

AOGG Audition Cut #1: Young Anne, Matthew, Stationmaster

SCENE: *A platform at the Bright River train station.*

ANNE SHIRLEY, a young girl, sets her suitcase down and glances about nervously. She speaks as though rehearsing a presentation.

ANNE. Hello, my name is Anne Shirley, but please call me Cordelia. I think Cordelia is a much better name for me, don't you think? I am truly honored and excited to be going to Green Gables with you, Mr. Cuthbert. I feel I'm the most fortunate girl in the whole universe... or at least in the whole dominion of Canada. *(She walks to the edge of the platform and continues "rehearsing.")* Hello, my name is Anne Shirley, but please call me Cordelia—

(Her voice trails off, but she continues to mouth the words as the STATIONMASTER and MATTHEW CUTHBERT, in his early 60's, enter. ANNE does not notice them.)

STATIONMASTER *(pointing to ANNE)*. There she is at the end of the platform.

MATTHEW. But it's a boy I've come for. Mrs. Spenser was to bring a boy over from Nova Scotia here to Bright River. Then I was to take him home to Avonlea.

STATIONMASTER. Well, Mrs. Spenser got off the train with that girl and left her in my charge till you got here.

MATTHEW. There must be some mistake.

STATIONMASTER. Maybe she can explain it. She sure is a talker, that one. Now, you'll excuse me, Matthew. That's the last train today, and I'm going home for my supper. *(He exits. MATTHEW walks tentatively toward ANNE who stops reciting to herself when she sees him.)*

ANNE. Oh. I do hope you are Mr. Matthew Cuthbert.

MATTHEW. Well now, I reckon that's me.

ANNE *(brightly, giving her "speech")*. Hello, my name is Anne Shirley, but please call me Cordelia, I think Cordelia is a much better—

MATTHEW. Yes, yes, I heard you saying all that a little earlier. You were talking kinda loud.

ANNE. Oh, yes, we tend to do that where I come from. I was beginning to be afraid you weren't coming for me. If you hadn't, I was going to climb that big cherry tree down the tracks and spend the night in it.

MATTHEW. You're not a boy.

ANNE. But I can climb all the same. And I wouldn't be the least bit afraid. I'd pretend the blossoms in the moonlight were columns in a castle.

MATTHEW. Well now, I guess I can't leave you here. I'll take you home and see what Marilla says. The horse and buggy are over there. I'll carry your bag.

ANNE *(picking up the suitcase)*. Oh, I can manage it. All my worldly goods are in it, but it isn't heavy. Now isn't that beautiful?

MATTHEW. What?

ANNE. That tree over there. What does it make you think of?

MATTHEW. Well now, I dunno.

ANNE. A bride, of course, with a misty veil. I don't ever expect to be a bride myself. I'm so homely nobody would ever want to marry me – except maybe a foreign missionary. Not only am I homely, I'm also thin. I love to imagine I'm nice and plump with dimples in my elbows. Am I talking too much? People are always telling me I do. Would you rather I didn't talk? (*Somewhat unexpectedly, MATTHEW finds himself becoming intrigued by the waif before him.*)

MATTHEW. Well now, I don't mind talkative folks so much since I'm kinda quiet myself. Talk as much as you like.

ANNE. Oh, thank you. I can already tell we're kindred spirits, Mr. Cuthbert. I can hardly wait to see Green Gables. Mrs. Spenser said there's a brook nearby. That makes me almost perfectly happy. But I can never be perfectly happy because of this. (*She holds out one of her braids.*)

MATTHEW. Your hair?

ANNE. What color would you call it?

MATTHEW. Red, ain't it?

ANNE (*gloomily*). Yes, red. I can imagine away my freckles and green eyes and skinniness – but not my red hair. Have you ever imagined what it would be like to be divinely beautiful, Mr. Cuthbert?

MATTHEW. Well now, no I haven't.

ANNE. Will your sister like me even though I'm not divinely beautiful?

MATTHEW. I doubt that'd bother her much, but something else might. Might bother her a whole lot. We'd better get home.

ANNE. Home! What a lovely sound – almost angelic. I don't know that I'll ever get used to it.

MATTHEW. Let's hope you get the chance. Come along now.

ANNE. Oh, yes. Let's not delay. (*They start to leave.*) Mrs. Spenser told me all about Green Gables, and it seems like a dream. I've pinched myself black and blue from the elbows up hoping it wasn't a dream. You see, Mr. Cuthbert, all my life–