

ANNE

#1

+
MATTHEW

(TRAIN STATION)

The Train Station Platform.
Avonlea, Canada.
The Turn of the Century.

ANNE SHIRLEY, a young orphan girl (early teens), has just arrived at the town of Avonlea to live on the Cuthbert farm on a trial basis - to see if MATTHEW & MARILLA CUTHBERT (a brother & sister) want to keep her.

Unfortunately, right from the start, there's already a mistake that ANNE's not aware of - the CUTHBERT's had originally requested a boy from the orphanage.

ANNE is a young girl in pigtails, dressed plain (poor) but clean. She's positive, an optimist, intelligent, loving, warm-hearted, and well-intended. But she tends to talk too much; and sometimes lives in a dream world. She has a vivid imagination which though sometimes gets her into trouble, has mostly served as her escape from a rather bleak existence at various foster homes.

ANNE takes an immediate liking to the shy MATTHEW CUTHBERT who has come to pick her up at the train station.

SCENE 2

The Train Station Platform.

(same as opening)

ANNE again sits on the crates with her hat and carpet bag; waiting patiently.

MATTHEW CUTHBERT enters & shyly looks around. He is quiet, shy; smokes a pipe - a man of few words - but a heart of gold.

MATTHEW looks at ANNE; then embarrassed, quickly looks away. He looks down the railroad tracks - waiting for the train. ANNE just stares at him. MATTHEW notices, and is uncomfortable - he looks down the tracks - waiting for the train. Finally, ANNE stands, picks up her carpet bag; and crosses to MATTHEW.

ANNE

(polite)(but firm, energetic/enthusiastic & fast-paced)
You must be Mr. Matthew Cuthbert. My name is Anne Shirley.

(ANNE puts down her bag & puts out her hand.)

(pause)

(MATTHEW looks confused, embarrassed; doesn't know what to say. Finally, they shake hands.)

MATTHEW (confused, stumbling)(shy)

Ah,...well,...there...ah...there must be some mistake.

ANNE

(undeterred)

You're Mr. Matthew Cuthbert, aren't you?

MATTHEW

Well, yes, but...I...

ANNE

Well, if you're Mr. Matthew Cuthbert, there's no mistake. Mrs. Spencer from the orphanage said I should wait right here for you.

MATTHEW (surprised)

The orphanage?

ANNE

Yes.

(MATTHEW realizes the mistake.)

MATTHEW

I see.

ANNE

The train was early.

MATTHEW (a bit in a daze)

I see.

ANNE

(smiling)
It was a long trip, but I made it.

MATTHEW

I see. ... I mean, ...
(puzzled)
All by yourself?

ANNE (positive)

Oh, I'm used to it. Besides, if I ever get lonely, I just imagine that my real mother and father are always right there with me.

MATTHEW

(curious, confused)
You...imagine?

ANNE

Yes. That way, the people you love never leave you.

MATTHEW

I see.

(Pause.)
(MATTHEW looks lost.)

ANNE

(sensing MATTHEW hesitancy)(polite)
Is something the matter?

MATTHEW

(covering)
Oh, no...no...
(MATTHEW decides to let the mistake pass for now. He starts to pick up ANNE's bag.)
Well, I suppose, we...ah...

ANNE

(happily picking up the bag first)
Oh, I can carry it. It's not heavy. And if it isn't carried in a certain way, the handle falls off.

MATTHEW

Oh?

ANNE

(happily continues talking)
Not the sort of luggage I would imagine the Lady of Shalot
would travel with. Of course, she would travel on a boat.

(day dreaming)
She was "divinely beautiful".

(suddenly a new idea)
Mr. Cuthbert, which would you rather be: divinely beautiful;
dazzlingly clever; or angelically good?

MATTHEW

(dazed)
Well, I don't know.

ANNE

Neither do I. When I asked Mrs. Spencer, she said for pity sake,
would I please stop asking her so many questions.

(She looks at MATTHEW who looks confused)
So,...shall we go?

(ANNE happily exits.)
(MATTHEW remains for a moment,
temporarily dazed, then follows.)