

The Mountains Are Calling...
A Play in 5 Stages
By Lana Sage

The Mountains Are Calling...

We are at the foot of The Mountain, a forest, a journey to something that has no end other than what might be. Lights out on The World. Stars appear. The Family appears from their respective bases: a weathered cabin at the foot of the woods, a makeshift guest room of a lifeless house, the garden of a 'poor'-person's most elaborate HOA-monitored home, and a secluded lakeside beach. As The Memory and The Now intermingle, interlooping, The Family leaves behind their respective containers: a Beer Bottle, a Cash Jar, a compost Bucket, and a Mason Jar. They begin to traverse The Mountain. The center of everything.

The Dad

Look to the stars DedeBee. They can tell you so much—

The Brother

Do that for me Man. While I'm gone—

The Stepmom

If you just give me your hand Amanda. You can do this if—

The Mom

Let in Amanda. It's alright to just give in—

The Family

Amanda—

The Dad

It'll help you—

The Brother

It won't help to—

The Stepmom

I'll help you—

The Mom

I can help to–

The Family

Amanda–

The Dad

Look to the stars / DedeBee. They can tell you so much–

The Brother

Do that for me / Man. While I'm gone–

The Stepmom

If you just give me your hand / Amanda. You can do this if–

The Mom

Let in Amanda. It's alright to just give in–

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Amanda–

The Dad

It'll help you–

The Brother

It won't help to–

The Stepmom

I'll help you–

The Mom

I can help to–

The Family

Amanda–

A breath

The Dad

Look to the stars / DedeBee. They can tell you so much–

The Brother

Do that for me / Man. While I'm gone—

The Mom

Let in Amanda. It's alright to just give in—

The Stepmom

If you just give me your hand / Amanda. You can do this if—

The Dad

It'll help / you—

The Brother

It won't help / to—

The Stepmom

I'll help / you—

The Mom

I can help / to—

The Dad

Look to the stars / DedeBee. They can tell you so much—

The Brother

Do that for me / Man. While I'm gone—

The Mom

Let in Amanda. It's alright to just give in—

The Stepmom

If you just give me your hand / Amanda. You can do this if—

Amanda, 19, stops at the foot of The Mountain, before The Family. She clasps a Necklace around her neck.

A breath

Amanda

The Mountains

The stars grow bright, there's so much sound there's no sound. We are at the culmination of the end, at least in some way.

The Family
Amanda—

Lights out on The Family.

The Denial

Lights up on The Dad, 47ish. We are on the porch of a weathered cabin at the foot of the woods. Amanda, 19, picks up The Dad's Bottle but then holds, as if waiting for something to break. The Dad holds his hand out for his Bottle.

Amanda
I'm sorry but I just can't get behind this whole thing

The Dad
What 'Whole Thing'

Amanda
You

The Dad
What about me? Is something wrong?

A pause

The Dad (continued)
De... I'm right here. What's wrong?

The Memory dilutes The Now. Amanda, 19 but 18ish, hands The Dad his Bottle.

Amanda
What's wrong is you wearing something other than a flannel

The Dad
I'm sure I didn't only / wear flannel when you were growing up

Amanda

Nope. No—in my memory you only wore red and brown flannel. Every single / day. Like a cartoon character or something

The Dad

Maybe your memory is wrong. Think about / it, like that—

Amanda

Doubtful

The Dad

You know like that one things that happens—

Amanda

What thing?

The Dad

You know. The thing. That / thing when—

Amanda

Oh right. The / thing. Right.

The Dad

When your memory remembers something wrong

Amanda

So you said

The Dad

No but there's a name for it

Amanda

Ya. Remembering something / wrong

The Dad

No... There's a name for it I know it

Amanda

Ok Dad

The Dad
I'm sure of it

Amanda
You're sure of a lot of things

The Dad
And I'm right about all those things I'm sure of

Amanda
...For example...?

The Dad
There's a name for this thing—

Amanda
This phenomenon—

The Dad
Ya—Cause he was in prison or something and we all thought he—But he wasn't actually—everyone was wrong—because years later he actually... Yaknow... He didn't actually... You know—why don't you just look it up for me

Amanda
There's no service

The Dad
You didn't even try

Amanda
Didn't need to. There's no / service.

The Dad
But how can you know there's no / service if you didn't even fucking check

Amanda
Because that's just how service works, Dad. When there's high / elevation the signals don't—

The Dad

Ya ya ya high elevation and all that liberal arts bullshit

Amanda

Dad—

The Dad

No. No, I get it. I know that I didn't get a big ol fancy fucking degree / like you or anything—

Amanda

Dad I didn't—

The Dad

Like I'm not some high and mighty / honors fucker who couldn't get laid in high school—

Amanda

Don't worry about that stuff—I didn't even submit my—

The Dad

But that doesn't mean that I don't / know things

Amanda

It's just physics, / Dad. The natural world

The Dad

I can know physic-ologist / shit

Amanda

Physicist. / Physics.

The Dad

You see, there's a clear difference between book smarts and street smarts

Amanda

So the saying goes—

The Dad

You Starling are book smart—you poor thing wasting money / on a degree life can teach you for free

Amanda

I'm not even going to college

The Dad

Your brother, the little shit, is street smart—I'll give him that

Amanda

Ok fine—

The Dad

And I am one smart ass man

Amanda

Ok smartass—

The Dad

Don't you go smarting me—

Amanda

I know / I was joking

The Dad

You know that

Amanda

I do

The Dad

Good?

Amanda

Good

The Dad

Good.

A beat

Amanda

But why the flowery shirt?

The Dad
You mean this?

Amanda
Ya. That.

The Dad
I like it

Amanda
You actually / like it

The Dad
I actually do. And what—you / don't?

Amanda
I'm sorry / it's just—

The Dad
No no. Don't you fucking apologize / to me. I liked something Lucy bought for me and I wore it

Amanda
I'm—I know. I'm glad you like it. Ok?

The Dad
Is it so bad to like something / she bought for me?

Amanda
No it's just weird

The Dad
I don't think it's weird

The Memory fades from The Now.

Amanda
You didn't wear that. You hated it. You weren't / wearing that when—

The Dad
I mean shit, De. You used to like everything she gave you when you were little

Amanda

I did ya / but you weren't wearing that

The Dad

So what's so wrong about it.

The Memory dilutes The Now. Amanda, 19 but 18ish, comes to.

Amanda

I don't know, Dad

The Dad

Ok. So it's settled. I like my shirt. And nothing's wrong

Amanda

But something is / wrong

The Dad

You mean my / shirt

Amanda

It's not just / the shirt

The Dad

But you're making it about the shirt. It's just a / shirt. Move on

Amanda

It's just not like you

The Dad

What isn't

Amanda

The... Siding with Lucy / I guess.

The Dad

You're wrong there, Bright Star. It's not like you to agree with your mother

Amanda

Stepmom

The Dad

If you're gonna be all specific and shit then just call her Goose again. It was never real anyway, right / De? Isn't that what you said?

Amanda

You're getting all mumbly again

The Dad

I'm just stating facts. You know I thought it was a good idea

Amanda

It was—it was a good idea but / I'm not four anymore

The Dad

But you act like we traumatized you / or something

Amanda

I mean it didn't kind of / traumatized after Mom

The Dad

We did nothing wrong

Amanda

I saw her on / the floor

The Dad

I don't know what you think / you saw—

Amanda

I saw her. And Gat and you took her away. And Lucy / stayed with me. All night.

The Dad

None of that happened, De. You're remembering / it wrong

Amanda

I'm remembering just fine.

The Dad

You were too young to remember it correctly

Amanda

Dad—

The Dad

Goose was there. You have that right. And she's still here.

A beat

The Dad (continued)

You've stayed with her. Right, / Amanda—

The Mom

Amanda—

Amanda

I—I'm sorry—

The Dad

What did I say about apologizing? We are not / gonna apologize—

Amanda

We're not gonna apologize for what / we don't yet know—

The Dad

For things we don't know yet that's right

*The Memory fades from The Now. A flicker. Lights out on The Dad. Amanda, 19, stands, bracing.
A flicker. Lights up on The Dad.*

The Dad (continued)

Just an old light, DedeBee. See? It's ok. We're ok

Amanda

Are you?

The Dad

I'm here aren't I

Amanda
Are you...

The Dad
You're being real strange today, De. Real strange...

The Memory dilutes The Now. Amanda, 19 but 18ish, comes to.

Amanda
I'm... I'm trying not to say sorry

The Dad
You're doing / fine, Starling

Amanda
It's a lot. You know?

The Dad
De... What is it?

Amanda
The... You know. All the... I don't know-

The Dad
You don't

Amanda
Can we change the subject

The Dad
What do you want to talk about?

Amanda
I don't / know can we just talk-

The Dad
No. No more of that 'I don't know' bullshit. You do know. You're just letting the 'I don't knows'
control you

Amanda

Ya?

The Dad

You know when I get lost in the ‘I don’t knows,’ I look to the stars

Amanda

That only works for directions

The Dad

You’re wrong there, Bright Star, The stars can tell so much more than that. If you let em

Amanda

Ya

The Dad

They always seem to know all the right shit, you know?

Amanda

I do

The Dad

Like... shit. Of course they know the way, the greats, the campfire stories. That much is obvious. They tell you math and—and all the sciency shit you talk about. You get it. That right there—the stars? That’s a fucking degree. Right there. All in the stars. A fucking degree. And how do you know that?

Amanda

Someone once told me

The Dad

I bet that person was one smartass man

Amanda

Sure

The Dad

You gonna sit or what

Amanda

I didn’t know if I was welcome

The Dad
What?

Amanda
I kind of feel like I'm intruding or something

The Dad
You? Never. The stars are welcome, so my Bright Star is welcome.

Amanda
You sure?

The Dad
I'm always sure, DedeBee. You know that. Just get me another bottle before you do, will ya?

Amanda
[exiting to the cabin] Ya. Sure. One sec

*The Beer Bottle falls with The Memory. It clanks and breaks against the other bottles at his feet.
The contents spill out.*

The Dad
Welcome to The Mountain, DedeBee

Amanda
[offstage] What's that?

The Dad
Be careful of elevation. Never hike alone. Welcome to The Mountain, / DedeBee...

Amanda
[offstage] Are you mumbling again?

The Dad
Be careful of-

Amanda
[offstage] You need to clean / up in here a bit

The Dad

Don't you go telling me / what to do—

Amanda

[entering with a new bottle] I'm just giving you a hard time. No need to act like I'm / Gat or whatever

The Dad

Oh. Hi De

The Memory might fade from The Now, but Amanda, 19, comes to, stopping in her tracks. The Memory dilutes The Now.

Amanda

...Hi Dad

The Dad

You're here

Amanda

Ya...

The Dad

It's you

A breath

Amanda

Who else would it be...

A pause

The Dad

Who knows these days.

A pause

Amanda

Dad?

The Dad
...De?

The Memory dilutes The Now Amanda, 19 but 18ish, holds the new beer bottle out to The Dad. A peace offering. A deal. He takes it.

Amanda
Tell me about the stars?

The Dad
Today?

Amanda
No four years from now. Yes / today

The Dad
Well I'm no time traveler but—Well shit why would you go fucking lying to me like that Amanda

Amanda
Dad—

The Dad
I mean... Shit. With what I do for you / and our family—

Amanda
I know—

The Dad
Here you go just / being all fucking cavalier and shit.

Amanda
Tell me about the stars ok? I'm just joking with you. You / know that—

The Dad
We're gonna go hunting.

Amanda
Dad—

The Dad

No don't you "Dad" me with all your—No you're not gonna do that. Not with me. You can do that with your brother. You can do that with Goose. But you can't—You will not do that with me. Do you hear me?

Amanda

I—

The Dad

Did you hear me.

Amanda

Yes.

The Dad

Good. We're going hunting. Now.

Amanda, 19, is a bystander to The Memory from when she was 18ish. The Dad wobbles as he grabs his crossbow.

Amanda

Are you sure you're safe / to hold a literal weapon right now

The Dad

DedeBee. I know you worry. But I know my crossbow. I know myself. I know what I'm doing.

The Dad

There's no need to worry about your old man. You're too young to worry. My mind and eyes are as clear as the sky above my head. See?

Amanda

I see it now

The Dad

Damn. You see the sky tonight, Starling? Fucking gorgeous 'innit?

Amanda

Ya. Gorgeous.

The Dad

As clear as the sky above my very head

Amanda
I know Dad.

The Dad lumbers to The Mountain. Amanda, 19, doesn't follow, but she stays as close to The Memory from when she was 18ish as it will allow her.

The Dad
Shit. Beautiful night for hunting. Clear skies

Amanda
And the stars? What about the stars

The Dad
They'll show us the way

A beat

The Dad (continued)
Bright Star. De.

The Mom's hand is seen. She holds her hand out to Amanda. Open.

The Mom
Amanda—

The Dad
Shhh

Amanda
What do you see

The Dad
Just shhhh...

The Dad crosses over The Mountain, crossbow aimed and ready. He takes slow lunges forward.

The Family (besides The Dad)
Amanda—

The crossbow clicks. Lights out on The Dad.

SAMPLE