



**Lucy Maud Montgomery**

*Anne's House  
of Dreams*



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## Chapter 1

### IN THE GARRET OF GREEN GABLES

“**T**hanks be, I’m done with geometry, learning or teaching it,” said Anne Shirley, a trifle vindictively, as she thumped a somewhat battered volume of Euclid into a big chest of books, banged the lid in triumph, and sat down upon it, looking at Diana Wright across the Green Gables garret, with gray eyes that were like a morning sky.

The garret was a shadowy, suggestive, delightful place, as all garrets should be. Through the open window, by which Anne sat, blew the sweet, scented, sun-warm air of the August afternoon; outside, poplar boughs rustled and tossed in the wind; beyond them were the woods, where Lover’s Lane wound its enchanted path, and the old apple orchard, which still bore its rosy harvests munificently. And, over all, was a great mountain range of snowy clouds in the blue southern sky. Through the other window was glimpsed a distant, white-capped, blue sea—the beautiful St. Lawrence Gulf, on which floats, like a jewel, Abegweit, whose softer, sweeter Indian name has long been forsaken for the more prosaic one of Prince Edward Island.

Diana Wright, three years older than when we last saw her, had grown somewhat matronly in the intervening time. But her eyes were as black and brilliant, her cheeks as rosy, and her dimples as enchanting, as in the long-ago days when she and Anne Shirley had vowed eternal friendship in the garden at Orchard Slope. In her arms she held a small, sleeping, black-curved creature, who for two happy years had been known to

the world of Avonlea as “Small Anne Cordelia.” Avonlea folks knew why Diana had called her Anne, of course, but Avonlea folks were puzzled by the Cordelia. There had never been a Cordelia in the Wright or Barry connections. Mrs. Harmon Andrews said she supposed Diana had found the name in some trashy novel, and wondered that Fred hadn’t more sense than to allow it. But Diana and Anne smiled at each other. They knew how Small Anne Cordelia had come by her name.

“You always hated geometry,” said Diana with a retrospective smile. “I should think you’d be real glad to be through with teaching, anyhow.”

“Oh, I’ve always liked teaching, apart from geometry. These past three years in Summerside have been very pleasant ones. Mrs. Harmon Andrews told me when I came home that I wouldn’t likely find married life as much better than teaching as I expected. Evidently Mrs. Harmon is of Hamlet’s opinion that it may be better to bear the ills that we have than fly to others that we know not of.”

Anne’s laugh, as blithe and irresistible as of yore, with an added note of sweetness and maturity, rang through the garret. Marilla in the kitchen below, compounding blue plum preserve, heard it and smiled; then sighed to think how seldom that dear laugh would echo through Green Gables in the years to come. Nothing in her life had ever given Marilla so much happiness as the knowledge that Anne was going to marry Gilbert Blythe; but every joy must bring with it its little shadow of sorrow. During the three Summerside years, Anne had been home often for vacations and weekends; but, after this, a bi-annual visit would be as much as could be hoped for.

“You needn’t let what Mrs. Harmon says worry you,” said Diana, with the calm assurance of the four-year matron. “Married life has its ups and downs, of course. You mustn’t expect that everything will always go smoothly. But I can assure you, Anne, that it’s a happy life, when you’re married to the right man.”

Anne smothered a smile. Diana's airs of vast experience always amused her a little.

"I daresay I'll be putting them on too, when I've been married four years," she thought. "Surely my sense of humor will preserve me from it, though."

"Is it settled yet where you are going to live?" asked Diana, cuddling Small Anne Cordelia with the inimitable gesture of motherhood, which always sent through Anne's heart, filled with sweet, unuttered dreams and hopes, a thrill that was half pure pleasure and half a strange, ethereal pain.

"Yes. That was what I wanted to tell you when I 'phoned to you to come down today. By the way, I can't realize that we really have telephones in Avonlea now. It sounds so preposterously up-to-date and modernish for this darling, leisurely old place."

"We can thank the A. V. I. S. for them," said Diana. "We should never have got the line if they hadn't taken the matter up and carried it through. There was enough cold water thrown to discourage any society. But they stuck to it, nevertheless. You did a splendid thing for Avonlea when you founded that society, Anne. What fun we did have at our meetings! Will you ever forget the blue hall and Judson Parker's scheme for painting medicine advertisements on his fence?"

"I don't know that I'm wholly grateful to the A. V. I. S. in the matter of the telephone," said Anne. "Oh, I know it's most convenient—even more so than our old device of signaling to each other by flashes of candlelight! And, as Mrs. Rachel says, 'Avonlea must keep up with the procession, that's what.' But somehow, I feel as if I didn't want Avonlea spoiled by what Mr. Harrison, when he wants to be witty, calls 'modern inconveniences.' I should like to have it kept always just as it was in the dear old years. That's foolish—and sentimental—and impossible. So I shall immediately become wise and practical and possible. The telephone, as Mr. Harrison concedes, is 'a buster of a good thing'—even if you do know that probably half a dozen interested people are listening along the line."

“That’s the worst of it,” sighed Diana. “It’s so annoying to hear the receivers going down whenever you ring anyone up. They say Mrs. Harmon Andrews insisted that their ‘phone should be put in their kitchen just so that she could listen whenever it rang and keep an eye on the dinner at the same time. Today, when you called me, I distinctly heard that queer clock of the Pyes’ striking. So no doubt Josie or Gertie was listening.”

“Oh, so that is why you said, ‘You’ve got a new clock at Green Gables, haven’t you?’ I couldn’t imagine what you meant. I heard a vicious click as soon as you had spoken. I suppose it was the Pye receiver being hung up with profane energy. Well, never mind the Pyes. As Mrs. Rachel says, ‘Pyes they always were and Pyes they always will be, world without end, amen.’ I want to talk of pleasanter things. It’s all settled as to where my new home shall be.”

“Oh, Anne, where? I do hope it’s near here.”

“No-o-o, that’s the drawback. Gilbert is going to settle at Four Winds Harbor—sixty miles from here.”

“Sixty! It might as well be six hundred,” sighed Diana. “I never can get further from home now than Charlottetown.”

“You’ll have to come to Four Winds. It’s the most beautiful harbor on the Island. There’s a little village called Glen St. Mary at its head, and Dr. David Blythe has been practicing there for fifty years. He is Gilbert’s great-uncle, you know. He is going to retire, and Gilbert is to take over his practice. Dr. Blythe is going to keep his house, though, so we shall have to find a habitation for ourselves. I don’t know yet what it is, or where it will be in reality, but I have a little house o’dreams all furnished in my imagination—a tiny, delightful castle in Spain.”

“Where are you going for your wedding tour?” asked Diana.

“Nowhere. Don’t look horrified, Diana dearest. You suggest Mrs. Harmon Andrews. She, no doubt, will remark condescendingly that people who can’t afford wedding ‘towers’ are real sensible not to take them; and then she’ll remind

me that Jane went to Europe for hers. I want to spend my honeymoon at Four Winds in my own dear house of dreams.”

“And you’ve decided not to have any bridesmaid?”

“There isn’t anyone to have. You and Phil and Priscilla, and Jane all stole a march on me in the matter of marriage; and Stella is teaching in Vancouver. I have no other ‘kindred soul’ and I won’t have a bridesmaid who isn’t.”

“But you are going to wear a veil, aren’t you?” asked Diana, anxiously.

“Yes, indeedy. I shouldn’t feel like a bride without one. I remember telling Matthew, that evening when he brought me to Green Gables, that I never expected to be a bride because I was so homely no one would ever want to marry me—unless some foreign missionary did. I had an idea then that foreign missionaries couldn’t afford to be finicky in the matter of looks if they wanted a girl to risk her life among cannibals. You should have seen the foreign missionary Priscilla married. He was as handsome and inscrutable as those daydreams we once planned to marry ourselves, Diana; he was the best dressed man I ever met, and he raved over Priscilla’s ‘ethereal, golden beauty.’ But of course there are no cannibals in Japan.”

“Your wedding dress is a dream, anyhow,” sighed Diana rapturously. “You’ll look like a perfect queen in it—you’re so tall and slender. How do you keep so slim, Anne? I’m fatter than ever—I’ll soon have no waist at all.”

“Stoutness and slimness seem to be matters of predestination,” said Anne. “At all events, Mrs. Harmon Andrews can’t say to you what she said to me when I came home from Summerside, ‘Well, Anne, you’re just about as skinny as ever.’ It sounds quite romantic to be ‘slender,’ but ‘skinny’ has a very different tang.”

“Mrs. Harmon has been talking about your trousseau. She admits it’s as nice as Jane’s, although she says Jane married a millionaire and you are only marrying a ‘poor young doctor without a cent to his name.’”

Anne laughed.

“My dresses are nice. I love pretty things. I remember the first pretty dress I ever had—the brown gloria Matthew gave me for our school concert. Before that, everything I had was so ugly. It seemed to me that I stepped into a new world that night.”

“That was the night Gilbert recited ‘Bingen on the Rhine,’ and looked at you when he said, ‘There’s another, not a sister.’ And you were so furious because he put your pink tissue rose in his breast pocket! You didn’t much imagine then that you would ever marry him.”

“Oh, well, that’s another instance of predestination,” laughed Anne, as they went down the garret stairs.

## Chapter 2

### THE HOUSE OF DREAMS

**T**here was more excitement in the air of Green Gables than there had ever been before in all its history. Even Marilla was so excited that she couldn't help showing it—which was little short of being phenomenal.

"There's never been a wedding in this house," she said, half apologetically, to Mrs. Rachel Lynde. "When I was a child I heard an old minister say that a house was not a real home until it had been consecrated by a birth, a wedding and a death. We've had deaths here—my father and mother died here as well as Matthew; and we've even had a birth here. Long ago, just after we moved into this house, we had a married hired man for a little while, and his wife had a baby here. But there's never been a wedding before. It does seem so strange to think of Anne being married. In a way she just seems to me, the little girl Matthew brought home here fourteen years ago. I can't realize that she's grown up. I shall never forget what I felt when I saw Matthew bringing in a girl. I wonder what became of the boy we would have got if there hadn't been a mistake. I wonder what HIS fate was."

"Well, it was a fortunate mistake," said Mrs. Rachel Lynde, "though, mind you, there was a time I didn't think so—that evening I came up to see Anne and she treated us to such a scene. Many things have changed since then, that's what."

Mrs. Rachel sighed, and then brisked up again. When weddings were in order Mrs. Rachel was ready to let the dead past bury its dead.



## CONTENTS

Chapter 1. IN THE GARRET OF GREEN GABLES .....	5
Chapter 2. THE HOUSE OF DREAMS .....	11
Chapter 3. THE LAND OF DREAMS AMONG .....	17
Chapter 4. THE FIRST BRIDE OF GREEN GABLES .....	25
Chapter 5. THE HOME COMING .....	29
Chapter 6. CAPTAIN JIM .....	33
Chapter 7. THE SCHOOLMASTER'S BRIDE .....	39
Chapter 8. MISS CORNELIA BRYANT COMES TO CALL .....	49
Chapter 9. AN EVENING AT FOUR WINDS POINT .....	61
Chapter 10. LESLIE MOORE .....	72
Chapter 11. THE STORY OF LESLIE MOORE .....	80
Chapter 12. LESLIE COMES OVER .....	90
Chapter 13. A GHOSTLY EVENING .....	93
Chapter 14. NOVEMBER DAYS .....	98
Chapter 15. CHRISTMAS AT FOUR WINDS .....	102
Chapter 16. NEW YEAR'S EVE AT THE LIGHT .....	110
Chapter 17. A FOUR WINDS WINTER .....	115
Chapter 18. SPRING DAYS .....	121
Chapter 19. DAWN AND DUSK .....	129
Chapter 20. LOST MARGARET .....	135
Chapter 21. BARRIERS SWEEP AWAY .....	138

Chapter 22. MISS CORNELIA ARRANGES MATTERS .....	145
Chapter 23. OWEN FORD COMES .....	151
Chapter 24. THE LIFE-BOOK OF CAPTAIN JIM .....	156
Chapter 25. THE WRITING OF THE BOOK .....	163
Chapter 26. OWEN FORD'S CONFESSION .....	167
Chapter 27. ON THE SANDBAR .....	172
Chapter 28. ODDS AND ENDS .....	178
Chapter 29. GILBERT AND ANNE DISAGREE .....	185
Chapter 30. LESLIE DECIDES .....	192
Chapter 31. THE TRUTH MAKES FREE .....	198
Chapter 32. MISS CORNELIA DISCUSSES THE AFFAIR .....	203
Chapter 33. LESLIE RETURNS .....	207
Chapter 34. THE SHIP O'DREAMS COMES TO HARBOR .....	212
Chapter 35. POLITICS AT FOUR WINDS .....	217
Chapter 36. BEAUTY FOR ASHES .....	224
Chapter 37. MISS CORNELIA MAKES A STARTLING ANNOUNCEMENT .....	232
Chapter 38. RED ROSES .....	236
Chapter 39. CAPTAIN JIM CROSSES THE BAR .....	241
Chapter 40. FAREWELL TO THE HOUSE OF DREAMS .....	245