***Anne of Green Gables***

***Chapter 33***

### ***The Hotel Concert***

### ***Summary:***

Diana, now locally famous for her fashion sense, helps Anne dress for a performance at the upscale White Sands Hotel. Diana suggests a dress of white organdy for Anne’s slim figure; Anne can adorn the dress with the string of pearls Matthew recently gave her as a gift. Anne, accustomed to public speaking, is levelheaded about the affair until she enters the hotel dressing room by herself and is swallowed up in the bustle of elegantly dressed city women. Suddenly, she feels out of place in her simple dress and pearls, which looked lovely in her room at Green Gables but now seem plain next to the other ladies’ silks, laces, and diamonds. Onstage, Anne sits between a stout lady who occasionally turns to scrutinize her and a girl in white lace who laughs loudly about the country bumpkins at the affair. The show of wealth and culture intimidates Anne, and stage fright assails her. For several moments, she feels she must run off the stage. Then she sees Gilbert’s face in the audience, and the unbearable thought of failing in front of him spurs her on. She delivers a recitation so accomplished that it impresses even the girl in white lace. Afterward, the stout lady, who is the wife of an American millionaire, introduces her to everybody, and she receives many compliments.

On the ride home, Diana tells Anne she overheard a rich American man comment on Anne’s hair and face, saying he wanted to paint her. Later, in response to Jane Andrews’s wistful observations about all the jewels and riches that were on display, Anne says that she already feels rich in her own skin, with her imagination and the gift of Matthew’s string of pearls.

***Synopsis:***

* Near the end of Anne's summer before Queen's, she's asked to speak in a big concert at the White Sands Hotel.
* Diana spends time dressing her up beautifully, and she, Diana, and Jane ride to White Sands with a local boy at the wheel.
* When they get there, Anne is escorted to the performers' dressing room, full of ladies in way fancier clothes. Then she's seated near a girl who makes fun of the local talent, calling everyone "rustic." Poor Anne feels like a joke.
* When she gets up to speak, she's consumed by stage fright. Gulp.
* She sees Gilbert in the audience and resolves not to fail in front of him. Whatever works?
* Anne recites so well she gets an encore.
* Afterward, she's introduced to all the other performers and they have supper. Everyone's happy.
* On the way home, Diana and Jane long for the lifestyles of the rich hotel ladies, but Anne says she'd rather have her tiny string of pearls given with love from Matthew than diamonds.

***Significance:***Anne and Diana are conferring in Anne's bedroom about what Anne should wear for a benefit concert at the White Sands hotel. She has been asked to participate by giving a recitation. As Anne would have said when she was younger, it's an "epoch in her life," and the right dress is important. On the big night, Anne is beautiful; Marilla says, "She looks neat and proper." Anne's organdy dress—says Diana—"seems as if it grew on you."

Although a professional elocutionist who is staying at the hotel will also be on the program ("the audience went wild over her [performance]"), and although Anne has an awful moment of stage fright, "her clear, sweet voice [reached] to the farthest corner of the room without a tremor or break ... She recited as she had never done before." The audience demands an encore, and Anne's "quaint, funny little selection" completely wins them over. Even the professional elocutionist compliments Anne. A famous artist sitting behind Jane and Diana asks who the girl with the "splendid Titian hair" is: "She has a face I should like to paint."

Jane is dazzled by the diamonds some of the women are wearing. She wishes she were a "rich American" who could summer at the hotel and have ice cream and chicken salad every day. But Anne insists the three girls are rich already and is "quite content to be Anne of Green Gables, with my string of pearl beads."

The White Sands Hotel is frequented by wealthy guests from the United States. As a rule Anne hardly interacts with Americans in this series, and Montgomery—staunchly pro-Canadian—often makes fun of the ones she does meet. The monocled "stout lady in pink silk" and the "scornful-looking girl in a white-lace dress" are pure caricature. The white-lace girl seems especially crass as she sniffs about country bumpkins and rustic belles. Anne being Anne and able to charm everyone, she manages to captivate the stout lady and win a "languid little compliment" from the white-lace girl.

Making Anne even more perfect is her modesty about her performance. "I'm only a schoolgirl, with a little knack of reciting," she says. About the "Titian hair" compliment, she laughingly tells Diana that Titian means "plain red." As she has matured, she's even found the grace to accept the color of her hair. Anne is a little too good to be true here, but this chapter affords a break from the Avonlea setting. Diamonds, Americans, famous artists, "dazzling" electric lights—the hotel is a fairyland, and [Montgomery](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Anne-of-Green-Gables/author/) lets herself luxuriate in writing about it.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[**Diana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/diana-barry) is in [**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley)’s room, helping her get dressed up. The gable room has changed a lot over the past four years: there’s no gold or silver to be seen, but there are pretty curtains, apple-blossom wallpaper, and a few pictures, including a photograph of [**Miss Stacy**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/miss-muriel-stacy), before which Anne keeps fresh flowers. Anne is getting ready to recite at an amateur concert at the White Sands Hotel. Diana has developed a reputation for fashion, and she makes sure that Anne’s dress, hair, and necklace are just right. She admires Anne’s natural style and grace—she feels like “just a dumpling” next to her friend, though Anne envies Diana’s dimples.

***Analysis Part 1:***

As Anne has grown up, her tastes have matured beyond the rather fantastical ones of her girlhood. Before moving on from Avonlea for college, she gets to recite publicly at a concert like the ones she used to love attending. Like her talents and aspirations, her beauty has also matured and blossomed.

***Summary Part 2:***

[**Marilla**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) gives grudging approval to [**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley)’s look, though she thinks organdy is “unserviceable”—[**Matthew**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert) just buys anything pretty for Anne nowadays, no matter what Marilla advises. Anne says she’s not at all nervous to recite “The Maiden’s Vow” that night. She and [**Diana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/diana-barry) ride to White Sands in a wagon with some other girls; Billy Andrews, a reticent 20-year-old, insists that Anne sit up front with him because he admires her, although he's too shy to say much.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Anne and Matthew have completely won over Marilla when it comes to beautiful dresses. Anne also gets to go on the grown-up outings that Marilla never would have allowed just a couple of years ago, and Anne is admired wherever she goes.

***Summary Part 3:***At the hotel, [**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) suddenly feels like a country girl among the other performers; some of the other women are dressed in silks and diamonds. Out in the concert hall, the electric lights and buzz of the crowd unnerve her. Onstage, she sits between a stout lady in a pink dress and a tall, scornful girl in a white dress. The stout lady scrutinizes Anne, and the tall girl keeps commenting on the “country bumpkins” in the show.

***Analysis Part 3:***

The White Sands concert is, nevertheless, a more highbrow affair than Avonlea concerts, and Anne stands out as a country schoolgirl among the more seasoned, self-assured performers.

***Summary Part 4:***A professional elocutionist is slated to recite, and she brings the house down. [**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) covers her face as the audience applauds—she can’t bear to follow that performance. Unfortunately, it’s her turn. She suffers an attack of stage fright for the first time; the Debating Club concerts were always attended by friendly neighbors. She stands paralyzed for a few moments, until she spots [**Gilbert Blythe**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/gilbert-blythe) smiling near the back. Anne thinks he looks taunting, but he’s really just admiring Anne. In any case, she refuses to fail in front of Gilbert. Her mind clears, and she recites confidently. She even gets an encore.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Under the pressure of a fancier setting, Anne almost fails to recite her poem, but her old rivalry with Gilbert comes to the rescue—she can’t humiliate herself in front of him. Though the tactic is effective, she still doesn’t recognize the real nature of his feelings for her; she thinks he’s disdainful the way she once was.

***Summary Part 5:***It turns out that the lady in the pink dress is a millionaire’s wife. After the concert, she takes [**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) backstage and introduces her to everyone, including the professional elocutionist. The night is a triumph, and she and her friends happily relive the event during the ride home. [**Diana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/diana-barry) overheard someone in the audience say that Anne has “Titian hair.” Anne explains that it refers to her [**red hair**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/symbols/red-hair).

***Analysis Part 5:***

Titian was an Italian Renaissance painter whose works sometimes featured vividly redheaded subjects.  Now that she’s nearly grown up, Anne has learned to recognize admiration for her hair when she encounters it and to hate the color less herself.

***Summary Part 6:***

[**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) tells her friends she feels as rich as the diamond-clad ladies they saw that night. They’re all 16-year-old girls with imaginations and beautiful Avonlea to live in. Anne doesn’t need diamonds; she’d rather be “Anne of Green Gables, with a string of pearl beads.”

***Analysis Part 6:***

Anne has a hopeful future ahead of her and, what’s even more important, a home she loves, whereas a few years ago she was still a rootless orphan. That’s more important to her than any riches could be.