***Anne of Green Gables***

***Chapter 10***

### ***Anne’s Apology***

***Summary:***

* The standoff continues. Anne spends an entire day in her room, unwilling to apologize.
* Seeing her supper tray return mostly untouched, Matthew sneaks into Anne's room and asks her to give in.
* Anne agrees, saying she'd do anything for Matthew. (Aww.)
* Anne tells Marilla she's ready, much to Marilla's relief. Marilla walks her to Mrs. Lynde's, and Anne starts to look excited instead of sorry. Marilla asks her what she's thinking about and Anne says she's planning what to say.
* When she sees Mrs. Lynde, Anne kneels before her and recites a heartfelt apology, saying it will be her "lifelong sorrow" if Mrs. Lynde doesn't forgive her. Because when Anne does anything, she commits.
* In fact, Marilla starts to feel like her punishment failed because Anne is enjoying it too much.
* Mrs. Rachel Lynde only hears the sorrow in Anne's voice and is totally won over.
* When Anne leaves to pick flowers, Mrs. Lynde says that even though Anne is odd, she sees why Marilla wanted to keep her. She thinks it's better to have a child with a temper that cools down quickly than to have a sly, underhanded kid.
* Anne's pretty happy on the walk back. She talks Marilla's ear off about flowers, the stars, and how happy she is to have a home.
* Plus, she holds Marilla's hand, which gives Marilla an unfamiliar warm feeling. Love, maybe? Or tenderness, at least.

***Synopsis:***

Anne remains in her room the entire next day, sulking and barely touching the food Marilla brings her. Matthew, concerned about Anne, waits for Marilla to leave the house and then creeps up to Anne’s room. He has not been upstairs for four years. He sneaks in and whispers to Anne that she should apologize to Mrs. Rachel, since Marilla is not likely to change her mind about the punishment. Anne admits that she is not as furious as she was, but says apologizing would be too humiliating. However, to oblige Matthew, she promises to go to Mrs. Rachel’s. Stunned by his success with Anne, Matthew hurries away so Marilla won’t find him interfering with Anne’s punishment.

Anne tells Marilla she is willing to apologize, and they walk to Mrs. Rachel’s house. During the first half of the walk, Anne’s gait and countenance suggest her shame, but midway through the walk, her step quickens and her eyes become dreamy. Upon arriving at Mrs. Rachel’s, Anne resumes slumping and throws herself on her knees before the older woman, clasping her hands and begging for forgiveness, saying,

I could never express all my sorrow, no, not if I used up a whole dictionary . . . I’m a dreadfully wicked and ungrateful girl, and I deserve to be punished and cast out by respectable people for ever.

Mrs. Rachel accepts the apology readily. In her way, Mrs. Rachel atones for her own thoughtlessness by telling Anne that her red hair might darken into auburn as she grows up. She tells Marilla that despite Anne’s odd ways, she likes her.

Marilla feels uneasy about Anne’s apology. She recognizes that Anne enjoyed her punishment, making her apology theatrical and flowery. Although Marilla feels the punishment has backfired, she would feel odd chastising Anne for apologizing too well. As they walk home, Anne slips her hand into Marilla’s, saying how happy she is to be going to a place that feels like home. At the touch of the little girl’s hand, Marilla feels a rush of motherly warmth that is both pleasurable and disarming. She tries to restore her usual emotional control and fends off this unfamiliar feeling of affection by moralizing to Anne about good behavior.***Critical Study:***

The next morning, Anne still has not assented to apologize to Mrs. Rachel. Marilla keeps Anne in her room all day, bringing food up to her room for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Matthew notices that Anne does not seem to be eating much of the food, so he decides to go up and talk to her. He tells Anne that she should apologize to Mrs. Rachel because he knows Marilla will not back down until she does. Anne tells Matthew that she is not as angry anymore, but she is prevented from apologizing by her embarrassment. She decides that she will apologize to Mrs. Rachel because Matthew has asked her to. Matthew tells Anne not to tell Marilla that he spoke to her about the matter.

Anne tells Marilla that she is ready to apologize to Mrs. Rachel; in the evening, they leave for Mrs. Rachel’s house together. Anne begins the walk seeming dejected, but by the time they reach Mrs. Rachel’s house, she is described as having “an air of subdued exhilaration about her” (p. 92). When they reach Mrs. Rachel’s house, Anne gets down on her knees and effusively begs for Mrs. Rachel’s forgiveness. Marilla and Mrs. Rachel both recognize that Anne is being sincere, though Marilla also notices that Anne enjoys the theatricality of the apology more than she would have liked. Mrs. Rachel accepts Anne’s apology and even tells her that she once knew a girl whose red hair turned to auburn when she grew up. Marilla and Mrs. Rachel let Anne go outside to play in the garden while they talk; in this conversation, Mrs. Rachel admits to Marilla that she likes Anne.

On the way home, Anne expresses pride in the way she apologized. Again, Marilla is annoyed to realize that she finds Anne’s behavior funny, even though she disapproves of it. Anne tells Marilla that it’s hard for her not to get angry when people criticize her looks. Anne expresses her love of beautiful things and her desire to be beautiful, which Marilla calls vain. As they approach Green Gables, Anne takes Marilla’s hand and says that she is so happy to have a home. Anne tells Marilla that she wouldn’t find it hard to pray right now.

***Critical Analysis:***

When Anne doesn't appear at breakfast the next morning, Marilla must explain her absence to Matthew, who staunchly takes Anne's side. "It's a good thing Rachel Lynde got a calling down; she's a meddlesome old gossip," but he admits Anne needs to be "punished a little." Anne stays in her room for the whole day, eating almost none of the food Marilla brings up to her. Matthew hovers uneasily in the background. Finally, when Marilla is out doing chores, he slips up to Anne's bedroom. He hasn't visited the second floor of the house in four years.

Timidly Matthew knocks, then peeks in. Anne is looking sadly out of the window, "bravely facing the long years of solitary imprisonment before her." Matthew tells her one way or another she's going to have to apologize: best to be done with it and "smooth it over so to speak." Anne, beginning to feel some remorse, promises to apologize for Matthew's sake. Greatly relieved, Matthew steals away. When Marilla returns, Anne calls her up and announces she's willing to tell Mrs. Lynde she's sorry. Shortly afterward she and Marilla begin the walk to the Lyndes' house. Halfway there a dejected Anne seems to take heart. "She lifted her head and stepped lightly along"; then she dreamily announces, "I'm imagining out what I must say to Mrs. Lynde." Evidently the prospect now thrills her.

When they reach Mrs. Lynde's house, Anne rushes over to her, kneels in front of her, and proffers a fervent and over-the-top apology in a quivering voice. She's clearly serious, but Marilla knows she's also secretly enjoying her "valley of humiliation." Mrs. Lynde lacks the perception to realize this and heartily forgives Anne. More important—to Anne, at least—she says she once knew a redheaded girl whose hair turned "a real handsome auburn" when she grew up. Dramatically Anne breathes, "You have given me a hope. I shall always feel that you are a benefactor." On the way home she proudly asks Marilla, "I apologized pretty well, didn't I?" Marilla dryly agrees. When they reach Green Gables, Anne suddenly takes Marilla's hand. "It's lovely to be going home and know it's home," she says.

Realistically minded readers may wonder if Anne stays in her room for every second of her punishment. Because there was little indoor plumbing in rural Canada at the time, it is likely Anne visits the Green Gables outhouse once or twice.

An interesting detail in this chapter is Matthew hasn't been on the second floor of his own house for four years. When he's not in the barn or outside, he gravitates between the kitchen and his small bedroom off the hall. Presumably he owns the farm along with Marilla: unmarried adult brothers and sisters often set up housekeeping together in the 19th century. But he doesn't seem to view the house as his territory. Anne is "domesticating" him in a way Marilla never did.

Readers have learned Anne likes romantic novels. This chapter makes it clear she also likes melodrama—and no wonder, since her life up to now has been so drab. It's lucky Mrs. Lynde doesn't have enough imagination to realize Anne has turned her apology into a touching scene with herself as the star. Marilla knows what's going on, though. She watches the scene with a sort of wry pleasure that augurs well for her relationship with Anne.

***Significance:***

The next evening while Marilla brings the cows in from the back pasture Matthew creeps up the stairs to the east gable. Mustering all his courage, Matthew enters the little girl's room where Anne is still being confined for her fitful tantrum. Matthew, whispering lest he be discovered by Marilla, implores Anne to smooth things over. Anne, willing to do anything for the softhearted Matthew, agrees. Marilla walks down the lane to Mrs. Lynde's house with a dejected Anne at her side. Lifting her head, her mood elevated and looking "rapt and radiant," Anne says only that she is thinking on what she should say to Mrs. Lynde. Arriving at Mrs. Lynde's, the penitent Anne drops to her feet and confesses her wickedness with outstretched hands, begging Mrs. Lynde to forgive a poor orphan girl such as herself. Heartened by the girl's performance, Anne wins Mrs. Lynde's approval. Marilla, suspicious of the degree to which Anne thoroughly enjoyed her "abasement," cannot help but be amused by the mere thought of it. Walking with the little girl's hand in her own, Marilla struggles to not allow her heart to swell as Anne talks of the fondness she feels for her new found home, Green Gables.

Anne's dramatic gesture thoroughly charms Mrs. Lynde. While her sincerity is not doubted by even the amused Marilla, Anne clearly finds not only redemption in her penance, but exaltation as well. Her abasement was an apology drawn out of Anne by the quiet Matthew, the man who suffered so in the presence of girls, and who is now growing nicely into fathering the little orphan.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

The next morning [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) tells [Matthew](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert) what happened, and he thinks it’s a good thing that [Mrs. Rachel](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/mrs-rachel-lynde) “got a calling down.” He tells Marilla not to be too hard on Anne. Marilla duly carries Anne’s meals up to the east gable, but Anne doesn’t seem to touch the food. That night, while Marilla is out tending to the cows, Matthew sneaks inside and slips upstairs to Anne’s room. He finds Anne sitting sadly by the window and gently asks her how she’s doing. Bravely, Anne says she is imagining in order to pass the time. Matthew encourages Anne to just apologize and get it over with—Marilla is stubborn, too, after all.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Unsurprisingly, Matthew sides with Anne. However, he also ventures beyond this, despite his promise that he won’t interfere with Marilla’s efforts at raising Anne. Because he has a special sympathy and connection with Anne, Matthew’s encouragement goes a long way toward softening her stubbornness. In this way, Matthew’s tenderness complements Marilla’s sternness. Anne also has stubbornness in common with Marilla.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) says she could apologize to please [Matthew](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert). What’s more, she does feel a little sorry—her anger dissipated overnight, and she feels ashamed of herself. Matthew tells her it’s too lonely in the house without her. Anne agrees to apologize, and Matthew tells her not to tell [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) that he talked to Anne. He flees to the pasture so his sister will never suspect him.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Matthew’s earlier prediction to Marilla proves accurate—that Anne will be motivated by love more than anything else. Though Anne regrets her actions, it’s Matthew’s tenderness that gets her to apologize.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) calls to [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) over the banister and says she’s ready to apologize to [Mrs. Rachel](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/mrs-rachel-lynde). Marilla is relieved—she’d secretly been worrying about what to do if Anne remained stubborn. That evening, she and Anne walk to Mrs. Lynde’s. Though Anne starts out looking gloomy, her expression brightens as they walk. She tells Marilla she’s imagining what she’s going to say in her apology. Marilla begins to worry—this is supposed to be a punishment, after all.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Everyone at Green Gables is learning as they go—Anne is learning how to be part of a family and community, and Marilla is figuring out how to raise a child one challenge at a time. Imagination helps Anne face difficult moments, and the dread of apologizing to Mrs. Lynde is no different.

***Summary Part 4:***

When they reach [Mrs. Lynde](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/mrs-rachel-lynde)’s, [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) suddenly drops to her knees and extends her hands to the surprised lady. In a quivering voice, she says she cannot possibly express all her sorrow, she has disgraced Green Gables, and she deserves to be ostracized by respectable society. Mrs. Lynde was right in all she said. Anne begs her forgiveness—she wouldn’t want to withhold it from a poor orphan girl, would she? Though Anne’s tone is sincere, [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) knows Anne is getting some enjoyment out of this.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Though Anne is sincere in her apology, she draws on her imagination to help her navigate this embarrassing scenario, and the outcome is more dramatic than necessary. Anne sometimes copes with difficult moments by imagining they’re bigger calamities than they really are.

***Summary part 5:***

[Mrs. Lynde](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/mrs-rachel-lynde) kindly urges [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) to get up. She forgives her and says she was too hard on Anne. Anyway, she once knew a girl with [red hair](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/symbols/red-hair) whose color later darkened to a lovely auburn—maybe the same will happen to Anne. Anne is delighted—Mrs. Lynde has given her hope that will help her to endure her hair color.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Despite her sharpness toward Anne earlier, Mrs. Lynde has a sense of humor about the incident and offers Anne hope that she might outgrow her hated hair color. This is a positive outcome for everyone involved.

***Summary part 6:***

[Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) is dismissed to the garden while [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) and [Mrs. Rachel](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/mrs-rachel-lynde) talk. Mrs. Rachel still thinks Anne is a strange child, but there’s something appealing about her, and she understands a little better why the Cuthberts kept her—she’ll probably turn out well in the end. Later, as Marilla and Anne walk home, Marilla refrains from laughing at the drama of Anne’s apology and warns her to control her temper better in the future. She also says Anne shouldn’t think about her looks so much. Anne says that she loves beautiful things and hates to be ugly; she’s not convinced of Marilla’s claim that “handsome is as handsome does.”

***Analysis part 6:***

For Anne, red hair is a matter of vanity about her looks, but it’s more than that, too. In her lonely, deprived childhood, Anne has often found comfort in beautiful things, so it’s difficult for her to accept that she isn’t beautiful (in her own eyes, at least). What’s more, her appearance is something else in her life that’s beyond her control and beyond even her imagination’s ability to change.

***Summary part 7:***

As they approach Green Gables in the starry, breezy evening, [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) suddenly takes [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert)’s hand and says that Green Gables is the first place that’s ever felt like home. She could even pray with full sincerity right now. Marilla feels a sudden warmth, but she subdues it by telling Anne that if she’s always good, then she’ll always be happy and find it easy to say her prayers. Anne objects that saying one’s prayers isn’t the same as praying. But for now she’d rather imagine that she’s the wind blowing over Green Gables—she’d rather not talk anymore. Marilla breathes a sigh of relief.

***Analysis Part 7:***

Green Gables feels like a home for the first time in Anne’s life, stirring gratitude in Anne as well as spontaneous affection toward Marilla. Marilla is unused to maternal stirrings in herself and covers them up with a moralizing statement, which comes more naturally to her. But she’s growing in love for Anne, despite her reluctance to accept a child who wasn’t “useful” at first.