

# ANNE OF GREEN GABLES

---

A full-length drama by  
Donna Hoke

adapted freely from the novel by L.M. Montgomery

This script is for evaluation only. It may not be printed, photocopied or distributed digitally under any circumstances. Possession of this file does not grant the right to perform this play or any portion of it, or to use it for classroom study.

[www.youthplays.com](http://www.youthplays.com)  
[info@youthplays.com](mailto:info@youthplays.com)  
424-703-5315

*Anne of Green Gables* © 2021 Donna Hoke  
All rights reserved. ISBN 978-1-63932-007-3.

**Caution:** This play is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, Canada, the British Commonwealth and all other countries of the copyright union and is subject to royalty for all performances including but not limited to professional, amateur, charity and classroom whether admission is charged or presented free of charge.

**Reservation of Rights:** This play is the property of the author and all rights for its use are strictly reserved and must be licensed by the author's representative, YouthPLAYS. This prohibition of unauthorized professional and amateur stage presentations extends also to motion pictures, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video and the rights of adaptation or translation into non-English languages.

**Performance Licensing and Royalty Payments:** Amateur and stock performance rights are administered exclusively by YouthPLAYS. No amateur, stock or educational theatre groups or individuals may perform this play without securing authorization and royalty arrangements in advance from YouthPLAYS. Required royalty fees for performing this play are available online at [www.YouthPLAYS.com](http://www.YouthPLAYS.com). Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Required royalties must be paid each time this play is performed and may not be transferred to any other performance entity. All licensing requests and inquiries should be addressed to YouthPLAYS.

**Author Credit:** All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisements and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line with no other accompanying written matter. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s) and the name of the author(s) may not be abbreviated or otherwise altered from the form in which it appears in this Play.

**Publisher Attribution:** All programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

*Produced by special arrangement with YouthPLAYS ([www.youthplays.com](http://www.youthplays.com)).*

**Prohibition of Unauthorized Copying:** Any unauthorized copying of this book or excerpts from this book, whether by photocopying, scanning, video recording or any other means, is strictly prohibited by law. This book may only be copied by licensed productions with the purchase of a photocopy license, or with explicit permission from YouthPLAYS.

**Trade Marks, Public Figures & Musical Works:** This play may contain references to brand names or public figures. All references are intended only as parody or other legal means of expression. This play may also contain suggestions for the performance of a musical work (either in part or in whole). YouthPLAYS has not obtained performing rights of these works unless explicitly noted. The direction of such works is only a playwright's suggestion, and the play producer should obtain such permissions on their own. The website for the U.S. copyright office is <http://www.copyright.gov>.

## COPYRIGHT RULES TO REMEMBER

1. To produce this play, you must receive prior written permission from YouthPLAYS and pay the required royalty.
2. You must pay a royalty each time the play is performed in the presence of audience members outside of the cast and crew. Royalties are due whether or not admission is charged, whether or not the play is presented for profit, for charity or for educational purposes, or whether or not anyone associated with the production is being paid.
3. No changes, including cuts or additions, are permitted to the script without written prior permission from YouthPLAYS.
4. Do not copy this book or any part of it without written permission from YouthPLAYS.
5. Credit to the author and YouthPLAYS is required on all programs and other promotional items associated with this play's performance.

When you pay royalties, you are recognizing the hard work that went into creating the play and making a statement that a play is something of value. We think this is important, and we hope that everyone will do the right thing, thus allowing playwrights to generate income and continue to create wonderful new works for the stage.

Plays are owned by the playwrights who wrote them. Violating a playwright's copyright is a very serious matter and violates both United States and international copyright law. Infringement is punishable by actual damages and attorneys' fees, statutory damages of up to \$150,000 per incident, and even possible criminal sanctions. **Infringement is theft. Don't do it.**

Have a question about copyright? Please contact us by email at [info@youthplays.com](mailto:info@youthplays.com) or by phone at 424-703-5315. When in doubt, please ask.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

MARILLA CUTHBERT, 50s-60s, a stern woman with a moral code.

MATTHEW CUTHBERT, 50s-60s, Marilla's brother with a soft spot for Anne.

ANNE, plays 11-18, a spirited fish out of water.

MRS. SPENCER, 30s-40s, a social services worker.

MRS. LYNDE, 70s-80s, the Cuthberts' busybody neighbor.

THOMAS, Rachel's husband.

DIANA BARRY, plays 11-18, Anne's best friend.

GILBERT BLYTHE, plays 11-18, Anne's academic rival.

MRS. BARRY, 30s-40s, Diana's strict mother.

MISS STACY, Anne's grammar school teacher.

RUBY GILLIS, plays 11-18, boy crazy know-it-all.

JOSIE PYE, plays 11-18, mean girl.

MS. GOLD, Anne's high school teacher.

WOMAN IN SILK, 60s, a woman at the variety performance.

GIRL IN WHITE LACE, 17, a girl at the variety performance.

In any play about love and acceptance, diverse casting is necessary, and every effort should be made to employ it.

### OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL CHARACTERS:

In order of contribution, students who can be added and/or cast from the Ensemble (if you choose not to, simply cut their lines and change I/we pronouns accordingly):

ERIKA JEFFERSON

MOODY MACPHERSON

CHARLIE SLOANE

MARIA MARILLO

TAMMY DIAZ

ENSEMBLE: The Ensemble allows directors to cast large numbers and use them creatively to create atmosphere throughout the script. In various scenes, the Ensemble are partygoers, trees, haunters in the woods, townspeople, and the collective conscience of the play. The Ensemble provides opportunity for individualization of the production and devised story/character work from performers. Use the scripted suggestions but also have fun and play! (And, of course, if there is no Ensemble, the play works just as well; simply ignore all Ensemble direction/lines and substitute exits, sound cues and lighting in scenes like Anne's walk through the Haunted Woods.)

Reduced Casting Plot (6F, 2M)

MARILLA CUTHBERT

MATTHEW CUTHBERT

ANNE SHIRLEY

RUBY GILLIS/MRS. SPENCER

MRS. RACHEL LYNDE/JOSIE PYE/GIRL IN WHITE LACE

THOMAS LYNDE/GILBERT BLYTHE

DIANA BARRY

MRS. BARRY/MISS STACY/MS. GOLD/WOMAN IN SILK

Directors: This casting plot is just a suggestion; please feel free to divide roles any way you choose.

## SETTING

A small rural community in the 20th century where love, acceptance, romance, imagination—and most of all, family—

are valued over technology and modern conveniences. Think '70s, though '50s through early '80s can also work; feel free to substitute a different fashion trend for "paisley" if another decade is chosen.

The main set is the Cuthbert home, and most scenes take place here; the rest of the scenes are merely suggested.

ACT I, Scene 1: Cuthbert home/Lynde house

ACT I, Scene 2: Cuthbert home/Lynde house

ACT I, Scene 3: Cuthbert home/school

ACT I, Scene 4: Cuthbert home

ACT I, Scene 5: Cuthbert home

ACT I, Scene 6: Cuthbert home

INTERMISSION

ACT II, Scene 1: Diana's garden/the road/Cuthbert home

ACT II, Scene 2: School

ACT II, Scene 3: The city

ACT II, Scene 4: Cuthbert home

ACT II, Scene 5: Cuthbert home

ACT II, Scene 6: Cuthbert home

ACT I

SCENE 1

*(July. The rural and rather austere farm home of Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert.)*

*(In the dark, the offstage ENSEMBLE whispers in anticipation. Their words should not be loud enough to hear, but the intensity of anticipation should build until:)*

*(Sudden lights up on MARILLA and MATTHEW staring hard at 11-year-old ANNE SHIRLEY, who stands in their doorway wearing worn, plain clothes and sporting a mass of unruly hair. Matthew and Marilla stare for a good 15 seconds at this girl who has interrupted their lunch preparations before Marilla gets closer, maybe even circles Anne, to size her up.)*

**MARILLA:** This is a girl.

*(MRS. SPENCER, the social worker, steps into the doorway.)*

**ANNE:** Did you –

**MARILLA:** This is a girl!

**MRS. SPENCER:** And isn't she lovely?

**MARILLA:** Doesn't matter if she's lovely, and in fact those clothes and that hair are a far cry from lovely/

**ANNE:** Were you –

**MARILLA:** /because this is a girl.

**MRS. SPENCER:** Yes, I guess she is.

**MATTHEW:** She seems like a real nice girl, Ms. Spencer, but...well she was supposed to be a boy.

**ANNE:** Oh, I've never been a boy.

**MRS. SPENCER:** Hoping for a little help on the farm, were you?

**MARILLA:** (Yes:) No.

**MRS. SPENCER:** When I arrived at the bus station, there was no boy, just her. Just her waiting all alone with a tiny little suitcase and a great big look of expectation.

*(Anne's eyes widen with earnest expectation.)*

**ANNE:** And imagination. I have a huge scope of imagination. I—

**MRS. SPENCER:** There must be some confusion.

*(Mrs. Spencer hands Matthew some paperwork, which he glances at, then hands to Marilla.)*

I couldn't just leave her there, and since the paperwork was all in order, I brought her along and here you are.

**MARILLA:** What are we supposed to do with her?

*(Throughout Anne's exuberant and rapid speech, Marilla is appalled and opens her mouth to speak a few times, but finds she can't get a word in. Matthew is thoroughly delighted.)*

**ANNE:** Oh, there's so much we can do! Starting with questions. I would like to ask them, and you can answer them, if that's okay. Are you really brother and sister? You don't look alike but you don't have any children, which doesn't necessarily mean you're brother and sister, because I guess there are also some married people who don't have any children and some are fine with that but others are sad. Are you sad you don't have children? Why aren't you married? To other people, I mean, not each other. That would be some wild scope of the imagination for a brother and sister to be married! Of course people can be married and have children and then get sick and die and then there are children who have no married people, by which I mean parents. Isn't it unfair when that happens? Positively tragical is what it is. That's what happened to me. You're my



third foster family but the first with no kids for me to take care of. One family had six with two sets of twins!

**MARILLA:** My word. I don't think she took a breath.

**MATTHEW:** Did they treat you right, those other families?

**ANNE:** Oh...when people mean to be good, you can't mind if they're not always. They had so much to worry about, you know? It's hard having a husband who drinks and two sets of twins in a row. I like kids fine but a home without any could be the best kind. I definitely can't wait to find out, though I did wonder if I'd ever make it here. I thought I'd climb a tree and sleep on a branch under the moon if nobody came to pick me up. I love the moon but, lucky for me, Mrs. Spencer showed up, and the ride back was so exciting...

*(As Anne trails off, her mouth keeps moving, and lights up on RACHEL and THOMAS LYNDE, who live across the way. Rachel is looking out her window; Thomas is reading a newspaper.)*

**RACHEL:** That's strange.

*(Thomas doesn't react.)*

*(A little louder:)* That's the strangest thing.

*(Thomas doesn't react.)*

Marilla Cuthbert is out in her garden without any clothes on!

**THOMAS:** What's that?

**RACHEL:** So you can hear me?

**THOMAS:** I always hear you, Rachel.

**RACHEL:** A strange woman just brought a strange-looking child to Green Gables. Certainly no child around here looks like that. What on earth would Matthew and Marilla need with a child?

**THOMAS:** Maybe she's lost.

**RACHEL:** No child is going to be found at the Cuthberts'. Marilla works fine as a neighbor, but they're a couple of odd ducks and everyone knows it. You don't suppose they've got it in their heads to take in some orphan? They're a bit long in the tooth for that, and orphans are dangerous.

**THOMAS:** Orphans are children!

**RACHEL:** You just don't know. I read about one who set fire to his foster family's house. They're inside now. What do you suppose they're talking about?

**THOMAS:** Odd duck soup?

**RACHEL:** I guess it's time to accidentally bake too much.

**THOMAS:** Why bother? Marilla might be odd, but she's sharp enough to figure why you're showing up at her doorstep three minutes after a couple of strangers arrive.

**RACHEL:** Thomas, do you know me at all? It's dark out, but I'm also feeling under the weather. It'll have to wait.

*(Lights down and back up on the Cuthbert home, where Anne is still going on.)*

**ANNE:** Why are there so many trees? I've never seen so many trees! There were no trees in the city, not any that really counted, just some scrawny things that looked as unwanted as me. Do you think city people just don't like trees or do you think the buildings killed them all?

**MARILLA:** You ask a lot of questions.

**ANNE:** Because there are so many things to find out about! The world wouldn't be half so interesting if we knew everything. Is that your brook out there? It's beautiful, like everything in the country. The Avenue of Apples was so beautiful, I could barely speak.

**MARILLA:** Really. Perhaps you should go back there.

**ANNE:** The Whispering Woods was a little –

**MARILLA:** Whispering Woods?

**ANNE:** That thick grove of trees! It's dark in there even in broad daylight, which means it's haunted.

**MARILLA:** I've never heard anything sillier.

**ANNE:** And the Lake of Shining Waters!/  
/

**MRS. SPENCER:** /She means that pond close by

**MATTHEW:** That's Barry's Pond.

**ANNE:** Lake of Shining Waters is a much more imaginative name for something so beautiful. Everything should have an imaginative name. There was a girl by the pond.

**MATTHEW:** Probably Diana.

**ANNE:** Like the goddess of the moon! The minute I saw her, I imagined she was a kindred spirit who would be my very best friend. I've never had a best friend. Imagine a home and a best friend all in one day!

**MARILLA:** Don't imagine any such thing. Obviously, there's been some kind of mista –

**ANNE:** You're going to send me back because I'm not a boy, aren't you? I should've known this was too good to be true. Should I just get back in the car right now?

**MATTHEW:** Now, now, Ms. Spencer can't take you anywhere this late. And there's no more buses tonight anyway.

**MRS. SPENCER:** He's right about that.

**MATTHEW:** Surely it wouldn't hurt for her to stay the night, Marilla?

**MRS. SPENCER:** You wouldn't want her to sleep in a tree.

**MARILLA:** What's your name?

**ANNE:** Please call me Cordelia.

**MARILLA:** Is that your name?

**ANNE:** No, but it's more imaginative than mine and since awful things like my hair are one hundred percent unchangeable, I can at least ask for a prettier name.

**MARILLA:** And you picked Cordelia?

**ANNE:** It's beautiful.

**MARILLA:** It's ridiculous. Tell me your proper name.

**ANNE:** Anne. Just plain Anne. It is spelled with an E and I can at least thank my poor dead parents for that because it does make it a little less boring even if you can't hear it. Marilla is very imaginative. It sounds exotic like a faraway place. May I call you Aunt Marilla?

**MARILLA:** You may not. Marilla is fine if you need to call me anything at all, which you don't. Why don't you go outside with Ms. Spencer while I talk to Matthew?

**ANNE:** No thank you.

**MARILLA:** Excuse me?

**ANNE:** If I go outside, I'll start loving the trees and flowers and brook. And the sunset's leftover purplish pinks and pinkish oranges and oncoming moonglow on the porch. There's no point to loving things if you're going to be ripped away from them, so I'll stay right here.

**MARILLA:** My goodness, you talk too much with such fancy words and ideas for a little girl.

**MRS. SPENCER:** The way these children are moved around, she's right to guard against unhealthy attachment.

**ANNE:** Big ideas need big words to express them. With all my big ideas, the big words just happen. I don't mean anything by it. But don't worry. I'm not afraid of the way you talk to me. I'm used to much worse than an old-fashioned tongue lashing.

**MARILLA:** Who are you calling old-fashioned?

**MRS. SPENCER:** I really do need to get—

**MARILLA:** Fine. But be back here to get her first thing in the morning.

Anne, there's a room at the end of the hall if you'd like to get ready for bed.

**MRS. SPENCER:** Have a good night, Anne.

**ANNE:** *(To Marilla:)* May I take Bonny to my room with me?

**MARILLA:** Bonny?

**ANNE:** The geranium on the windowsill.

**MARILLA:** The geranium is not Bonny. It's a geranium.

**ANNE:** It's Bonny.

**MARILLA:** A geranium doesn't need a name.

**ANNE:** But how wonderful to have one! Now it's not just a geranium, it's Bonny. With a Y.

**MARILLA:** Which I suppose is more imaginative than an I-E.

**ANNE:** Absolutely. May I take Bonny with me?

*(Marilla waves dismissive approval. Anne picks up Bonny and her ratty suitcase and heads down the hall, turns back.)*

I'll try not to imagine what it would be like to have a home like Green Gables. That's the kind of imagining that can only hurt you in the end.

*(Anne exits but stays close enough to overhear the next.)*

**MRS. SPENCER:** I'll call the agency tomorrow and see if we can't get this straightened out. I know your neighbor Katherine Blewett's last foster child aged out and she's been looking for another. To help with all those kids, you know. Maybe we can keep this simple.

**MARILLA:** Katherine Blewett is a hard and cruel woman.

**MATTHEW:** I wouldn't give a dog I despised to the likes of her.

*(Anne claps her hand over her mouth to stop from gasping, exits to her room.)*

**MRS. SPENCER:** Well, the important thing is that you don't have to keep her, isn't it?

*(Mrs. Spencer exits. Matthew and Marilla look at each other.)*

**MARILLA:** What is wrong with that woman bringing such a child here?

**MATTHEW:** I like her.

**MARILLA:** What do you know about the female persuasion, Matthew? You haven't said boo to a woman besides me and Rachel in sixty years. If you had, we wouldn't be in this predicament, because you'd be married with some farm helpers of your own.

**MATTHEW:** I like her.

**MARILLA:** A middle-aged woman doesn't know much about bringing up a child, but I'm sure I know more than an old bachelor.

**MATTHEW:** Who you calling old?

**MARILLA:** You'll never be younger than me, big brother.

**MATTHEW:** She's such an interesting little thing. She might be good company for you.

**MARILLA:** I'm not suffering for company.

---

*(They become aware of the sound of Anne, down the hall in her room, sobbing. Matthew looks pleadingly at Marilla.)*

**MATTHEW:** Okay, then we might be good for her.

*(Lights down.)*

## SCENE 2

*(August. The Cuthbert home.)*

*(While a teapot whistles, Anne looks into the glass of a kitchen cabinet as if searching but not finding anything. Marilla enters, rubbing her eyes, removes the teapot with exasperation while Anne remains transfixed.)*

*(Onstage, the Ensemble is paired off, miming each other's movements.)*

**MARILLA:** Anne! Anne!

*(Anne finally looks up.)*

Couldn't you hear the whistle?

**ANNE:** What?

**MARILLA:** It would've boiled away and burned the teapot if I hadn't walked in.

**ANNE:** I'm sorry. I got worried about Katie Maurice and my worry got so big that I failed your very easy test.

**MARILLA:** It wasn't a test. If I ask you to do something, you need to do it. And who is Katie Maurice?

**ANNE:** Mrs. Thomas had a cabinet with two glass doors just like this. Mr. Thomas smashed one of the panes when he was a little drunk—

**MARILLA:** Is this story going to make my headache worse?

**ANNE:** I hope not. The other pane was fine and when I got up close to look, I could see Katie Maurice, the little girl who lived in it.

**MARILLA:** That was just your own reflection!

**ANNE:** Oh no, Katie Maurice was the comfort and consolation of my life! The bookcase was enchanted and if I knew the spell, I could step right into where Katie Maurice lived and it would be full of flowers and sunshine and fairies and beautiful magical trees and we'd live there happily ever after.

*(Once again, Anne's mouth continues to move, and Marilla reacts as the lights go up on the Lynde house. Thomas reads his paper, as Rachel looks out the window.)*

**RACHEL:** I saw Matthew outside, so I know they're home.

**THOMAS:** So what if they are?

**RACHEL:** Now that I'm rid of that awful flu, I mean to go over there. I need to see that girl for myself up close.

**THOMAS:** Want me to get the telescope?

**RACHEL:** You can get me that cake if there's any left.

*(Lights down on the Lynde house and back on Anne continuing on and Marilla looking like she'd do anything to make it stop.)*

**ANNE:** When I left, our hearts were broken. I could see her crying when we kissed goodbye. My next house didn't have a bookcase, but there was a wonderful echo in the alley, so I imagined that voice belonged to a little girl named Violetta. I loved her, too. When I left, I called, "I'll miss you!"

**ENSEMBLE:** *(Echo sounding:)* "I'll miss you."

*(Rachel enters carrying a single slice of cake on a plate. The Ensemble lines up to create a path and, as she passes, they mime a game of telephone, but we don't hear words, only gossipy whispers.)*



*(Once Rachel has passed through, the Ensemble becomes trees.)*

**ANNE:** She said it right back.

**MARILLA:** That was your echo, Anne.

**ANNE:** She sounded so sad that I was leaving.

**MARILLA:** Anne, that was you sounding —

*(Marilla stops, as she realizes how sad Anne was.)*

**ANNE:** Did I make your head worse?

**MARILLA:** We need to get you some clothes.

**ANNE:** Can I get paisley? I want something with paisley soooo bad.

**MARILLA:** No need to be frivolous. You'll have the clothes you need for school, where you can forget your nonsense and make a real friend.

**ANNE:** Like Diana? She looked like a kindred spirit.

**MARILLA:** She's just a girl, but she lives close, which is nice.

**ANNE:** She'd be really close if we could cut through the Whispering Woods.

**MARILLA:** Still with the haunted nonsense? Now, what size are you?

*(Rachel knocks on the door.)*

Who could that —

**ANNE:** Maybe Diana come to meet me!

*(Marilla opens the door to Rachel and her piece of cake. As she talks, Rachel tries to get a peek at Anne.)*

**RACHEL:** Marilla! It's been so long since we've had a visit but I've been down with the most awful flu. It takes so long to recover as we get older. I found myself with all this extra cake

and I thought, "You know who would like some cake? Matthew and Marilla would like some cake!" Once I thought that, I just had to bring it over immediately.

**MARILLA:** Generally speaking, "all this extra cake" means at least enough for the two people you're pretending to bring it for.

*(Anne stifles a laugh. The Ensemble laughs softly.)*

*(Rachel crosses the threshold, looking at Anne the entire time, even as she holds out the plate for Marilla to take – nowhere in the vicinity of Marilla's actual hands; it's a job getting cake and hand to connect while Rachel obsesses over Anne.)*

*(Finally securing the cake:)* As it turns out, Rachel, we're actually three people – at least for the time being.

**ANNE:** Time being? I thought –

**MARILLA:** Don't interrupt. Anne, this is Mrs. Rachel Lynde. She's across the way. Rachel, this is Anne.

*(Anne holds out her hand.)*

**ANNE:** It is my biggest pleasure to meet you, Mrs. Lynde.

*(Rachel leaves her hanging.)*

**RACHEL:** Hmph.

**ENSEMBLE:** Hmph.

*(Rachel circles Anne to examine her.)*

**MARILLA:** You act like you've never seen a girl before, and you've raised three yourself.

**RACHEL:** I'm surprised at you, Marilla.

**ANNE:** Surprises are wonderful, aren't they? Not bad surprises, they're the opposite of wonderful, but the good kind give me goosebumps. Sometimes when I'm imagining things, I surprise

myself, almost like my imagination isn't even me but a mysterious voice that—

**MARILLA:** Anne, please go pick us some apples.

**ANNE:** But I just—

**MARILLA:** When you come back, I'll serve tea with the...piece of cake.

*(Anne exits to join Matthew by the Ensemble, who act as Anne's tree friends and give her apples to fill Matthew's basket. Meanwhile, inside...)*

**RACHEL:** Such a dreadful mistake for them to make. When does she go back?

**MARILLA:** I'm not sure. I don't want her to get too attached.

**RACHEL:** It's been weeks! You can't be thinking of keeping her.

*(Anne enters with Matthew and her basket of apples in time to hear the next line. The Ensemble trees remain.)*

You've got no experience with children and there's just no guessing how a child with such upbringing will turn out.

**MATTHEW:** Hello, Ms. Rachel.

*(Rachel nods at Matthew, turns to look at Anne.)*

**RACHEL:** You're certainly not what I'd choose if I were to even consider the risk of bringing an orphan into my home.

**ANNE:** That's a mean thing to say.

**MARILLA:** Anne...

**RACHEL:** I read the stories. When children are passed from home to home, it does something to them.

**ANNE:** You don't even know me—

**RACHEL:** You're nothing but skin and bones.

*(Humiliated, Anne glares but says nothing.)*

And I've never seen a mop of hair like that.

*(Anne is crushed.)*

On such a plain face.

*(The Ensemble gasps.)*

**ANNE:** I hate you!

*(The Ensemble gasps again.)*

**MARILLA:** Anne!

**ANNE:** *(To Marilla:)* Who says things like that to someone?! Only mean horrible witches with no feelings!

**MARILLA:** Anne!

**ANNE:** *(To Rachel:)* You must say mean things because you're old and lonely. I bet your children don't visit you because you're so mean. Worst of all, you don't have any imagination, not even enough to count to two pieces of cake!

**MARILLA:** Anne! Go to your room!

**ANNE:** But —

**MARILLA:** Now!

*(Anne exits, but not before sticking out her tongue at Rachel. The Ensemble mimics her.)*

**RACHEL:** Looks like I was not far off the mark, Marilla.

**MARILLA:** Those were awful things to say.

**RACHEL:** Are you supporting that horrible display of temper?

**MARILLA:** No, and she will hear about it. But even if nobody's ever taught her manners, you were hard on her.

**RACHEL:** I guess I'd better watch what I say from now on, if this random child's feelings are more important than mine.

Don't expect me to visit any time soon just to hear more insults. I'm not angry, Marilla. I feel too sorry for you to be angry, but take my advice: the sooner you send her back, the better. In the meantime,

*(Rachel turns to exit.)*

don't come crying to me when your house is on fire.

*(Rachel turns back, grabs the cake, leaves in a huff. The Ensemble lines up to create her exit path, but their backs are to her now. Once she is through, they slowly turn one by one.)*

**MATTHEW:** Well, that sure was something.

**MARILLA:** Something awful. What should we do?

**MATTHEW:** Don't expect anything we do will get Ms. Rachel to change her ways.

**MARILLA:** About Anne! Maybe it is best to send her back.

**MATTHEW:** For giving that old busybody what's been coming to her for years?

**MARILLA:** I suppose you think Anne doesn't even need punishment.

**MATTHEW:** Well I didn't say that.

**MARILLA:** Anne! Anne! Come here, please.

*(The last Ensemble member turns around and Anne meekly appears in the doorway. She's been crying.)*

Come and sit.

*(Anne sits.)*

Surely you know that what you said to Mrs. Lynde wasn't nice.

**ANNE:** It was true.

*(The Ensemble trees nod.)*

**MATTHEW:** She's got ya there.

**ANNE:** And she had no right to say those things to me.

*(The Ensemble trees nod harder.)*

**MARILLA:** You often say them yourself!

**ANNE:** I'm allowed to! Imagine if someone said those things to you!

*(The Ensemble trees couldn't agree more. Marilla imagines – and remembers. Until the next Ensemble stage direction, the Ensemble are forlorn trees indeed.)*

**MARILLA:** I'm not saying she was right, but there are ways to make your point without losing your temper. I want you to apologize.

**ANNE:** But I'm not sorry! I can't even pretend I am!

**MARILLA:** I won't let you play outside until you do.

**ANNE:** I just can't.

**MARILLA:** If you expect to stay, you have to try. Apologizing is a good thing to do.

**ANNE:** I am good! I just—

**MARILLA:** Since you aren't allowed out to pick the dinner vegetable, I'll have to do it myself.

*(Marilla exits. Matthew and Anne stare at each other.)*

**MATTHEW:** She's probably not likely gonna change her mind.

**ANNE:** About letting me stay?

**MATTHEW:** About the apology.

**ANNE:** I'm not either.

**MATTHEW:** You're two stubborn peas in a pod.

**ANNE:** I was looking forward to school and friends. Now even if Marilla lets me stay, I'll grow old in this house but I won't look old because my skin will never see the sun and get wrinkly. I won't need new clothes once I'm done growing so that's a plus, right? When you and Marilla get old and die, I'll be able to leave but by then, I'll be too afraid to go far or see people because of being cooped up so long. People will talk about the witch who lives in the old Cuthbert house and creeps into the Whispering Woods at night to make potions. They'll be afraid of me so I'll tend the gardens at night when they can't see me because I don't want to scare anyone. That will start rumors about how I've made friends with the rats and night creatures —

*(Matthew can no longer hold back his laughter.)*

**MATTHEW:** Oh, Anne. Isn't it better to just get it over with?

**ANNE:** You mean apologize?

*(The Ensemble trees perk up.)*

**MATTHEW:** As funny as you make your future sound, it's tough to imagine you locked up for even a minute more than necessary.

**ANNE:** I love that you are trying to imagine! We are kindred spirits, Matthew.

**MATTHEW:** You'll do it then?

**ANNE:** Do you have any idea how hard it is to hear from someone else that the absolutely worst things you imagine about yourself are true?

**MATTHEW:** Well...I do live with Marilla.

*(Anne laughs.)*

**ANNE:** For you, I'll do it.

**MATTHEW:** Keep that between us. I don't want Marilla jumping on me for interfering.

**ANNE:** Wild horses won't drag the secret from me. How would wild horses drag a secret from someone anyhow?

*(Matthew puts a finger to his lips and motions to the door. As Marilla enters with a basket, the Ensemble trees beckon.)*

Let's get it over with.

**MARILLA:** Excuse me?

**ANNE:** I'm sorry I lost my temper, so let's go tell Mrs. Lynde. I don't want to waste another minute feeling bad.

**MARILLA:** That quick change of heart proves you are trying.

*(Matthew winks at Anne.)*

Let's go to Rachel's then.

*(The Ensemble members create a warm and welcoming path for Anne and Marilla to walk along. The Ensemble plays a whispered game of telephone that begins with:)*

**ENSEMBLE:** Anne is sorry.

*(and continues with unintelligible whispers to end with:)*

Anne is good.

**ANNE:** Do you hear the trees talking, Marilla?

**MARILLA:** It's just the wind.

**ANNE:** It's a beautiful sound.

**MARILLA:** You're awfully cheery for someone about to beg forgiveness.

**ANNE:** I'm just thinking of what to say.

*(Anne fairly skips the rest of the way across the stage to the Lynde space, where Rachel is sitting in a chair, Thomas next to her. Anne*



---

*does a complete about-face in attitude and fairly throws herself at Rachel's feet. The Ensemble turns to watch this scene.)*

Oh, Mrs. Lynde! I am soooooo sorry. I'm can't express the depths of my sorrow even with all the words in the dictionary. You'll just have to imagine it, even if you don't have a lick of imagination. I've disgraced Matthew and Marilla, who are so kind to just consider taking in a potentially murderous orphan who isn't even a boy. It was selfish to get mad just because you told me the truth, because I am an ugly girl with even uglier hair. What I said to you was true, too, but it was mean and rude to say out loud. I'm trying so hard to be good but I'm just an orphan with a tragical past. A few anger issues are understandable, aren't they? Please, please forgive me.

*(Anne dramatically bows her head and waits for judgment. The Ensemble holds its breath.)*

**RACHEL:** There, there, get up, my goodness. Of course I forgive you!

*(The Ensemble exhales.)*

I was a little hard on you, but I'm an old woman and I speak my mind. That doesn't mean I always know what I'm talking about. I once knew a girl with a mop just like yours and when she grew up, it became the most fashionable wavy hair you ever saw.

**ANNE:** That could happen?

**RACHEL:** Stranger things have come to pass.

**ANNE:** Thank you, thank you! I don't think I hate you anymore.

**MARILLA:** I hope you don't mind that we head right back, Rachel. I was about to get dinner on, but Anne's remorse just couldn't wait.

**RACHEL:** Yes, yes, run along. And Anne, pick some of my lilies for your table if you'd like.

**ANNE:** Thank you!

*(Anne and Marilla exit. The Ensemble trees make their path.)*

**RACHEL:** She's an odd little thing but she may turn out all right.

**THOMAS:** Any of that cake left, Rachel?

**RACHEL:** One slice. I saved it just for you.

**THOMAS:** You're the kindest woman in town.

**RACHEL:** If there's comfort to be found in a temper like that, it's her determination.

**THOMAS:** Yes, dear.

**RACHEL:** I admire determination.

**THOMAS:** Yes, dear.

**RACHEL:** I guess it wouldn't be the worst thing if Marilla kept her for a little while.

*(Marilla and Anne walk back along the Ensemble path; this time, each of the Ensemble members hands Anne a white flower.)*

**ANNE:** I apologized pretty well, didn't I?

**MARILLA:** Maybe too well.

**ANNE:** It was easy! I just imagined I was Lady Cordelia of Green Gables throwing herself on the mercy of the queen. I almost said "Your Majesty," but I thought it might be a bit much.

**MARILLA:** *(Suppressing a laugh that Anne does not see:)* Perhaps.

**ANNE:** I just wanted to make the sincerest apology.

**MARILLA:** Let's hope you won't need to make another any time soon.

**ANNE:** Could my hair really become fashionable and wavy when I grow up?

**MARILLA:** It's vain to think about. When you imagine things about yourself, imagine the best inner things. Those are the most beautiful.

*(Anne now has a whole fistful of flowers; she regards them with delight.)*

**ANNE:** I love Green Gables already and I've never loved any place before.

**ENSEMBLE:** This could be home.

**MARILLA:** I don't think you should get too attached to it.

**ANNE:** I'm trying not to, but I think attaching is what people do and Green Gables feels more like home than anyplace I've ever been.

**MARILLA:** I hope I'm not the one making it feel homey.

**ANNE:** Oh no, not at all!

**MARILLA:** At all?

**ANNE:** Well, you know... Anyway, if you don't mind, for the rest of the way, I want to imagine I'm the wind. Do you hear it again? At the top of the trees? And when I'm done there, I'll blow in the ferns and over the gardens and flowers... So while I'm imagining, I hope you won't mind I'll be silent.

**MARILLA:** No, Anne, I won't mind that at all.

*(Anne takes Marilla's hand and, after just a moment's hesitation, Marilla allows her to.)*

*(Lights down.)*

### SCENE 3

*(September. The Cuthbert home.)*

*(Marilla gathers things for Anne's lunch, while Matthew sits with tea.)*

© Donna Hoke

This is a perusal copy only.

Absolutely no printing, copying/distribution or performance permitted.

**MARILLA:** Anne! Anne! Hurry up now. You're going to be late!

*(Anne enters wearing a very plain and sensible top and skirt or pants – no paisley, and Anne's unhappiness about this is apparent.)*

You don't look very excited about starting school.

**ANNE:** When you said you had a surprise for me, I thought my new tops would be paisley.

**MARILLA:** Paisley. I told you that's just excess and vanity.

**ANNE:** *(Pointing to Marilla's pin:)* Look at your sparkly pin. Isn't that vain?

**MARILLA:** Children do not talk that way to grown-ups.

**MATTHEW:** She makes a point, Marilla.

**MARILLA:** I'm going into town a little later, and this amethyst pin belonged to my mother so you can forgive me that.

**ANNE:** *(Touches it with reverence:)* It's so very beautiful. Being good sure would be easier if I had some fashion.

**MARILLA:** The clothes I got you are perfectly serviceable.

**ANNE:** Serviceable means no imagination. All the girls who have paisley will make fun of me because I don't.

**MARILLA:** Don't you want to know what the actual surprise is?

**ANNE:** I guess.

**MARILLA:** I've never seen such lack of gratitude.

**MATTHEW:** I got you some chocolate!

**MARILLA:** That's not the surprise.

**MATTHEW:** It's my surprise.

**MARILLA:** Who told you to spoil this child and ruin my surprise?

**MATTHEW:** I wanted to do something nice her first day.

**MARILLA:** You'll give her ideas with your interfering.

**MATTHEW:** It's just chocolate.

*(Matthew hands Anne the chocolate.)*

**ANNE:** Thank you! It's a wonderful surprise.

**MARILLA:** I don't suppose you even want to know the real surprise now.

**MATTHEW:** Hey—

**ANNE:** Have you decided I'm staying for a long time, Marilla?

**MATTHEW:** Oh boy.

**MARILLA:** Mrs. Barry is bringing Diana over to walk to school with you.

**ANNE:** Really!

**MARILLA:** Don't be fancy around Mrs. Barry. She's very strict and—

*(Knock knock.)*

*(Marilla opens the door to DIANA and her mother, MRS. BARRY. Diana's top is paisley, which Anne notices instantly.)*

**ANNE:** I'm so happy to meet you! And you have the most beautiful—

*(Marilla silences her with a look.)*

What? If I can't have paisley myself, the next best thing is a best friend who has it.

**MRS. BARRY:** Best friends? You just met.

**ANNE:** But I saw her once, by the Lake of Shining Waters—

**MARILLA:** That's the silly name she gave your pond.

**ANNE:** And I just sensed we'd be kindred spirits.

**DIANA:** Kindred what?

**ANNE:** The best of friends! Unless you already have one.

**DIANA:** No! And you live so close! I can see a teeny part of your farm from my bedroom window.

**ANNE:** Which means we can set up a secret code. I knew a clandestine connection was our destiny!

**MRS. BARRY:** What are you talking about?

**ANNE:** Just that I know —

**MRS. BARRY:** I know you're going to be late if you don't get going.

**MARILLA:** And keep walking, Anne. No stopping for daydreaming or you'll be late.

**MRS. BARRY:** Is that something I need to worry about?

**ANNE:** No, Mrs. Barry. I know how to walk and talk at the same time.

*(Marilla hands Anne her lunch, and Anne and Diana exit to the path, which is formed by the Ensemble.)*

*(Once the girls leave, Marilla picks up knitting and heads to the porch with it.)*

*(As Anne and Diana walk, Anne "picks" a wildflower from somewhere on the body of each Ensemble member and hands it to the Ensemble member, who passes it down the Ensemble line.)*

I'm so excited I can hardly stand it!

**DIANA:** It's just school.

**ANNE:** My other fosters were homeschoolers, which meant I did the schooling. I've never been to a real school and I imagine it's all kinds of fun.

**DIANA:** It's math and spelling and regular boring school stuff. But this year's teacher is nice.

**ANNE:** I'd love to be a teacher, even if one person can never teach everything there is to know.

**DIANA:** You can get a head start at Queens School. If you get good grades and pass the test, you go there for senior year.

**ANNE:** If I'm still here.

**DIANA:** What do you mean?

**ANNE:** Foster situations are temporary. They worry about kids getting attached.

**DIANA:** So how long are you staying?

**ANNE:** I don't know.

**DIANA:** You've been here for two months already. Maybe they'll adopt you.

**ANNE:** People don't adopt big kids, just babies.

**DIANA:** Not always. My sister Minnie May is my cousin. My parents adopted her when my aunt and uncle died.

**ANNE:** I'm older than Minnie May and I'm not family.

*(Diana shrugs.)*

**ENSEMBLE:** Hmmm.

**ANNE:** If I got high enough grades for Queens School, Matthew and Marilla would be so proud, they'd have to keep me.

**DIANA:** We need to turn here.

*(The final Ensemble member presents Anne with a wreath "made" from the flowers she picked. Anne puts it on her head.)*

© Donna Hoke

This is a perusal copy only.

Absolutely no printing, copying/distribution or performance permitted.

**ANNE:** I hate to leave the flower path. I'm going to name it Violet Vale.

**DIANA:** It's called –

**ANNE:** It doesn't matter. Violet Vale is what it is to me. I love making up names. Lake of Shining Waters. Whispering Woods.

**DIANA:** Ooh, what's that?

**ANNE:** The haunted trees between our houses.

**DIANA:** Those trees are haunted?

**ANNE:** You ever been in there?

**DIANA:** No.

**ANNE:** Good thing. Don't you hear the whispers when you pass? That's the ghosts and creatures making grisly plans for evil trespassers.

**DIANA:** I'll listen closer.

**ANNE:** Not too close! When we visit each other, promise you'll take the long way around. Always.

**DIANA:** I promise.

**ANNE:** We'll call this one Willowmere, because that sounds like something out of an old novel.

**DIANA:** Willowmere.

**ANNE:** Do you want to do one?

*(Diane is elated.)*

They can be our secret names because best friends have secret names.

**DIANA:** The path between our houses has birch trees on it. How about...um...Birch Path?

**ANNE:** Birch Path... Well, yes. That's a great name.



**DIANA:** Really?

**ANNE:** Oh yes! Wonderfully serviceable.

**DIANA:** Yay! Did your parents really die, Anne?

**ANNE:** Yes, and it was perfectly tragical. Are we almost there?

**DIANA:** Almost.

**ANNE:** Then I have to know: Will you swear to be my friend forever and ever?

**DIANA:** I'm not allowed to swear! My mother would send me to my room for a year!

**ANNE:** Not that kind of swear. The kind that means a solemn promise.

**DIANA:** Well, I feel like I already know you better than any of the girls at school, even the ones who aren't mean like Josie Pye.

**ANNE:** Kindred spirits! The chocolate Matthew bought me for my first day of school will be our bond. Even when we're old, we'll remember the day we swore on chocolate because promising on chocolate is forever.

*(Anne removes chocolates from her bag.)*

Do you swear to be my best friend and most kindred spirit forever and ever?

**DIANA:** I do, Anne!

**ANNE:** Now you.

**DIANA:** Do you swear to be my best friend and most kindred spirit forever and ever?

**ANNE:** I swear!

*(Anne and Diana eat the chocolate; the Ensemble looks on with envy.)*

**DIANA:** Mmmm. Can I tell you a best friend secret?

© Donna Hoke

This is a perusal copy only.

Absolutely no printing, copying/distribution or performance permitted.

**ANNE:** That is the most solemn thing a best friend can do.

**DIANA:** Gilbert Blythe is the cutest boy at school!

*(Anne is wide-eyed and Diana giggles as they arrive at school, where the Ensemble becomes the room of students. The students should include at minimum JOSIE, RUBY and GILBERT and may include as many others as you've chosen to cast in your production.)*

**JOSIE:** *(To the other girls:)* What on earth is in her hair?

**TAMMY:** I think it's flowers.

**ERIKA:** They look like violets and violets are flowers.

**RUBY:** Did a boy give you the flowers?

**MARIA:** Of course they're flowers.

**ANNE:** I don't even know any boys yet—

**DIANA:** *(Whispers to Anne:)* Ruby is obsessed with boys.

**CHARLIE:** Let me be the first to introduce myself. I'm Charlie.

**ANNE:** And I was going to say I don't really care to. I'll be way too busy learning all the things I need to learn.

**JOSIE:** What's your name anyway?

**ANNE:** I'm Anne.

**JOSIE:** Why would anybody put weeds in their hair?

**TAMMY:** I think they look beautiful.

**DIANA:** You just watch your mouth, Josie. Anne is my best friend and her flowers are beautiful.

**RUBY:** That's a nice nose you've got.

**ANNE:** Really?

**JOSIE:** Don't get carried away, Ruby. It's an okay nose.

**RUBY:** There's a magic pebble you can get that'll take those kinks out of your hair.

**MARIA:** Why would she want to do that?

**DIANA:** Her hair is fine the way it is.

**ANNE:** Where would I get the pebble?

**ERIKA:** Don't listen to her, Anne.

**RUBY:** Did anybody study for the spell-off? I was down by the brook talking to Moody and forgot all about it.

**TAMMY:** Even when you're not talking to Moody, you forget to study.

**MOODY:** Don't blame me for your bad grades!

**ANNE:** There's a spell-off on my first day?

**ERIKA:** It doesn't really count. It's just to help us study for the test that's coming.

**DIANA:** Gilbert always wins. He's so smart.

**ANNE:** Which one is Gilbert?

**DIANA:** There. Hi Gilbert!

*(GILBERT catcall whistles at Anne.)*

He just whistled at you!

**ANNE:** I'm sure it was at you and, either way, it's rude. We're not here for him to whistle at.

**RUBY:** He was definitely whistling at you. Maybe your names will end up on the wall.

**GILBERT:** I'd be okay with that.

**ANNE:** What is the wall?

**RUBY:** The side of the old barn, where people write couples' names.

**ERIKA:** It's the Lovers Wall.

**JOSIE:** Ruby's name is up there all the time.

**RUBY:** And Josie's has never been up there. I wonder why.

**ANNE:** Nobody better put my name up there.

**RUBY:** Moody put ours up there today.

**MOODY:** That wasn't me!

**ERIKA:** I like you, Anne. You're nice.

**JOSIE:** You might be okay. Even if you look weird.

**GILBERT:** But how are you at spelling?

**ANNE:** I hope you're not talking to me.

**GILBERT:** Who else would I be talking to?

**ANNE:** Between you and I, I'm a great speller.

**GILBERT:** Between you and me.

**ANNE:** What?

**GILBERT:** If you want to be as good at grammar as you are at spelling, it's between you and me. Objective pronouns come after prepositions.

**RUBY:** Wow, Gilbert, you call that flirting?

**DIANA:** He's not flirting!

**MARIA:** Gilbert loves to tease.

**ANNE:** Whatever you're doing, stop it.

**GILBERT:** I'm just trying to talk to you.

**ANNE:** Stop trying.

*(Anne walks away from Gilbert.)*

**GILBERT:** I didn't mean anything by it.

**CHARLIE:** Maybe you just made it easier for me.

**JOSIE:** You don't want her anyway.

**ANNE:** A wolf whistle doesn't mean anything? Just stay away from me.

**GILBERT:** Fine. I don't know why I'd want to talk to someone who looks like you anyway.

*(Anne turns to give him an earful, but –)*

**MARILLA:** *(From the porch, not looking up:)* There are ways to make your point without losing your temper.

*(Anne takes a deep breath.)*

**ANNE:** What's that supposed to mean?

**GILBERT:** Don't you own a mirror? Or is that too scary? Your hair looks like –

*(Anne knocks his books out of his hands.)*

Hey!

**ANNE:** Too bad a mirror can't show your ugly insides.

**DIANA:** He's just teasing. He does it to everyone.

**ANNE:** That doesn't make it right. *(Under her breath to Diana:)* This is the guy you like?

**JOSIE:** What an awful temper, Foster Girl.

**DIANA:** Don't call her that!

**JOSIE:** It's true, isn't it!

**ERIKA:** But it isn't nice.

**MARIA:** Since when is Josie nice?

**MISS STACY:** What's going on here?

**JOSIE:** The new girl is causing trouble.

**GILBERT:** It's my fault, Miss Stacy. I was teasing her.

**DIANA:** He does it to everyone.

**MISS STACY:** Well, maybe you shouldn't do that, Gilbert.

**GILBERT:** I didn't mean anything by it.

**MISS STACY:** And maybe that's the problem: you don't consider what it means to someone else.

**ANNE:** I never want to hear his name again! We will never be friends and anybody who says his name to me will never be my friend either.

**JOSIE:** Gilbert Blythe! Gilbert Blythe!

**ERIKA:** Josie!

**TAMMY:** Why does Josie like to make enemies so much?

**MARIA:** Because she can't make friends.

**RUBY:** Josie, that's not the way to make girl or boy friends.

**MISS STACY:** Students, come along! Anne, this isn't the best way for us to meet, but I'm Miss Stacy and I'm happy you're in my class. May we talk?

*(The class/Ensemble disperses but looks on and whispers.)*

**ANNE:** I'm sorry, Miss Stacy. I lost my temper, but you should know that is something I'm working on.

**MISS STACY:** I won't reprimand you on your first day and I won't excuse any boy who insults you. Teasing is something Gilbert will be working on, and maybe your reaction will make him think twice next time. But if there is a next time, please come to me, okay?

**ANNE:** *(Nods.)* I'm happy to be here. Everybody – well, almost everybody – is so nice already.

**MISS STACY:** Let's get to the spell-off then. Maybe you'll find that beating Gilbert in a spell-off is better than beating him with his books.

*(Lights down.)*

#### SCENE 4

*(June. The Cuthbert home.)*

*(Marilla chops vegetables, occasionally looking out the window and getting frustrated. Finally, Anne bursts in.)*

**MARILLA:** I've gotten used to you being a few minutes late when you say goodbye to Diana, but forty-five minutes! You have chores before supper.

**ANNE:** I'm so sorry, Marilla. I've been here ten months and I wouldn't want to give you any reason to not make it eleven.

*(Marilla looks Anne over.)*

**MARILLA:** Are you teasing me, Anne?

**ANNE:** Oh no. Never.

**MARILLA:** What were you doing out there anyway?

**ANNE:** Making all kinds of Saturday plans to finish our story house in the woods!

**MARILLA:** I'm glad to hear you're over the idea those woods are haunted.

**ANNE:** Oh, not in the Whispering Woods, the woods on the other side. We can't take any chances.

**MARILLA:** Woods aren't haunted just because you want them to be. They're trees like any other, and you love trees.

**ANNE:** Trees full of goblins and eerie things that we can't even describe. Well, Diana can't, because she has a little trouble with imagination, but with mine, I can tell you about some screechy

scary things and the Lady in White who walks along the brook crying and wringing her hands, or the ghost of the little child.

**MARILLA:** Any whispering is just the wind. You've said it yourself. You're too old to believe such things.

**ANNE:** Okaaaay...but don't say I didn't warn you if you go walking in there and don't come back. Our story house is called Idlewild. It took me a whole night to come up with something that poetical. But I almost forgot the most important thing of all: a fair!

**MARILLA:** At your "story" house?

**ANNE:** An end-of-school fair! With games and food and I've never been to a fair, Marilla!

**MARILLA:** It's only two weeks away. It's safe to say you can cross it off your list of life goals.

*(Delighted, Anne throws her arms around Marilla and kisses her cheek. Marilla is taken aback though stoically pleased with the affection; she quickly regroups.)*

Don't forget your chores but first, could you finish chopping those beans? My head is throbbing.

*(Marilla sits and rubs her eyes.)*

**ANNE:** I'm so ecstatic, I'll chop and do my chores! I'll even weed the garden!

**MARILLA:** Don't be silly, and don't be silly in your excitement either or you'll build your expectations too high. Expect nothing and you'll never be disappointed.

**ANNE:** But if I expect nothing, I also don't get the excitement of being excited! And if it turns out I am disappointed by the fair, then nothing good came out of it at all.

*(Marilla opens her mouth to rebut, but struck by this odd logic, changes tack.)*



**MARILLA:** You know, if you've got things under control, I'm going to lie down for a few minutes.

**ANNE:** Are you okay?

**MARILLA:** Fine, fine. Just one of my headaches.

*(Marilla exits. Anne chops. Matthew enters. He's hiding something in a bag.)*

**ANNE:** What's that, Matthew?

**MATTHEW:** Nothing.

**ANNE:** It's something in a bag.

**MATTHEW:** Well it might be.

**ANNE:** It is.

**MATTHEW:** Please don't ask me questions about it, Anne. I don't know what to say if you ask me questions.

**MARILLA:** Anne!

*(Anne looks up with alarm. Marilla enters, her hand on her head.)*

Have you seen my pin?

**ANNE:** What pin?

**MARILLA:** The amethyst you admired so much your first day of school.

**ANNE:** Oh.

**MARILLA:** Have you seen it?

**ANNE:** Just on your dresser where it always is.

**MARILLA:** Did you touch it?

*(Beat.)*

Anne.

**ANNE:** I tried it on the other day. Just for a second! It was vain and I'm sorry but I've never worn anything so beautiful.

**MARILLA:** What did you do with it?

**ANNE:** I put it back. I'll never do it again, I promise. I never make the same mistake twice, which means soon I'll run out of mistakes to make and be perfect.

*(Matthew snickers.)*

**MARILLA:** I searched the room high and low.

**ANNE:** But Marilla, you were supposed to be resting your headache.

**MARILLA:** Which is worse now because I'm sick about my mother's pin! What did you do with it?

**ANNE:** Nothing! I put it right back.

**MARILLA:** It's not there.

**MATTHEW:** That sounds like an accusation, Marilla.

**MARILLA:** You're taking her side?

**MATTHEW:** Just saying she's not prone to lying. Flying into a rage, sure, but not lying.

**ANNE:** I'm not lying.

**MARILLA:** There's just no other explanation. You must confess or you can forget about the fair.

**MATTHEW:** That seems —

**MARILLA:** Matthew, you've interfered enough! Now excuse me, I need aspirin.

*(Marilla puts a hand to her head as her yelling has exacerbated the pain. Marilla exits.)*

**MATTHEW:** Oh boy.

**ANNE:** I really want to go to the fair!

**MATTHEW:** Seems like there's only one way to make that happen.

**ANNE:** I can't confess to something I didn't do!

**MATTHEW:** You wanna be stubborn or you wanna play cornhole?

**ANNE:** Matthew... Do you think... Would Marilla would ever adopt me?

**MATTHEW:** I told you I'm not good with questions.

**ANNE:** But do you think...?

**MATTHEW:** She worries about you getting too attached. Heard that's not always the best thing.

**ANNE:** Why not?

**MATTHEW:** Beats me. But you're still here, aren't you? You wouldn't wanna do anything to mess that up.

**ANNE:** Why are you so good at convincing me what needs to be done?

**MATTHEW:** Maybe 'cause I just sit here and let you convince yourself.

**ANNE:** I want to go to the fair.

**MATTHEW:** Mm-hm.

*(Marilla enters and moves toward the stove. Anne swoops in, grabs a pot and puts the beans in it.)*

**ANNE:** I can do that, Marilla, but first I'd like to confess.

**MARILLA:** Let's hear it then.

**ANNE:** I took the pin, just like you said. I didn't mean to but, when I tried it on, I imagined I was Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald of Idlewild but to really be Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald of Idlewild, I

have to be at Idlewild, right? Diana and I make necklaces out of berries but even with my imagination, berries are nothing compared to amethysts. On my way to Idlewild, I crossed the bridge of the Lake of Shining Waters and I took the pin off to see the amethysts sparkle in the sunlight and...

**MARILLA:** And?

**ANNE:** That's when it happened!

**MARILLA:** I don't think I want to hear this.

**ANNE:** But you have to, because you want me to confess. It slipped through my fingers!

**MARILLA:** Oh!

**MATTHEW:** Oh boy.

**ANNE:** And it went down, down, down into the depths of the Lake of Shining Waters until there was no more purple sparkle to see and to where it will lie at the bottom until the water dries up and it's discovered like treasure by some lucky girl a million years from now.

**MARILLA:** Anne, that's a terrible story!

**ANNE:** I thought it was pretty good.

**MARILLA:** You took something that didn't belong to you. I can't let you go to the fair.

**ANNE:** But you said I could if I confessed!

**MARILLA:** Is that the only reason you did it?

**ANNE:** And I thought you might send me back.

**MARILLA:** I don't know what's worse, you taking the pin or not showing any regret.

**MATTHEW:** Don't you think you could —

**MARILLA:** Could what?

**MATTHEW:** Just...I dunno. She's never had any upbringing.

**MARILLA:** If you two are going to gang up on me, I'm going to sit on the porch while Anne makes dinner.

*(Marilla grabs her sweater and stomps out.)*

**MATTHEW:** That was a whopper.

**ANNE:** Too much?

*(Matthew shrugs, and Anne looks woeful as she fills the pot with water.)*

*(Marilla walks in holding out the pin.)*

**MARILLA:** I just found my pin stuck on my sweater.

**MATTHEW:** Did you now?

**MARILLA:** *(To Anne:)* You want to tell me what that cockamamie tale was all about?

**ANNE:** You said I couldn't go to the fair unless I confessed, which was a waste of imagination because you didn't keep your word.

**MARILLA:** Imagination is not the answer to everything.

**ANNE:** But when I don't know the answer —

**MARILLA:** You're right. I was wrong to not believe you, because you're not a liar. I won't count your "confession" because I forced you into it.

**ANNE:** So...the fair?

*(Marilla nods begrudgingly. Matthew laughs.)*

And you'll consider adopting me?

**MARILLA:** What!?! Our arrangement is fine.

**ANNE:** But I never know when —

**MARILLA:** Enough. But while Matthew and I are running errands tomorrow, you can have Diana over.

**ANNE:** Just us?

**MARILLA:** You're old enough to be home by yourself with a friend. And you can make cookies. I trust you, Anne.

*(Lights down.)*

## SCENE 5

*(The next day. The Cuthbert home.)*

*(Diana and Anne are at the kitchen table feeling very grown up. There are empty iced tea glasses on the table, and Anne is making dough balls to bake cookies.)*

**ANNE:** *(Affected grown-up voice until noted:)* How is your mother, Lady Barry?

**DIANA:** Anne, you just saw her picking apples—

**ANNE:** Pretend, Diana!

**DIANA:** *(Transitioning to affected grown-up voice until noted:)* Oh, um, she is very well, thank you. I suppose Lord Cuthbert is off planting cauliflower today?

**ANNE:** Indeed he is.

**DIANA:** He's a nice man. It's a shame he never found a wife.

**ANNE:** Did he try, do you think?

**DIANA:** My, that's a good question! Do you suppose there are some who never do try?

**ANNE:** There are all kinds of love in the world and we're lucky to find any at all. There is lots of love at Green Gables.

**DIANA:** And what about...at school?

**ANNE:** Lady Barry, whatever do you mean?

**DIANA:** (*Dropping grown-up voice:*) Charlie Sloane has such a crush on you! He told his mother you were the smartest girl in school!

**ANNE:** (*Dropping grown-up voice:*) Not the smartest person in school?

**DIANA:** Well...it's always so close between you and Gilbert—

*(Diana claps a hand over her mouth.)*

I'm sorry!

**ANNE:** It's okay. You weren't doing it to be mean. It's just that Gil— That boy thinks being good-looking is an excuse to tease.

**DIANA:** He doesn't so much anymore, but now he doesn't pay attention to me at all.

**ANNE:** Why do you want him to?

**DIANA:** I still think he's so cute! And his name still isn't on the Wall.

**ANNE:** Because he's hateful. At least I think so. It's okay if you don't.

**DIANA:** Your name isn't up there either.

**ANNE:** Which is just fine. Ready for a surprise? Marilla said we could have sparkling grape juice, which is practically champagne.

*(Anne retrieves a bottle from the cabinet, unscrews the cap.)*

**DIANA:** My parents only drink champagne on special occasions.

**ANNE:** This is!

*(Anne pours some into Diana's cup. She starts to clean up the baking supplies.)*

**DIANA:** *(Affected grown-up voice:)* Aren't you going to join me, Lady Shirley?

**ANNE:** I want to clean up first.

**DIANA:** *(Affected grown-up voice:)* So responsible of you, but hurry, or there won't be any left!

**ANNE:** *(Affected grown-up voice:)* Lady Barry, please understand that I will be just as happy to see my best friend enjoy it.

*(Anne pushes the cup toward Diana and puts the bottle on the table. She straightens the kitchen while Diana drinks.)*

**DIANA:** It's lost some fizz. But it's good.

*(Diana drinks again.)*

**ANNE:** *(Affected grown-up voice:)* I'm so proud that Marilla let you visit, Lady Barry, because I make lots of mistakes in the kitchen. I've let soup boil over, my potatoes are lumpy and I once forgot to put flour in a cake because I was imagining saving your life from the flu.

*(Dropping voice:)*

Cooking is all attention and no imagination. I'd rather be outside helping Matthew.

**DIANA:** I like being inside.

*(Diana pours herself a second glass of juice.)*

**ANNE:** *(Affected grown-up voice:)* When we invited Minister Allan's wife over, I wanted to make a special layer cake. It turned out extra special because I used vinegar instead of vanilla! Mrs. Allan took a bite and thought she'd swallowed a fly!

*(Diana laughs and the Ensemble joins in, as it does each time one of the girls laughs, so as to contribute to the heightened nature of the scene.)*



**DIANA:** (*Affected grown-up voice:*) Lady Shirley, are you making up stories to amuse me?

**ANNE:** (*Regular voice:*) They're almost better than made up, aren't they? Oh! The worst was when I went outside while the pudding was cooking and Marilla nearly served a drowned mouse to Mrs. Lynde!

**DIANA:** (*Laughing:*) Oh, I wish I saw that! No, I wish Marilla had done that!

*(Diana laughs harder, and so does the Ensemble.)*

**ANNE:** I stopped her just in time.

**DIANA:** Oh, Anne, why would you do that?

*(Diana laughs and pours more juice.)*

Oh, Mrs. Lynde... I simply mouse ask you a question. How is your tea?

*(Anne laughs.)*

**ANNE:** Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I cut you a nice big piece of cake. It's absolutely enor-mouse.

**DIANA:** "Why thank you, Anne. You are such a mice and sweet girl!"

**ANNE:** I do try. I help Marilla with all the mousework.

**DIANA:** "That's why it always looks so squeaky clean. I think" –

*(Anne and the Ensemble laugh but cut off quickly when Diana stops cold.)*

**ANNE:** What's wrong?

**DIANA:** I don't feel well at all.

**ANNE:** Do you need some water?

**DIANA:** I should go home.

**ANNE:** But I didn't finish the cookies yet! I'm better at baking now, I swear.

**DIANA:** I'm so dizzy.

**ANNE:** Maybe you do have the flu! I'll take care of you. Just lie down for a minute.

**DIANA:** I'm sorry. I can't.

*(Diana rushes out, about to throw up.)*

**ANNE:** Diana!

*(Distraught, Anne tearfully turns back to the kitchen, then sadly starts washing the glasses. Marilla enters.)*

Marilla! You can't be home already.

**MARILLA:** I shouldn't be, but we didn't get five miles out when Matthew started to feel lightheaded.

**ANNE:** Is he okay?

**MARILLA:** It's too hot, I think, but I had him turn around before he asked me to drive. He's resting on his shade bench, which the doctor says he should do more often, but telling that man not to work is like telling him not to breathe.

**ANNE:** He'll be all right, won't he?

**MARILLA:** He has his spells; that's why we hired some help. But never mind that. Did I see Diana rushing out of here like her underwear was on fire? I thought you'd be having a sugar party and gossiping about boys.

**ANNE:** We were! And then Diana felt sick and ran out right in the middle of it.

**MARILLA:** Maybe there's something going around then, poor thing. I told Matthew I'd bring him some water.

*(Marilla is getting the water when there is a hard banging on the door. Marilla opens it to an irate Mrs. Barry.)*

*(Matthew is right behind her.)*

*(Behind him is the Ensemble, watching with nosy curiosity.)*

Why, Mrs. Barry, we were just —

**MATTHEW:** She's in a state.

**MRS. BARRY:** Where is she?!

*(Mrs. Barry spots Anne and points a finger.)*

You! Mrs. Lynde was right! You're a wicked, vicious girl!

*(The Ensemble gasps.)*

**MARILLA:** What are you talking about?

**MATTHEW:** That's what I'm trying to tell you. She's saying that Anne —

**MRS. BARRY:** Got my Diana drunk! They were supposed to be having iced tea and cookies, and they were getting drunk like two sailors on shore leave.

**ENSEMBLE:** Drunk!

**MATTHEW:** Oh boy.

**MARILLA:** Excuse me, but I've been talking to Anne for several minutes and she does not appear at all drunk.

*(An Ensemble member wobble walks, while another tries to hold them up. The remaining Ensemble members point to the wobbler.)*

**ANNE:** Neither did Diana! She wasn't mean like Mr. Thomas.

**MRS. BARRY:** Don't be smart with me, young lady. What did you give my daughter?

**ANNE:** Nothing! Iced tea, and then some sparkling grape juice. Marilla said we could. We didn't even have cookies before she got sick.

**MRS. BARRY:** Did she ever get sick! And I could smell the— Anne, how dare you?

**ANNE:** I didn't! She had three glasses of juice, that's all.

**MARILLA:** Three! That kind of greed would make anyone sick.

**MRS. BARRY:** But not drunk. Where is the juice?

**ANNE:** Diana finished it but there's the bottle.

*(Anne retrieves the bottle and hands it to Marilla.)*

**MARILLA:** Oh, Anne. This isn't juice. It's wine.

**ENSEMBLE:** Ohhhhhhhh!

**ANNE:** But you told me it was in the cabinet.

**MARILLA:** The cabinet in the living room.

**ANNE:** Diana did say it was flat.

**MARILLA:** I should have been more clear. Mrs. Barry, this is my fault.

**MRS. BARRY:** I never thought I'd see the day when you'd lie for a child who's not even your own.

*(Ensemble gasps with disgust.)*

**MATTHEW:** Hey, now, if Marilla says—

**MRS. BARRY:** Matthew, don't bother yourself. I'm through here. Anne, Diana will not be walking to school with you and do not speak to her when you see her.

*(Mrs. Barry storms out; Ensemble gets behind her and invisibly forces her off the stage, then turns to Anne, who looks to a helpless Marilla and Matthew.)*

**ANNE:** Of all the things I ever imagined, this is the worst!

*(Anne storms out to her room. Ensemble members hang their heads. Lights down.)*

## SCENE 6

*(Several weeks later. The Cuthbert home.)*

*(Anne enthusiastically writes. Matthew reads a farming magazine.)*

**MATTHEW:** You really like that homework.

**ANNE:** Huh?

**MATTHEW:** You haven't put down your pencil for twenty minutes.

**ANNE:** *(Whispers:)* It's not actually homework, but don't tell Marilla!

**MATTHEW:** What are you doing?

**ANNE:** Writing another story about Lady Cordelia. In this one, she is secretly in love with Bertram, but so is her very best friend, Lady Di— Dianaralee. It's a confounding conflict, but those make the best stories.

**MATTHEW:** I wouldn't know about that.

**ANNE:** Didn't you ever have a girlfriend, Matthew?

**MATTHEW:** Well...once I— Then there was this... But that didn't— I guess I gotta say nope, never did.

**ANNE:** Did you ever want one?

**MATTHEW:** I guess if I never noticed one missing, then I've been all right.

**ANNE:** Ruby Gillis says she's going to have a whole string of boyfriends, but one good one is probably all a person needs.

**MATTHEW:** I couldn't say. Where do you get your ideas, Anne?

**ANNE:** Oh...they just come to me. I need to work on my fractions though, because Gil – a certain boy at school beat me at French and fractions is my only way to catch up to him before the end of the year.

**MATTHEW:** It's important to beat that certain boy.

**ANNE:** It's been important since the first day of school when he beat me in the spell-off by one word. And do you know what that word was?

**MATTHEW:** I bet you're gonna tell me.

**ANNE:** Imagination! Imagine imagination! I know how to spell imagination, and I have more imagination now than Gil – that boy will find in his entire life. I just got nervous.

**MATTHEW:** So maybe get back to your studies.

**ANNE:** Studying reminds me of school and school reminds me of Diana. She doesn't even smile at me because she's afraid someone will tell her mother. She still signals me from her window every night so at least I know we're still best friends.

**MATTHEW:** I hate to see you so sad. I got something that might cheer you up.

*(Matthew pulls a bag from a cabinet and hands it to Anne.)*

**ANNE:** The mysterious bag! What is this?

**MATTHEW:** I was waiting until Marilla wasn't around.

*(Anne opens the bag to find a paisley dress.)*

Is it the kind you wanted?

**ANNE:** It's like you saw what was in my head!

**MATTHEW:** When you're with the other girls...I noticed you aren't dressed like them. I guess I just want you to fit in.

**ANNE:** This might be the nicest thing anybody's ever done for me.

**MATTHEW:** Well... I just— It's what families do, isn't it?

**ANNE:** I think so. Did you... Did you pick this out all by yourself?

**MATTHEW:** Oh boy, no, no of course not. I did try, but I felt like a pig in a flower shop just trying to talk about clothes. I asked Ms. Stacey for help. I just haven't figured yet how we're gonna explain it to Marilla.

**ANNE:** We?

**MATTHEW:** You're the one with the imagination.

**ANNE:** We'll just say that you wanted a surprise for my year anniversary of coming here, and you didn't want to bother her with shopping, what with her headaches and all.

**MATTHEW:** Sounds good to me.

**ANNE:** Matthew...

**MATTHEW:** Hm?

**ANNE:** It really has been almost a whole year. And I'm so grateful you're my foster parents, but...I want you to be my real parents.

**MATTHEW:** I feel like I am, Anne.

**ANNE:** I mean legally. Does she ever talk about it?

**MATTHEW:** Marilla doesn't talk about things. She stews on 'em.

**ANNE:** Is she stewing so I don't get too attached?

**MATTHEW:** (*Shrugs:*) She's a stubborn woman.

**ANNE:** Has she said anything to you?

**MATTHEW:** No, but maybe that's better than if she did say something to me, right?

**ANNE:** I guess that's true. Thank you for my beautiful top! Maybe when Diana sees it, she won't be able to stop herself from talking to me.

*(The phone rings. Diana enters with phone as Anne answers.)*

**DIANA:** Anne! My parents are in town and Minnie May has a fever!

**ANNE:** It's okay! The twins had fevers all the time. I'll come over.

**DIANA:** Really?

**ANNE:** Right away — Wait. Will your mother be mad?

**DIANE:** I don't care if she is! Hurry, Anne!

*(Anne hands the phone to Matthew.)*

**MATTHEW:** I'll call a doctor.

*(Anne puts on her coat as the Ensemble gathers. She opens the door to the dark.)*

**ANNE:** The quickest way to Diana's is through the Whispering Woods, but I can't do that —

*(Anne walks toward the Ensemble, who moan, wail and screech. We hear the Lady in White crying, and the ghost of her little child crying "Mama!")*

*(Anne takes a step.)*

*(The moans and whispers of the Ensemble become louder. Anne starts to enter but turns back when the Ensemble "creatures" start grabbing at her.)*



**MARILLA:** *(From within the Ensemble:)* Still with the haunted nonsense?

*(Anne attempts to enter the woods again and is scared away by the Ensemble's moans and wails.)*

**ANNE:** Minnie May needs me.

*(Anne tries again.)*

I can't!

**DIANA:** Hurry, Anne!

**ANNE:** I love you, Diana!

*(Anne plunges into the woods. The lighting becomes eerie and the Ensemble surrounds her as all sorts of scary things: monsters, goblins, the ghost child, the Lady in White, trees with clawing branches, etc. It should be scary. Anne screams.)*

Help! Help!

**MARILLA:** *(From within the Ensemble:)* Woods aren't haunted just because you want them to be.

*(The Ensemble continues its scare tactics. The wails continue and a scary tree claws at Anne. Anne screams.)*

You look pretty haunted to me!

**MARILLA:** *(From within the Ensemble:)* They're trees like any other.

**ANNE:** You're just a tree!

*(The tree backs off. Another comes forward to attack. Anne screams.)*

**MARILLA:** *(From within the Ensemble:)* And you love trees.

**ANNE:** I love trees!

*(The tree backs off, and Anne realizes she did that. Other creatures all start advancing at once. Anne screams again.)*

**MARILLA:** *(From within the Ensemble:)* Whispering is just the wind. You've said it yourself.

**ANNE:** I love trees!

*(But these aren't trees and they keep coming.)*

**MARILLA:** *(From within the Ensemble:)* You're too old to believe such things.

**ANNE:** It's just my imagination.

*(The Ensemble starts to retreat.)*

You're not there.

*(The Ensemble retreats and quiets into gentle wind sounds, perhaps an owl hoots, the calming sounds of nature emanate from these trees that are now like any others. Anne has defeated the Whispering Woods. Trembling and shaken, but proud and triumphant, Anne knocks on Diana's door. Diana answers.)*

**DIANA:** You came!

*(Diana gives Anne a huge hug.)*

**ANNE:** I'm so happy to see you, but I hate the reason. How is Minnie May?

**DIANA:** I'm scared.

**ANNE:** I'm sorry it took me so long, but it took hours to get through the Whispering Woods. Diana, it was so—

**DIANA:** Hours? I called you not even ten minutes ago. Quick! Come see Minnie May.

**ANNE:** I would do anything for you, Diana, but I have to tell you something important: the Whispering Woods aren't haunted anymore.

*(End of Act I.)*

---

ACT II

SCENE 1

*(Diana's backyard. Three years later, April.)*

*(Diana, Josie, Anne, Ruby and other Ensemble girls as desired are hanging out, but they are listless. There is a ladder to the side that leads up to Diana's roof. Note: No girl wears paisley.)*

**ANNE:** ...and once Marilla found out that Matthew asked someone else for help, she wasn't about to let that happen again and she's been letting me pick out my own clothes ever since.

**JOSIE:** This is boring. Fifteen is too old for little girl fun and too young for real fun.

**RUBY:** We should have invited the boys.

**MARIA:** Boys are all you ever think about.

**ANNE:** We don't need boys to have boys' fun.

**RUBY:** You never make any sense, Anne.

**ANNE:** You know, Josie, I have tried for four years to like you, but you never make it any easier.

**ERIKA:** That makes sense.

**ANNE:** Truth or dare!

**ERIKA:** Oh, we couldn't!

**TAMMY:** Why not?

**DIANA:** Ruby: Truth or dare, how many boys have you kissed, and were any of them Gilbert?

**ANNE:** Diana!

**DIANA:** I'm sorry to say his name but I didn't know how else to find out!

**RUBY:** Dare!

**ANNE:** So we're playing!

**DIANA:** You have to hop on one foot until the whole next truth or dare is done.

**MARIA:** I could do that!

**JOSIE:** That's no dare!

**DIANA:** If she switches feet or loses her balance, she has to tell.

*(Ruby begins hopping on one foot. If the actor should lose her balance and fall before the \*\*\*, she can whisper the answer in Diana's ear, and Diana's eyes widen. Josie can react: "That's not fair" but Ruby just shrugs.)*

**ANNE:** Josie, truth or dare: Why are you so mean to everyone?

**TAMMY:** Ooh, Anne, that's daring all by itself!

**JOSIE:** Dare.

**ANNE:** Eat this caterpillar.

*(All the girls react, but Josie is calm. Josie takes the caterpillar from Anne, pops it in her mouth, chews and swallows amidst a chorus of EWWWs, and YUCKs.)*

**DIANA:** I didn't think she'd do it.

**ERIKA:** That takes guts, Josie!

**MARIA:** More like eating guts!

**TAMMY:** You are what you eat.

*([\*\*\*If Ruby is still hopping, she may stop now, with a huge sigh of relief.] Josie gives a triumphant look to Anne: The game is on.)*

**JOSIE:** Anne, truth or dare: Tell us the worst story from foster care.

*(Anne glares at Josie. Just then, Gilbert, Charlie and Moody arrive. Casual greetings all around.)*

**DIANA:** Gilbert!

**ERIKA:** Hi boys!

**RUBY:** Well, things just got interesting.

**JOSIE:** We're playing Truth or Dare.

**GILBERT:** Perfect.

*(As if Josie weren't enough, Anne now has to show up Gilbert.)*

**ANNE:** Dare.

**GILBERT:** I dare you to speak to me.

**ANNE:** You're not playing.

**JOSIE:** And it's my turn. Ready, Anne? Walk across the peak of Diana's roof.

**TAMMY:** She can't do that!

**CHARLIE:** That's low, Josie.

**DIANA:** You don't have to, Anne. *(To Josie:)* You can't make her do that. It's not fair to dare something so dangerous.

**MOODY:** Glad I'm not playing.

**JOSIE:** She picked dare, not me. She can always tell us a terrible foster story.

**DIANA:** She doesn't have to do that either. This is supposed to be fun! *(To Anne:)* Don't do it! You'll fall off and kill yourself!

**GILBERT:** She's right.

*(With a steely look at Gilbert...)*

**ANNE:** I don't have a choice.

*(Amid protest and Josie's smug face, Anne climbs the ladder to the roof and out of sight.)*

**GILBERT:** I'm going to the other side.

*(Gilbert exits, followed by Charlie and Moody. All watch Anne precariously cross the roof, cringing, gasping, watching, leaning, reacting with fear, and finally, at the sound of Anne's scream, a huge gasping "OH!" as they watch Anne fall.)*

**DIANA:** Anne!

**ERIKA:** Josie, how could you?

**MARIA:** You killed Anne!

**JOSIE:** I didn't make her do it! Who'd've thought she'd be dumb enough to do it?

**DIANA:** What are we going to tell her parents?

**JOSIE:** Those aren't her parents!

**ERIKA:** You're awful, Josie!

*(Diana rushes to see Anne just as Gilbert rounds the corner, followed by Charlie and Moody, carrying Anne.)*

**DIANA:** Oh Anne, are you killed?!

**ANNE:** Put me down!

**ERIKA:** Thank goodness!

**GILBERT:** You can't walk!

**ANNE:** I'll manage!

*(Gilbert puts Anne down; she takes one step and falters in pain. Gilbert scoops her back up.)*

**GILBERT:** I'm taking her home.

**DIANA:** Anne, I'm so sorry. Please tell Marilla it wasn't my fault!

**ANNE:** It was an accident, just like the wine. Your mother forgave me and Marilla is actually reasonable.

**DIANA:** I hope so!

**ANNE:** *(To Gilbert:)* Let's get this over with then.

**ENSEMBLE:** Oooh.

*(The Ensemble forms a gossip path for them to follow; whispered chatter includes:)*

**MARIA:** I thought they didn't even talk.

**TAMMY:** Maybe they won't need to talk.

**JOSIE:** Does Anne like Gilbert now, Diana?

**MARIA:** Josie!

**RUBY:** They hate each other.

**JOSIE:** Or do they?

**RUBY:** It's not hate hate. I don't think.

**DIANA:** More like friendly rivals.

**JOSIE:** Sure.

**ERIKA:** Josie!

*(As Gilbert carries Anne along, the Ensemble members say goodbye and wish her well. They exit one by one until Anne and Gilbert are alone.)*

*(Once they're gone, Marilla comes out on her porch with her knitting.)*

**GILBERT:** Is it okay if I take a rest?

**ANNE:** I never asked you to carry me in the first place.

**GILBERT:** Why are you being awful? If I hadn't broken your fall, you would've broken your neck instead of your ankle. I saved your life.

**ANNE:** So now I'm supposed to be in your debt forever?

**GILBERT:** A thank you wouldn't be out of the question.

**ANNE:** Thank you. Maybe I could just lean on you.

© Donna Hoke

This is a perusal copy only.

Absolutely no printing, copying/distribution or performance permitted.

*(Anne leans on Gilbert and hobble hop walks with him as they talk.)*

**GILBERT:** How many more times can I apologize for whistling at you?

**ANNE:** And implying I was ugly.

**GILBERT:** I only did it so you'd pay attention to me.

**ANNE:** That's not how to get a girl's attention.

**GILBERT:** I know that now. I don't do it anymore and I've apologized forever and your hair is beautiful.

**ANNE:** ...Really?

**GILBERT:** Yeah, it's all...wavy-like.

**ANNE:** Oh.

**GILBERT:** But that's not why I like you. You're smart. You don't just stare at me looking for something to say.

**ANNE:** That's because I don't say anything.

**GILBERT:** You know what I mean. Like when I teased you, you didn't just— I don't know, Anne.

**ANNE:** What about Diana?

**GILBERT:** She's Diana. You're you. The only girl like you. I can't explain it.

*(Long pause.)*

**ANNE:** So many times in my life, I've been humiliated and I couldn't do anything about it. I just had to take it.

**GILBERT:** Can't we both just say we're sorry and be friends?

**MARILLA:** *(From the porch, without looking up:)* Apologizing is always a good thing to do.



**ANNE:** I'm sorry, Gilbert... I'm sorry, but I can't forget how humiliated you made me feel. I also can't walk any farther.

**GILBERT:** But—

**ANNE:** Please don't make me beg.

*(Gilbert scoops up Anne, and they arrive at the Cuthbert farm. Marilla spots them approaching and clutches her heart and runs toward them as they approach the steps.)*

**MARILLA:** Anne!

**ANNE:** I'm fine, Marilla! Maybe I have a broken ankle, but somebody thinks it could've been a broken neck, so let's look on the bright side.

*(Gilbert helps Anne into a chair.)*

**MARILLA:** The bright side! I don't know what I'd do if something happened to you.

**GILBERT:** Exactly.

**ANNE:** Does that mean I'm staying for good, Marilla?

**MARILLA:** Oh, Anne. You'll have to stay at least until your ankle heals.

*(Anne and Marilla smile at what has now become a familiar exchange.)*

**ANNE:** I love you, Marilla.

*(Awkward.)*

**MARILLA:** Did you carry her the entire way, Gilbert? Can I get you something to drink?

**GILBERT:** I was happy to help and thank you, but no. I know when I'm not wanted.

*(Gilbert exits.)*

**MARILLA:** What did he mean by that?

**ANNE:** He thinks because he saved my life I have to be nice to him.

**MARILLA:** Would that be the worst thing in the world?

**ANNE:** Next to losing Diana, yes.

**MARILLA:** Okay then, but try to remember that it's only good to be stubborn if you're right.

*(Lights out.)*

## SCENE 2

*(Late May. Classroom. A chalkboard with Anne, Gilbert and Josie's names on it.)*

*(The Ensemble stands around Gilbert and Anne, who are the last two left in the final spell-off of the school year. The new teacher, MS. GOLD, erases Josie's name from the board and the battle between Anne and Gilbert is on; let their reactions and attitudes show it.)*

**MS. GOLD:** That just leaves Gilbert and Anne. Gilbert, your word is imbroglio.

**DIANA:** What does that mean?

**GILBERT:** May I have the definition?

**MS. GOLD:** A confused or complicated disagreement.

**GILBERT:** Imbroglio. I-M-B-R-O-G-L-I-O. Imbroglio.

**MS. GOLD:** Correct. Anne, your word is nonplussed.

**RUBY:** Oh, that's easy! I got stuck with—

**MS. GOLD:** Shh!

**ANNE:** Nonplussed. N-O-N-P-L-U-S-S-E-D. Nonplussed.

**MS. GOLD:** Correct. Gilbert: braggadocio.

*(Anne stifles a laugh.)*

**GILBERT:** Braggadocio. B-R-A-G-G-A-D-O-C-I-O.  
Braggadocio.

**MS. GOLD:** Anne: vituperate.

**ANNE:** May I have a definition?

**MS. GOLD:** To blame or insult someone with strong or violent language.

**ANNE:** Vituperate. V-I-T-U-P-E-R-A-T-E. Vituperate.

**MS. GOLD:** Correct. Gilbert: Risibility.

**GILBERT:** Risibility. R-I-S-A-B-I-L-I-T-Y.

**MS. GOLD:** That's incorrect. Anne: Risibility.

**ANNE:** Risibility. R-I-S-I-B-I-L-I-T-Y. Risibility.

**MS. GOLD:** That is correct! Anne, you've won our final spell-off!

*(Ms. Gold puts a #1 next to Anne's name.)*

**RUBY:** Maybe she should put a little heart instead.

**DIANA:** Why would she do that?

**ANNE:** He really couldn't be meaner. He doesn't even speak to me.

**DIANA:** I thought that's what you wanted.

*(Gilbert approaches.)*

**GILBERT:** Congratulations, Anne. I'll never forget risibility as long as I live.

**ANNE:** Maybe we'll laugh about it one day.

*(Gilbert smiles, walks away.)*

**RUBY:** Seems like now she's not so sure.

**ANNE:** *(Not so sure:)* I'm sure!

**MS. GOLD:** Anne, may I see you a moment?

**JOSIE:** Ooh, Anne's in trouble. I bet I know why.

**MARIA:** Because you think you know everything.

**ERIKA:** She can't be in trouble if she just won the spell-off.

*(Anne approaches Ms. Gold.)*

**ANNE:** I am in trouble and I know why.

**MS. GOLD:** You do?

**ANNE:** I was reading a novel when I should've been studying. But it was only because I already know about animal pellets and because...well...I was also upset that the boys were chosen to find the pellets and the girls had to clean up after we studied them.

**MS. GOLD:** Did you not like dissecting the pellets?

**ANNE:** I loved it but—

**MS. GOLD:** You don't find that fair.

**ANNE:** No.

**MS. GOLD:** *(Nodding:)* I understand. Next time, we'll ask for volunteers for all the jobs.

**ANNE:** Thank you, Ms. Gold!

*(Anne starts to walk away.)*

**MS. GOLD:** Anne.

*(Anne turns around.)*

Did you forget that I had something to talk about?

*(Anne sheepishly walks back.)*

I'm putting together a group to study for the exams to spend senior year at Queens. Have you given any thought to your future?

**ANNE:** Diana and I figured we'd live together and avoid all that marriage and baby stuff.

**MS. GOLD:** (*Smiles:*) I meant testing for advanced studies at Queens. It makes you eligible for awards as well.

**ANNE:** I really have the grades for it?

**MS. GOLD:** You do, as do Ruby, [Erika], Josie, Charlie, Moody and of course—

**ANNE:** Diana?

**MS. GOLD:** Gilbert.

**ANNE:** Of course Gilbert.

**MS. GOLD:** Is there a problem with Gilbert? During the spell-off, I thought I detected—

**ANNE:** It's kind of an imbroglio.

**MS. GOLD:** I hope you figure it out. You could be spending a lot of time together.

**ANNE:** Oh boy.

*(Ms. Gold claps her hands and Ruby, Josie, and Gilbert, Moody and Charlie [Moody and Charlie's spots can also be taken by Erika, Maria or Tammy, or two other Ensemble girls in this scene only] head over to her. Diana and Anne take a moment to share a sad goodbye, as Diana exits with the rest of the Ensemble. Anne joins the group.)*

**MS. GOLD:** Okay, scholars! We've got one hour every day after school together but I expect you to do at least as much on your own. Let's start with geometry.

**ANNE:** That's my worst!

*(The Scholars line up in front of Ms. Gold. As each student goes up, she hands them a test and fires a question. They answer the question and join the end of the line. This moves FAST.)*

**MS. GOLD:** How many degrees is a right angle?

**ERIKA:** Ninety.

**MS. GOLD:** What is the largest country by land mass?

**JOSIE:** Russia.

**MS. GOLD:** What is the longest human bone?

**GILBERT:** Femur.

**MS. GOLD:** Who wears the Scarlet Letter?

**RUBY:** Hester Prynne?

**MS. GOLD:** Irrational numbers cannot be written as what?

**MOODY:** Rational numbers?

**MS. GOLD:** Fractions.

**MOODY:** Aargh!

**MS. GOLD:** Who discovered Canada?

**CHARLIE:** Cartier.

**MS. GOLD:** Compared to animals, humans have a weaker sense of what?

**ANNE:** Smell.

*(After each question in this round, Ms. Gold hands each student a pencil and paper and, once they answer, they drop to the floor and hunch over their papers, i.e., they are taking the test.)*

**MS. GOLD:** Where is the Dome of the Rock?

**ERIKA:** Jerusalem.

**MS. GOLD:** Arthropods lack what?

**JOSIE:** Vertebrae.

**MS. GOLD:** Which city was Rome's biggest Renaissance rival?

**GILBERT:** Florence.

**MS. GOLD:** Naples. (*To next student:*) Which Civil Rights leader led America's Montgomery Bus Boycott?

**RUBY:** Martin Luther King.

**MS. GOLD:** What is the least common multiple of five and seven?

**MOODY:** Seventy?

**MS. GOLD:** Thirty-five.

**MOODY:** Argh!

**MS. GOLD:** Who wrote *Swan Lake*?

**CHARLIE:** Tchaikovsky.

**MS. GOLD:** Foxglove can be used to treat conditions of the what?

*(Anne drops to the ground, writes on her paper:)*

**ANNE:** Heart?

*(Students scribble furiously and a light flash signals that time has passed.)*

**MS. GOLD:** Time! Put down your pencils.

*(Scholars put down their pencils and papers.)*

Congratulations! The test is done. Now, we wait for the results.

**ERIKA:** I made a horrible mistake on English!

**CHARLIE:** I'm sure you didn't.

**ANNE:** I wish I had nerves like Josie. Nothing rattles her.

**JOSIE:** (*Surprised:*) Thank you, Anne. I'm sure you'll do fine.

**ANNE:** What if I don't pass? What if I don't pass and Gil—everybody else does?

**MS. GOLD:** Let's not worry until there's something to worry about.

**ANNE:** How long before the results come out?

**MS. GOLD:** About three weeks.

**SCHOLARS:** Three weeks?!

*(Anne collapses and enters a dream state. She is back in the Whispering Woods but, this time, the haunting is not borne of imagination but real fears. Lighting and sound indicate this unreality, as the entire Ensemble plays a role in haunting her. We can see the same figures from earlier, but they are not trying to harm her physically; they are preying on her fear. Maybe they hold out papers with big red Fs on them, or whisper "you failed" or "you can't stay" over and over, amid the following lines:)*

**ANNE:** I'm never going to pass!

**DIANA:** Of course you'll pass! You're the smartest girl in school, which is so much better than being pretty.

**RACHEL (or JOSIE):** Because make no mistake, you are not pretty.

**GILBERT:** You're probably not the smartest either. *(Sings in a taunt:)* Because we all know who i-is.

**ANNE:** Geometry is the worst!

**JOSIE:** A ten-year-old could do it.

*(Moody continuously walks through reciting his multiplication tables, over and over. Marilla enters.)*

**MOODY:** I'm going to be such a disappointment.

**ANNE:** Marilla!

**MARILLA:** Why aren't you studying, Anne? Can't I trust you to study?

**ANNE:** Will you adopt me, Marilla? I've never had a home.

**MARILLA:** What a silly question.



**ANNE:** But will you? Will you?

**MARILLA:** I guess that depends.

**ANNE:** On what?

**MARILLA:** Don't you know?

*(Matthew enters.)*

**ANNE:** I don't want to leave Green Gables!

**MATTHEW:** Everybody has to leave sometime, Anne.

*(Josie and Gilbert walk by holding hands.)*

**ANNE:** Why are you walking with her?

**GILBERT:** Why not?

**RUBY:** Queens School won't be the same without you.

**GILBERT:** It's me. I'm the smartest.

**ANNE:** I don't want to be lower than you on the list!

**GILBERT:** Don't worry. You probably won't be on the list at all.

**SCHOLARS:** Three weeks!

**GILBERT:** Imagine that—you'll never have to hear my name again.

**ANNE:** Three weeks!

**MS. GOLD:** Have you thought about your future?

**ANNE:** Three weeks!

*(The entire Ensemble is in on the nightmare now, repeating all of the above in a cacophony of sound and light that ends suddenly with the harsh light of reality. Anne "wakes." Diana rushes in.)*

**DIANA:** Anne! Anne! The pass list is out! You're first! Well, Gilbert's name is first because B comes before S, but you tied for top scores! You did it, Anne!

*(Marilla and Matthew enter.)*

**MARILLA:** You've done well, Anne, I must say.

**MATTHEW:** I knew you could.

**MARILLA:** It's sure going to be different with you gone.

**ANNE:** It'll be quiet! My talking won't hurt your head.

**MARILLA:** The headaches are getting worse but it's not your talking. *(Smiles:)* I've gotten used to that.

**ANNE:** It won't make a bit of difference where I go. I love you so, at heart, I will always be your Anne.

*(Marilla doesn't respond, but accepts Anne's hugs. Lights out.)*

### SCENE 3

*(The city, over Anne's year at Queens.)*

*(Anne stands in a spotlight.)*

**ANNE:** Dear Diana: I miss you! Your aunt's house is as luxurious as you said it was! Velvet carpet? Silk curtains? What's left to dream of when you have everything? I guess that's the upside of not having a lot of money.

*(Diana enters, reading the letter.)*

**DIANA:** "Your things in your aunt's spare room make me wish you were here, or maybe wish we were twelve years old again at Idlewild." Oh, me too, Anne! "I get wistful when I realize we never will be. Even sleeping in a spare room isn't the grand experience I imagined as a child."

*(On the next line, Josie, Ruby and Erika enter eating ice cream cones.)*

**ANNE:** Last night, Aunt Geraldine took us all for ice cream at eleven o'clock at night!

*(Anne joins the girls and they hand her an ice cream cone.)*

© Donna Hoke

This is a perusal copy only.

Absolutely no printing, copying/distribution or performance permitted.

**DIANA:** Even Josie?

**ANNE:** Josie is friendlier now that we appreciate each other's familiar faces. We've all been crying a little bit, which is why Aunt Geraldine took us.

**ERIKA:** This does cheer me up a little bit.

**JOSIE:** I feel so grown-up.

**ANNE:** Maybe you do that a lot when you visit, but eleven o'clock and you can still get ice cream?

**RUBY:** I was born for city life!

**ANNE:** I'm not so sure. Late night ice cream is a nice treat, but there are no trees or water here except in a crowded little square that you have to make a special trip to. That's nothing like having your own brook and woods to calm you.

**DIANA:** Are you okay, Anne?

**ANNE:** Ugh. I just made myself homesick. I miss you so much! All my love and friendship forever, Anne. P.S. Even though Gilbert is also a familiar face with a very nice smile I recently noticed, we still don't talk. But knowing he's here keeps me sharp.

*(Diana exits, and Anne starts a new letter. Marilla and Matthew enter, reading their letter.)*

Dear Matthew and Marilla. I miss you as much as ever!

**MARILLA:** "My classes are still a challenge, but I'm getting good grades to make you proud, and also because I hope to win the Gold Medal at the end of the year. I'd love to get the Avery Scholarship and study science at college, but Gilbert will probably get that."

**MATTHEW:** That boy again.

**MARILLA:** "I used to work hard to beat Gilbert, but now I work hard because I can never know enough! Whatever happens, I've learned that the next best thing to trying and winning is trying and failing."

**ANNE:** But enough about me! What did the doctor say about your eyes, Marilla? Are you able to read?

Want to read the entire script? Order a perusal copy today!