

(She throws the shawl around her. The brooch drops off it and lands on the floor. They both stare at it.)

Dear life and heart, what's this?

MATTHEW. Hmmm.

MARILLA. Now I remember yesterday afternoon I did lay this shawl on the bureau for a minute.

MATTHEW. Hmmm.

MARILLA. What in the world did that girl mean by saying she took this and lost it?

MATTHEW. Hmmm.

MARILLA. *(Walks quickly to the door and calls to Anne's room:)* Anne Shirley! Come down here this very minute!

(ANNE enters, red-eyed.)

ANNE. Yes, Marilla.

MARILLA. Anne, I've just found my brooch hanging to the lace of my shawl.

ANNE. Oh! Marilla!

MARILLA. Yes. Now I want to know what that rigmarole you told me just now meant.

ANNE. *(Increasingly wrought up in the conflicting relief over the brooch being found and tension of the punishment, she is in tears by the end:)* Why, you said you'd keep me here until I confessed, and I decided I had to confess because I was bound to get to the picnic. I thought out a real interesting confession last night. And I said it over and over so that I wouldn't forget it. But then you wouldn't let me go to the picnic after all.

(MARILLA and MATTHEW are both trying not to laugh. They catch each other's eye and lose the struggle. They dissolve in laughter.)

MARILLA. Anne, you do beat all!

(She and MATTHEW exchange a look and a nod. MATTHEW grabs his hat and goes quickly out.)

I was wrong, Anne—I can see that now. I had no reason not to trust your word. Of course, it *was* very wrong for you to confess to a thing you hadn't done. But I drove you to it. *(She offers ANNE her hand.)* So if you'll forgive me, I'll forgive you and we'll start square again.

(ANNE shakes the proffered hand. She'd like to hug MARILLA, but refrains.)

And now let's get you ready for the picnic. Matthew's already gone to bring the buggy 'round. I'll fill a basket for you to take. You run on out and fill this bowl with strawberries.

ANNE. *(Hugging MARILLA:)* Oh, Marilla! Thank you!

MARILLA. *(Disengaging and patting ANNE—sending her toward the door:)* There, now. Never mind your hugging and kissing nonsense. Hurry on now!

ANNE. *(Stopping at the door before she exits:)* Oh, Marilla! Five minutes ago I was so miserable I was wishing I'd never been born and now I wouldn't change places with an angel!

(Lights. Music.)

Scene 14

(Music out. Lights cross fade. Several weeks later. Kitchen, Green Gables. MATTHEW is asleep with his newspaper on his chair. MARILLA and MRS. LYNDE at the table.)

MARILLA. Yes, she seems to be getting along just fine. She's such an odd girl sometimes. I couldn't imagine how she'd hold her tongue through a whole school day.

MRS. LYNDE. Seems to be real popular.

(Her voice wakes MATTHEW, who resumes reading.)

MARILLA. Oh, yes. *(Imitating.)* "Ruby Gillis gave me an apple and Sofia Sloane let me wear her bead ring all afternoon. And we had scrumptious fun playing at lunchtime!"

MRS. LYNDE. Scrumptious!

MARILLA. Yes! *(Continuing:)* "Oh! And, Marilla, Jane Andrews told me that Minnie MacPherson told her that she heard Prissy Andrews tell Sara Gillis that I have a very pretty nose!"

MRS. LYNDE. And so she does, if you don't count all the freckles.

(MATTHEW rolls his eyes.)

MARILLA. It troubles her some she's so far behind the others. She's in the fourth book, you know, and all her friends are in the fifth.

MRS. LYNDE. Well, she won't be alone for long. Gilbert Blythe'll be back soon.

MARILLA. Gilbert? He must be near fourteen. He's in the fourth class, too?

MRS. LYNDE. He didn't go to school while he was out in Alberta with his father.

MARILLA. That's right. John was sick for a time.

(MRS. LYNDE and MATTHEW share a look as MARILLA looks absently out the window.)

Oh! What in the world?

(ANNE slams into the room in a rage carrying all her school books and supplies.)

Anne Shirley! What on earth?!

ANNE. I'm never going back to that school again!

MARILLA. What?

ANNE. I hate Mr. Phillips and I'm never going back there again! Ever!

MARILLA. Nonsense.

ANNE. Don't you understand? I've been insulted!

MARILLA. Insulted, fiddlesticks! You'll go to school tomorrow as usual.

ANNE. Oh no. I'm *not* going back. I'll learn my lessons here and I'll try to hold my tongue and be good *all* the time. But I will *never* go back to that school, I assure you!

MATTHEW. Anne, what was it happened...

ANNE. That Gilbert Blythe!... *(Beginning to cry:)* Oh, I can't talk about it now! I can't... I can't see anybody now... I have to...

(She runs out of the room. MATTHEW starts to follow.)

MARILLA. No, Matthew. Perhaps we'd better...

MRS. LYNDE. *(Seeing DIANA, JANE, and RUBY, carrying their school baskets, approaching tentatively:)* Oh, good! Here're some of the girls. Maybe...

MARILLA. *(Waving them in quietly. MATTHEW hides in a corner.)* Oh, Diana, please come in. Jane... Ruby...

DIANA. Can we see Anne?

MARILLA. I'm afraid she doesn't want to see anyone.

JANE. I told you.

MRS. LYNDE. What happened, girls?

(The girls take a quick look at each other wondering if they should and who should begin.)

JANE. It was Gilbert.

RUBY. Gilbert Blythe.

JANE. It was his first day back.

RUBY. He'd been away all summer...

JANE. ...at his cousins' in New Brunswick.

RUBY. And this was his first day back.

JANE. I just said that.

RUBY. Oh.

(Music tag. Lights shift. The kitchen is dim, but still alive. ANNE is with the girls now in a flashback scene at the schoolhouse. GILBERT and MOODY enter at opposite side of the stage with lunch pails and books. They are occupied in an activity. The girls continue to narrate back to the kitchen. DIANA grabs ANNE's hand and whispers.)

DIANA. Anne, look! That's Gilbert Blythe with Moody. Just look at him and see if you don't think he's handsome.

JANE. He teases us girls something terrible.

RUBY. *(With a little relish:)* He just torments our lives out.

ANNE. Didn't somebody write his name up with... Yes, there! "Take notice! Gilbert Blythe plus Julia Bell!"

(MOODY crosses to the girls, GILBERT follows.)

MOODY. Diana! Gilbert's back!

DIANA. Morning, Moody. Gilbert.

GILBERT. Diana Barry, you little crow.

MOODY. *(To the other girls:)* Gilbert's back!

DIANA. Gilbert! How was your summer?

GILBERT. Oh, all right, I reckon... It was New Brunswick...

(He's been noticing ANNE since he came in. There is a moment when he almost speaks to her and she almost speaks to him. He almost touches his hat. Then JANE and RUBY run past him giggling and he follows. He turns back and winks at ANNE, then runs out.)

Jane Andrews, you little squirrel!

DIANA. I should have introduced you.

ANNE. Oh...

(JOSIE enters. Off stage we hear JANE squeal.)

DIANA. Morning, Josie.

JOSIE. Diana. *(To ANNE:)* Well, it won't be so easy to stay head of your class now, Anne. *(Exits.)*

ANNE. What...?

DIANA. You'll have Gilbert in your class after this.

(They look in the direction GILBERT has gone.)

He's ever so smart. I told you.

ANNE. Yes.

DIANA. Yes.

RUBY. *(Squealing, as she and JANE run back across the stage:)* Gilbert!

ANNE. *(ANNE and DIANA look at each other.)* I think your Gilbert Blythe is handsome, Diana. But I think he's very bold!

(Sound of school bell. The school room is set up. JANE and RUBY begin the narration from the blackboard. The students take their seats. ANNE [wearing a paper crown] and GILBERT are silently engaged in the spelling competition described. They urgently raise their hands. One is called on, rises and spells - shoots a look to the other and sits.)

MARILLA. But what happened?

JANE. Anne was spelling champion in the fourth class and Gilbert was trying to take her crown.

(ANNE can't spell a word. Reluctantly takes off the crown. GILBERT can't spell it either. They both sit.)

RUBY. Anne couldn't spell "epitome."

JANE. But Gilbert couldn't either.

DIANA. I'd never even heard of it.

JANE. So Mr. Phillips called them ties.

(ANNE is distressed over this fact. GILBERT is very pleased. He tries to get ANNE's attention. She won't look at him.)

He told them they'd both be moving into our class soon.

RUBY. (*Crossing to sit in front of GILBERT.*) Then he told us to work on our math problems silently while he did some special work with the Queens Academy scholars at the back.

JANE. Meaning some love poetry for Prissy!

MARILLA. Jane!

JANE. Well, Mr. Phillips starts droning this old poem:

(JANE crosses to the rear of the class and intones in Mr. Phillips' voice "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day..." As she does, GILBERT torments RUBY, then sneaks a look to the rear of the class and then begins to try to get ANNE's attention.)

RUBY. And Gilbert started to torment us again!

DIANA. (*Whispering and pointing over in GILBERT's direction.*) Anne!

(ANNE refuses to look directly at GILBERT. He makes faces. DIANA giggles. GILBERT smirks at ANNE and makes more faces. DIANA giggles again. ANNE is pointedly concentrated on her math. GILBERT reaches over and picks up one of ANNE's braids and whispers loudly.)

GILBERT. Carrots! Carrots!

ANNE. (*Rising in a fury.*) You mean, hateful boy! How dare you!

(She raises her slate high and cracks it over GILBERT's head. There is a moment when the whole schoolhouse says: "Ohhh!" and then GILBERT says: "Owww!" RUBY bursts into tears. JANE breaks the scene talking to MARILLA as she pushes ANNE center stage.)

JANE. Then Mr. Phillips made Anne go to the board and he wrote:

(She writes "Ann Shirley" on the board as she speaks.)

"Ann Shirley has a very bad temper."

(The girls chime in rapidly as the story builds in momentum.)

DIANA. He spelled it without an "E," Marilla!

RUBY. (*Entering with the cap which she puts on ANNE.*) And he made her put on the dunce cap.

(GILBERT stands and raises his hand.)

DIANA. Then Gilbert said it was *his* fault because he'd teased Anne.

(DIANA takes GILBERT by the collar and pushes him beside ANNE. Then she returns to her seat.)

JANE. And Mr. Phillips made him go up beside Anne and he wrote on the board:

(Writes "Gilbert Blythe" as she speaks.)

"Gilbert Blythe Must Tease his Ladyfriends more discreetly."

RUBY. Then he made Gilbert stand right beside Anne.

JANE. 'Cause there was only one cap and they had to share it.

RUBY. And he made Anne hold Gilbert's hand 'cause there was only one cap.

JANE. I just said that.

RUBY. Oh.

JANE. And Anne wouldn't.

RUBY. And he made her.

JANE. (*Writing as she speaks.*) And then he wrote a "plus" sign between their names on the board and said (*"Mr. Phillips" voice.*) "Now, as the two of you have succeeded in commanding the attention of the whole school...we have no choice but to... (*RUBY writes.*) "Take Notice."

(Pause. All are scandalized.)

JOSIE. Well, I guess she's at the head of the class now!

DIANA. It was awful!

RUBY. You should have seen her face. It was acksually *white*, with little red spots.

MARILLA. Oh!

MRS. LYNDE. Mercy!

DIANA. Then it was time. And we all picked up our things and started to leave.

(Over the above, the bell rings. ANNE erases the "Take Notice" and the "+" sign from the board and adds an "E" to the end of her name. GILBERT is trying to speak to her.)

GILBERT. I'm awfully sorry I made fun of your hair, Anne. Honest I am. Don't be mad for keeps, now. *(Pause.)* Anne?

(ANNE walks disdainfully to her desk. DIANA comes over to ANNE.)

DIANA. Oh how could you, Anne?

ANNE. I shall never forgive Gilbert Blythe.

DIANA. Gilbert makes fun of all the girls. You heard him call me a crow before school.

ANNE. *(Packing all her things into her school basket:)* I don't care. Gilbert Blythe and Mr. Phillips have hurt my feelings excruciatingly.

DIANA. Why are you taking all those things home?

ANNE. *(Exiting with all her things:)* I'll never go to school to that man again!

DIANA. Oh, Anne!

(Music tag. The school room is struck. Lights restore as the girls reenter the kitchen. To MARILLA:)

And she wouldn't even let me walk home with her.

(They all look to see how MARILLA will take this. After a pause.)

MARILLA. Anne'll come see you, Diana. When she's ready. You girls run on home now.

(The girls start dejectedly for the door.)

And thank you for coming over.

(Looking back toward Anne's room, the girls exit. MATTHEW comes out of hiding.)

MRS. LYNDE. Well.

MARILLA. Well. What would you advise, Rachel?

MRS. LYNDE. Since you've asked, Marilla, I'll tell you. I'd just humor her.

MARILLA. Rachel!

MRS. LYNDE. It's my belief that Mr. Phillips was in the wrong. Of course, it doesn't do to say so in front of the children.

MARILLA. No.

MRS. LYNDE. I wouldn't say "school" to her again until she said it herself. She'll cool off in a week and be ready to go back. But, if you were to make her go back right off, dear knows what tantrum she'd throw.

(She rises to leave. MARILLA follows her out. MRS. LYNDE keeps talking until she fades from view.)

MARILLA. I suppose you're right.

MRS. LYNDE. Course I am.

(MATTHEW looks after them, then up to where ANNE has exited. He exits. Lights. Music.)

Scene 15

(Lights up. Music out. Outside Green Gables, afternoon, two weeks later. ANNE and DIANA run on wearing very nice dresses.)

ANNE. ...yes and she said we could use the second-best tea service!

DIANA. Yea! When will she be back?

ANNE. Not till late. She's left me in charge of everything.

DIANA. Well, it's awfully nice of her to let you invite me to tea.