***Anne of Green Gables***

***Chapter 22***

### ***Anne Is Invited Out to Tea***

***Summary:***

* Anne gets an invitation from Mrs. Allan to join her for tea. Never mind that all the members of her class will be invited to tea; Anne is pumped. She's never received an invitation in the mail before.
* Anne goes through her usual stages of pre-big-event feeling: excitement whenever she thinks about the event and anxiety that the event will be cancelled due to bad weather.
* It goes well. No bursts of anger or badly-flavored treats from Anne. Mrs. Allan sympathizes with Anne's geometry struggles and suggests she join the church choir.
* Anne also finds out that the Avonlea school's new teacher is going to be a woman named Miss Muriel Stacy.

***Synopsis:***

Returning from the post office, Anne is filled with excitement because Mrs. Allan has invited her to tea. Marilla explains that Mrs. Allan has invited all the children in her Sunday school class, but this news does not diminish Anne’s excitement. As usual, Marilla is troubled by Anne’s enthusiasm, believing it will cause Anne pain when reality does not live up to her expectations. Anne is nervous that she will forget her manners and offend Mrs. Allan. Marilla gives her etiquette advice and tells her not to think about how she should behave but to imagine what sorts of behavior would please Mrs. Allan. After tea, Anne describes her time at Mrs. Allan’s home. She admires Mrs. Allan so much that she says she wants to become a minister’s wife. She tells Marilla that, according to Mrs. Rachel, the school is getting a new teacher named Miss Muriel Stacy.***Critical Study (Ch15-22):***

Chapter 15 begins by jumping ahead around a month. Anne has already gotten adjusted to the Avonlea school and established a routine of walking to and from school with Diana. This allows the author to focus on Anne's interaction with Gilbert on the first day he returns to school, rather than describing the whole process of Anne meeting the other students. The two days at school described in Chapter 15 set Gilbert up as the main antagonist in the novel, even though Gilbert tries to make amends with Anne repeatedly.

For readers of the entire [Anne of Green Gables](https://www.gradesaver.com/anne-of-green-gables)series, there is a humorous irony in Anne's antagonistic relationship with Gilbert and declaration that she "made up her mind to hate Gilbert Blythe to the end of life" (p. 149). In fact, in sequels to *Anne of Green Gables*, Anne and Gilbert marry and have seven children together. Nevertheless, this statement does foreshadow that Anne will stubbornly continue her antagonistic relationship with Gilbert until the end of the novel.

Montgomery's chapter titles often create suspense regarding what will happen next in the story. For example, the title of Chapter 16 is "Diana Is Invited to Tea with Tragic Results" (p. 151). The title gives just enough information to create tension throughout the beginning of the chapter, but it does not spoil exactly what the tragic result will be. Similarly, Chapter 18, "Anne to the Rescue" (p. 174), informs the reader that this chapter will have a positive and triumphant tone.

Anne's imagination is a theme throughout *Anne of Green Gables*. Anne has developed a strong imagination as a coping technique due to the neglect and isolation she experienced in her childhood. Montgomery shows how Anne is able to start lowering her defenses once she feels loved and accepted. Earlier in the book, Anne tells Marilla that when she was living with various guardians who treated her like a servant, she would play with imaginary friends. She speaks quite fondly about these imaginary friends at that point in the novel. However, just after Diana has told Anne that she loves her in Chapter 17, Anne tells Marilla, "Somehow, little dream girls are not satisfying after a real friend" (p. 168). Now that Anne's reality is mostly positive and affirming, she is able to live more in reality, rather than escaping into her mind.

Though Anne's past was traumatic and negatively impacted her self-esteem and education, Montgomery also shows that difficult experiences can forge important skills and character traits. Montgomery demonstrates this in Chapter 18 when Anne is able to save Diana's younger sister's life due to having cared for her guardians' children from a young age. Anne herself says, "I'm so glad [Mrs. Hammond](https://www.gradesaver.com/anne-of-green-gables/study-guide/character-list#mrs-hammond) had three pairs of twins after all. If she hadn't I mightn't have known what to do for Minnie May" (p. 182). This shows Anne beginning to integrate her negative experiences into a positive image of herself as a capable and caring young woman.

***Brief Summary:***

One day over the summer, Anne is very excited to find that Mrs. Allan has sent her an invitation to come over for tea. Marilla worries that Anne’s emotions are too strong—both the positive and negative emotions. Anne is anxious that it might rain the next day and she won’t be able to go to tea, but the weather is fine in the morning and she goes to the Allans’ house after breakfast.

Anne returns and tells Marilla all about her time at tea with Mrs. Allan and another little girl named Lauretta. They had tea together and then sang together, leading Mrs. Allan to invite Anne to sing in the church choir. Lauretta left early, so Anne got to have a “heart-to-heart talk” (p. 228) with Mrs. Allan, and she told her all about her difficult childhood, her life at Green Gables, and her struggles in school. At the end of tea, Mrs. Rachel Lynde came by and said that the Avonlea school has hired a new teacher named Miss Stacy.

***Synopsis:***

Once the Cuthberts have had the Allans to tea, it's time for the Allans to reciprocate. Mrs. Allan, who teaches the church's Sunday school, plans to invite every student to tea one or two at a time. It's hard to imagine any other member of the class could be as excited as Anne when her turn to visit the manse arrives.

Anne is full of nerves on the big day. She's diligently studied etiquette, but she's still afraid she'll make an embarrassing mistake. Marilla, "hitting for once in her life on a very sound and pithy piece of advice," suggests thinking about what would be most pleasant for Mrs. Allan rather than worrying about herself. Anne instantly sees the wisdom in this suggestion.

The tea turns out to be a great success. Anne gives Marilla a full report, sitting "with her tired curly head in Marilla's gingham lap." Mrs. Allan was beautifully dressed; the meal was elegant; the other little girl invited was "not exactly a kindred spirit, you know, but still very nice." Mrs. Allan praised Anne's voice, and Anne had a chance to pour out her heart to her hostess who, she informs Marilla, "was a dunce at geometry too."

While Anne is at the manse, Mrs. Lynde drops by with the news that the school trustees have just hired a new teacher: Miss Muriel Stacy. "Isn't that a romantic name?" says Anne, who can't imagine how she's going to get through the next two weeks before school starts again.

Marilla's advice to Anne is excellent, and [Montgomery](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Anne-of-Green-Gables/author/)'s candor about Marilla's usual advice is noteworthy. It's rare for an author to criticize one of her characters this way. What Montgomery means is the "very sound and pithy piece of advice" is helpful *for Anne*, unlike many of the platitudes Marilla offers elsewhere. Marilla must have given good advice to other adults occasionally. But Montgomery is always loyal to Anne, even if it means poking fun at Anne's guardian.

When Anne comes home, she sits with her head in Marilla's lap. Obviously the two have become much closer over the months, even though Marilla never talks about it.

It's fitting for Anne learn about Miss Stacy from Mrs. Lynde at Mrs. Allan's house. Except for Marilla, these are the three women who most influence Anne.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

One August evening [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) dances home from an errand, full of news—she’s invited to tea at the minister’s house tomorrow. She shows [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) the invitation from [Mrs. Allan](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/mrs-allan); it’s the first time she has ever been addressed as “Miss.” Marilla tells Anne she needs to take things more calmly.  Marilla is troubled that Anne feels both good and bad so intensely, fearing this sensitivity will cause her difficulties in later life. She doesn’t understand that Anne’s capacity for joy makes up for her capacity for sadness. And deep down, she really prefers Anne as she is.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Anne is delighted by the “grown-up” invitation to tea. Marilla worries that Anne’s fluctuating emotions will be difficult for her to control as she grows up, but as much as she wishes Anne would show more of a decorous, ladylike balance, she is growing to love and embrace Anne as she is.

***Summary Part 2:***

The next day, [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) is so happy that she says she could be a “model child” if only she were invited to tea daily. But she’s also nervous that she’ll misbehave or commit a breach of etiquette. [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) says she shouldn’t think so much about herself, but should just think about [Mrs. Allan](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/mrs-allan) and what would be nicest for her. Anne gets through tea just fine, and she tells Marilla all about it that night.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Montgomery often uses the technique of telling certain episodes in Anne’s words instead of directly narrating them—thereby giving more of Anne’s colorful perspective. Marilla’s advice is often idealized and not necessarily what best serves a situation—but in this case, it’s actually good advice that helps Anne navigate a new situation more calmly.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) rapturously describes [Mrs. Allan](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/mrs-allan)’s beautiful dress. She says she’d like to be a minister’s wife someday, but she supposes it won’t work because she isn’t “naturally good,” unlike Mrs. Allan, who doesn’t appear to have to work at being good. There was another little girl at tea, from the White Sands Sunday school. After the other girl went home early, Anne and Mrs. Allan had a long talk. Anne told Mrs. Allan everything about her life and history, and Anne was encouraged to hear that Mrs. Allan, too, had once struggled with geometry. Just before leaving, [Mrs. Lynde](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/mrs-rachel-lynde) stopped by the Allans’ with the news that a new teacher has been hired for the school: [Miss Muriel Stacy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/miss-muriel-stacy). Mrs. Lynde thinks a lady teacher is “a dangerous innovation.”

***Analysis Part 3:***

Anne associates maturity with “being good” and sees Mrs. Allan as the epitome of this, although as she grows older, Anne comes to see maturity as having more to do with overcoming obstacles and learning from one’s mistakes. Nevertheless, Anne finds comfort in looking up to someone like Mrs. Allan who represents the kind of goodness and gracious attitude she strives for herself. And the new teacher will likewise prove to be an encouraging influence in Anne’s life—Mrs. Lynde’s disapproval notwithstanding.