

MATTHEW. We're pretty near home now. That's Green Gables over—

ANNE. (*Hiding her eyes from his pointing:*) Oh, don't tell me. Let me guess. I'm sure I'll guess right.

(She opens them and looks around at several possible houses. Picks one.)

That's it, isn't it?

MATTHEW. (*Delighted:*) Well now, you've guessed it!

ANNE. Just as soon as I saw it I felt it was home.

(They trot on. She leans her head on MATTHEW's shoulder. With growing unease, he watches her in her dream. They turn into the yard.)

MATTHEW. Whoa.

(Buggy stops. Mare whinnies.)

Well... Here we are.

(Music tag. They get out. ANNE regards the house, then takes her carpetbag and follows him into the kitchen. Sharp sound—tea kettle, maybe? —and light shift exterior to interior as MARILLA enters to meet them and stops short in amazement.)

Scene 2

MARILLA. Matthew Cuthbert, who's that? Where's the boy?

MATTHEW. There wasn't any boy. There was only...*her.*

MARILLA. There *must* have been a boy! We sent word to Mrs. Spencer to bring a boy.

MATTHEW. Well, she didn't. She brought *her.* I had to bring her home, Marilla, no matter where the mistake had come in.

MARILLA. Well, this is a pretty piece of business!

(They both turn to look at ANNE who has been watching them through this. She suddenly drops her carpetbag.)

ANNE. You don't want me! You don't want me because I'm not a boy! Oh, I should have known. Nobody ever did want me.

(She falls on the floor, lies across a rug and cries.)

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

ANNE. Yes, there *is* need! Oh, this is the most *tragic* thing that ever happened to me!

MARILLA. Well, don't cry any more. We're not going to turn you out-of-doors tonight. You'll have to stay here until we investigate this affair. What's your name?

(ANNE gets to her knees.)

ANNE. Could you please call me Cordelia?

MARILLA. *Call* you Cordelia? Is that your name?

ANNE. No-o-o, it's not exactly my name, but I would love to be called Cordelia.

MARILLA. I don't know what on earth you mean. If Cordelia isn't your name, what is?

ANNE. Anne Shirley. Oh, but, please call me Cordelia. It can't matter much to you what you call me if I'm only going to be here a little while.

MARILLA. Fiddlesticks! Anne is a real good plain sensible name.

ANNE. (*Disappointed. Standing and moving to MARILLA:*) Ohhh. If you have to call me Anne please call me Anne spelled with an E.

MARILLA. What difference does it make how it's spelled?

ANNE. Oh, it makes *such* a difference. It *looks* so much nicer. If you won't call me Cordelia, please, *please* call me Anne with an E.

MARILLA. Very well, then, Anne with an E, can you tell us how this mistake happened? Were there no boys at the asylum?

ANNE. Oh, yes. But Mrs. Spencer said *distinctly* that you wanted a girl about twelve years old. I couldn't sleep all last night for joy. (*To MATTHEW:*) Oh, why didn't you leave me at the station? If I hadn't

seen the White Way of Delight and the Lake of Shining Waters it wouldn't be so hard.

MARILLA. What on earth is she talking about?

MATTHEW. She's... Well...just some conversation we had on the road.

(He moves to the door.)

ANNE. If I was very beautiful and had nut-brown hair would you keep me?

MARILLA. No. We want a boy to help Matthew on the farm. A girl would be of no use to us. Take off your hat, now, and sit down to tea.

ANNE. Oh, I can't eat anything. I'm in the depths of despair.

MARILLA. What in the world?

ANNE. A lump comes right up in your throat and you can't swallow anything, not even if it was a chocolate caramel.

MARILLA. A what?

ANNE. I had a chocolate caramel once two years ago and it was simply delicious. I hope you won't be offended because I can't eat. Everything smells very nice.

MATTHEW. I guess she's tired. Best put her to bed.

(He exits to unhitch the buggy. MARILLA calls after him.)

MARILLA. Yes, but where. I got the pallet in the pantry ready for the *boy* and that won't do. And the spare room is not for... Ohhhh! Well, come along. The east gable room is clean.

(MARILLA takes a candle and Anne's bag. ANNE grabs her hat. They move to Anne's bedroom. MARILLA lights the candle.)

MARILLA. I suppose you have a nightgown?

ANNE. *(Nods:)* Mmmmm.

MARILLA. Well, undress as quick as you can and go to bed.

ANNE. I will.

MARILLA. *(Exiting:)* Good night.

ANNE. *(Calling after her:)* How can you call it a *good* night when you know it must be the very worst night I've ever had?

(MARILLA returns to the kitchen as MATTHEW comes in from outside. They face each other from their respective doors. ANNE snuffles as she looks about her room.)

MARILLA. Well, this is a pretty kettle of fish. This is what comes of sending word instead of going ourselves. One of us will have to drive over and see Mrs. Spencer tomorrow, that's certain. This girl will have to be sent back to the asylum.

MATTHEW. I suppose so.

MARILLA. You *suppose* so! Don't you know it?

MATTHEW. Well now, it's kind of a pity to send her back when she's so set on staying here.

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

MATTHEW. Well, now, no, I suppose...we could hardly be expected to keep her.

MARILLA. *(She sits and pours tea:)* I should say not. What good would she be to us?

MATTHEW. *(After a beat:)* We might be some good to her.

MARILLA. I believe that child has bewitched you! I can see as plain as plain that you want to keep her.

MATTHEW. She could maybe be some comfort and companionship for you.

MARILLA. *(Bristling:)* I'm not suffering for companionship, thank you. It's *you* needs the help, not me.

MATTHEW. I could hire a French boy to help me.

MARILLA. *I'm not* going to keep her!

(MATTHEW looks at her intently for a moment.)

MARILLA. What?

(He looks.)

What, Matthew?

(He starts for the door.)

MARILLA. Aren't you having your tea? ...Matthew?

(He exits.)

Oohhh!

(ANNE cries in her room and blows out her candle. Lights out. Music tag to the next scene.)

Scene 3

(Lights up. Kitchen, the next morning. Birds singing. MARILLA is watching as ANNE finishes up the dishes. Anne's things are there.)

MARILLA. Well, you've washed those dishes right enough, I'll give you that.

ANNE. Thank you. The world doesn't seem such a howling wilderness as it did last night. I'm glad it's not rainy today because it's easier to be cheerful and bear up under affliction on a sunshiny day. I do feel that I have a good deal to bear up under. But I do like rainy mornings real well, too.

MARILLA. Oh, for pity's sake, hold your tongue, now. You talk entirely too much for a little girl.

(MATTHEW enters. ANNE begins to greet him, then holds her tongue. They catch eyes and nod. MARILLA watches them. MATTHEW looks to her.)

MARILLA. I suppose I can have the mare and buggy this morning?

(MATTHEW nods, barely perceptibly and looks to ANNE.)

I'm going to take Anne over to Mrs. Spencer's and settle this thing. She'll probably make arrangements to send her back to Nova Scotia.

(She removes Anne's chair. MATTHEW looks at her, then at ANNE, then back at MARILLA.)

What? Matthew?

(He shakes head and exits to the barn.)

There is nothing more aggravating than a man who won't talk back.

ANNE. Oh, I think he's lovely. He didn't mind how much I talked. I felt he was a kindred spirit as soon as I saw him.

MARILLA. You're both odd enough, if that's what you mean.

(Gets things ready to go, then takes knitting from her bag and works.)

Now sit here 'til Matthew comes. And hold your tongue!

(ANNE sits.)

Don't you have any piecework to do? Or mending?

(ANNE begins to speak, thinks better and shakes her head. MARILLA shudders a little.)

Idle hands!

(ANNE watches her. Looks about. Makes as if to speak. Thinks better. MARILLA has seen all this and cuts her off before she can speak.)

Now, since you're obviously bent on talking, you might as well talk to some purpose. Tell me what you know about yourself.

ANNE. (A little reluctant:) Oh, Oh, couldn't I please tell you what I imagine about myself?

MARILLA. No, I don't want any more of your imaginings. Just you stick to bald facts. Where were you born and how old are you?

ANNE. Oh, well. (Sighs and girds herself for telling this.) I was twelve in March. And I was born in Bolingbroke, Nova Scotia. My parents