

Audition Scene 4 – Marilla, Rachel and Anne

(Anne, who has just arrived at Green Gables, is introduced to Rachel. Rachel is outspoken and speaks her mind about Anne, which Anne takes as insulting and disrespectful.)

MARILLA: Anne, this is Mrs. Rachel Lynde, one of our closest friends. She lives in the next farm.

ANNE *(tentatively, under the scrutiny of RACHEL.):* Good morning... ma'am.

RACHEL: Well, they didn't pick you for your looks, that's certain. She's terribly skinny and homely, Marilla. Come here child. Lawful heart, did anyone ever see such freckles. And hair as red as carrots. Come here I say. *(ANNE goes to her, pauses, then lets fly.)*

ANNE: I hate you! I hate you – I hate you – I hate you! How dare you call me skinny and ugly and freckled and red-headed! You are a rude, impolite woman.

RACHEL: Well!

MARILLA: Anne!

ANNE: How would you like to be told your fat and clumsy and probably haven't a spark of imagination. You've hurt my feelings and I'll never ever forgive you! *(She stomps away and exits toward her room.)*

RACHEL: Did anybody ever see such a temper?

MARILLA: Anne, come back here and apologize at once!

RACHEL: Well, Marilla. I certainly don't envy you bringing up that child.

MARILLA: She was very naughty, I'll admit. But you shouldn't have twitted her about her looks, Rachel.

RACHEL: Oh, now I have to be considerate of the fragile feelings of orphans, do I?

MARILLA: Maybe she's never really been taught right from wrong. She'll learn. *(Calling toward Anne's room.)* Anne, come here this instant!

RACHEL *(after a pause as both wait for ANNE.):* Well, it appears she has no intentions of apologizing. You needn't expect a visit from me anytime soon, Marilla. Good day. *(She turns in a huff.)*

MARILLA: Rachel! (*Again, calling toward Anne's room.*) Anne, I'm ashamed of you! Now you come down here this instant! (*Calling out the front door.*) Rachel! Don't go just yet! I'll see if I can get her to come down and (*They see ANNE who swings slowly to her knees. Her "apology" is sincere, but melodramatic as well.*)

ANNE: Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I'm so extremely sorry. I could never express my sorrow even if I used a whole dictionary. I've behaved badly toward you, and disgraced my dear friends, Matthew and Marilla, who have let me stay at Green Gables even though I'm not a boy. I am wicked and ungrateful, and I deserve to be cast out forever. What you said was true; my hair is red, and I'm freckled and skinny and ugly. What I said about you was true too, only I shouldn't have said it. Please, Mrs. Lynde, forgive me. If you don't forgive me, it will inflict a lifetime of sorrow on a poor little orphan girl. Please, please forgive me. (*RACHEL looks bewildered, MARILLA relieved.*)

RACHEL (after a brief pause.): There, there, get up child. Of course, I forgive you. Maybe I was a little too hard on you anyway. But you mustn't mind me; I'm known throughout these parts as a woman who speaks her mind. Anyway, you needn't worry about your hair, I knew a girl once with hair every bit as red as yours. But when she grew up, it darkened to a real handsome auburn.

ANNE: You have given me hope, Mrs. Lynde. I shall always think of you as a benefactress.

RACHEL: Marilla... what this child needs is discipline and a proper education. The Sunday School picnic is scheduled this week for Barry's field. I want you to take Anne, so she can meet some civilized children her own age. Her tongue appears to be hinged in the middle, but she may turn out alright.

MARILLA: I'm sure you're right, Rachel.