

### **Audition Scene 3 – Marilla and Rachel Lynde**

*(Marilla, a very serious woman is confronted by her best friend Rachel Lynde – the town gossip who is trying to get Marilla to tell her why Matthew, Marilla's brother, went to town.)*

**MARILLA:** Evening, Rachel.

**RACHEL:** Marilla, are you all right?

**MARILLA:** I had one of my headaches yesterday, but I'm okay now. Why do you ask?

**RACHEL:** I was at my window shelling peas this afternoon, and I saw Matthew going by with the buggy and sorrel mare.

**MARILLA:** Yes?

**RACHEL:** And I haven't seen him come back yet.

**MARILLA:** You've been sitting at your window for three hours?

**RACHEL:** We – had a big pea harvest this year. Anyway, I overheard Matthew tell Peter Morrison over t Blair's store in Carmody yesterday that he meant to sow turnips today.

**MARILLA:** He finished.

**RACHEL:** And?

**MARILLA:** He left.

**RACHEL:** And?

**MARILLA:** That's about all there is to it.

**RACHEL:** I suspect that's not all there is to it, Marilla. But not being the nosey type, I certainly won't pry.

**MARILLA** *(resigned to reveal the truth)*: Oh, I suppose you may as well know. Matthew went to Bright River. We're getting a little boy from an orphan asylum in Nova Scotia. He was to come in on the five-thirty train. They should be along soon. Sit and have some tea, Rachel.

**RACHEL:** I'll sit, but no tea thank you. I'm much too flabbergasted. Are you in earnest,

Marilla?

**MARILLA:** We've been thinking about it for some time. Matthew's getting up in years and his heart troubles him a good deal. So we sent for an orphan boy – old enough to do some chores right now, but young enough to be trained up proper.

**RACHEL:** Well, Marilla, I'll tell you plain that I think you're doing a mighty foolish thing – bringing a strange child into your home – not knowing a single thing about him. Why just last week I read in the paper about a man and his wife that took a boy out of the orphanage, and he set fire to the house – on purpose. Burned the whole family to a crisp! And I heard of another case where an adopted boy sucked all the eggs he gathered. But the worst one – they say that over in New Brunswick an orphan poured poison down the well and the whole family died in fearful agony. Only in that instance, it was a girl.

**MARILLA:** Well, we're not getting a girl. Matthew's afraid of them, and I'd never dream of bringing one up.

**RACHEL:** Well, I can't wait to tell – *(Correcting herself)* – to see how all this comes out. *(Going to the window)* Look, there's Matthew and the boy pulling up now. Hard to see him in this light, but looks like the first thing you're going to have to do is give him a haircut. I'll just slip out the side door so you and Matthew can be alone with the new boy. And I won't breathe a word about this. I'll let you two break the news. *(She starts to leave.)* Oh, and Marilla – if I were you, I'd keep the lid fastened, real tight over the well. *(She exits.)*