

## Synopsis

### ACT I

In the town of Warner an announcement is being made. Mr. Manning introduces Mr. Gates, who announces the town's name will change to Ladysmith. Mrs. Manning recounts the dinner at which the new name was chosen. Mr. Gates introduces Tom Maxwell, who will be writing a story about the name change for the Milwaukee and Chicago papers. Lucy and Will, two young people of the town, discuss the new name. Will insists that they should be married soon and leave the town before it is overrun.

At the town meeting to plan a festive reception for Charles Smith and Isabel Rogers, arriving soon by train, Tom Maxwell is interviewing people about the town. When Lucy arrives, Tom goes to talk to her. Will arrives, and is angered that Lucy is talking to the reporter. Lucy tries to keep them from fighting, and eventually Will tells her she needs to make a choice.

The train with the important visitors has arrived. Lucy wonders what Isabel would do about the choice Will has asked her to make. She wishes she could ask Isabel's advice. Tom appears and they talk about the future of the town. Charles appears and he and Tom exit. Lucy is about to turn back towards home, when she notices Charles has left the door to the railway car open. On impulse, she climbs inside, determined to ask Isabel's advice.

### ACT II

Lucy makes her way into the train car; Isabel believes it is Charles coming back and tells him he can just tell the town she was too sick to make the trip. Then, she sees it is not Charles at all. Although Isabel is at first alarmed and confused, Lucy's story wins her over. When they part ways, Isabel asks that Lucy keep secret that Isabel is on the train.

Lucy exits the train car just as Will arrives – he is shocked that she would board the train uninvited, and demands to know what she was doing. Lucy tells him she was hoping to find Isabel and ask her advice but there was no one on the train. She tells Will she just sat and thought and imagined what advice Isabel might give her. He reminds her of his own dreams, how different they are from hers. In the end, they part ways as friends.

Lucy thinks about her town, what it has been and what it could be. Tom enters; he has been looking for her. Tom has decided to stay in Ladysmith and cover the story of the new industry in the town for his paper in Milwaukee, and also write for the local weekly paper. But, he says, he will have to return to the big city from time to time, and he would prefer not to travel alone anymore. They compare the naming of a town with the naming of other things: rivers, animals, babies, the new name Lucy would take if she married. As they kiss, the celebration begins.