Pilgrimage of Imagination

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Anne Shirley whispers from their desks.
Their nights are stitched with stories that breathe,
and here, on Prince Edward Island's misted shores,
Anne Shirley leaps from the pages of my students,
her freckles blinking like distant constellations
over the blue waters.

I, a Persian pilgrim, carry Anne in my chest,
a flame is flickering against the Atlantic wind,
tracing lines between shining rivers
and the poetry of orchard blossoms.
I can hear Khayyam and Rumi humming in my classroom:
"Born with wings,"
and students nod,
their pens sketching Anne's rebellion
in Farsi.

The curls of imagination
become a shadow on the chalkboard,
while orphaned tears
merge with Anne's red-haired resolve.
A bridge of cedar and maple
sings across centuries,
as Persian hamlets and Avonlea
fold into a single heartbeat.

The Magi show their gold and frankincense,
watching young women bend the air
with laughter, hope, and stubborn dreams,
their identity intermixed with Anne's reveries,
a tapestry of exile, triumph, and fairyland.
Anne's stubbornness, Rumi's wings, Khayyam's joy, Shahrazad's tales,
all converge here,
in the quiet audacity of reading,

where literature transcends walls
and a story becomes a pilgrimage.



Top right and left: Dr. Roodi's former Iranian students performing scenes from *Anne of Green Gables* in a classroom drama. Bottom left: an excerpt from PEI's *Buzz* in 2008.

About the Author: Sam Roodi is a professor of Communications at Fanshawe College, where he teaches courses in communications, writing, and Global Citizenship. He received his doctorate in English from the University of Sussex in England and has been teaching English and literature for over thirty years. He moved to Canada with his family in 2006 and has one daughter, who is also a devoted Montgomery fan. His hobbies include reading, writing, and hiking.

Anne of Green Gables has long inspired Dr. Roodi. He taught the novel at universities in Iran and, in 2008, was invited to present a paper on his experiences at the Centennial Montgomery Conference in Charlottetown, PEI. That paper was eventually published in *Anne Around the World* (2013). “Pilgrimage of Imagination” was written as a poetic reflection on that experience, celebrating the enduring power of Anne’s story to cross cultures, languages, and generations.

Article Info

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Banner image: Dr. Roodi's Iranian students presenting a puppet show based on *Anne of Green Gables*.