

Chapter 2  
**Marilla Is Surprised**

Marilla came forward as Matthew opened the door. But when she saw Anne she stopped in amazement.

"Matthew Cuthbert, who's that?" she demanded. "Where is the boy?"

"There wasn't any boy," said Matthew unhappily. "There was only *her*."

"But there *must* have been a boy. We sent word to Mrs. Spencer to bring a boy."

During this conversation Anne had remained silent, but suddenly she grasped the meaning of it.

"You don't want me!" she cried. "Because I'm not a boy! I should have known nobody really wanted me. Oh, what shall I do?" Anne burst into tears and buried her face in her arms.

Marilla and Matthew looked at each other. Neither of them knew what to do. Finally Marilla said, "Well, there's no need to cry so about it."

"Oh, yes there is." Anne looked up through her tears. "You would cry too if you had come to a place you thought was home and they didn't want you because you weren't a boy. This is the most *tragic* thing that ever happened to me!"

A little smile turned up at the corners of Marilla's mouth. "Well, don't cry any more. You will have to stay here at least for tonight. What's your name?"

"Anne Shirley." Then she added, "Spelled with an 'e'."

"Very well then, Anne spelled with an 'e,'" Marilla replied, "can you tell us how this mistake came to be made? Were there no boys at the asylum?"

"Oh, yes, there were plenty. But Mrs. Spencer clearly said that you wanted a girl about eleven years old. The matron picked me. I was so excited I couldn't sleep last night for joy."

She suddenly turned to Matthew. "Why didn't you tell me at the station and leave me there? It is so much harder now that I have seen how beautiful Green Gables is."

Matthew looked at the girl sadly. "I'll put the horse in, Marilla," he said quickly. "Have tea ready when I get back."

"Did Mrs. Spencer bring anybody besides you?" continued Marilla when Matthew had gone out.

"She brought Lily Jones for herself. Lily is only five and is very beautiful. She has nut-brown hair. If I was very beautiful and had brown hair would you keep me?"

"No. We want a boy to help on the farm. A girl would be of no use to us. Now take off your hat and we'll talk about this after supper."

But Anne was so sad that she could not eat.

"I guess she's tired," said Matthew at last. "You'd better put her to bed." So Anne followed Marilla upstairs to a small room up in the east gable of the house.

Marilla set the candle on a little table in the

corner. "Undress and get in bed as quickly as you can. I'll come back for the candle. I can't trust you to put it out. You might burn the house down. Tomorrow we'll settle this mess. Good night."

"How can it be a *good* night? This is the very worst night I've ever had," Anne replied.

When Marilla had gone, Anne looked around the tiny room. It was bare and cold. She jumped into bed and pulled the covers over her head. Lying stiffly in bed she could hear the sounds of the house. A door closed and she heard Marilla's voice saying angrily, "What a disappointment. We should have gone to get the boy ourselves." A man's voice said something, cut off by Marilla's. "Keep her? That's out of the question. What good would she be to us?" "We might be some good to her," said Matthew suddenly and unexpectedly.

But Anne could not hear this from the east gable where the lonely, friendless child cried herself to sleep.