

CLASSIC COLLECTION



ANNE OF
GREEN GABLES

LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY

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A Surprise at Green Gables

Mrs Rachel Lynde was most surprised to see Matthew Cuthbert driving his buggy up the hill, dressed smartly, at half-past three on a sunny afternoon. He should have been at home planting his turnip seed.

Rachel Lynde felt it her business to know everything that went on in Avonlea. "I'll just step over to Green Gables and find out from Marilla where her brother's gone," she said to herself.

Rachel noted immediately that Marilla's table was set with three places – so Matthew must be bringing someone back. The tea was not fancy, so it could not be for a very grand visitor.

"We're getting a little orphan boy from Nova Scotia," Marilla told her. "Matthew went to Bright River to collect him." Matthew was getting older and an orphan boy could help him with chores.

Rachel could not have been more surprised if Marilla had said they were getting a kangaroo from Australia! The world was turning upside down. Rachel always spoke her mind, and told Marilla that she thought it a mighty foolish thing to do. An unknown child might burn the house down, or poison the wells! Rachel hurried off to spread the news – she loved to cause a sensation. She did feel sorry for the orphan, though. A child at Green Gables! But Rachel would have felt even sorrier if she could have seen the child waiting patiently on the railway platform.





When Matthew arrived at the station there was no one there but a little girl, sitting on the platform. He asked when the train was expected.

"It's been and gone," the stationmaster said. "There was a passenger dropped off for you – a little girl."

"But I've come to collect a boy," Matthew said.

"Maybe they ran out of boys," the stationmaster said.

Matthew didn't like talking much, and talking to a strange little girl seemed like the hardest thing! The girl was about eleven. She had long red hair in two plaits, big green eyes, and her pale face was covered with freckles. She wore an ugly dress that was too short.

"I suppose you are Mr Matthew Cuthbert?" she said. "I thought perhaps you wouldn't come. If you hadn't come, I would have slept in a tree, because you would surely come tomorrow."

The girl talked on and on through their long ride to Green Gables.

"Doesn't that white tree make you think of a bride? I should love a white dress, though I will never marry because I am too plain. I've never had a pretty dress, but I can imagine one. Don't you love to imagine things?"

"Well, I don't know that I do," Matthew answered.

"Is there a brook at Green Gables? I have always dreamed of living near a stream. Wouldn't it be nice if dreams came true?"

Matthew decided Marilla could tell the girl that she wasn't wanted.



Marilla's Decision

“Who’s that?” Marilla said, looking at the little girl.
“Where’s the boy?”

“There isn’t one,” Matthew said.

“But we asked for a boy!” Marilla said.

“You don’t want me because I’m not a boy!” Anne cried.

Marilla tried to calm her, but she would not be calmed.

“You would cry if you were an orphan and thought you’d found a home, and then weren’t wanted because you’re not a boy!” she sobbed.

Marilla started to smile. She asked the girl’s name.

“It is Anne Shirley – Anne with an ‘e’,” she said.

Marilla said Anne could stay until morning, and showed her to the little room under the east gable. It was bare and white. Anne shivered as she looked around it.

“She’ll have to go back,” Marilla said later that evening.

“I suppose so,” Matthew said, sadly.

“What do you mean, you ‘suppose so’? You can’t want to keep her? What use would she be to us?”

“We might be some use to her,” Matthew suggested.

“I’m not keeping her,” Marilla said, firmly.

The next day, Anne gazed in wonder out of the window.

“Isn’t it all so lovely?” she said when Marilla came in.

“The orchard, and the brook and the flowers. What’s that geranium called? I shall call it Bonny. I like things to have names.”

“I never saw anything like her,” Marilla muttered to herself. “She is kind of interesting.”



