

# MRS. RACHEL LYNDE #2

(FINAL SCENE)

The Cuthbert Farm.  
Avonlea, Canada.  
The Turn of the Century.

MATTHEW & MARILLA CUTHBERT (a brother and sister) have argued over whether to allow the young orphan, ANNE SHIRLEY, to stay at their farm. When MARILLA finally says 'no', in defiance, MATTHEW (despite his ill-health) stormed out of the house; and had walked all the way into town to the General Store - run by MRS. RACHEL LYNDE (the town gossip).

MATTHEW was determined to buy a store-bought dress with puffed sleeves as a surprise for ANNE.

Now (about an hour or so later) MARILLA is pacing the floor at the Cuthbert farm - worried about MATTHEW.

RACHEL enters.

(RACHEL & MARILLA have been friends for years despite the fact that MARILLA is mostly strong & silent; while RACHEL is always talkin' too much. Here, though, RACHEL is not insensitive to MARILLA pain.)

(RACHEL quickly enters)(She carries dress box)

RACHEL  
(out of breath)  
Marilla,...Now Marilla, you should know before I say anything,...

MARILLA  
(sensing trouble)  
Something's the matter.

RACHEL  
Everything that could be done...

MARILLA  
(annoyed - anxious)  
What's happened?

RACHEL  
(continues)  
There wasn't another thing that would have...

MARILLA  
(cuts her off)(exasperated - annoyed)  
Oh for heaven's sake Rachel, just say it!

(pause)

RACHEL  
It's Matthew.

MARILLA  
What?

RACHEL  
His heart.

MARILLA  
I knew it.  
(MARILLA quickly crosses to get her shawl)

RACHEL  
Carrying all them packages.

MARILLA  
Knew he was up to something.

RACHEL  
I offered a ride...

MARILLA  
Where is he?

RACHEL  
No, Marilla...

MARILLA  
Take me to him.

RACHEL  
Marilla,...

MARILLA  
I have to see him.

RACHEL  
No, Marilla, it's too late.

MARILLA  
Too late?

RACHEL  
Yes.

MARILLA  
You mean, ...Matthew's...?

RACHEL  
Doc Blair was with him when he passed on.

(MARILLA stands motionless)  
(ANNE sits - in shock)

ANNE  
Matthew.  
(pause.)

RACHEL  
(talkin' too much)  
Guess what they say is true - the Lord takes the good ones early  
cause He wants so much to be nearer to them. ... Remember, Marilla,  
you yourself said he's been living with us only by the grace of  
God ever since that first attack last spring. ... Of course, ya know  
he should have been takin' it more easy like, stead of running  
into town, ... ~~(to ANNE)...but all because he insisted that you just  
had to have this.~~

(She shoves the dress box at ANNE.)  
(ANNE starts to open it.)

I knew he was up to something as soon as he came into the store; -  
twenty pounds of potatoes indeed - all agitated, don't ya know.

(ANNE opens the box.)

ANNE  
(taking out dress)(near tears)  
Puffed sleeves.