***Anne of Green Gables***

***Chapter 36***

### ***The Glory and the Dream***

***Summary:***

On the morning the exam results are announced, Anne is too nervous to check the list, but someone spots her name and cries that she has won the Avery Scholarship and Gilbert Blythe the Gold Medal. A swarm of people surrounds Anne and congratulates her, and when Matthew and Marilla come to the Queen’s Academy for commencement, they can hardly contain their pride in Anne’s achievements. Anne goes back to Green Gables after commencement, rejoicing in all the familiar sights and in spending time with Diana. Anne plans to continue her education at Redmond College in the fall, while Jane and Ruby will begin to teach. She learns from Diana that Gilbert will be teaching also, since his father cannot afford to send him to Redmond, which disappoints Anne.

At Green Gables, Anne and Marilla discuss the shaky position of Abbey Bank, where the Cuthberts have always kept their money. Rumors of the bank’s trouble have persuaded Marilla to ask Matthew about moving their money, but he has reassured her that the bank is all right. Anne notices that Marilla and Matthew are not looking well. Marilla says that her headaches have become severe and her deteriorating vision has made sewing and reading uncomfortable. Matthew has been having heart trouble all spring but cannot bring himself to follow the doctor’s order to rest more.

Although Anne has always fantasized about material wealth, fancy jewels, and fine dresses, she has never been overly materialistic or obsessed with acquiring nice possessions. The world of wealth and culture she sees at the White Sands Hotel does not appeal to her as much as her simple life in Green Gables, which is rich in natural beauty, love, and imagination. During Anne’s childhood, Marilla and Mrs. Rachel warn Anne frequently that lofty dreams, especially dreams of wealth, will lead only to disappointment. But Anne is not disappointed when riches do not measure up to her dreams. After indulging in dreams of opulence as a child, she now calmly realizes the worth of her simple, happy life.

As an adult, Anne dreams not of riches and of golden hair, but of academic and professional success. The word “ambition” appears nearly as often in the later chapters as the word “imagination” does in the early ones, showing how Anne’s character has changed. In some ways, however, Anne can cast aside her childhood dreams because they have all come true. The red hair she so loathes as a youngster has turned a rich auburn color. She claims earlier that she would rather be pretty than smart, and now she is both pretty and smart. She earlier wants to be well behaved, and she now comports herself with compassion and maturity as well as good manners.

Anne’s ideas about success change, and she ceases to define success as beating Gilbert Blythe. She even says, “Next to trying and winning, the best thing is trying and failing.” Whereas earlier she thinks that she would rather fail the entrance exam than be beaten by Gilbert, now she does not equate success with winning. When she feels she cannot recite her poem at the White Sands Hotel, she considers leaving the stage, but decides it is better to recite the poem and be humiliated than not to try at all. This newfound belief that losing to another person is not as humiliating as not trying to succeed is a sign of her growing maturity.

Anne’s feelings for Gilbert gradually change too. She thinks of their rivalry with affection and nostalgia, and is disappointed to learn that he will not go with her to Redmond College. She is now able to see that they share many character traits and might have been close friends were it not for her own competitiveness. Anne has not completely outgrown her childish traits, however, and the stubbornness that created the rift in the first place still prevents her from forging a friendship with Gilbert.

***Synopsis:***

* Anne and Jane walk together to find out the results of their end-of-year exams. As they walk up, Anne hears someone shout that Gilbert won the medal. Anne feels defeated for a moment—until someone sees her and yells, “Three cheers for Miss Shirley, winner of the Avery!” (p. 361). Anne won the scholarship to attend college.
* The next day is commencement, and Marilla and Matthew come to see Anne graduate. Anne wears the green dress Marilla gave her and reads an essay for the crowd. Marilla, Matthew, and Aunt Josephine all talk about how proud they are of Anne. After commencement, Anne goes back to Green Gables. Diana is jealous of Anne’s new friends from Queen’s, but Anne assures her that Diana is her dearest friend. Anne tells Diana that she will be going to Redmond College in September, but she will have three months of vacation first. Diana informs Anne that Gilbert is going to become the teacher at the Avonlea school since his family can’t afford to send him to college. Anne is disappointed that she will not have her rivalry with Gilbert to keep her focused at Redmond.
* The next morning, Anne notices that Matthew isn’t looking well. After he leaves, she asks Marilla about Matthew’s health; Marilla says that he’s been having issues with his heart but refuses to stop working. Anne asks about Marilla’s health and Marilla says that she’s been having headaches and her eyes have gotten worse. At the end of June, Marilla plans to have her eyes checked. On top of these problems, Marilla tells Anne that the bank where they keep all of their money has been “shaky” (p. 365). Marilla wants Matthew to pull their money out of the bank, but Matthew refuses. The rest of the day is pleasant, but the narrator ends the chapter foreshadowing sorrow soon to come.

## *Significance:*

It's the morning final exam results will be posted at Queen's, and Anne and Jane are on their way to see how they fared. Jane is cheerful, Anne is "pale and quiet." Even exam results don't feel as important as knowing who will win the Avery. When the girls reach the Queen's entranceway, they see the hall thronged with boys cheering, "Hurrah for Blythe, Medalist!" as they carry Gilbert on their shoulders. Anne feels a moment of sick disappointment until someone yells, "Three cheers for Miss Shirley, winner of the Avery!" Now Anne too is surrounded by well-wishers thumping her on the back and fighting to shake her hand.

Commencement is the next milestone. Matthew and Marilla watch proudly as Anne reads her winning essay. That evening they bring Anne home, and Diana is at Green Gables to meet her. Marilla has put a rose plant on the windowsill in her room.

Josie Pye has informed Diana that Stella Maynard is now Anne's best friend, but Anne just laughs and reassures her. Of course Diana is still her favorite! Diana tells her Jane will be teaching at the Newbridge School. She adds Gilbert will be teaching too. "He has to. His father can't afford to send him to college next year"—he'll have to work to put himself through. Anne feels curiously dismayed at this news. What will Redmond be like without Gilbert and their "inspiring rivalry"? Even coed college will seem flat if he's not there.

There's another unwelcome change: Matthew has been having heart trouble. Marilla is worried, but he's been better recently. She's hoping he can cut back on work now they have a good hired man.

Anne comments that Marilla doesn't look well herself and insists she "take a rest, now that I'm home." Marilla says it's not tiredness that's bothering her but a pain behind her eyes. Dr. Spencer insists she see the oculist who will be visiting in June. She's also troubled by a rumor the Abbey Bank is shaky: that's where she and Matthew keep their savings. Marilla has wanted to move the money to another bank, but Matthew is holding off, having been reassured the bank is all right.

Anne spends the following day roaming through the woods and fields, and that evening she and Matthew walk to the back pasture to get the cows. Matthew walks slowly, head bent. Anne wistfully says if she'd been the boy they sent for, she'd be able to spare him so much work now. But Matthew pats her hand. "I'd rather have you than a dozen boys," he tells her. She is "my girl—my girl that I'm proud of." Anne always remembers that lovely evening. She comments, "It was the last night before sorrow touched her life."

Rumors about the bank and fears about Matthew's health mean something bad is on its way. [Montgomery](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Anne-of-Green-Gables/author/) does more than foreshadow the future here; she all but spells it out. On her first morning at Green Gables, Anne sat looking through this same window; on this evening, the last of Matthew's life, she's here again, looking out over the "silvery, peaceful beauty and fragrant calm of that night." Though the paragraph ends on a note of dread, its lyrical beauty is as memorable as its warning. In the moonlight, sorrow is a "cold, sanctifying touch," not the jagged agony it will become in [Chapter 37](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Anne-of-Green-Gables/chapter-37-summary/).

This is the first time there's mention of Marilla's putting a rose on Anne's windowsill. She's a changed person. Earlier she has looked "askance" at a jug of apple blossoms Anne brought in. She also has forbidden Anne to "clutter up your room" with flowers. Now she has brought a flower into Anne's room herself. Like Matthew, Marilla is feeling the effects of getting older, but raising Anne has made her younger in spirit.

The plot is moving along quickly now. More than half the 38 chapters cover Anne's first year at Green Gables; Montgomery needs only three chapters to take her through her time at Queen's. This may be partly because she wants to convey the impression time passes more quickly now Anne is older. More likely, though, it's that Charlottetown is less compelling than Avonlea as a setting. Teacher's college may be worthy enough, but 16-year-old Anne doesn't have real adventures there.

Montgomery was sometimes careless about her characters' names. Here she mentions Mr. Russell but doesn't identify him. Since this is the only place he appears, readers will never know why he gives Matthew bad advice. Since the Great Depression that began in the United States in 1929, bank depositors have been insured, so if a bank fails, they can get back a certain amount of the money they deposited. At the time this book takes place, no such safeguards exist. The Cuthberts therefore have no recourse once the Abbey Bank fails.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) and [**Jane**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters) walk down the street together on the day the exam results are supposed to be posted; Anne is pale and anxious. Anne has little hope of winning the Avery scholarship; she’s so nervous that she makes Jane promise to look up her results while she hides in the girls’ dressing room. But as they approach Queen’s, they see [**Gilbert**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/gilbert-blythe) being hoisted on his friends’ shoulders while they shout, “Hurrah for Blythe, Medallist!” No sooner does Anne's disappointment sink in than she hears, “Three cheers for Miss Shirley, winner of the Avery!” She’s soon surrounded by a jubilant group of congratulating friends.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Anne doesn’t achieve her goal of beating Gilbert for the Queen’s medal, but she achieves an arguably better one—a college scholarship, surpassing the goals and dreams she’d initially brought with her to Queen’s. Unlike most girls of the time, Anne has doors open to her even beyond a teaching career—a full college degree.

***Summary Part 2:***

[**Marilla**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) and [**Matthew**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert) attend Commencement to see [**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) honored and hear her read her prizewinning essay. Matthew asks Marilla, “Reckon you’re glad we kept her?” Marilla tells her brother to stop rubbing it in. That night, Anne happily breathes in the familiar sights, smells, and atmosphere of Green Gables. She and [**Diana**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/diana-barry) get reacquainted, and Diana teases Anne about replacing her with her new Queen’s friends. Anne pelts Diana with flowers and assures her that Diana is still her dearest friend.

***Analysis Part 2:***

For Matthew and Marilla, keeping Anne has become the most important choice of their lives—she has brought them tremendous love, joy, and pride. The value of having her around has long ceased to be a matter of her usefulness to the household. Back home, it seems like Green Gables is the same place it’s always been and that life this summer promises to go on much as before.

***Summary Part 3:***  
 [**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) is going to enjoy three months of vacation before starting college at Redmond in September. [**Jane**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters), [**Ruby**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters), and [**Gilbert**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/gilbert-blythe) are going to be schoolteachers. Gilbert can’t afford additional college, so he’ll likely teach at Avonlea school in order to earn a salary. Anne hears a pang at this news—what will college be like without a rival to motivate her?

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Anne realizes that things are going to change more than she’d realized—Gilbert’s presence as a valued rival, something she’s taken for granted for years now, will soon be gone. She wonders if she’ll be able to remain motivated without him.

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***Summary Part 4***

The next morning at breakfast, [**Matthew**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert) looks a bit gray. [**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) that Matthew has had bad spells with his heart but refuses to slow down his work. Anne thinks Marilla looks tired, too, and promises to do the chores this summer so Marilla can rest. Marilla says it’s a problem with her eyes; she’ll have to see the doctor about them soon. Marilla also mentions a rumor about the Abbey Bank, where all the Cuthberts’ money is stored. Mr. Abbey was their father’s good friend, but the bank has been shakier under the younger generation. After Marilla heard that, she wanted Matthew to withdraw all their money from it, but someone reassured him that all was well.

***Analysis Part 4***

Though at first it looked as if nothing had changed at Green Gables, Anne realizes that’s not quite true. Both Matthew and Marilla have aged and they struggle to keep up with things at Green Gables as they used to. The news of instability at the bank is likewise ominous.

***Summary Part 5***

[**Anne**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) has a wonderful, carefree day revisiting all her favorite spots around Green Gables. That evening, as she and [**Matthew**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert) bring the cows in, Anne tells him he’s working too hard. Anne says if only she’d been the boy they originally sent for, then she could be of much more help to Matthew. Matthew says he’d rather have Anne than a dozen boys. After all, it wasn’t a boy who won the Avery scholarship; it was *his* girl. Anne treasures his words, and she always remembers that happy day.

***Analysis Part 5***

Despite the obvious changes, Anne treasures her reunion with Green Gables. Even after all these years, she does hold onto a bit of guilt about the fact that she couldn’t be what Matthew and Marilla originally sought in an adopted child. Yet Matthew reassures her that *she* is what they really wanted and needed all along.