ankle. These episodes refine the novel's treatment of imagination. It is neither praised without limit nor blamed as a defect. Imagination enriches experience, supports empathy, and gives language to hope. But when separated from reality, it produces fear, vanity, and physical danger. Anne gradually learns that courage does not mean accepting every dare and that a vivid thought is not the same as a fact.

Anne is excited when the minister and his wife come to tea. Determined to demonstrate her usefulness, she bakes a cake but accidentally flavors it with anodyne liniment because Marilla has stored it in an old vanilla bottle. Anne is mortified, expecting that Mrs Allan will think her hopeless. Instead, the minister's wife laughs kindly and reassures her. Mrs Allan becomes an important adult friend because she combines moral seriousness with warmth. She encourages Anne rather than measuring her by mistakes. Anne is later invited to tea at the manse and experiences the event as an entrance into gracious society. The contrast between the disastrous cake and the successful visit shows her developing social confidence. She learns that respectable adults can be forgiving and that an error need not define an entire relationship.

The arrival of Miss Stacy transforms the Avonlea school. She encourages compositions, nature study, physical exercise, and independent thought. Conservative neighbors question her methods, but Anne responds with enthusiasm. School becomes a place where imagination and discipline support one another. Miss Stacy recognizes Anne's ability and guides it toward sustained work. The students prepare a Christmas concert, and Anne discovers the pleasure of contributing to a shared performance rather than merely attracting attention. Matthew watches her recite and realizes that her plain dresses distinguish her painfully from other girls. Education now includes academic ambition, public expression, and the subtle social knowledge that Marilla sometimes overlooks. Miss Stacy gives Anne a model of womanhood based on intellect, vocation, and encouragement.

Matthew decides that Anne should own a dress with fashionable puffed sleeves. Too shy to make the purchase directly, he first buys an absurd collection of unrelated items

from a female clerk. He eventually asks Rachel Lynde to sew the dress. On Christmas morning Anne receives the gift she has dreamed about for years. The moment matters because Matthew has listened to a desire that other adults dismiss as vanity. Marilla values simplicity and fears encouraging pride, but Matthew understands that beauty and social belonging can carry emotional meaning. The dress does not corrupt Anne. It tells her that someone noticed what she wanted and chose to delight her. Matthew's affection is quiet, yet it repeatedly reaches Anne at points where rules alone cannot.

Anne, Diana, Jane Andrews, and Ruby Gillis form a Story Club and write romances filled with coincidences, suffering, and dramatic beauty. Marilla worries that fiction is a waste of time, but the club develops Anne's creative discipline. She begins distinguishing between imagination that merely exaggerates and imagination shaped into art. At the same time, vanity creates another painful lesson when Anne buys hair dye from a traveling salesman. She hopes to transform her red hair into raven black, but it turns green. Marilla must cut it short. Anne recognizes that dishonesty toward her own appearance has produced exactly the humiliation she hoped to escape. Gradually her hair darkens naturally, but more importantly, its color loses power over her identity. She can desire beauty without believing that beauty determines worth.

Anne and her friends reenact the story of Elaine, the Lily Maid, by placing Anne in a flat-bottomed boat and allowing it to drift downstream. The boat leaks, forcing Anne to cling to a bridge piling while the others run for help. Gilbert arrives in another boat and rescues her. He again offers friendship, but Anne, embarrassed and still proud, refuses. After he leaves, she regrets the decision yet convinces herself it is too late. The scene brings her romantic imagination into direct contact with danger and with Gilbert's consistent generosity. Gilbert does not mock her predicament or demand gratitude. Anne's refusal reveals that her pride is no longer simply a defense against cruelty; it has become a habit that obstructs a desired friendship. This recognition prepares for change even though reconciliation remains delayed.

Anne travels to Charlottetown with Diana and the Barrys to see an exhibition. A hotel concert gives her the opportunity to recite before a sophisticated audience. At first she is terrified, especially when she sees Gilbert in the crowd and imagines that fashionable listeners are judging her. She recovers and performs successfully. The trip widens her world beyond Avonlea while also deepening appreciation for home. She enjoys elegant rooms, electric lights, fine clothes, and public applause, but returning to Green Gables brings greater satisfaction. Ambition no longer requires rejecting the ordinary. Anne can imagine education, artistic accomplishment, and travel while remaining rooted in the people and landscape that formed her.

Miss Stacy organizes a special class for students preparing for entrance to Queen's Academy. Anne, Gilbert, Jane, Ruby, Josie Pye, and others accept an intense schedule. Diana will not continue her education, so the friends face their first major divergence. Anne grieves but learns that affection can survive different futures. Competition with Gilbert becomes increasingly respectful. They exchange first place across examinations, each recognizing the other's ability. Anne's work is no longer driven only by wounded pride. She wants to justify Miss Stacy's confidence, please Matthew and Marilla, and test her own powers. The preparation years compress childhood. Games and fantasies remain, but they are joined by deadlines, choices, and awareness that Avonlea will not contain every stage of life.

Anne and Gilbert tie for first place in the entrance examinations, bringing pride to Avonlea. At Queen's Academy, Anne initially feels lonely in a city room, but she builds a disciplined routine and joins friends from home. The course normally requires two years; Anne attempts it in one. She competes for the Avery Scholarship, which would fund college study. Gilbert pursues a medal, and their rivalry becomes almost entirely honorable. Anne wins the scholarship, while Gilbert receives the medal. The achievement seems to confirm a clear future: college, writing, and intellectual distinction. Matthew's delight matters more to Anne than public recognition. Marilla is proud but conscious that the child who transformed Green Gables is preparing to leave it.

Before Anne becomes fully settled at Green Gables, a missing amethyst brooch creates one of the first serious tests of trust between her and Marilla. Anne had admired the brooch when Marilla allowed her to look at it, and when it later disappears, Marilla assumes that Anne handled it again and lost it. Anne denies taking it, but Marilla refuses to let her attend a long-awaited picnic unless she confesses. Desperate not to lose the event, Anne invents a detailed confession in which she claims to have dropped the brooch into the Lake of Shining Waters. Marilla then discovers the ornament caught in her own shawl. She is forced to admit that she judged Anne unfairly, while Anne must explain why she confessed to something she did not do. The incident teaches Marilla that authority can be mistaken and teaches Anne that an invented story can cause real harm when it is offered as truth.

Daily life at Green Gables gradually gives Anne the ordinary experience she once regarded as impossible luxury. She helps with dishes, sewing, errands, and meals, learns Marilla's standards, and becomes familiar with Matthew's quiet movements around the farm. She still makes mistakes, but she no longer treats every correction as evidence that she will be sent away. When a mouse drowns in a pot of pudding sauce, Anne remembers the accident but forgets to warn Marilla before important guests are served. Her horror is genuine, and the household survives another social embarrassment. Such incidents make Green Gables feel more

rather than less secure. A mistake produces work, apology, and sometimes laughter, not abandonment.

Anne's friendships extend beyond Diana. Jane Andrews is dependable, Ruby Gillis romantic and emotional, Josie Pye competitive, and Moody Spurgeon awkward but earnest. Their games and school projects create a social education as important as lessons. Anne sometimes judges classmates dramatically, dividing them into kindred spirits and impossible people, but repeated contact makes those categories less absolute. Rivalries soften, talents become visible, and children who seem ridiculous in one setting become useful in another. Avonlea teaches Anne that community is made of imperfect relationships that cannot all resemble her immediate bond with Diana.

Marilla's responses to Anne's adventures also change in small stages. At first she suppresses amusement because she fears laughter will encourage misbehavior. Later she can correct Anne while privately enjoying the absurdity. She consults Rachel, listens to Mrs Allan, and becomes more willing to acknowledge uncertainty. When Anne is injured after the roof dare, Marilla's fear reveals how deeply attachment has grown. She no longer asks whether keeping Anne was wise; she imagines the house without her and finds the thought unbearable. Anne's recovery restores not simply order but the emotional center of Green Gables.

Matthew's pride in Anne grows as her world expands. He follows school news, listens to recitations, and measures her success less by rank than by happiness. Because speech is difficult for him, gifts and practical acts carry what he cannot easily say. The puffed-sleeve dress is the clearest example, but his support also appears in allowing study time and in defending Anne's ambitions. Anne understands him without demanding eloquence. Their bond is built from quiet recognition: Matthew sees value in the child others initially treated as a mistake, and Anne sees courage and tenderness in a man others consider merely shy.

The transition toward Queen's Academy changes the rhythm of friendship. Anne and Diana can no longer assume that every day will follow the same pattern. Diana remains rooted in Avonlea while Anne prepares to leave, and both must learn that closeness can survive absence and difference. Anne's classmates also begin separating according to talent, money, family expectation, and opportunity. The old school becomes a place of memory even before they leave it. Their final months contain excitement and grief because accomplishment ends a shared stage of life.

At Queen's, Anne encounters students who have not watched her grow from an impulsive orphan. She must establish herself through present work rather than local affection or reputation. Homesickness initially surprises her; the city and academy are everything she wanted, yet the east gable room and Marilla's familiar routines remain emotionally powerful. Anne organizes her time, completes the accelerated course, and learns that independence includes carrying home within memory. Her success is not a magical transformation. It is the result of years in which competition, encouragement, mistakes, and responsibility gradually taught her how to direct attention.

After Matthew's death, practical decisions arrive before grief has settled. The failed bank has removed savings that were meant to protect the siblings in old age. Marilla's eyesight makes farm management increasingly difficult. Anne considers what can be sold, what work she can obtain, and how study might continue outside college. Friends help locate teaching positions, and Avonlea's network closes around Green Gables. The same community that once debated whether the strange orphan should be kept now assumes that Anne belongs and looks for ways to help her remain. Gilbert's surrender of the Avonlea school is part of this wider response, though it is also a personal act of reconciliation.

The collapse of the Abbey Bank destroys Matthew and Marilla's savings. Matthew, already weakened by heart trouble, suffers a fatal attack after reading the news. His death ends the novel's long sequence of comic accidents with genuine loss. Anne confronts grief without the dramatic tears she expects; numbness initially makes her feel disloyal. Later sorrow arrives fully when she understands that Matthew will never again enter a room or call her his girl. Marilla finally tells Anne openly that she loves her and admits how difficult expression has always been. The two women comfort one another. Soon Marilla learns that her eyesight is failing and that she may become blind unless she avoids strain. Green Gables may need to be sold. Anne's scholarship and college plans suddenly conflict with the needs of the home that once chose her.

Anne decides to remain in Avonlea, teach, and study independently while caring for Marilla. She does not portray the decision as martyrdom. Her ambition changes form because love has changed her understanding of success. Gilbert has been appointed to the Avonlea school, but when he learns of Anne's circumstances, he gives up the position so she can stay near Green Gables and takes a more distant school himself. Anne finally thanks him and offers friendship. The old slate, insult, and rivalry are not erased; they become the history from which mutual respect has grown. Looking toward the future, Anne sees a bend in the road rather than a closed path. She has lost Matthew and postponed college, yet she possesses home, purpose, friendship, and confidence in her ability to continue learning. The ending fulfills her deepest childhood wish not through permanent ease but through permanent belonging.

The decision settles into daily arrangements. Anne writes to Miss Stacy and other friends, explaining that she will not use the scholarship at once. She studies the courses she can

pursue at home and plans how teaching wages will support Green Gables. Marilla resists at first, unwilling to become the reason Anne abandons college, but Anne reminds her that the house and the people within it gave direction to every ambition she possesses. Remaining is not a return to the powerless waiting of her childhood. She now chooses where she will live and what responsibilities she will carry. The spare room, the orchard, and the east gable no longer belong to a place she fears losing at another person's command.

News of Gilbert's generosity reaches Anne before she speaks with him. Their meeting on the road is quiet compared with their years of public rivalry. She thanks him for surrendering the Avonlea school, and he answers without making the favor sound heroic. He will teach at White Sands and travel farther so that she can stay with Marilla. Anne acknowledges that she behaved badly when he first tried to apologize, and Gilbert admits that teasing her was foolish. They agree to be friends. The conversation does not destroy their competitive energy; it changes its purpose. Each knows the other's intelligence and determination too well for shallow politeness, but neither needs hostility to prove worth.

Summer evening gathers over the fields as Anne returns to Green Gables. The grief inside the house remains, and Matthew's absence is present in every familiar task. Yet Marilla is waiting, the farm is secure for the moment, and work lies ahead. Anne thinks of the classroom she will soon enter as its teacher, of books she will study after lessons, and of the friends whose lives will continue beside her own. The future no longer follows the straight route she imagined at Queen's. It turns beyond sight, carrying loss and possibility together, and she walks toward it from the home where she was once received by mistake and kept by love.

At the gate she pauses to look across the countryside that once seemed too beautiful to be real. Avonlea has witnessed every embarrassment, triumph, quarrel, and reconciliation since her arrival. Tomorrow will bring household duties and preparations for school, while later days will bring changes she cannot predict. For the present, she goes inside to Marilla, accepting the altered life before her with sorrow, gratitude, and the same eager attention that transformed an unwanted journey into a homecoming.

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