

ACT II

Scene 1

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

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

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

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

MATTHEW. Hmm.

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

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

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

MATTHEW. Puffed sleeves?

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

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

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

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

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

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

MARILLA. Oh, I don't know.

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

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

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

MARILLA. What? Matthew!?

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

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

JANE. No, Josie!

DIANA. No!

JOSIE. I don't see why.

ANNE. It has to be Ruby or Jane.

JOSIE. Why?

ANNE. Because.

DIANA. Hello, Marilla. Hello, Matthew.

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

MARILLA. Girls.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

JANE. Come on!

(They start to exit.)

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

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

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

MARILLA. What, Matthew?

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

MARILLA. What?

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

MARILLA. What are you talking about?

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

(He is gone. Lights. Music tag.)

Scene 2

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

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

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