

ROMANCE AND NATURE IN L.M. MONTGOMERY'S

ANNE OF GREEN GABLES, ANNE OF AVONLEA,

AND ANNE OF THE ISLAND

THESIS

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INTRODUCTION

L. M. Montgomery, in the first three books of her *Anne* series, characterizes her protagonist, Anne Shirley, as a soul deeply in love with nature. In *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), Anne is adopted and brought to Green Gables, Avonlea, and she falls in love with its natural beauty as soon as she arrives there. Indeed, Montgomery sets all of her books in Prince Edward Island, a noted spot for its natural beauty. *Anne of Avonlea* (1909) explores Anne's life as a young school teacher, and in *Anne of the Island* (1915), Anne leaves her beloved island for college.

The first time I met Anne was in Iran, through the Kevin Sullivan film (1985). There, as a teenager, I fell in love with Anne Shirley and pictured my life similar to hers. A few years later, as a young lady, I again watched the movie, uncensored. I was still in love with Anne and her romantic, emotional character and world. The movie does not show Anne's romantic narrative with Roy, but pictures Anne's romance with Gilbert so beautifully and definitely that I couldn't think of any other option for Anne's ideal husband. I became interested in knowing more about the romance in the story. At that time I liked seeing Anne and Gilbert's romance, but could not understand why she rejects him sometimes. After reading *Anne of Green Gables* for the first time, I thought it was time to study the idea of romance in the story, so I decided to research it for my thesis. Thus, through reading *Anne of Green Gables* more closely and later reading *Anne of Avonlea* and *Anne of the Island*, I discovered there are also other kinds of romances in the

book that Montgomery shows readers and that are not shown in the movie very explicitly. For example, Anne's romance with nature, though so important for Anne, is not shown very clearly in the movie. The nature is pictured very nicely in the movie, yet the film does not imply the depth of Anne's romance with it as Montgomery does in the book. Overall, the movie shows the traditional romances in the book very well, but does not picture the nontraditional romances as strongly as they are written in the book.

Before going further into the idea of romance, one thing needs to be clarified; the conventional romance is the love, fondness, or infatuation between a boy and a girl or a man and a woman; but when it comes to Anne's romance with nature, she, in fact, displaces the boy in the romantic equation with the natural world, which is, actually, Romantic in the early 19th century sense of the word.

As the story progresses, Anne's sense of romance with nature seems in contrast with society: its culture, its belief, and its people. While society believes in realistic and reasonable romances (conventional romance in its literal meaning), Anne's romance seems unreal and childish. As Anne grows up, this contrast gets stronger, so that Anne has to leave a great deal of her childish romantic sensibility in order to be accepted by an unromantic society. Anne's romantic nature can be classified in two ways: traditional and nontraditional. Her romance with nature, which lies among the nontraditional romances, plays an important and central role in Anne's romantic personality. Anne, who is a child when we meet her, finds romance in nature, takes refuge in nature when alone, learns many lessons from nature, and respects nature. Nature means everything to her. However as Anne ages, she learns to accept traditional romance. The subject of this thesis is romance that originates in nature, then, with the passage of time, Anne's sense of

romance transforms from nontraditional to traditional, from nature to humans, from herself to other people.

L.M. Montgomery, the well-known Canadian children's writer, experienced two major literary eras in her life: Victorian and Edwardian. The Victorian era of the United Kingdom (1837-1901) marked the height of the British Industrial Revolution and the apex of the British Empire. The mid-Victorian period witnessed significant social changes and an evangelical revival occurred alongside a series of legal changes in women's rights. While women were not enfranchised during the Victorian period, they did gain the legal right to their property upon marriage through the Married Women's Property Act, the right to divorce, and the right to fight for custody of their children upon separation (Batho, Chapman, Tucker). Most of these changes are related to women's issues in a male-dominated society, and many manifested themselves in the works of several women writers of the time, like L.M. Montgomery. Her *Anne* books rebel against Victorian concepts. The way Montgomery writes about Anne, an orphan girl and a very successful and beloved heroine who pursues higher education and becomes active and successful in male-dominated aspects of society, is the result of ideas that arose in the Victorian era against the limited beliefs on women's rights.

But, actually, even more than the Victorian era, it was Romanticism that formed Montgomery's writings. John B. Halsted addresses several primary characteristics of Romanticism in his book, *Romanticism*,

Romanticism [1780 to 1850] opposed the superficiality of the conventions of an artificial, urban, aristocratic society quite as much as the ideas the conventions were taken to embody. [...] for Romanticism nature was

pointed to as a standard, the “natural” constituted a standard for beauty and natural behavior a standard in morality. [...] Nature unsullied by man was seen as full of spiritual value; and those peasants who lived in it [...] were believed to be spiritually superior to city men. [...] The main force and tendency [...] was to note the importance of the heart, of feeling, of emotion, of passion [...] Pity and the importance of sentiment often produced sheer sentimentality, as in much of the glorification of children or pity for the fallen woman who was pure of heart. (5, 10, 13, 14)

If one reads Montgomery’s *Anne* series closely, one can find most of these Romantic features and concepts.

Montgomery both criticizes and promotes the idea of romance in her *Anne* books. In the first two books she encourages the childish romances, the nontraditional ones, while she also criticizes the grown ups’ traditional romances. During the third book, as Montgomery demonstrates through the character Anne, there is no way to live in society without accepting its rules. The idea of romance plays a multilateral role in the *Anne* books, and this thesis aims to discover those different meanings: the deeper surfaces hidden in the word “romance” used in the books.

To interpret the *Anne* books, besides reading them closely, I have also employed Montgomery scholarship, New Historical, and Biographical theories. In New Historicism, a literary work should be considered a product of the time, place, and circumstances of its composition rather than as an isolated creation. New Historicists aim simultaneously to understand the work through its historical context and to understand cultural and intellectual history through literature. In Biographical criticism, the writer’s

life and autobiography are crucial to understanding his/her literary work. Irene Gammel in her book, *The Intimate Life of L.M. Montgomery*, states, “Montgomery signals an explicit connection between her fiction and her life, and refers to that connection as a story” (243). Gammel believes that: “Montgomery’s journals function as a document that explains the ways in which Montgomery’s fiction, notably her most famous and best-loved novel, *Anne of Green Gables*, is connected to the incidents and environment of her life” (248). So, having knowledge about the Victorian era or women’s issues of the time, of Romanticism and its conceptions of nature and emotion, and also of Montgomery’s intimate life, ideas, and beliefs, helps the reader to better understand the themes of her *Anne* books.

It is also important to note Montgomery’s shift in writing styles. In her first two books, Montgomery employs a “writerly” style, while in the third book, her style becomes more “readerly”. Roland Barthes in his book, *S/Z*, indicates:

The primary evaluation of all texts can come neither from science [...] nor from ideology. Our evaluation can be linked only to a practice, and this practice is that of writing. On the one hand, there is what it is possible to write, and on the other, what it is no longer possible to write: what is within the practice of the writer and what has left it: which texts would I consent to write (to re-write), to desire, to put forth as a force in this world of mine? What evaluation finds is precisely this value: what can be written (rewritten) today: the *writerly*. [...] the goal of literary work (of literature as work) is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text. (4)

Sharon A. Beehler in her article, “Close vs. Closed Reading: Interpreting the Clues”, interprets Barthes’ definition of “writerly” text as “one to which the reader responds actively and which, in fact, the reader *re_writes*. This *re_writing* occurs simultaneously with the reading of the text and involves the reader in the process of ‘interpretation’” (40). In *Anne of Avonlea*, and especially *Anne of Green Gables*, Montgomery’s “writerly” writing style affords a reader enough space for thinking and producing various meanings and interpretations of the text.

However, in *Anne of the Island*, we see a less “writerly” and more “readerly” text. Barthes indicates: “Opposite the writerly text, then, is its countervalue, its negative, reactive value: what can be read, but not written: the *readerly*” (4). Beehler again uses Barthes’ idea and explains the “readerly” text as “one which the reader believes to be limited, the authority for that limitation resting entirely with the text itself: the reader is merely a passive receiver of another’s writing” (40). While reading Montgomery’s third *Anne* book, the reader encounters a set of events that seem predetermined in their outcome, with no real alternatives for writer or reader to consider or choose. As we will examine in detail in later chapters, Montgomery finally and unwillingly has to accept what society expects for her heroine’s romantic life. Montgomery herself acts like a passive receiver of her society’s acceptable kinds of stories and romances. I think this is the reason why she chooses the “readerly” style for her third book; to depict this limitation and constraint for her readers. Montgomery intentionally positions the reader as a passive receiver of her conventional ideology, unable to produce as many interpretations and meanings as he/she had in the first two *Anne* books.

This thesis attempts to uncover romantic aspects of Anne's character, as well as explicate her struggles for keeping romance in her life. In chapter one, I will focus on Anne's romance with nature, what nature really means to her, how nature works as a therapy for her, and how this romantic sensibility apparently fades as Anne grows older. Chapter two considers Anne in society, her struggles while growing up in such an unromantic society, and her efforts to adapt to the environment and people who want to take her out of her romantic world. Finally, for chapter three, I will show how Anne enthusiastically resists the unromantic values that society and people want to impose on her during every period of her life, and how she eventually has to accept them.

CHAPTER I

ANNE'S ROMANCE WITH NATURE

Anne's romance with nature can be classified as both nontraditional romance and "writerly" text. As discussed earlier in the Introduction, in writerly texts, readers have enough scope for imagination and personal interpretations. Most of the nature scenes and Anne's romance with them are not only inspiring, imaginative, and romantic for her, but also for the readers. Montgomery loves nature and devoted a lot of time to nature. She also has personally experienced the natural scenes she writes about in her books; she describes them very beautifully and precisely so that readers are able to genuinely feel those scenes almost identically as Anne does in the books. These vivid and authentic descriptions, highlighted by Montgomery's use of the senses, make reading the novel very enjoyable. One can feel the beauty of the White Way of Delight by Montgomery's description:

A stretch of road four or five hundred yards long, completely arched over with huge, wide-spreading apple-trees, planted years ago by an eccentric old farmer. Overhead was one long canopy of snowy fragrant bloom. Below the boughs the air was full of a purple twilight and far ahead a glimpse of painted sunset sky shone like a great rose window at the end of a cathedral aisle. (*AGG* 17)

Or the beauty of Lover's Lane or the Lake of Shining Waters:

a pond, looking almost like a river so long and winding was it. A bridge spanned it midway and from there to its lower end, where an amber-hued belt of sand hills shut it in from the dark blue gulf beyond, the water was a glory of many shifting hues—the most spiritual shadings of crocus and rose and ethereal green, with other elusive tintings for which no name has ever been found. Above the bridge the pond ran up into fringing groves of fir and maple and lay all darkly translucent in their wavering shadows. Here and there a wild plum leaned out from the bank like a white-clad girl tiptoeing to her own reflection. From the marsh at the head of the pond came the clear, mournfully-sweet chorus of the frogs. (*AGG* 19)

Or the horror dominating the Haunted Woods that Montgomery describes through Anne:

“Diana and I just imagined the wood was haunted. All the places around here are so—so—*commonplace*. We just got this up for our own amusement. We began it in April. A haunted wood is so very romantic, Marilla. We chose the spruce grove because it’s so gloomy. Oh, we have imagined the most harrowing things. There’s a white lady walks along the brook just about this time of the night and wrings her hands and utters wailing cries. She appears when there is to be a death in the family. And the ghost of a little murdered child haunts the corner up by Idlewild; it creeps up behind you and lays its cold fingers on your hand—so. Oh, Marilla, it gives me a shudder to think of it. And there’s a headless man stalks up and down the path and skeletons glower at you between the boughs. Oh, Marilla, I wouldn’t go through the Haunted Wood after dark

now for anything, I'd be sure that white things would reach out from behind the trees and grab me." (AGG 164)

Among the Anne's series, *Anne of Green Gables* is the only book with a plethora of natural scenes. Other series have some romances with nature although none of them has such plentiful chromatic and romantic descriptions as *Anne of Green Gables*. In fact, the most important characteristic of *Anne of Green Gables* is its beautiful nature scenes coupled with a little lovable girl who is deeply in love with nature.

Anne loves nature, especially the nature of Avonlea, and gets easily excited about every beautiful scene of nature she encounters. She describes these sights with incredibly romantic words which infuse her feeling to her listener. In Anne's first appearance in the story, she is waiting for Matthew at the train station. When Matthew arrives Anne starts talking about the beauty of the wild cherry tree in front of the station and about her decision to sleep in it if Matthew had not come for her:

"I'm very glad to see you. I was beginning to be afraid you weren't coming for me and I was imagining all the things that might have happened to prevent you. I had made up my mind that if you didn't come for me tonight I'd go down the track to that big wild cherry tree at the bend, and climb up into it to stay all night. I wouldn't be a bit afraid and it would be lovely to sleep in a wild cherry tree all white with bloom in the moonshine, don't you think? You could imagine you were dwelling in marble halls, couldn't you? And I was quite sure you would come for me in the morning, if you didn't tonight." (AGG 11-12)

Through these vivid words and the way Anne describes the scene, Montgomery characterizes and introduces her protagonist to the readers: a girl who has a powerful imagination, a romantic soul, and a deep love of nature. It's interesting that Anne, as an 11 years old girl, does not think to go to stationmaster and ask him for help if Matthew did not come for her. She, very gladly and calmly, simply imagines herself in the cherry tree and staying there all night. Here Montgomery gives the readers the first clue that Anne feels more comfortable, much happier, and safer to be in nature than with people: "I wouldn't be a bit afraid and it would be lovely to sleep in a wild cherry tree" (AGG 12). Anne loves nature more than people and anything else in the world. However, she does not reject people completely because she does realize that she needs to have both nature and people to be able to live in the society: "I'm very glad to see you. I was beginning to be afraid you weren't coming for me."

As the story progresses, the reader discovers that it is not merely a simple love of nature for Anne but that nature has a greater meaning to her. It helps Anne to fill her loneliness, especially before coming to Green Gables, and cope with the difficulties she encountered during her life at the orphanage. Anne is trying to find in nature whatever she wanted to have as an 11 years old girl but did not get. For example, Anne does not have any friends before arriving at Green Gables; so her only friend is her own image reflected in a cupboard. She also does not have any dolls to play with or to name as all the other girls in her age do. So, after coming to Green Gables, she tries to take advantage of its beautiful nature. Anne looks at different parts of Avonlea's nature as her different friends; she enjoys naming them and making them her own friends. Snow Queen is one of her nature friends who later symbolizes Anne's lovely romantic childhood. Nobody

can take nature away from the young girl, so she gives identity to the nature around her—trees, flowers, lakes, and everything else that is part of nature— and in this way she makes them for herself. Thus she has something very special that nobody else has. Anne immerses herself in her romantic relationship with nature to the point that she replaces the boy in the conventional romantic scene with nature. As will be explained in chapter two, Anne rejects Gilbert's romance to keep her romance with nature; becoming engaged in the real world is unromantic for Anne and distances her from nature, so she must resist the real world by rejecting Gilbert and his promise of romance. Additionally, Anne's arrival at Green Gables provides her with a home, something that she never had before. She finally feels that she belongs somewhere and that there are some people who truly love her. Furthermore she can give her love to them and to the beautiful nature of Avonlea; most importantly she is loved in return which is something that she missed out on throughout her life.

Matthew and Diana are two of the people whom Anne really loves and, not coincidentally, both of them also love nature. Anne tries to be grateful to Marilla because Marilla allowed Anne to stay with her and Matthew. Marilla tells that her decision to keep Anne is not because she loves her but because he wants to keep Anne: ““And, since you seem to want her, I suppose I'm willing—or have to be”” (*AGG* 47). Anne likes Matthew because he liked Anne from the beginning and wants her to stay with them. In spite of Matthew's shyness, he shows his love to Anne, so she loves him back. When Marilla tells Matthew that they are going to keep Anne, “Matthew's shy face was a glow of delight;” he also advises Marilla, ““Only be as good and kind to her as you can be without spoiling her. I kind of think she's one of the sort you can do anything with if you

only get her to love you” (AGG 48). Despite Marilla’s disapproval, Matthew buys Anne chocolates, a pearl necklace, a puffed sleeves dress which Anne always wanted. Anne’s opposing feelings towards Matthew and Marilla are highlighted when Anne replies to Mrs. Lynde’s statements about her appearance very angrily and rudely. Then, for her punishment, Marilla asks Anne to go to Mrs. Lynde’s to apologize. Anne answers very determinedly, “I can never do that, [...] You can punish me in any way you like, Marilla. [...] I shall have to stay here for ever then [...] because I can’t tell Mrs. Lynde I’m sorry I said those things to her” (AGG 68). However when Matthew asks her to do the same thing she replies: “I suppose I could do it to oblige you [...] I’d do anything for you—if you really want me to—” (AGG 72).

In addition to Matthew, Anne also loves her “bosom friend” Diana. Anne begins loving Diana even before meeting her. Before she meets Diana, she is frightened that her future best friend’s mother might not like her: ““Oh, Marilla, you’d be excited, too, if you were going to meet a little girl you hoped to be your bosom friend and whose mother mightn’t like you”” (AGG 85). It is as if they were born to be each other’s bosom friend. Moreover when they meet for the first time, they swear to be friends with each other forever: “I solemnly swear to be faithful to my bosom friend, Diana Barry, as long as the sun and moon shall endure [...] Diana repeated the ‘oath’ with a laugh fore and aft” (AGG 88). Their love to each other is not only visible in their actions but in their words as well:

“Oh, Diana [...] do you *love* me?”

“Why, of course I do. Didn’t you know that?”

“No. [...] I thought you *liked* me of course, but I never hoped you *loved* me. Why, Diana, I didn’t think anybody could love me. Nobody ever has loved me since I can remember. Oh, this is wonderful! It’s a ray of light which will forever shine on the darkness of a path severed from thee, Diana [...] And I will always love thee, Diana, [...] In the years to come thy memory will shine like a star over my lonely life, as that last story we read together says.” (*AGG* 131-132, italics in the original)

Their hearts beat for each other in mirth and remorse. One friend is happy for the other’s success. For example when Anne passed the exam, Diana runs to tell her, “‘Anne you’ve passed,’ she cried, ‘passed the *very first*—you and Gilbert both—you’re ties—but your name is first. Oh, I’m so proud!’” (*AGG* 336). Diana is as happy as if she herself had passed the exam. Anne, of course, shows her love for Diana as well. When Anne goes to Aunt Josephine, despite all her fright and pride, to confess that it was her fault not Dian’s for jumping on Aunt Josephine while she was slept is another illustration of their love: “That it was all my fault about jumping into bed on you last night. I suggested it. Diana would never have thought of such a thing, I am sure. Diana is a very ladylike girl Miss. Barry. So you must see how unjust it is to blame her” (*AGG* 157). Throughout the story, Anne and Diana are always with each other, physically or mentally, and nothing can separate them even after the currant wine incident and they are forbidden to meet each other. Anne invites Diana to tea at her home while Marilla is out in Carmody. Anne has Marilla’s permission to serve Diana with “a bottle half full of raspberry cordial” (*AGG* 122), but when the time comes, Anne cannot find the bottle in its place, and she takes the wine bottle by mistake. Diana drinks “three big tumblerfuls” and then feels dizzy and

sick. When Mrs. Barry finds about it she says, “[Anne] must be a thoroughly bad, wicked little girl and she’s never, never going to let Diana play with [her] again” (*AGG* 127). The next day they say their farewells:

“Oh, Diana, will you promise faithfully never to forget me, the friend of your youth, no matter what dearer friends may caress thee?”

“Indeed I will,” sobbed Diana, “and I’ll never have another bosom friend—I don’t want to have. I couldn’t love anybody as I love you.”

(*AGG* 131)

Of course, eventually, Mrs. Barry repents her anger and all is well for Anne and Diana.

The notable characteristic about Diana and Matthew is that they both love nature, like Anne. In Matthew’s case, as Anne points out, there are many “fields he had tilled and the orchards he had loved and the trees he had planted” (*AGG* 297). Anne later tells to Mrs. Allan:

“I was down to graveyard to plant a rosebush on Matthew’s grave this afternoon,” said Anne dreamily. “I took a slip of the little white Scotch rosebush his mother brought out from Scotland long ago; Matthew always liked those roses the best—they were so small and sweet on their thorny stems. It made me feel glad that I could plant it by his grave—as if I were doing something that must please him in taking it there to be near him. I hope he has roses like them in heaven. Perhaps the souls of all those little white rose that he has loved so many summers were all there to meet him. I must go home now. Marilla is all alone and she gets lonely at twilight.”

(*AGG* 298)

Although there is little evidence of Matthew's love of nature before his death, it does not mean that he did not love nature. He might have concealed his love of nature for some reasons; first is the fear of being ridiculed by Marilla – a very serious character with no sense of romance – and also by people of Avonlea, especially in such a male-dominated society of the time. Moreover, nobody else other than Anne could find out about this love because, as Elizabeth Rollins Epperly in her book, *The Fragrance of Sweet-Grass; L.M. Montgomery's Heroines and the Pursuit of Romance*, states, "Anne finds the romance around her – not because her active imagination manufactures it, but because it is there to be discovered" (45), even if it is a romance to nature.

In Diana's case, most of Anne's romance with nature is accompanied by Diana, making Anne's romance complete and more enjoyable. For example, the beginning of their friendship happens outside in the Barry garden "which was full of mellow sunset light streaming through the dark old firs to the west of it, stood Anne and Diana, gazing bashfully at one another over a clump of gorgeous tiger lilies" (AGG 86). Also "The way Anne and Diana went to school was a pretty one. Anne thought those walks to and from school with Diana couldn't be improved upon even by imagination. [...] to go by Lover's Lane and Willowmere and Violet Vale and the Birch Path was romantic, if ever anything was" (AGG 105). They also name special places in nature together: "'Oh, we have named that little round pool over in Mr. Barry's field Willowmere'" (AGG 93). Therefore, Diana, along with Matthew are Anne's kindred spirits who love nature, thus Anne loves them too.

Halsted suggests, "It was Romantic thought that first offered the escape from what seemed to many an oppressive mechanism. It did so by returning God to nature [...]"

Nature for some became divinity [...] God in nature is one version of nature's beneficence" (12). That is why, although Anne has never said any prayer before coming to Green Gables, she knows God very well: "If I really wanted to pray I'll tell you what I'd do. I'd go out into a great big field all alone or into the deep, deep woods, and I'd look up into the sky—up—up—up—into that lovely blue sky that looks as if there was no end to its blueness. And then I'd just *feel* a prayer" (AGG 50-51, italic in the original). Nature and home are the most important places to Anne. When she prays for the first time, she says:

"Gracious heavenly Father, I thank Thee for the White Way of Delight and the Lake of Shining Waters and Bonny and the Snow Queen. I'm really extremely grateful for them. And that's all the blessing I can think of just now to thank Thee for. As for the things I want, they're so numerous that it would take a great deal of time to name them all, so I will only mention the two most important. Please let me stay at Green Gables; and please let me be good-looking when I grow up." (AGG 51)

She thanks God first for all the beautiful scenes that He created in Avonlea. She thanks Him for creating the scenes for people to enjoy and not solely for her own personal enjoyment. Only then does she ask Him to keep her at Green Gables thus giving her a home. And finally she asks to look pretty. This order of her prayer demonstrates how much Anne loves nature.

The love of nature, especially the nature of Green Gables, overflows in Anne's soul so much so that, as Epperly indicates, "Prince Edward Island is part of Anne's identity" (24). The view from Anne's room window at Green Gable is an incredibly

beautiful scene that she figuratively praises the first time she looks out the window, “Anne dropped on her knees and gazed out into the June morning, her eyes glistening with delight” (*AGG* 30). By coupling the exquisite nature with Anne’s home, Montgomery creates the perfect romantic place for Anne to feel safe and comfortable and thus allowing her “scope for imagination [there]” (*AGG* 30):

A huge cherry-tree grew outside, so close that its boughs tapped against the house, and it was so thick-set with blossoms that hardly a leaf was to be seen. On both sides of the house was a big orchard, one of apple trees and one of cherry trees, also showered over with blossoms; and their grass was all sprinkled with dandelions. In the garden below were lilac trees purple with flowers, and their dizzily sweet fragrance drifted up to the window on the morning wind. (*AGG* 30-31)

Montgomery bases the romance in the story on nature’s romance. She fills Anne’s soul with nature’s romance so that Anne can never forget or leave it. She creates the best and most romantic childhood for Anne by placing beautiful nature around her. She allows Anne to open her heart to nature because it is the only romance that really gives “thrill” to her and Anne would never get regretful or tired of having a romance with nature. It is the only romance that never betrays Anne or leaves her alone, but, whenever Anne is tired of the unromantic world, she finds refuge in the beauty of nature and remembers her romance with it. So, in this first book, Anne fills her soul with nature’s romance and gets ready to grow up and enter the unromantic world of society.

When Anne is happy, her view of nature is positive. For example, when Anne and Diana are invited by Aunt Josephine to her home in town for the Exhibition, they both are so happy that they enjoy every scene of nature when driving there:

It was a long drive, but Anne and Diana enjoyed every minute of it. It was delightful to rattle along over the moist roads in the early red sunlight that was creeping across the shorn harvest fields [...] sometimes it wound along a harbor shore and passed by a little cluster of weather-gray fishing huts; again it mounted to hills whence a far sweep of curving upland or misty blue sky could be seen; but wherever it went there was much of interest to discuss. (*AGG* 232)

However, even when Anne is deeply sad, nature never seems to lose its beauty. Actually, it helps Anne to feel better when she is surrounded by nature. In the scene when Matthew is dead and Anne feels extremely sad, she cannot resist the good feeling that nature provides her:

She felt something like shame and remorse when she discovered that the sunrise behind the firs and the pale pink buds opening in the garden gave her the old inrush of gladness when she saw them [...] in brief, the beautiful world of blossom and love and friendship had lost none of its power to please her fancy and thrill her heart, that life still called to her with many insistent voices. (*AGG* 297)

After writing *Anne of Green Gables*, complete with beautiful descriptions of nature, Montgomery writes the sequel *Anne of Avonlea*. One element the two books have in common is the scenes showing Anne's romance with nature. Although Anne talks

much less about her romances and her thoughts in *Anne of Avonlea*, there are still many situations reinforcing Anne's romance with nature. Anne tries forming a group for improving beauty of the nature of Avonlea, its buildings, and homes. Nature is Anne's love, so she would do anything to see Avonlea become more beautiful. She tells Mrs. Rachel, "There are lots of things which might be done to make it prettier" (AA 10). She also talks to Mr. Harrison about the improvements: "I think Avonlea is a lovely place; and the people in it are very nice, too [...] I like it all the better for them" (AA 24).

Anne's first concern with the Avonlea Improvement Society (AVIS) is making its nature more beautiful not improving the people. When Mrs. Rachel talks to Anne about AVIS, "Well, you'll get into no end of hot water if you do. Better leave it alone, Anne, that's what. People don't like being improved," Anne replies very confidently, "Oh, we are not going to try to improve the *people*. It is Avonlea itself" (AA 10, italics in the original). Nevertheless as the story progresses, Anne's hesitation about improving the people shifts. Mr. Harrison tells his idea about AVIS to Anne, "that's right. Go ahead. There's lots of room for improvement in this settlement ... and in the people too." This time Anne does not completely reject the idea of improving people: "Oh, I don't know," flashed Anne. To herself, or to her particular cronies, she might admit that there were some small imperfections, easily removable, in Avonlea and its habitants" (AA 24). However, Anne cannot, in reality, improve Avonlea without improving its people.

The first project the AVIS decides to implement is paint the hall. The reactions of some people to this event prove to Anne that improving Avonlea depends on improving its people. Almost all the inhabitants approached by Anne to help with the project are incorrect in their way of thinking or living. For example, the pessimistic Eliza Andrews

does not believe in beauty nor modernity, so she does not help them paint the hall. She believes ““It’s no benefit to the settlement ... just a place for young folks to meet and carry on when they’s better be home in their beds”” (AA 44). Mr. Daniel Blair is a henpecked husband who is so afraid of his wife, so he helps them because they helped him to mix the cake his wife had ordered him to do (AA 46). Mrs. White is a meticulous woman and she helps them, as Diana says, ““to prevent us from having to go back”” (AA 48). The first step for improving Avonlea is changing the people to think more modernly and to be more open to change: I the Improvers are not able to do any improvement without the help of the people of Avonlea. However, finally, through their efforts and hard work, they affect the prejudiced people. When the group finally decides to paint the hall, they collect money and give it to Mr. Roger Pye to get the green color paint in town. And Mr. Joshua Pye is selected to paint the hall. Unfortunately, Mr. Roger Pye, due to a misunderstanding, gets the wrong color. When the job is finished, the group finds out that the hall has been painted ““a deep, brilliant blue, the shade they use for painting carts and wheel barrows”” instead of green (AA 71). ““The Avonlea people did not laugh; they were too angry””:

The luckless Improvers expected that Avonlea would be more prejudiced than ever against them; but instead, public sympathy veered around in their favor. People thought the eager, enthusiastic little band who had worked so hard for their object had been badly used. Mrs. Lynde told them to keep on and show the Pyses that there really were people in the world who could do things without making a muddle of them. Mr. Major Spencer sent them word that he would clean out all the stumps along the

road front of his farm and seed it down with grass at his own expense”

(*AA* 73)

As Halsted believes, Romantic nature helps people to seek their origin (12), their real identity. Romanticists believed in the warmth that “was of the heart, expressed in enthusiasm and usually enhanced by communion with nature” (Halsted 13). So, the Improvers actually help Avonlea people to find their origin and their real identity beside nature and bring the beauty and warmth to Avonlea through a communion with each other and with nature.

Another characteristic of a real lover is sacrificing himself for his love; he would endure any hardship to make his love happier. This endurance is also seen in Anne’s relationship with nature. For example, when she goes to Copp’s house to get a serving platter, she discovers that the Copp girls are not home. She then decides to climb up on the roof of a little house, “which had in times past served as a habitation for ducks” to look into the pantry for the platter (*AA* 155). When she leans on the window sill to take a look, she suddenly crashes through the duck house roof up to her armpits. It begins raining in so Anne is stuck there without protection from the thunderstorm. Even in that situation Anne does not complain at all. Instead she says to Diana, ““Don’t pity me, Diana, for I haven’t minded it at all. I kept thinking how much good the rain will do and how glad my garden must be for it, and imagining what the flowers and buds would think when the drops began to fall”” (*AA* 157). The extent of her love with nature is emphasized even in this unromantic situation. It also illustrates Anne’s power of inverting an unpleasant situation to a pleasant one by thinking about the romantic parts of it.

In another chapter when the girls are in the woods talking about wishes they would like granted, Montgomery writes, “Anne thought of her hair and then dismissed the thought as unworthy. ‘I wish it’d might be spring all the time and in everybody’s heart and all our lives,’ she said” (*AA* 107). Anne first wishes the best season for nature and then makes a wish for people in general; she is trying to connect her feelings about nature to people, although the nature, as always, comes first. She even pictures heaven for herself as beautiful nature with four seasons: “only like a part of heaven. In the other parts there would be summer and autumn... yes, and a bit of winter, too. I think I want glittering snowy fields and white frosts in heaven sometimes” (*AA* 107). All these scenes depict Anne as a true lover of nature whom has strong romances with all aspects of her love.

Actually *Anne of Avonlea* works as a transitional text: Anne as a character moves from childhood to marriagability, from a resistant girl to a surrendered young lady; and, through the course of the novel, Montgomery as a writer transitions from a “writerly” style to a “readerly” one. In the last scene of the book, Anne is sitting in nature, in the same place that her older friend, Miss Lavendar’s, first romance and her marriage happened, talking with Gilbert and trying to give herself hope about her unromantic romance with Gilbert:

Perhaps, after all, romance did not come into one’s life with pomp and blare, like a gay knight riding down; perhaps it crept to one’s side like an old friend through quiet ways; perhaps it revealed itself in seeming prose, until some sudden shaft of illumination flung athwart its pages betrayed the rhythm and the music; perhaps ... perhaps ... love unfolded naturally

out of a beautiful friendship, as a golden-hearted rose slipping from its green sheath. (*AA* 277)

This is not the same confident, strong, romantic Anne in *Anne of Green Gables* because these are not the words she usually uses, and this is not the way that she usually looks at the world around her. Montgomery is introducing a new Anne to the readers: a girl who is ready to surrender herself to destiny or society. She is far from the old Anne who used to resist against every unromantic situation that she did not like. Epperly points out:

The rose, as the symbol of passion and romance, is associated in Anne's mind with the fairy-tale of Miss Lavendar and her own changing friendship with Gilbert. While Anne apparently eschews courtly, chivalric romance in favor of real life, she is merely turning away from medieval romance (or a Victorian version of it) and towards the traditional romance of which the rose is the emblem. (54)

As is seen in this scene, Montgomery changes Anne's tone, thus beginning Montgomery's change of style from "writerly" to "readerly". Up to this point, the readers can interact with the text and have their own interpretations of it, but from now on, Montgomery directs the readers to her beliefs. From this point on there is no scope for interpreting and interacting with text, it is simply reading and accepting the only possibility that Montgomery defines for the readers. Therefore, it is not only a new Anne in *Anne of the Island*, but also a new style of writing: the "readerly" style.

Anne believes herself a true lover of nature so that she is able to see in nature what the others cannot. She enjoys knowing more about her romance because it causes her to fall more in love with it. Even if one knows nothing about her romance with

nature, one can just feel it in her words: “I want to explore all those fields and lonely places anyhow. I have a conviction that there are scores of beautiful nooks there that have never really been *seen* although they may have been *looked* at. We’ll make friends with wind and sky and sun, and bring home the spring in our heart” (*AA* 103, italics in the original). Once more Montgomery makes the clear point that Anne cannot and will not be separated from nature and its romance at all.

At the end of *Anne of Green Gables*, Anne learns that she must not speak out about her romance but must keep it like a treasure in her heart. In *Anne of Avonlea*, Montgomery repeats this fact again: “But she had long ago learned that when she wandered into the realm of fancy she must go alone. The way to it was by an enchanted path where not even her dearest might follow her” (*AA* 14). The readers see how much Anne desires to speak out her thoughts and they feel her deep sorrow of not being able to do that. The day that Anne and some of her friends are out for picnic, they encounter a patch of violets. Anne gets excited as usual but does not say much; then Priscilla expresses, “If a kiss could be seen I think it would look like a violet”. Anne “glows” at her sentence, maybe because Priscilla, like Anne, looks at nature with a romantic eye. Anne responds, “I’m so glad you *spoke* that thought, Priscilla, instead of just thinking it and keeping it to yourself. This world would be a much more interesting place ... although it *is* very interesting anyhow ... if people spoke out their real thoughts” (*AA* 105, ellipses in the original). First Anne talks about making this day as a golden day in their memories: “Let’s try to make this a really golden day, girls, a day to which we can always look back with delight” (*AA* 104). A little later Anne says, “Anyhow, we can tell all our thoughts today because we are going to have nothing but beautiful thoughts.

Everybody can say just what comes into her head. *That is conversation*” (AA 105).

Apparently, the day is golden for Anne because she is allowed to speak out loud her thought in this day.

Montgomery wants to be sure that the readers are aware of the fact that Anne never quit her romance with nature, but she only decided to be quiet: “‘What a nice month this November has been!’ said Anne, who had never quite got over her childish habit of talking to herself” (AA 74). Diana also references this issue: “‘Anne Shirley, you’re only pretending to be grown up. I believe when you’re alone you’re as much a little girl as you ever were” (AA 75). “‘Well, one can’t get over the habit of being a little girl all at once,’ said Anne gaily. ‘You see, I was little for fourteen years and I’ve only been grown uppish for scarcely three. I’m sure I shall always feel like a *child in the woods*” (AA 75, emphasis added). In fact, “child” here means Anne’s childish way of having a strong romance with nature. When Anne “feels like a child in the woods” it is because her connection and romance to nature is so strong that she, although a young lady, cannot resist showing it. The Temptation of nature’s romance is so powerful in her that Anne simply surrenders against it and opens her bosom to nature, for she “throw[s] her arm about a slim young birch and kiss[es] its cream-white trunk” (AA 75), and feels like a child in the woods. She actually enjoys of her surrender to nature’s romance.

However, this childish romance with nature disappears more as Anne grows up. This is more apparent in *Anne of the Island*, Montgomery’s third Anne book. In this book, there are fewer descriptions of nature and Anne’s romance with it. As Anne gets older, the physical setting of her stories expands too, but the natural scenes become fewer and fewer. In fact, Montgomery does not show many romances with nature at all in her

third book, but uses nature metaphorically for indicating her opinions on the events that happen to Anne as a young lady. Descriptions of nature help Montgomery indicate indirectly either her agreement or disagreement with some beliefs of early twentieth century society. Montgomery in the first chapter of *Anne of the Island*, “The Shadow of Change,” talks about a big change in Anne’s story by shifting from the spring and summer settings she usually emphasizes to autumn setting. Montgomery begins the chapter with a description of nature:

“Harvest is ended and summer is gone,” quoted Anne Shirley, gazing across the shorn fields dreamily.

[...] everything in the landscape around them spoke of autumn. The sea was roaring hollowly in the distance, the fields were bare and sere, scarfed with golden rod, the brook valley below Green Gables overflowed with asters of ethereal purple, and the Lake of Shining Waters was blue—blue—blue; not the changeful blue of spring, nor the pale azure of summer, but a clear, steadfast, serene blue, as if the water were past all moods and tenses of emotion and had settled down to a tranquility unbroken by fickle dreams. (*AI* 1)

Montgomery prepares readers for different sorts of changes they will see in the book: Anne’s moving away, her starting college, and having societally-approved romances. The scene infuses the readers with a feeling that all joys and mirth are over and “summer is gone”. The tone suggests this summer, unlike the other summers, is gone forever and its special beauties will never again return. The summer represents Anne’s childhood and her childish romances that are gone forever and will never return. Montgomery at the

end of *Anne of Avonlea* writes, “The page of girlhood has been turned, as by an unseen finger, and the page of womanhood was before her with all its charm and mystery, its pain and gladness” (277). The description also indicates that sadness and despair is everywhere and “everything in the landscape around them spoke of autumn.” This sad feeling is something related to Anne’s future life, or more likely, to her ideal romantic life that will happen later in the book when Anne is a woman. Montgomery again indirectly states that womanhood is not something to look forwards to because Anne has to quit her childhood real romances with nature. So, for Montgomery, womanhood with all its related matters is the real autumn of Anne’s life.

Halsted reminds us that, for Romanticists, “an admiration for all the potency, fecundity, the diversity of living nature superseded a concern for the discovery of its universal traits. The elements Romanticists felt worth knowing or noting or representing as beautiful in nature were no longer its abstract universal laws, but nature’s glorious diversity of detail and especially its moral or emotional relation to mankind” (12-13). For example, the scenes of Anne and Gilbert “sauntering through the shadows of the Haunted Wood” and Gilbert’s discovery of “a veritable apple-bearing apple tree, too, here in the very midst of pines and beeches, a mile away from any orchard” (*AI* 15) work as a moral lesson to Anne. She looks at the tree and is surprised by “how it has grown and flourished and held its own here all alone among aliens, the brave determined thing!” (*AI* 15). Anne who perceives the fact that the tree has been able to survive this hard situation – growing up “all alone among aliens” – is able to survive her own situation. At least she can keep her romance, imagination, and romantic world for herself and enjoy her life, even if she is far from her ideal romantic life and is surrounded by unromantic people.

Another example of Montgomery's metaphorical descriptions is when Anne enters Kingsport for the first time. Priscilla describes Anne's room in boarding house: "Your room is a front one and looks out on Old St. John's graveyard, which is just across the street'. 'That sounds gruesome,' shivered Anne'" (AI 21-22). Montgomery uses a graveyard as Anne's bedroom's view because Anne later finds many romantic souls with romantic stories buried in there. This grave yard signifies that Anne's need to forget all her childish romances after coming to Kingsport. She should bury all her romances with nature, her friends, and Green Gables at the very entrance to this big city and to the adult world because they are all parts of her childish life. She should bury them like those romantic bodies with their romantic stories now buried in the graveyard of her bedroom's view.

There are also scenes in the story in which Anne states, directly or indirectly, that Avonlea is not the same place for her as it used to be. For example, when she is talking to Mr. Harrison about her writing, she says, "Avonlea is the dearest place in the world, but it's not quite romantic enough for the scene of a story" (AI 90). While at the beginning, before coming to Kingsport, Anne says to Gilbert, "I wonder if it will be—can be—any more beautiful than this,' murmured Anne, looking around her with the loving, enraptured eyes of those to whom 'home' must always be the loveliest spot in the world, no matter what fairer lands may lie under alien stars" (AI 5). The graveyard and this change of mind about Avonlea indicate that Anne's romances and her definition of romance have changed, or had to be changed, with her growing up. She is also trying to forget all the great romances that she had before in Avonlea. Her romances with its nature were the most beautiful and romantic for her. It was a place with Green Gables and its

orchard, with her bosom friend, with Matthew, and with all her romantic imaginary friends.

In the end, when Redmond with all its memories is over, Anne is back home again; unfortunately, upon her return, she finds her old beloved cherry tree, the Snow Queen, has blown down. The tree symbolized all her romances and now, as Epperly indicates, “The death of the tree marks the death of Anne’s childhood dreams and life—the tree was one of the first things she named on arrival at Green Gables as a child, and into its branches she had gazed as she had dreamed and thought and planned the brightest of future for herself” (68). Anne grieves, “I’ll miss it so, [...] The porch gable doesn’t seem the same room without it. I’ll never look from its window again without a sense of loss” (*AI* 229). Consequently, even Green Gables, her home and her most romantic place, should be forgotten. This is not something Anne desires, but it is what society dictates and Anne must forget it. The tree is also a symbol of her interest and connection to her childish romances with nature thus a symbol of her resistance. However, now the tree is an obstacle blocking Anne’s future life planned by society. Matthew warned Anne in the first book that she should keep a little romance for herself and not lose all of it. However, society is apparently taking all of her romance and Anne’s only choice is to accept the loss.

“The sense of loss” that Anne acknowledges deserves examination for the readers wonder the loss of what (*AI* 229)? It may represent the loss of all her childish romances, of her old resistance, of that happy rebellious Anne who enjoyed the Avonlea summers with all her existence: “When I was little I couldn’t see from one end of the summer to the other. It stretched before me like an unending season. Now ’tis a handbreath, ’tis a

tale” (*AI* 156). Even Green Gables, once the dearest place in the world, must be replaced: “Patty’s place is the dearest spot, Miss Lavendar” (*AI* 158). Anne tries to forget all her childish romantic places, romances, and even her home because she must find new romances in new places that belong to her grown up world. Consequently, even the glimpses of nature described in the book are not as romantic as before; they are merely used to convey some facts related to society to the readers.

CHAPTER II

ANNE, SOCIETY, AND HER ROMANCE

After reading about Anne as a young girl and her romances with nature, now the reader reads about a young lady and her struggles for choosing one of her male interests as her husband. While the first book is only about Anne and her romantic relationship with Avonlea nature, the second book is less about Anne and more about her relationship with other people. Finally the third book is about Anne's relationship with society and almost nothing about Anne herself. As Anne grows older, the physical setting of her stories grows too. The story begins at Green Gables, which is the beginning of Anne's most romantic memories. Then it expands to Avonlea, where Anne learns some much needed lessons for growing up. Additionally, her stories are more realistic and less romantic. After Avonlea the setting moves to Kingsport, a city off the island consisting of very little nature and even fewer romances than in the second book. However, there are more grown up issues: finding a place to live, finding a job, living on her own, trying to fix all her problems alone, and dealing with many marriage matters. She receives six proposals, some of which are more important to her than others. But after learning and experiencing some facts that direct her to the right reasons for choosing the right person, she finally chooses one of them as her future husband.

Romance, like Anne and the physical setting of the story, progresses in *Anne of Avonlea* to fit Anne's age. Montgomery still introduces traditional and nontraditional

romances to her readers, but they are different from the first book. In *Anne of Green Gables*, traditional romance is Anne's romance with men or, specifically, with Gilbert as her husband, and nontraditional romance is her romance with nature. But in *Anne of Avonlea* the traditional romance is the conventional marital romance introduced by young Davy, "I wouldn't leave *my* wife for anything like that. I'd just put my foot down and say, 'Mrs. Davy, you've just got to do what'll please *me* 'cause I'm a *man*.' *That'd* settle her pretty quick I guess" (AA 221, italics in the original); The nontraditional romance is the romance found in Miss Lavendar's or Hester's narratives; women who loved nature, married their ideal men, and lived in nature romantically.

In *Anne of Avonlea*, the reader reads much less about Anne herself and more about Anne as a part of society called Avonlea, with all the people and their behaviors, lessons, and adventures. In this book Anne learns that she should not only consider herself, but she must also pay attention to the people around her and to the society in which she lives. Epperly states, "*Anne of Green Gables* is about Anne; *Anne of Avonlea* is more about what Anne does" (41). But *Anne of Avonlea* is more than Epperly's statement indicates, for the book is also about what Anne, who is no longer a child, should learn for living in an adult society. There are a lot of life lessons for Anne in the book to make her ready for her new life. Every event in the story is a lesson for Anne, and everyone wants to teach her some points that she must know for living in elders' society.

Most of the events in *Anne of Avonlea* and almost all of the lessons the different characters try to teach Anne are all in some way related to romance: from Anne's ideal romance to society's expectations for romance. Sometimes the other characters

encourage Anne to have hope in finding her ideal romance, and at other times they hinder her in attaining it. Nevertheless, they all teach a lesson to Anne and make her grow up mentally, to get more and more familiar with the real world, including its contradictions and both pleasant and unpleasant events. Despite this opposing view of the world, the events in this book are mostly about romantic relationships between established or future husbands and wives such as Miss Lavendar's narrative, Hester's narrative, and Mr. Harrison's reconciliation with his wife. Epperly writes, "The Harrison reunion proves that virtually everything in Avonlea supports mating and pairing and some form of romance" (45). In fact, Anne only discovers these romances and then connects the related parts to each other: "Anne finds the romance around her – not because her active imagination manufactures it, but because it is there to be discovered. Anne is an interpreter, not a creator, of romance" (Epperly 45).

The transition from childhood to adulthood coupled with being a young lady requires Anne to learn some facts and lessons. Montgomery teaches these lessons through different characters in the *Anne of Avonlea*.

Mrs. Allan, the minister's wife, tries to teach Anne that ideals in real life are important, but rarely achieved. This idea is taught through their discussion about Anne's idealistic theories on behaving to her pupils: "I haven't done what I meant to do when I began to teach last fall. ... I haven't lived up to my ideals.' 'None of us ever do,' said Mrs. Allan with a sigh" (AA 130). The lesson that Anne should learn is that "... We must have ideals and try to live up to them, even if we never quite succeed. Life would be a sorry business without them. With them it's grand and great. Hold fast to your ideals, Anne'" (AA 130). This sentence reminds readers of Mathew's advice to Anne in *Anne of*

Green Gables, that she should keep a little romance for herself and not get over all of it. They all want to teach Anne that she should live with her romance and ideals in this unromantic society, although she most probably would never reach them. Maybe, they would help her to tolerate the unromantic life.

Marilla, who is known as an unromantic character in the story, tries to teach Anne that the real life is more disappointing and also different from her romantic ideal life. Marilla says, ““You’ll probably have a good many more and worse disappointments than that before you get through life [...] it seems to me, Anne, that you are never going to outgrow your fashion of setting your heart so on things and then crashing down into despair because you don’t get them”” (AA 148). And here is the lesson for Anne: ““I’d rather walk calmly along and do without both flying and thud. But everybody has her own way of living...”” (AA 149). Earlier in the story, Anne learns to keep her romance and fantasy world in her heart and not speak of them out loud; now she learns that she must also not let her private romance and dreams affect her daily life and her way of living in the real society because the reality is very far from her romantic world. She will be very disappointed when entering the real world if she does not give up her romantic way of looking at world. In fact, Mrs. Allan and Mathew are also aware of the reality of life and how disappointing it is, but they try to teach Anne to make her life more enjoyable, at least in her mind, by having some romantic ideals for herself. However, Marilla, who is a serious character, does not believe in such frivolities, so she directly tells Anne what is waiting for her in the real world.

Later, Diana teaches Anne that behaving well is more important than a pretty name. Anne has always longed to have an elegant name, like the names she calls herself

and gives to her story characters: Cordelia and Geraldine. “Anne” has never been her favorite name. She states, “Now, my name just smacks of bread and butter, patchwork and chores” (AA 193). However, when Diana tells her: “I think people make their names nice or ugly just by what they are themselves,” Anne apparently changes her mind. She realizes that even with having an ordinary name like “Anne,” she can still live like everyone loves her: “That’s a lovely idea Diana,’ said Anne enthusiastically. ‘Living so that you beautify your name, even if it wasn’t beautiful to begin with ... making it stand in people’s thoughts for something so lovely and pleasant that they never think of it by itself. Thank you, Diana” (AA 193).

Mrs. Allan, later in the story, tries to explain about the real friendship and its importance to Anne, “True friendship is a very helpful thing indeed [...] and we should have a very high ideal of it, and never sully it by any failure in truth and sincerity. I fear the name of friendship is often degraded to a kind of intimacy that has nothing of real friendship in it” (AA 132). And Anne agrees with her: “If we have friends we should look only for the best in them and give them the best that is in us, don’t you think? Then friendship would be the most beautiful thing in the world” (AA 132). Anne has no idea that one day friendship will not be “the most beautiful thing in the world” any more: as Mrs. Allan says, “Friendship is very beautiful [. . .] but some day ...” (AA 132). As we go through the third book, we find out how this simple friendship with Gilbert one day changes Anne’s life. Although at the end of *Anne of Avonlea* Anne is disappointed by the realization that “Perhaps, after all, romance did not come into one’s life with pomp and blare, [...] perhaps it crept to one’s side like an old friend through quiet ways” (AA 277), during *Anne of the Island*, she finally realizes that having romance based on an old

friendship is better than having it based on a sudden acquaintance, even if the latter seems the ideal romance.

Even Miss Lavendar, a new kindred spirit introduced in *Anne of Avonlea*, teaches Anne that she must not be stubborn and proud in her romantic relationship. It is almost the same lesson that Marilla teaches Anne in the first book; she must forgive her love's faults before it gets to be too late. Here Montgomery repeats this lesson again, but this time using the romantic character of Miss Lavendar, "And then I sulked because he didn't come. I might have sent for him perhaps, but I couldn't humble myself to do that. I was just as proud as he was" (AA 203). The lesson Anne learns is that "pride and sulkiness make a very bad combination" (AA 203).

Montgomery introduces traditional and nontraditional romances in *Anne of Avonlea* by using specific characters as symbols of each romance: Miss Lavender and the long dead Hester may represent the nontraditional romance. Both of them find their ideal romances and live their ideal lives largely because they are closely in tune with nature. Additionally, they both act as a perfect model for Anne and their romance is the kind of romance that, in Anne's opinion, comes with "pomp and blare".

Miss Lavendar is the most similar to Anne because Miss Lavendar imagines things, and had the same feeling about her future life when she was young. When Miss Lavendar was young, she believed that she would be an old maid if she did not marry her ideal man: "But I could never care for anybody else and I didn't want to. I knew I would rather be an old maid for a thousand years than marry anybody who wasn't Stephen Irving" (AA 203). Similarly in *Anne of the Island*, Anne tells Diana, "In no time you'll be a staid, middle-aged matron, and I shall be nice, old maid Aunt Anne, coming to visit

you in vacations” (AI 4) which highlights the parallels between Anne and Miss Lavendar. Furthermore, Miss Lavendar likes to do things in her own way and not just to imitate the others: “People say I’m odd; but it’s just because I follow my own way of being an old maid and refuse to copy the traditional patterns” (AA 202). It is because of all these similarities that Anne likes, respects, and feels so close to Miss Lavendar; more importantly this is why her words and advice hugely impact Anne.

The story of Hester is sacred for Anne in a different way. Hester’s love and life are not only Anne’s ideal, romantic life, but they are highly praised by Anne. Hester’s garden is extremely sacred for Anne because of the kind of romances that lived there before. Montgomery’s use of the word “pilgrimage” highlights the importance and sacredness of the garden to Anne: “The evening before she had made a pilgrimage back to the little deserted garden in the woods and brought there-from some of Hester’s own white roses” (AA 129). Therefore, not only Anne, but Montgomery as well, praises that garden, that love, and that kind of romantic life.

Hester and Miss Lavendar both lived in and deeply loved nature. In fact, Hester even died surrounded by nature as she desired: “One day Jordan carried her out to the bench and then he picked all the roses that were out and heaped them over her; and she just smiled up at him ... and closed her eyes ... and that [...] was the end” (AA 110). After hearing Hester’s story, Anne goes to Hester’s grave and puts some of Hester’s garden roses on it. Hester becomes a life teacher who teaches and reminds Anne how romantically one can live in this unromantic world. She gives Anne a new life by instilling a new hope for a romantic life in Anne. The discovery of this new hope, new spirit, and new life leads Anne to adopt the day she learned Hester’s narrative as her

birthday: “This is my adopted birthday, you know, and this garden and its story is the birthday gift it has given me” (*AA* 111).

Montgomery emphasizes that everyone who has a true deep romance with nature and thus can bring nature into one’s heart lives romantically in the world, as Miss Lavendar and Hester did. Montgomery illustrates that having a romance with nature is not some childish thought that must be condemned and denied in the adult world, but it is actually a prerequisite for having a romantic life. Montgomery demonstrates to Anne that love of nature is combined with love for her husband, so, if Anne desires to have a romance with nature, it can be considered beneficial and even necessary. However, she also has to find a real romance with somebody who will be her future husband. The combination of these two romances evolves into the perfect kind of romantic life, such as Hester’s. Multiple situations in the book illustrate Anne combining her love of nature and her love of people until they cannot be separated from each other. This bond is even stronger for Hester because she chooses her lover and nature both at the same time (*AA* 109). Even Anne struggles with Hester’s decision not to be with people so much: “I wouldn’t want it myself for a steady thing, because, although I love the fields and woods, I love people too” (*AA* 110). Anne prefers to combine the two: for example, the idea of Avonlea Improvement Society is a practice for Anne to serve her people, although the motive is her love of nature.

On the other side of romance, Davy, an orphan boy adopted by Marilla, and his words about his wife’s obedience symbolize the traditional romance, as Epperly also points out:

In the story no one responds to Davy’s philosophy – and we are free to

laugh at it as a childishly simple misunderstanding of the complexity of things, or, perhaps, we see that Montgomery is using a child to voice the views of presiding culture. Perhaps we are encouraged to see Davy's attractive, free, bad-boy behavior and his proud self-image as essential parts of the culture that promotes conventional romance. Certainly the conception of romance the book favors seems supportive of Davy's view of things. (44)

Putting this idea in the words of a naughty boy that always makes the others laugh at his words is done deliberately. Montgomery wants to criticize this view of society on the relationship between wife and husband. In fact, laughing at Davy's idea is laughing at society and its presiding cultural views on men and women. Although Montgomery makes Davy's words comical to illustrate how ridiculous society's view on this issue is, she still has to write her story so that early twentieth century Canadian society will accept, understand, and like it.

Anne's main romantic struggle in the story is with Gilbert, who is barely seen or heard of in the second book. Gilbert in *Anne of Avonlea* is not the same attractive character for the reader as he was in *Anne of Green Gables*. First, the different situations in which Anne directly or indirectly returns to Gilbert as her imperfect man. Since the narrative is usually focused through Anne, readers identify with Anne and accept her feelings. For example, when Diana asks Anne, "Do you care anything for Gilbert?" Anne answers, "Ever so much as a friend and not a bit in the way you mean." Diana continues, "Don't you mean ever to be married, Anne?" Anne again assures her that if it happens it would not be Gilbert, because he's not her ideal man: "Perhaps ... some day

... when I meet the right one” (AA 236). In another scene Montgomery writes, “Anne thought Gilbert was a very handsome lad, even though he didn’t look at all like her ideal man” (AA 168). Second, the setting in which Gilbert is first presented to Anne and the reader for the first time in the book creates the feeling that he is not Anne’s ideal mate stronger. In the first book, Anne first hears about Gilbert in “Birch Path,” a romantic beautiful spot. However, in *Anne of Avonlea*, when again she hears about him after a long period, it is in a place of Gothic romance, imbued with horror: “In the twilight Anne sauntered down to the Dryad’s Bubble and saw Gilbert Blythe coming down through the dusky Haunted Wood” (AA 168). This change in Anne’s perception of Gilbert is highlighted because he is coming out of the Haunted Wood, which the reader discovered in the first book was a place that represented horror for Anne. Right after his coming out of the Haunted Wood, Montgomery indicates, “[Anne] had a sudden realization that Gilbert was a school boy no longer,” so the horror is related to his growing into a man. Her relationship with Gilbert cannot be based on a simple friendship anymore because he is now old enough to have grown up romantic feelings and relationships.

Montgomery tries to show Anne what would happen if Anne insists on finding her ideals and romances in the real world by degrading Anne’s fictional story. Epperly states, “Montgomery uses what happens to Anne’s beloved story as emblematic of what should happen to Anne’s ideas of romance” (62). Anne’s main emphasis in writing her story is on the idea of romance which is illustrated by her goal to write it as romantically as possible. She indicates, “I’d like it to end unhappily, because that would be so much more romantic” (AA 88) and “That wouldn’t have been romantic, and, besides, it would have made the story too long” (AA 89). However in the end, her romantic book degrades

into a story advertising baking powder. She tells Gilbert:

“I feel as if I were disgraced forever. What do you think a mother would feel like if she found her child tattooed over with a baking powder advertisement? I feel just the same. I wrote it out of the best that was in me. And it is sacrilege to have it degraded to the level of a baking powder advertisement.” (AA 116)

Montgomery shows Anne that if Anne merely cares about romance in her life, not only her romance would be ruined, but all her feelings and emotions would be injured too, and she would remain alone and disappointed. Seeing life solely romantically is unrealistic because there are many elements in the world that are not romantic at all. Anne should learn that life is multi-faceted, romance and happiness are only one side of it. Her one-sided view is apparent in her story, and thus far from reality, so the book, not accepted by society, is degraded to an advertisement. This is confirmed by Marilla for she tells Anne in *Anne of Avonlea*, ““You’ll probably have a good many more and worse disappointments than that before you get through life”” (148).

The traditional – nontraditional romance discussion continues in the third book, *Anne of the Island*, but this time Montgomery confronts Anne with two different lovers and their different romances: Gilbert and Royal. Royal represents the nontraditional romance because, as I discuss later, he does not belong to Anne’s tradition: her culture, custom, and upbringing. But Gilbert stands for traditional romance because he belongs to Anne’s tradition. Although Gilbert has loved Anne from the very first book, Anne does not take him and his love serious until the third book, a book, as Epperly points out, full of wedding stories:

Most of the stories in this novel also deal with or end with marriage.

Lavendar and Stephen Irving return with Paul to the stone house from which they were married; Diana marries Fred; Jane marries a Winnipeg millionaire; Phil marries Jonas Blake; Mrs. Skinner tells her courtship story; Janet Sweet marries John Douglas; widowers make 'sheep's eyes' at Aunt Jamesina; Anne receives six proposals. (61)

In *Anne of the Island*, Anne comes to Kingsport to continue her studies. After entering Kingsport, she learns that she should forget all her previous childish ideal romances. She indicates, after going to her bedroom the first night in Kingsport: “‘ I’m not even going to have my good cry. I’ll put that off to a more convenient season, and just now I’ll go calmly and sensibly to bed and to sleep’” (*AI* 23). However, that “convenient season” never comes.

In Kingsport, Anne is a young lady who has to live on her own in a big city, where her future will be determined. She receives six marriage proposals, but two of them are more important and serious than others: first is Gilbert’s and then Roy’s (Royal). Gilbert represents the traditional romance, while Roy, with his sudden romantic appearance, symbolizes nontraditional romance. Compared to the first time Anne meets Gilbert, Roy and Anne’s first visit happens extremely romantically. In the former case, Gilbert makes fun of Anne’s red hair on her first day of school, so Anne breaks a slate on his head and does not talk to him for years. Anne’s first impression of Gilbert, as she tells Diana, is not very pleasant: “‘I think your Gilbert Blythe *is* handsome, [...] but I think he’s very bold. It isn’t good manners to wink at a strange girl’” (*AGG* 111, italics in original). However her first meeting with Roy highlights romance. They meet in the park

where Anne has gone for a walk to enjoy her day. Suddenly it starts raining heavily, and Anne's umbrella cannot tolerate a savage gust of wind and turns wrong side out:

Anne clutched at it in despair. And then there came a voice close to her:

“Pardon me—may I offer you the shelter of my umbrella?”

Anne looked up. Tall and handsome and distinguished-looking—dark, melancholy, inscrutable eyes—melting, musical, sympathetic voice—yes, the very hero of her dreams stood before her in the flesh. He could not have more closely resembled her ideal if he had been made to order.

[...] the words were very commonplace, but oh, the tone! And the smile which accompanied them! Anne felt her heart beating strangely. (*AI* 165)

After that visit, Roy sends her flowers with romantic poems and Anne falls in love with him. The different approaches between the two men is further distinguished in both proposal scenes. When Gilbert wants to propose to Anne, she tries to stop him as if he wants to say some awful thing, ““Oh, don't say it,' cried Anne, pleadingly.

‘Don't—please, Gilbert’”. And when he finally gets a chance to ask her, ““Will you promise me that some day you'll be my wife?’” she rejects him: ““I—I can't,' said Anne miserably. ‘Oh, Gilbert—you—you've spoiled everything’” (*AI* 143). To Anne, all these conversations happen very unromantically: ““there was nothing romantic about this. Must proposals be either grotesque or—horrible?’” (*AI* 143). Conversely, Roy's proposal is completely romantic to Anne:

Roy asked Anne to marry him in the little pavilion on the harbor shore where they had talked on the rainy day of their first meeting. Anne thought it very romantic that he should have chosen that spot. And his proposal

was as beautifully worded as if he had copied it, as one of Ruby Gillis' lovers had done, out of a Department of Courtship and Marriage. The whole effect was quite flawless. And it was also sincere. There was no doubt that Roy meant what he said. There was no false note to jar the symphony. (AI 224)

Nevertheless, although worded romantically, Anne still cannot say "her fateful yes" to him, but instead she cries, "Oh, I can't marry you! I can't! I can't" (AI 225). After rejecting Gilbert:

Anne got herself to her room, sat down on her window seat behind the pines, and cried bitterly. She felt as if something incalculably precious had gone out of her life. It was Gilbert's friendship, of course. Oh, why must she lose it after this fashion? (AI 144)

However, after rejecting Roy, Anne does not feel upset, like with Gilbert, but sorrowful and ashamed:

When Roy had gone she sat for a long time in the pavilion, watching a white mist creeping subtly and remorselessly landward up the harbor. It was her hour of humiliation and self-contempt and shame. Their waves went over her. And yet, underneath it all, was a queer sense of recovered freedom. (AI 226)

She articulates her reason for rejecting Roy "I just knew I *never* could marry him [...] I want someone who *belongs* in my life. He doesn't" (AI 226, italics in original). While her reason for rejecting Gilbert is something else, "Do you call it idiotic to refuse to marry a man I don't love?" (AI 144). It appears belonging is more important to Anne

than romantic love. When someone belongs in her life she can hope someday that person will love her, even if it does not look like romantic love and does not come with “pomp and blare” (AA 277). Nevertheless the love is real and will last a long time because of the similarities in their lives. However, if Anne chooses someone who simply loves her and does not really belong to her life, even if it appears to be romantic love, their love will not be guaranteed to remain forever. She cannot hope Roy would belong to her life one day because his life, tradition and roots are completely different, and these differences may make him leave her life anytime to return to where he belongs. Also because of this difference in upbringing, Anne would feel confined by him because she always has to be another person, someone whom Roy’s family and their prestige accept, and be not free to be herself anymore.

Roy has everything that Anne has always dreamed of and desired. She says, “I was swept off my feet at first by his good looks and knack of paying romantic compliments; and later on I thought I *must* be in love because he was my dark-eyed-ideal” (AI 226, italics in original). Therefore in the end, Gilbert’s simplicity of character and his belonging in Anne’s life and culture wins her hand in marriage. Roy is a “Handsome Unknown” (AI 179), but Gilbert is an old friend whom Anne has always liked and respected; Gilbert does not show any bad manners or behavior apparent in *Anne of Green Gables*. Yet, even his teasing of Anne during their first meeting turns out well in the end because Gilbert feels so guilty. Even after all of Anne’s rejections, he apologizes to her and wants to be her friend. To demonstrate Gilbert’s good character and his devotion to Anne, Montgomery has him, at the end of *Anne of Green Gables*, give up his job at the Avonlea school to give it to Anne. After Matthew dies Marilla will be alone, so

she decides to sell Green Gables. When Anne hears about Marilla's decision, she decides to give up the idea of going to college to stay home with Marilla and teach. Because Gilbert had applied for the Avonlea school before Anne, the trustees promise it to him. However, as Mrs. Lynde tells Anne, "as soon as Gilbert heard that you had applied for it he went to them [...] and told them that he withdrew his application, and suggested that they accept yours [...] Of course he gave up the school just to oblige you [...] I think it was real kind and thoughtful in him, that's what. Real self-sacrificing" (*AGG* 306).

However, despite these good behaviors and intentions, Gilbert does not love nature as Anne does, and he does not feel the romance of and peace in nature as Anne does. When Anne rejects Gilbert's proposal, like Anne who becomes sad, everyone who knows them feels unhappy too: Marilla "felt that something in the universal scheme of things had gone sadly awry" (*AI* 179). Yet, after Anne rejects his proposal, whenever she goes back to Avonlea she misses the old days with Gilbert:

Anne had wandered down to the Dryad's Bubble and was curled up among the ferns at the root of the big white birch where she and Gilbert had so often sat in summers gone by. He had gone into the newspaper office again when college closed, and Avonlea seemed very dull without him. (*AI* 180)

Gilbert really belongs in Anne's life because after rejecting him Anne always feels she has lost something in her life:

Life was very pleasant in Avonlea that summer, although Anne, amid all her vacation joys, was haunted by a sense of 'something gone which should be there.' She would not admit, even in her inmost reflections, that

this was caused by Gilbert's absence. But when she had to walk home alone from prayer meetings and A.V.I.S. pow-wows, while Diana and Fred, and many other gay couples, loitered along the dusky, starlit country roads, there was a queer, lonely ache in her heart which she could not explain away. (*AI* 153)

Additionally, there are scenes in the book that show how much Anne still cares about Gilbert even after her meeting Roy: "but her heart never gave the queer, quick, painful bound at sight of [Roy] letters which it had given one day when Mrs. Hiram Sloane had handed her out an envelope addressed in Gilbert's black, upright handwriting" (*AI* 179). After coming back to Kingsport, occasionally she tries to please Gilbert, although unknowingly. For example, when she is getting ready for Convocation, she first: "Flung Roy's violets aside and put Gilbert's lilies-of-the-valley in their place. She could not have told why she did it. Somehow, old Avonlea days and dreams and friendships seemed very close to her in this attainment of her long-cherished ambition" (*AI* 219). Then she wore the necklace Gilbert gave her as a Christmas gift years ago: "But she had never worn the trinket. Tonight she fastened it about her white throat with a dreamy smile" (*AI* 220).

Also her strong reactions and feelings after learning about Christine Stuart going with Gilbert prove the importance of Gilbert to Anne. When Phil, Anne's friend, tells Anne "By the way, Gilbert is going about constantly with Christine Stuart. Did you know?" Anne suddenly feels restive: "Anne was trying to fasten a little gold chain about her throat. She suddenly found the clasp difficult to manage. *What* was the matter with it—or with her finger?" (*AI* 170). Later when she meets Roy and "Roy murmured a

poetical compliment as he helped her on with her coat, she did not blush and thrill as usual; and he found her rather silent in their brief walk to Redmond. He thought she looked a little pale when she came out of the coeds' dressing room" (*AI* 170).

Moreover, later in the book, when Anne has finally accepted her feelings for Gilbert as love, he is not associated with Haunted Wood, but most of their journeys are through Lover's Lane, Lake of Shining Waters, and Hester's garden: "'Can't we take a ramble up Lover's Lane before you go in?' asked Gilbert as they crossed the bridge over the Lake of Shining Waters, in which the moon lay like a great, drowned blossom of gold. Anne assented readily. Lover's Lane was a veritable path in a fairyland that night" (*AI* 183). It relates to the reader that Anne is no longer afraid of Gilbert and also encourages the reader to be pleased about seeing Gilbert and Anne together again in a romantic place such as Lover's Lane. Walking with Gilbert is as romantic as walking through a fairyland for Anne. Readers are able to picture Gilbert as a romantic lover and imagine Anne's future with him.

As for Anne's inclination to Gilbert, although Anne believes she loves Roy, she is not one hundred percent convinced about her love and cannot strongly accept or talk about her marriage to Roy. Once when Phil asks her, "'You *do* love [Roy], don't you, Anne?'" she answers, "'I—I suppose so,' said Anne reluctantly" (*AI* 175, italics in original). Additionally, when Phil says to her, "'How angry I was when you refused Gilbert, Anne. But Roy Gardner was foreordained for you. I can see that now. You were right, after all.'" Then "Anne did not blush, as she usually did when the girls assumed that her eventual marriage to Roy Gardner was a settled thing. All at once she felt rather dull. Phil's chatter was trivial and the reception a bore" (*AI* 170). Furthermore, Aunt

Jamesina admires Roy as “the nicest young man she ever knew” and Anne as “a very fortunate girl,” after which “such remarks made Anne restive. Roy’s wooing had certainly been as romantic as girlish heart could desire, but—she wished Aunt Jamesina and the girls would not take things so for granted” (*AI* 170).

In *Anne of Avonlea*, Anne did not want a “hopelessly good” man as her husband, which she expresses when talking to Marilla about Diana’s betrothal to Fred: “He certainly isn’t the wild, dashing, wicked, young man Diana once wanted to marry [...] Fred is extremely good [...] I wouldn’t want to marry anybody who was wicked, but I think I’d like it if he *could* be wicked and *couldn’t*. Now, Fred is *hopelessly* good” (178-179, italics in original). In the third book, Anne believes that Roy is like Fred: too good, with no sense of humor. Once when Anne is comparing Gilbert and Roy on their abilities to use romantic words, she thinks, “Gilbert would never have dreamed of writing a sonnet to her eyebrows. But then, Gilbert could see a joke long run” (*AI* 176). Roy’s sister, Dorothy, echoes Anne’s sentiments after Anne and Roy’s split: “[Roy] would bore you to death. I love him, and he is a dear sweet boy, but really he isn’t a bit interesting. He looks as if he ought to be, but he isn’t” (*AI* 228).

While Roy represents breaking all norms in a nontraditional way: a poor orphan girl marrying a rich man from a well-known family who has nothing in common with Anne’s poor family and her rustic traditions, Gilbert appears to belong to Anne’s tradition and past. Anne does not realize her feeling to Gilbert as love until Gilbert takes typhoid fever and is so sick. When Davy tells Anne that Gilbert is dying she “stood quite silent and motionless, looking at Davy. Her face had gone so white that Marilla thought she was going to faint.” Then:

Anne [...] walked blindly across the kitchen, through the hall, up the stairs to her old room. At its window she knelt down, staring out unseeingly. It was very dark [...] And Gilbert was dying!

She loved Gilbert—had always loved him! She knew that now. She knew that she could no more cast him out of her life without agony than she could have cut off her right hand and cast it from her. And the knowledge had come too late—too late even for the bitter solace of being with him at the last. If she had not been so blind—so foolish—she would have had the right to go to him now. But he would never know that she loved him—he would go away from this life thinking that she did not care. Oh, the black years of emptiness stretching before her! She could not live through them—she could not! She cowered down by her window and wished, for the first time in her gay young life, that she could die, too. If Gilbert went away from her, without one word or sign or message, she could not live. Nothing was of any value without him. She belonged to him and he to her.

(*AI* 237)

At the very beginning of *Anne of the Island*, Anne imagines herself as an old maid, who has not found her ideal man to marry. Then, she rejects Gilbert and meets her apparently ideal dream man. Then she rejects her ideal man too, and comes again back to Gilbert, and the marriage that she has always tried to run away from is now around the corner. This is the ultimate end that Mrs. Rachel and later Miss Lavendar, predicted for Anne. Hearing the practical advice from Marilla and Mrs. Lynde, the two most rational, strict, unromantic characters of the book, is not assertive enough because readers already

know these characters and do not take them seriously. However, reading the practical guidance from Miss Lavendar, one of Anne's favorite romantic models, has a stronger impact because, as mentioned earlier, Miss Lavendar and Anne have similar characteristics, and moreover, Anne respects her opinions on love. Anne cannot just ignore what Miss Lavendar says, and it definitely affects Anne's way of thinking about romance. Miss Lavendar has already experienced what would happen if she stood against society for achieving her romantic dreams. It appears she is trying to indirectly explain to Anne that it is not always worth so long a wait and isolation from people and society because society is more powerful than Anne and Anne will only be disappointed.

It does not take long for Anne to experience this disappointment. When her friends, Diana, Phil, Jane, and Janet all get married their lives change significantly and thus their friendship with Anne also changes dramatically: "Anne was always glad in the happiness of her friends; but it is sometimes a little lonely to be surrounded everywhere by a happiness that is not your own" (*AI* 232). Anne feels glad that they all have reached happiness, but sorry for herself because she has not. If she wants to keep her friends, she has to enter their world and be like them. Otherwise she will be left alone: "It gave her a queer desolate feeling that she herself somehow belonged only in those past years and had no business in the present at all" (*AI* 232). Especially after Diana, Anne's kind, trustworthy friend, marries, Anne again feels isolated. The need for a companion arises in her, but she is not looking for a simple friend any more. Anne needs a real companion to support her, to be with her and to help her out in the real adult world, so she thinks she has to get ready to change. This necessity for change is why her friendship with Gilbert does not satisfy her anymore: "something of their old comradeship had returned. But

Anne no longer found it satisfying. The rose of love made the blossom of friendship pale and scentless by contrast. And Anne had again begun to doubt if Gilbert now felt anything for her but friendship” (*AI* 241). This illustrates the main change and sacrifice that Anne makes in herself. Once Anne reproved Gilbert for wanting more than friendship, ““it’s only that Gilbert wants more than friendship and I can’t give him more”” (*AI* 156), but now she demands more herself.

Finally, in the contest between the apparently good looking ideal man and a familiar well behaved friend, she chooses the less risky man: Gilbert. He encompasses traditional love, good manners, and fun. Anne’s courtship story eventually ends in a very romantic way. Anne is an orphan who has nothing in the world but a powerful imagination. She vividly imagines her future but cannot believe she will reach it in the real world. Although she is poor and has a difficult life, she finally reaches the happy end of her story: finds her love, gets engaged to him, and hopes to live happily ever after with him.

Anne still wonders if she has made the right decision about getting engaged to Gilbert because, for her, it means the end of her childish imaginative world and romances and the beginning of the responsibility of entering the adult world, which frightens and worries her: “Anne wanted to speak but she could find no words. Happiness was breaking over her like a wave. It almost frightened her” (*AI* 242). Also when Gilbert explains to Anne that it was Phil who encouraged Gilbert to “try again” for Anne’s hand in marriage, “Anne laughed then shivered.” (*AI* 244). Anne could not imagine how powerful destiny or society is and what unbelievable ways it has to reach its aim, and how by using her good friend it changes her entire life. It gives her a shiver because she thinks if Phil had

not written to Gilbert, everything would have been different, but now there is another story written for Anne to participate in.

After all these challenges, Anne and Gilbert's engagement happens in Hester Gray's garden. Anne is happy, for Montgomery writes, "'It's the birthday of our happiness,' said Anne softly. 'I've always loved this old garden of Hester Gray's, and now it will be dearer than ever'" (*AI* 244). In *Anne of Avonlea*, when Anne enters Hester Gray's garden for the first time she says, "'This is my adopted birthday, you know, and this garden and its story is the birthday gift it has given me'" (111). However, these two birthdays represent very different births. The latter is the birthday of Anne's entrance into a new ideal romantic world and a realization that she, like Hester, can live as romantically as she pleases. The other is her birthday of entering the adult world and realizing that it is the end of her childish romances, and the beginning of her grown up romances. This is the end that Miss Lavendar predicted for Anne once: "'Because you were made and meant for each other, Anne—that is why. You needn't toss that young head of yours. It's a fact'" (*AI* 157).

CHAPTER III

ANNE AS A RESISTANT GIRL

Starting with the first book, *Anne of Green Gables*, Anne tries to resist people and conventions around her. Her rebellious character in the first book fades more and more as she grows up and experiences living in the world in the subsequent books. Anne actually resists society and its unromantic expectations. Montgomery does not want to end Anne's romantic narrative so that Anne feels extremely sad and disappointed because Montgomery personally experienced the confinement and despair of marrying a man whom she did not love. In her journal, Montgomery describes her feelings of her wedding night:

I had been feeling contented all the morning. I had gone through the ceremony and the congratulations unflustered and unregretful. And now, when it was all over and I found myself sitting there by my husband's side — *my husband!* — I felt a horrible inrush of *rebellion and despair*. I *wanted to be free!* I felt like a prisoner — a hopeless prisoner. . . . At that moment if I could have torn the wedding ring from my finger and so freed myself I would have done it! But it was too late — and the realization that it was too late fell over me like a black cloud of wretchedness. . . . And I was as unhappy as I had ever been in my life. (*Selected Journals* II: 68)

Therefore, Montgomery, allows Anne fight for her ideal man and resist all the restrictions

and traditions in order to reach her ideal life. Unfortunately after all the resisting, Anne, like Montgomery, surrenders and marries a man whom she does not love and consequently ends all of Anne's joys and nontraditional romances. This is the very end that Montgomery wanted to keep Anne away from but cannot, as she could not keep herself away from engaging in traditional love.

Although Anne's first resistance, refusing to apologize to for speaking rudely to Mrs. Lynde in *Anne of Green Gables*, seems trivial, it proves her rebellious character. When Mrs. Lynde meets Anne for the first time she tells Anne exactly what she thinks of her:

“Well, they didn't pick you for your looks, that's sure and certain,” was Mrs. Rachel Lynde's empathic comment [...] “She's terrible skinny and homely, Marilla. Come here, child, and let me have a look at you. Lawful heart, did any one ever see such freckles? And hair as red as carrots! Come here, child, I say.” (AGG 64)

Anne becomes angry and replies to Mrs. Lynde, “I hate you [...] I hate you—I hate you—I hate you [...] How dare you call me skinny and ugly? How dare you say I'm freckled and redheaded? You are a rude, impolite, unfeeling woman!” (AGG 65). After this incident, Marilla tells Anne her punishment: ““You must go to her and tell her you are very sorry for your bad temper and ask her to forgive you”” (AGG 68). Anne refuses Marilla's request and resists going to Mrs. Lynde to apologize:

“I can never do that,” said Anne determinedly and darkly. “You can punish me in anyway you like, Marilla. You can shut me up in a dark, damp dungeon inhabited by snakes and toads and feed me only on bread

and water and I shall not complain. But I cannot ask Mrs. Lynde to forgive me.” (AGG 68)

However, after a full night of resistance, Matthew goes to Anne the next morning and asks Anne to fulfill Marilla’s request and apologize to Mrs. Lynde:

“Well now, Anne, don’t you think you’d better do it and have it all over with [...] Do it right off, I say, and have it over [...] Just smooth it over so to speak”: “I suppose I could do it to oblige you [...] I *am* sorry now. I wasn’t a bit sorry last night [...] I made up my mind I’d stay shut up here for ever rather than do that. But still—I’d do anything for you—if you really want me to—” (AGG 71-72)

After Anne agrees with Matthew, she and Marilla go to Mrs. Lynde’s to apologize. All the way to Mrs. Lynde’s home Anne is “imagining out what [she] must say to Mrs. Lynde” (AGG 73). When they arrive:

Anne suddenly went down on her knees before the astonished Mrs. Rachel and held out her hands beseechingly. “Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I am so extremely sorry [...] You must just imagine it. I behaved terribly to you—and I’ve disgraced the dear friends, Matthew and Marilla, who have let me stay at Green Gables although I’m not a boy [...] Oh, Mrs. Lynde, please, please, forgive me. If you refuse it will be a lifelong sorrow to me. You wouldn’t like to inflict a lifelong sorrow on a poor little orphan girl, would you, even if she had a dreadful temper? Oh, I am sure you wouldn’t. Please say you forgive me, Mrs. Lynde.” (AGG 73)

Anne's apology is accepted and Mrs. Lynde forgives her. However, Marilla is well aware that although Anne listened to her and apologized to Mrs. Lynde perfectly, "Anne was actually enjoying her valley of humiliation—was reveling in the thoroughness of her abasement" (*AGG* 74). This enjoyment subverts Anne's punishment, turning it into a melodramatic production that fulfills Marilla's requirements but also meets Anne's desire for romance.

Montgomery illustrates Anne's resistance against society and its conventional romances by having Anne resist Gilbert whom represents all the elements of unromantic society. Therefore, Anne's first significant resistance to conventional romance begins with her first introduction to Gilbert on the first day of school. After Gilbert calls Anne "carrots" and Anne breaks the slate on his head, Gilbert tries desperately to apologize and please her in some way, but Anne always rejects him: "I'm awful sorry I made fun of your hair, Anne,' he whispered contritely. 'Honest I am. Don't be mad for keeps, now.' Anne swept by disdainfully, without look or sign of hearing" (*AGG* 113). Anne decides that "She would never look at him again! She would never speak to him!!" because, as she says to Diana, "'Gilbert Blythe has hurt my feelings excruciatingly, Diana'" (*AGG* 113). Even after Gilbert rescues her when she was stranded while playing with Elaine and asks for her friendship once more two years later, she says, "I shall never be friends with you, Gilbert Blythe; and I don't want to be!" (*AGG* 226).

Montgomery is aware that this friendship with Gilbert leads to an unhappy marriage, so she lets Anne resist it as long as she can. Epperly indicates: "Perhaps the covert suggestion is that in deciding to explore a friendship with Gilbert, Anne has chosen to live in a conventional emotional and intellectual 'cottage' when her nature has

fitted her for variety and experiment on a far more splendid scale” (36-37). Anne resists the conventionalism of society because her lovely romantic world is too big, for it is infinite and stretches as far as Anne’s imagination allows it to. Consequently, it is very difficult for her to leave this big beautiful world with all its varieties, pleasures, and new experiences to enter into an unimaginative world with predefined roles, strict conventions, and defined romances. Anne’s fervent rejection of Gilbert’s friendship is her first resistance against society; Anne wants to prove that she is able to live happily without having Gilbert as a friend despite his firm belief that they are destined to be friends. He explains, ““We were born to be good friends, Anne. You’ve thwarted destiny long enough. I know we can help each other in many ways”” (AGG 308).

Anne’s denial of transitioning from friendship to romance with Gilbert in *Anne of Avonlea* is another resistance—a resistance against a future that society has chosen for her. After resisting befriending Gilbert in *Anne of Green Gables*, now Anne resists transforming her friend into her romantic love. In her resistance to friendship, she, in the end, has to surrender to and reconcile with Gilbert, as she says to Gilbert, “I forgave you that day by the pond landing, although I didn’t know it. What a stubborn little goose I was. I’ve been—I may as well make a complete confession—I’ve been sorry ever since” (AGG 308). Similarly in her refusal to accept romance, she eventually discovers that she has no choice but to accept that her romance would be out of a simple friendship. Anne sees this as a completely unromantic way of finding romance but hopes that “Perhaps ... love unfolded naturally out of a beautiful friendship” (AA 277).

Anne is fully aware of her weakness against society — not being able to resist having a romance with Gilbert. This awareness is emphasized when Anne and Diana are talking about Diana's plan for her dream home:

Anne had no sooner uttered the phrase, "home o' dreams," than it captivated her fancy and she immediately began the erection of one of her own. It was, of course, tenanted by an ideal master, dark, proud, and melancholy; but oddly enough, Gilbert Blythe persisted in hanging about too, helping her arrange pictures, lay out gardens, and accomplish sundry other tasks which a proud and melancholy hero evidently considered beneath his dignity. Anne tried to banish Gilbert's image from her castle in Spain but, somehow, he went on being there, so Anne, being in a hurry, gave up the attempt and pursued her aerial architecture with such success that her "home o' dreams" was built and furnished before Diana spoke again. (AA 269)

Montgomery illustrates in Anne's dream that Anne will not obtain her ideal dark-eyed man, for she cannot even banish Gilbert from her dreams. Anne tries to resist picturing Gilbert as the master of her dream home, but he is persistently there and Anne will have to accept it one day.

Montgomery also highlights Anne's internal struggle with finding an ideal man:

"I am glad Diana is so happy and satisfied. But when my turn comes ... if it ever does ... I do hope there'll be something a little more thrilling about it. But then Diana thought so too, once. I've heard her say time and again she'd never get engaged any poky commonplace way ... he'd have to do

something splendid to win her. But she has changed. Perhaps I'll change too. But I won't ... I'm determined I won't. Oh, I think these engagements are dreadfully unsettling things when they happen to your intimate friends." (*AA* 269)

When Diana and Anne are talking about their ideal husbands and their marriages, Diana asks Anne, "What if you never meet [your ideal man]?" "Then I shall die an old maid," was the cheerful response. "I daresay it isn't the hardest death by any means" (*AA* 238). These two scenes demonstrate the importance to Anne of marrying her ideal man so much so that if she does not find him she will never marry and will live alone all her life. However, the second part of the first scene shows Anne's struggle with this realistic outcome. "But she has changed. Perhaps I'll change too," implies that Anne will most likely change too and will marry an imperfect man. Therefore, she tries to ready herself for confronting an unromantic, ordinary life but, as usual, makes it pleasant and beautiful, because of her romantic character:

"I'd like to add some beauty to life," said Anne dreamily. "I don't exactly want to make people know more ... though I know that is the noblest ambition ... but I'd like to make them have a pleasanter time because of me ... to have some little joy or happy thought that would never have existed if I hadn't been born." (*AA* 54)

Anne does not want "to make people know more" because she knows through personal experience that knowing more means growing up faster and faster. Growing up means leaving all your childish romances behind to do many unromantic things that you do not like. Anne is still not a creature of the head: of reason and rationality. She is a creature of

the heart: feeling, emotion, and passion. She wants to help people feel joy, beauty, and delight, and not simply know more and look at around them with rational eyes. In fact, this emotional character of Anne and her resistance to rationality fuels her resistance to traditional romance.

In Montgomery's *Anne of the Island*, the book of weddings, Anne's marriage refusal to Gilbert to be with Roy is her last unsuccessful resistance against society and her last attempt to live a romantic life. It's unsuccessful, because she cannot stop thinking about Gilbert, even when she has Roy with her and because she finally resigns to what society wants: rejecting her ideal man and accepting Gilbert's proposal. As noted in Chapter 2, even the moments in which Anne is enjoying being with her ideal dark-eyed man Roy, she is still thinking about Gilbert. Nonetheless, she still tries to convince herself that Roy is her ideal man. When she finds out that, compared to Gilbert, Roy is extremely boring and "[has] no sense of humor" (*AI* 176), she reminds herself that Roy is an ideal hero and that "who could expect a melancholy, inscrutable hero to see the humorous side of things? It would be flatly unreasonable" (*AI* 176).

Anne could not banish Gilbert's image from her dreams in *Anne of Avonlea*, and now she cannot banish him from her thoughts and heart. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Anne does not realize her love to Gilbert until he is dying. It is only then that Anne realizes that "she loved Gilbert—had always loved him!" (*AI* 237). Anne's admiration of Gilbert's friendly manner and her desire to become his wife at the end of *Anne of the Island* causes the reader to yearn to see them in love:

Anne looked after him as he strode away, and sighed. Gilbert was friendly—very friendly—far too friendly. He had come quite often to

Green Gables after his recovery, and something of their old comradeship had returned [...] She was haunted by a miserable fear that her mistake could never be rectified. It was quite likely that it was Christine who Gilbert loved after all. Perhaps he was even engaged to her. Anne tried to put all unsettling hopes out of her heart, and reconcile herself to future where work and ambition must take the place of love. (AI 241)

Once Gilbert recovers, Anne and Gilbert go for “one of [their] old time rambles” (AI 239) and visit Hester Gray’s garden. There, Gilbert proposes to Anne: “I asked you a question over two years ago, Anne. If I ask it again today will you give me a different answer?” (AI 242). Anne accepts his proposal even though accepting it is a form of surrendering for Anne; however, Montgomery writes it in a way that makes it a happy ending for both the story and the reader. Montgomery did not have love like that passage in her life, so she gave it to Anne to make Anne’s surrender a happy event. Compared to Montgomery’s sense of entrapment in her wedding night, Anne’s feeling after her engagement to Gilbert and the scene of their returning home together seem extremely romantic:

“I don’t want sunbursts and marble halls. I just want *you*.” [...] Gilbert drew her close to him and kissed her. Then they walked home together in the dusk, crowned king and queen in the bridal realm of love, along winding paths fringed with the sweetest flowers that ever bloomed, and over haunted meadows where winds of hope and memory blew. (AI 244)

In fact, choosing Gilbert first as a friend, later as a love interest, and finally as a husband represents all the societal limitations that Anne always tries to avoid throughout her life. Based on Epperly’s statement, mentioned earlier in the chapter, the closer Anne

gets to Gilbert, the more Anne moves away from her romantic world. Her world gets smaller until it is simply limited to her thoughts and romance with Gilbert thus ending her nontraditional romances. Anne is aware that marrying Gilbert would result in these changes, so she says: ““how horrible it is that people have to grow up—and marry—and *change!*”” (*AI* 181). Since Gilbert is the one that Anne has to marry, he symbolizes all the restrictions in Anne’s life and the termination of her nontraditional romances; therefore Anne resists him in every book even though she surrenders to him in the end.

CONCLUSION

After writing *Anne of Green Gables*, Montgomery sent it to several different publishers, who returned the novel every time. Finally, after several trials, the American publisher, L.C. Page, accepted Montgomery's novel and published it in 1908. Because writing was her primary source of income, Montgomery had to write her novels so that the society of her time accepted them. Since remaining a single woman was not very usual at that time, it was obvious that she would make Anne get married anyway.

Montgomery herself saw women as mothers first and professionals second:

Montgomery was a woman who appeared to the public as a minister's wife and the mother of two sons. She did not always identify herself as "L.M. Montgomery" outside her writing, and she always maintained that her work as "Mrs. Macdonald" came before her work as a writer.

(Devereux 32)

However, now that Anne has to get married, I as a reader would have preferred to see her with her real ideal husband who loves nature as Anne does and is loving and romantic in their marriage. Roy looks like Anne's ideal man, but if he could have a character deeply in love with nature, like Anne, and a more companionable personality, then he and Anne would make the most perfect romantic couple and live all their life in love and peace.

The theme of pilgrimage is potent, not just within the texts, but also for Prince Edward Island, Anne, the books, and Montgomery herself all becoming pilgrimage

destinations. Anne makes pilgrimage to Hester garden in the book to feel comfortable and enjoy the romance has once lived there. Today readers of Anne books make pilgrimage to Prince Edward Island to take refuge in its beautiful nature and feel comfortable in there. Hester is sacred for Anne because she is Anne's romantic model. Anne is sacred for readers because she has been their romantic model for many years. So, people admires Montgomery as the creator of this romantic model, make pilgrimage to Anne's place of living, to tell Montgomery that Anne and her romance are still alive and sacred for them.

Wherever Anne winds up, we hope Anne will make the best out of it. Forbidden or not, Anne has a romantic character with a powerful imagination. Her soul is deeply in love with nature, so we can hope wherever she goes she will be able to find parts of the natural world to comfort her: "nothing could rob her of her birthright of fancy or her ideal world of dreams. And there was always the bend in the road! 'God's in his heaven, all's right with the world,' whispered Anne softly" (*AGG* 309).

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VITA

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