

# ANNE *of* GREEN GABLES

## PLOT SYNOPSIS

**TIME PERIOD:** Early 1900s **PLACE:** Avonlea, Prince Edward Island, Canada

**CAST OF CHARACTERS:** *in order of appearance*



Anne Shirley



Matthew Cuthbert



Marilla Cuthbert



Gilbert Blythe



Rachel Lynde



Diana Barry



Mr. Phillips



Josie Pye



Ruby Gillis



Prissy Andrews



Moody MacPherson



Melody Bombard



Jude Andrews



Charlie Sloan



Fred Wright



Mr. Blythe



Mrs. Barry



Miss Stacy



## ACT 1

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**Note that the underlined words are defined in the glossary at the end.**

### SCENE 1:

In Avonlea, on Prince Edward Island, Canada at the turn of the 20th Century, we witness Anne Shirley pick up a book. She flips through the pages which evoke memories that flood the stage. She becomes the wild orphan who first arrived in Avonlea.

♪ **Song:** “Prologue”

### SCENE 2: The Carmody Train Station

A stationmaster points Matthew Cuthbert towards Anne Shirley, who sits waiting. Anne is a red-headed orphan, about 11 years old, who is euphoric to finally have been chosen by a family.

♪ **Song:** “Waiting”

### SCENE 3: Green Gables Farm

Matthew takes Anne to his home, called Green Gables where they meet Matthew’s sister, Marilla. Marilla is not happy to meet Anne—because Matthew and Marilla had requested an orphan boy to come work on the farm. Marilla says that she will write to the Asylum to inquire about returning Anne and getting a boy to work on the farm. Anne is devastated by this.

### SCENE 4: The streets of Avonlea, the next day

Ruby Gillis, Moody MacPherson, and Prissy Andrews stand gossiping about the orphan girl who has arrived in town. Gilbert Blythe joins their conversation. Gilbert doesn’t stay for long as he is leaving Avonlea for an honors course in the city of Carmody.

♪ **Song:** “Easy”

Gilbert leaves for Carmody and exits with his suitcase.

### SCENE 5: The kitchen at Green Gables, three days later

Marilla is baking and Matthew is reading the newspaper. Mrs. Rachel Lynde, a neighbor, enters the kitchen to confirm the gossip that Matthew and Marilla are considering keeping Anne instead

of sending her back in exchange for a boy. As they confirm that they do plan to keep Anne, at least temporarily, Anne enters. Mrs. Lynde comments that

Anne is homely, has hair the color of carrots, and lots of freckles. Anne is very hurt by these words and tells Mrs. Lynde that she hates her and calls her a “a miserable, nasty, old shrew.” Mrs. Lynde leaves and Marilla insists that Anne go after her to apologize—or she will have to leave and go back to the orphanage. Anne won’t apologize and leaves the kitchen in tears.

### SCENE 6: Anne’s bedroom

Matthew knocks on Anne’s door. He wants to soothe her and asks her to apologize to Mrs. Lynde. He wants Anne to stay at Green Gables. Anne agrees.

♪ **Song:** “Matthew’s Song”

### SCENE 7: Mrs. Lynde’s front porch, the next day

Anne and Marilla arrive at Mrs. Lynde’s home so that Anne can apologize to Mrs. Lynde.

♪ **Song:** “The Apology”

Mrs. Lynde accepts Anne’s apology and they come to an uneasy truce. As Marilla and Mrs. Lynde talk, Anne spies other children playing outside. Mrs. Lynde encourages Anne to go meet them, especially encouraging her to meet Diana Barry—a girl the same age as Anne. Anne watches the children play shyly.

♪ **Song:** “Diana Barry”

### SCENE 8:

The girls meet and Anne charms Diana. They decide then and there to become best friends even though Diana’s mother does not want Diana to befriend an orphan who “is belligerent and bold, won’t do as she is told, is trash—more or less.”

♪ **Song:** “Different Kind of Girl”

## SCENE 9: The Avonlea School, a few days later



**Watch For:** Anne hits Gilbert, bright flashing lights

♪ **Song:** “Anne Went to School”

As time goes by, Anne makes friends at school and devotes herself to her studies. She and Diana are inseparable. One day, a boy comes to class. It's Gilbert Blythe, the boy who was away studying in an honors program. The girls all swoon when Gilbert looks at them, or winks at them or teases them. He is clearly very popular and very smart. Anne is not interested in Gilbert.

The end of the semester comes and the teacher announces the end of semester placements. Anne and Gilbert tie for first place. Anne is incensed. She does not want to share first place with Gilbert. Gilbert tries to get Anne's attention—first by calling “hey you” and then by calling her “carrots” and tugging on her hair. Anne is enraged and breaks her slate over his head knocking him to the ground. Anne refuses to apologize to Gilbert, so the teacher makes her write “Ann Shirley must learn to control her temper” on the blackboard until she apologizes. She still refuses to apologize so he makes her share a desk with Gilbert (instead of Diana) for the rest of the year. Anne vows to hate Gilbert Blythe forever.

♪ **Song:** “Forever”

## SCENE 10: The Kitchen at Green Gables, later that evening

Marilla is horrified that Anne has broken a slate over Gilbert's head. Matthew laughs it off.

## SCENE 11: The Blythe Household, that same night

Gilbert's father sees Gilbert's black eye and admonishes him for fighting and for flunking out of the Carmody honors course. He wants to know the name of the boy who gave him the black eye—and of course, it's Anne.

## SCENE 12: Anne's bedroom

Marilla enters Anne's bedroom to talk with her about the Gilbert incident. Anne is hiding under her covers. Anne sits up to reveal a head full of putrid green hair. Anne has tried to dye her hair black and it has gone horribly wrong. Marilla scolds Anne for being so vain and always thinking about her looks. She believes that it's shallow to worry about looks.

♪ **Song:** “Anne's Response (Lonely)”

Anne tells Marilla about her lonely years at the orphanage—watching other, more conventionally beautiful, children get adopted and learning very young that she wasn't attractive enough to be worthy of love. Anne exits and Marilla is shaken.

## SCENE 13: The Kitchen at Green Gables, several weeks later

♪ **Song:** “The Invitation”

For several weeks, Anne had refused to go to school. Marilla told her that she could invite Diana over to the house for “tea.” Anne was thrilled! She was going to prepare a lovely tea for Diana. Marilla told her that as special treat, she could serve raspberry cordial. She finds a bottle of something red that she thinks is raspberry cordial, but it isn't. It's Current Wine. Diana loves it. Anne is too busy in the kitchen to drink any. By the time Anne figures out what it is, Diana is drunk.

## SCENE 14: The Barry's Front Porch

Matthew and Marilla, with Anne in tow, apologize to Mrs. Barry for the mistake. But Mrs. Barry won't hear it. She forbids Diana from ever seeing or speaking to Anne ever again. Anne is heartbroken. Marilla and Matthew know that Anne is heartbroken and use this as an opportunity to tell her that they've decided that Anne can stay at Green Gables.

♪ **Song:** “Ashes of My Youth”

## ACT 2

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### SCENE 1:

Anne enters, her hair grown out. Considerable time has passed. She sits at her school desk and begins to write a note to Diana, whose mother still hasn't relented. Gilbert and the ensemble sing its contents.

♪ **Song:** “Oh, My Diana”

Gilbert picks up the letter from the desk that he and Anne still share and begins to read it. Anne sees him with the letter and enraged, she rips it from his hands. Gilbert cowers, not wanting to be hit again. The new school teacher, Ms. Stacy, interrupts them. They settle quickly. Ms. Stacy offers them scholarship application forms for teaching college.

## SCENE 2: The Kitchen at Green Gables

Mrs. Rachel Lynde and Marilla sit drinking tea, Matthew smokes his pipe and reads his paper. Matthew tells them that Anne is going to apply for a college scholarship. Anne enters very excited about the scholarship opportunity and the “performance” that she will be giving as part of her application. She’s even more excited that she would get to go to college with Diana. She begs Marilla to make her a dress “with puffed sleeves” for the event. Marilla won’t do it. She won’t let her apply for the scholarship either because she must stay in Avonlea and help on the farm. Anne is crushed.

## SCENE 3: The General Store

Matthew is in the General Store looking at a dress on a mannequin. Mrs. Lynde enters. She convinces him to buy the dress for Anne.

🎵 **Song:** “Different Kind of Girl (Reprise)”

## SCENE 4: A Pond

Anne and friends Ruby, Prissy, and Moody are by the pond next to a little boat. Anne is wearing the new dress with puffed sleeves that Matthew has purchased. Anne has decided that she must rehearse her recitation of *Elaine, The Lily Maid of Astolat*, in a boat. As her friends push her off, she realizes that the boat has a hole in it and it sinks in the pond. Gilbert—who is nearby, rescues her. We get a glimpse of a thawing between the two as Gilbert apologizes for treating her badly in years past. Then, Gilbert’s boat reaches shore, and just as quickly, the détente is over. Anne returns to her friends.

🎵 **Song:** “Gilbert’s Song (I Wanna Know You)”

## SCENE 5: Green Gables

Anne is sneaking into the house. Marilla and Mrs. Lynde are in the kitchen. Matthew enters the kitchen dressed in a suit. Marilla is telling Mrs. Lynde and Matthew that even if Anne wins the scholarship—they can’t afford the room and board for her to go. Anne overhears this as she enters the kitchen in her wet, ruined dress. She explains how she got wet and that she overheard the conversation about room and board. Matthew tells her not to worry about it and to go to the competition and win!

## SCENE 6: On Stage and Backstage at the Concert Hall

Anne wins the scholarship. Matthew congratulates

her. Marilla has not come. Diana comes to congratulate her as well. Diana’s mother doesn’t know that she’s there. Diana tells Anne that she will not be attending college with her because her parents won’t let her go.

Diana encourages Anne to forgive Gilbert. Diana believes that Anne and Gilbert are meant for each other. And since they will be going to college together, they should go as friends. Anne isn’t ready to forgive.

🎵 **Song:** “Diana’s Lament”

## SCENE 7: The Avonlea Schoolhouse

Ms. Stacy comes upon Gilbert at his desk very early one morning. He’s studying extra hard because his father was unhappy that Gilbert lost out on the scholarship Anne won. Ms. Stacy asks Gilbert if he’s disappointed that he lost—and he is. But he’s not disappointed that Anne won. He’s mostly upset because he clearly loves Anne and Anne still won’t speak to him.

Ms. Lynde enters the schoolhouse to complain about the behavior of some of the students. In the course of their conversation, Ms. Stacy tells Mrs. Lynde that Anne won’t be attending college after all.

Mrs. Lynde finds Anne. She tells Anne that she should pursue her dreams of going to college and offers to help.

🎵 **Song:** “Make A Move”

Anne agrees to go to Queens College.

## SCENE 8: Green Gables

Marilla is mending Anne’s white dress. She and Matthew agree that they do want her to go to College.

## SCENE 9: The Carmody Train Station

Anne and Gilbert are leaving for College. Anne still won’t speak to Gilbert. Gilbert’s father says goodbye to him and notices Anne’s rudeness to Gilbert. John Blythe comments that Anne is just like Marilla. This is where we find out that John Blythe and Marilla were sweethearts as young people. Marilla got angry with John and never forgave him—something that Marilla came to regret too late.

### SCENE 10: Queen’s College

Anne and Gilbert both excel at Queen’s College. They continue to try to best with each other driving themselves to be better and better. They are the top two contenders for the teaching apprenticeship at the Avonlea School.

The apprenticeships are announced—Gilbert is thrilled with his placement at Avonlea. Anne is less happy with her placement in Carmody. Anne receives a telegram—Matthew has died. Anne runs home to Avonlea.

### SCENE 11: Matthew’s Funeral in Avonlea

🎵 **Song:** “Marilla’s Song”

The town has gathered for the funeral. Anne arrives and stands at Matthew’s grave. Diana comes to comfort her. Anne is surprised that Diana approaches her—something is different. Diana tells her that she is engaged to Fred Wright. Her engagement has clearly made her bolder. More confident. When Diana’s mother sternly calls her away from Anne, Diana won’t be moved. She is firm in her friendship with Anne and tells her mother so.

Marilla tells Mrs. Lynde that she can’t manage Green Gables alone. She will have to sell. Mrs. Lynde offers Marilla a home.

### SCENE 12: Diana & Fred’s Wedding in Avonlea, time has passed

🎵 **Song:** “Prologue (Reprise)”

We witness the wedding of Diana Barry and Fred Wright. They are surrounded by friends and family.

Anne Shirley, in a beautiful gown, holds a small bouquet, and watches. Anne’s bouquet slips from her fingers.

Everyone is gone except for Gilbert who brings Anne some wedding cake. Anne confesses that she is lost, alone, and feeling rootless. Gilbert congratulates her on her teaching apprentice position at Carmody School. Anne bristles—thinking that Gilbert is gloating that she didn’t get the Avonlea position that she really wanted. Gilbert has had it—he finally tells her that she’s being stubborn and that he is so sorry for his long ago behavior and that what he really wants is her. He kisses her.

Diana walks in on the kiss. She is thrilled. Diana takes Anne away for the wedding bouquet toss.

### SCENE 13: Time Passes

🎵 **Song:** “Before You Hit the Ground”

At Green Gables, we see Marilla, Mrs. Lynde and Anne with a realtor who will help them sell Green Gables. Gilbert enters. An angry Anne sends him away but Marilla and Mrs. Lynde ask him to stay a moment. They find Anne and send her back to speak with Gilbert. Gilbert has arranged for them to trade apprenticeships so that Anne can teach in Avonlea and help Marilla at the farm so they don’t have to sell.

Anne FINALLY forgives Gilbert. Anne tells Marilla the good news. Anne has finally found a home and a future.

🎵 **Song:** “Waiting (Reprise)”

## GLOSSARY

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**Euphoric:** characterized by or feeling intense excitement and happiness

**Asylum:** another word for an orphanage

**Slate:** a small chalkboard, typically framed in wood, formerly used in schools.

**Elaine, The Lily Maid of Astolat:** is a figure in Arthurian legend. She is a lady from the castle of Astolat who dies of her unrequited love for Sir Lancelot.