***Anne of Green Gables***

***Chapter 14***

### ***Anne’s Confession***

***Summary:***

* Anne is shelling peas when Marilla walks in and asks if Anne took her amethyst brooch.
* Anne admits to trying it on, but she says she returned it to Marilla's bureau afterward.
* Marilla re-checks the bureau and her whole bedroom, but no brooch. So she returns to Anne and accuses her of lying.
* Anne refuses to confess, so she's sent to her room. It's the same punishment as earlier: stay in your room until you do the thing. In this case, confess.
* What bugs Marilla more than a missing brooch is the idea that there's a child in her house who lies and can't be trusted. She tells as much to Matthew the next morning, but Matthew's completely willing to stay out of this one.
* The next day, Marilla searches for the brooch and Anne stays in her room. In the evening, Marilla tells Anne she can't go to the picnic until she confesses.
* So the next morning, Anne "confesses." She tells Marilla she took the brooch and accidentally dropped it in the Lake of Shining Waters. But she says it all without any feeling, like she's reciting something.
* A super-annoyed Marilla forbids Anne from going to the picnic. Matthew tries to persuade her otherwise, but Marilla's foot is down.
* But later, when Marilla goes to mend her black shawl, she finds the brooch caught in it.
* Anne admits she made up the story of dropping it into the lake so she could go to the picnic. Marilla apologizes and sends Anne there with some food.
* The picnic doesn't disappoint. Afterward, Anne tells Marilla that she had tea, was rowed around the lake, and tasted ice cream.
* Marilla tells Matthew that she thinks Anne will turn out all right.

***Synopsis:***

Anne slowly tells Marilla how she was drawn to the glimmering purple stones in answer to Marilla's worried queries about her amethyst brooch. After a thorough search, Marilla is convinced that Anne has taken the brooch out to play with and misplaced it, despite Anne's insistence that she only pinned it on her breast and then put it back. Certain that Anne is telling falsehoods, Marilla confines the girl to her room until she is ready to confess. Stricken by the thought of missing the Sunday school picnic, Anne confesses the next morning. Having pinned it to her breast, says Anne, and overcome by an irresistible temptation, she wished to take the brooch to Idlewild to imagine herself as Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald, but it slipped from her fingers at the bridge over the Lake of Shining Waters, and sank all purply-sparkling. Feeling a hot anger at Anne's telling of her story, Marilla forbids her the Sunday school picnic even though she has confessed. When Marilla later prepares to mend a small rent in her best shawl, she discovers the shimmering violet of the amethyst brooch caught on a thread of the black lace. Anne wearily explains that she was bound to get to the picnic, and Marilla was set on keeping her until she confessed. Marilla supposes that Anne's confession was a falsehood but owes that Marilla drove her to it. Marilla fills a basket for Anne, who on her return from the picnic, declares ice cream to be "sublime."

Anne, the redheaded orphan girl who so wants to please, does not always find it an easy thing to dispose of her natural eccentricities for the sake of fulfilling Marilla's expectations of how a good girl behaves herself. Marilla, on realizing that she was at fault for having misplaced the brooch, apologizes to Anne for having doubted her, and inches closer to understanding and accepting Anne's peculiarities.

***Brief Summary:***

One evening a few days before the picnic, Marilla asks Anne whether she has seen her amethyst brooch. Anne says that she did see it earlier that day and tried it on, but she put it back on the bureau afterward. Marilla looks for the brooch again and, unable to find it, thinks that Anne is lying about putting it back. She sends Anne to her room until she is ready to confess to having lost the brooch. Marilla tells Matthew about it, who takes Anne’s side at first; however, after hearing that Marilla has checked everywhere, he merely thinks that he is glad that he doesn’t have to deal with disciplining Anne.

Marilla goes up to Anne’s room the night before the picnic and tells Anne that she will not get to go to the picnic if she does not confess. Anne is devastated and begs Marilla to let her go, but Marilla stands firm. The next morning, the day of the picnic, Anne confesses to Marilla. She tells Marilla—in a voice that sounds like she is reciting a memorized lesson—that she took the amethyst brooch to play with outside and dropped it into a lake. Marilla becomes very angry and tells Anne she still cannot go to the picnic, as a punishment for her behavior. Anne screams and cries, but Marilla leaves her in the room.

Marilla cleans the house all morning to avoid thinking about the situation with Anne. When she goes up to call Anne to lunch, Anne is still crying and says that her heart is broken. Marilla goes downstairs in exasperation and complains to Matthew. However, instead of comforting her, Matthew suggests letting Anne go to the picnic since she is so young and neglected. Marilla says that she can’t, especially when it seems that Anne is not actually remorseful for what she did.

After lunch, Marilla decides she will mend a shawl that she noticed on Monday had a hole in it. When Marilla pulls out the shawl, she sees the amethyst brooch is caught on it! Marilla immediately goes to Anne’s bedroom with the brooch in hand. Anne tells her that she made up a confession to tell Marilla so that she could go to the picnic. Marilla says that they both have things to apologize for, and she says that Anne can go to the picnic.

Anne is immediately overjoyed and rushes to get ready. Anne is happy and exhausted when she returns that evening from the picnic. After Anne has gone to bed, Marilla tells Matthew that Anne is hard to understand, but she believes she will turn out all right.

***Critical Study:***

Two days before the picnic, Marilla notices that her brooch is missing. She asks Anne if she touched it, and Anne admits that while Marilla was out for the afternoon, she saw it in Marilla’s room and tried it on just for a moment. Marilla, after searching her room thoroughly, realizes that Anne must have lost the brooch. Anne denies she lost it, steadfastly maintaining that she put it back. Marilla, however, cannot reconcile Anne’s story with the fact that the brooch is nowhere to be found, and she sends Anne to her room, declaring that she must stay there until she confesses.

On the day of the picnic, Anne decides to confess. In poetic, theatrical language, she explains that she borrowed the brooch so that she could imagine she was Lady Cordelia and then accidentally dropped it into the Lake of Shining Waters. Marilla is furious that Anne lied and that she seems to feel no remorse. She orders Anne to stay in her room and tells her she cannot attend the picnic—a sentence Anne thinks unjust, since Marilla promised she could leave her room once she confessed. Anne throws a fit. Matthew suggests that Marilla is being a bit harsh, but he cannot think of a good defense for Anne.

Marilla, trying to busy herself with chores, goes to fetch a black shawl that needs mending. When she picks it up, she catches sight of the brooch hanging from a thread. Realizing she was at fault the whole time and that Anne was telling the truth when she said she didn’t lose it, Marilla goes to Anne to apologize. She feels sorry for treating Anne as she did and has to squelch a desire to laugh at Anne’s invented confession. She scolds Anne for confessing to a deed she did not commit but admits she forced Anne to lie. Anne goes to her picnic and comes home overjoyed, telling stories about her adventures and about the indescribable taste of ice cream.

***Critical Analysis(Ch 9-14):***

In Chapter 9, we again see Anne's sensitivity about her looks when she yells at Mrs. Rachel Lynde after the older woman criticizes Anne's hair, freckles, and skinniness. This pattern will continue to get Anne into trouble throughout the book, such as when she attacks Gilbert at school after he makes fun of her hair, or when she tries to dye her hair black and ends up turning it green. For Anne, someone criticizing her looks is someone pointing out that she is different, and this makes Anne fear that she is unlovable.

Anne's argument and apology to Mrs. Rachel Lynde also demonstrate Anne's unique ability to charm adults. First, the narrator says that Marilla is surprised at herself for defending Anne's actions to Mrs. Rachel Lynde, showing that Anne brings out a rare feistiness in Marilla. Though Marilla scolds herself, she finds herself wanting to laugh at Mrs. Rachel Lynde getting a taste of her own medicine. Then, Mrs. Rachel Lynde herself is charmed by Anne when the young girl apologizes. Mrs. Rachel Lynde remarks, "She certainly is an odd child, but there is something kind of taking about her after all. I don't feel so surprised at you and Matthew keeping her as I did...On the whole, Marilla, I kind of like her" (p. 95). Anne's honest and emotional way of interacting with others may take people aback at first, but throughout the novel, almost everyone she meets ends up wanting to be her friend.

L. M. Montgomery uses foreshadowing frequently in [Anne of Green Gables](https://www.gradesaver.com/anne-of-green-gables). One example of this is when Marilla tells Anne, "I guess Diana'll like you well enough. It's her mother you've got to reckon with. If she doesn't like you it won't matter how much Diana does" (p. 108). This quote foreshadows a major conflict later in the book when Diana's mother forbids Diana from being Anne's friend. By using foreshadowing, Montgomery creates tension, suspense, and curiosity throughout the novel.

Another example of Montgomery's use of foreshadowing can be seen at the end of Chapter 13. Montgomery introduces the symbol of Marilla's amethyst brooch and specifically says that it "was Marilla's most treasured possession" (p. 119). The narrator also notes that Anne was "smitten with delighted admiration" (p. 120) and begged Marilla to hold it. This foreshadows the conflict between Anne and Marilla in Chapter 14 over whether Anne lost the amethyst brooch. The brooch is an important symbol because it represents Marilla's connection to her family. When Marilla thinks that Anne has lost the brooch, this temporarily ruptures the familial connection the two have been forging.

Marilla's maternal feelings toward Anne grow rapidly during this section of the book, but we also see the deficits she has as a parent figure. Marilla tells Matthew that she can't imagine Green Gables without Anne, but she rarely says this kind of statement to Anne since she seems to think it would spoil her. This leads Anne to turn to Matthew for emotional support rather than Marilla. Marilla also has difficulty disciplining Anne. She is conflicted over whether to whip Anne following the conflict with Mrs. Rachel Lynde, and she tells Anne, "You are the very wickedest girl I ever heard of" (p. 126) when she believes Anne lost her brooch. Though Anne does not react to this statement, it is important to remember that she was neglected and felt unloved throughout her childhood, so this kind of statement could confirm her feelings that she does not belong.

***Significance:***

Two nights before the picnic, a worried Marilla asks Anne if she's seen the amethyst brooch. Anne admits she tried it on but put it right back. Marilla, unconvinced, makes a thorough search for the brooch without success. When Anne still refuses to confess she's responsible for its loss, Marilla is furious. She dispatches Anne to her room and spends the rest of the evening fretting.

Marilla feels alone in her plight. Matthew won't help her; Anne isn't the child she took her to be. Sternly she tells Anne she'll have to stay in her room until she confesses. Anne pleads to be allowed at least to attend the picnic and then return to confinement, but Marilla won't budge.

The next morning, a bright-eyed Anne announces she's ready to confess. She unspools a speech that sounds as if she has prepared it in advance: she wore the brooch outside (pretending she was "the Lady Cordelia") and accidentally dropped it into the Lake of Shining Waters. There it "sank forevermore."

Anne's calm manner makes Marilla even angrier, and she forbids Anne to go to the picnic. "But you PROMISED me I might! ... That was why I confessed," pleads Anne. When she realizes Marilla won't change her mind, she bursts into such hysterical tears that Marilla is appalled. Anne refuses to eat dinner (which is served in the middle of the day at Green Gables), and Marilla brings Matthew up to date on the morning's events. He makes it clear he thinks the punishment is too strict, but Marilla ignores him.

After dinner Marilla goes to her room to mend a tear in her best shawl. As she lifts the shawl from her trunk, she realizes the amethyst brooch is hanging to it by a thread and must have been there for the past two days. She hurries to Anne's room and asks her what's going on. An exhausted Anne explains because Marilla had said she couldn't leave her room until she'd confessed, she dreamed up a confession on the assumption Marilla would let her out in time for the picnic. Marilla admits she should have believed Anne from the beginning. Anne shouldn't have fabricated her story, "but I drove you to it." And now, if each of them can forgive the other, it's time for Anne to get ready for the picnic.  
This chapter shows the near-totemic importance people ascribe to their possessions when they don't have many. The amethyst brooch is almost the only piece of jewelry mentioned in this book. Anne has her string of pearl beads and her pearl bead ring, but that's all. To Marilla the brooch is so valuable "she would have thought it rather sacrilegious" not to wear it to church. Marilla, who often reminds Anne looks don't matter, is nevertheless "always pleasantly conscious of [the amethyst's] violet shimmer at her throat." Anne's "confession" about losing the brooch shows the same near-reverence for it.

More important, the chapter examines the nature of trust. Marilla knows, on one hand, Anne doesn't steal or lie, but what else is she to think if Anne was the last person to see the brooch? Anne assumes once she's apologized she'll be allowed to go to the picnic; she believes Marilla has gone back on her word. Both Marilla and Anne feel betrayed, and both have good reason to feel that way.

Readers can't ask [Montgomery](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Anne-of-Green-Gables/author/) which she thinks is worse: not doing something wrong and then falsely confessing to it or doing something wrong and concealing it. But the chapter seems to tilt in Anne's favor—though Marilla's confusion and anger are understandable. Certainly Montgomery must have had fun writing the confession! Anne has many funny lines, and she also has a good understanding of how she would have behaved in that situation. "I went all the way around by the road to lengthen the time" so she could keep wearing the brooch: perfect.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

The next day, [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) can’t find her amethyst brooch; it isn’t stuck in her pincushion as usual. When she asks [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) about it, Anne admits that she’d spotted the brooch in Marilla’s room earlier and briefly tried it on. However, she insists that she put it back where it belonged. Marilla checks her room again, but the brooch isn’t anywhere. When Anne maintains her innocence, Marilla thinks she’s being defiant and sends her to her room. She’s troubled by Anne’s lie and worries that she can’t trust her.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Knowing Anne was fascinated with the brooch, Marilla fears that Anne is now being dishonest with her about not having taken it. This is a good reminder that she’s still getting to know Anne and trying to figure out how best to interpret and deal with Anne’s behavior.

***Summary Part 2:***

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) that she’s searched everywhere for the brooch, and that since [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) continues to deny having taken it, she’ll have to stay in her room until she confesses. That means missing the Sunday school picnic, too. Anne is devastated. The next morning, when Marilla brings Anne’s breakfast upstairs, Anne says she’s ready to confess. Anne claims that when she put on the brooch, she decided to go to Idlewild and pretend she was the Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald. But on the way, while she was crossing the bridge over the Lake of Shining Waters, she took off the brooch for another look and accidentally dropped it into the water.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Given Anne’s impulsive and whimsical behavior, her “confession” of having borrowed and lost the brooch is believable enough—yet given her eagerness to attend the picnic, its timing is rather suspicious, too.

***Summary Part 3:***

Angry, [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) tells [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) what her punishment will be—she can’t go to the Sunday school picnic. She’s unmoved by Anne’s passionate tears and spends the morning fiercely scrubbing the house. After dinner—when Marilla is irked that [Matthew](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert) thinks she’s being too hard on Anne—she goes up to her room to look for a lace shawl that needs mending. When she looks in her trunk, she finds the amethyst brooch attached to a thread of the shawl. She suddenly remembers laying her shawl on the bureau, where the brooch must have gotten caught on it.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Anne’s confession backfires, leading to dismay all around. The rediscovery of the brooch makes clear, however, that the entire crisis has been for nothing—the brooch was never truly lost, and Anne wasn’t responsible for its disappearance.

***Summary Part 4:***

[Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) takes the brooch to [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley)’s room and demands an explanation. Anne, worn out from crying, explains that she’d confessed in hopes of being allowed to go to the picnic. She invented a story, made it as interesting as possible, and memorized it. Marilla can’t help laughing. She admits that she shouldn’t have doubted Anne, who’s never lied to her before, and that she drove Anne to tell the story. She says that if Anne forgives her, she’ll forgive Anne—and now Anne had better get ready for the picnic; it’s barely started, so she won’t have missed much. Anne is ecstatic.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Like Marilla, Anne is still figuring out what it means to function as part of a family, too. Because of her experience with Mrs. Lynde—agreeing to apologize got her out of trouble—it makes sense to her that a confession (even a false one) would get her out of this mess, too. Despite her strictness, Marilla is capable of admitting her mistakes and even has a sense of humor about them, deepening trust between her and Anne.

***Summary Part 5:***

That night [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) is exhausted and completely happy. She tells [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) all about the picnic, including a boat ride on the lake, and the indescribable ice cream. That night Marilla tells [Matthew](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert) the whole story about the brooch. She admits that she’s learned a lesson from the whole episode. Anne is hard for her to understand sometimes, but Marilla thinks she’ll turn out well in the end—and life with her certainly isn’t dull.

***Analysis Part 5:***

The picnic lives up to Anne’s joyful imagination. For her part, Marilla continues to find that Anne doesn’t fit into her preconceived notions of raising a child, but she is getting to understand Anne better a little bit at a time, and their family bond strengthens accordingly.