

THE DREAM Q → SWITCH

Lyrics by Becky Boesen

Music by David von Kampen

Sung by Andrea von Kampen |

**Co-produced by BLIXT and
Nebraska Community Foundation**



Song Lyrics



BUT FOR CHADRON

He's holding my blue suitcase
By the time I reach the door.
Scattered showers.
Wilted flowers.
I can't stay here anymore.
"Don't you worry,"
Something whispered
As we step into the night.
"Keep your head up . . .
But for Chadron
Darlin'
Darlin'...
But for Chadron, darlin', you might be alright."
Went to college with one goal, to get away.
Morning Glory in my rear view,
with the things I didn't say
Why, Nebraska?
Maybe I've been stuck here out of fright.
Like the kid on the corner,
Who can't seem to get it right.
When his mother calls,
I hear my own.
Her voice rings clear in the night.
"Keep your head up . . ."
But for Chadron,
Darlin,
Darlin' . . .
But for Chadron, darlin',
You might be alright.

BUCKET SEATS

We sink into the bucket seats and fly.
I don't ask where we're going
Cuz I hope that he'll decide.
My college days have bought the farm,
Bad news personified.
So what? Outwore my welcome,
And I lost a 4-year ride.
I almost drift asleep
But then I notice blue upholstery,
A worn spot that I start to pick,
Until it tears excessively.
Leave well enough alone
Is not a thing that ever stuck with me.
It's empty now.
I'm empty now.
Sidelines Bar is right off Highway 9,
We order tons of fried stuff,
And we dash after we dine.
His laughter is strong medicine,
But still we crossed a line.
I lean against his shoulder

And pretend I'm doing fine.
Darkness turns to daylight,
He pulls off the road and turns to me.
I ask him what his deal is,
And he says "Who did you hope I'd be?"
He wants to live in Chadron
And he can't change plans so easily.
I can't reply.
I don't know why.
If my future's so important
Why can't I see it?
When it's time to make decisions
Why do I hide?
If I don't know what comes next
Why can't I say that?
I look away, hoping he'll stay . . .
We're silent for the ride.
He drives into our old familiar town.
Spring is taking her sweet time here,
There's still snow left on the ground.
Some fly ahead, some stay behind,
Soon word will get around.
He leaves me on my mother's porch,
And we let each other down.

ROCK EERIE

Mom?
Are you asleep?
Good.
Gentle breathing.
Stay that way.
Sleep until the day.
I'm over Chadron.
I'm going to Rock Eerie.
Don't follow me.
Remember our first trip?
Family vacation.
Endless mountain range
So beautiful and strange.
I want to feel that,
Like a kid at Rock Eerie.
I'll miss the scenery,
But I have plans for me,
More than Front Street.
The crystal air
Is waiting there
Pink ice cream cones,
Now it's calling me.
Set me free . . .
I can't just be who you want.
I'll find a favorite place.
Down on Main, drink an espresso.
There's no one to blame,

We just don't feel the same.
I won't regret it,
Heading out to Rock Eerie.
The air out there,
Is worth being wrong.
I want to find
A place where I belong.
Brave New World
My family's lived right here
For at least 100 years.
And staying near the farm has been
A thing they want from me.
I'm tired of years of morning chores,
Of summer storms and old barn doors,
Of staring at the wall,
And making myself small.
Anna Karenina,
Wuthering Heights
Heart of Darkness,
Sense and Sensibility,
A girl from the Sandhills
With a pen in her hand,
And a fire in her belly,
The next Mary Shelley . . .
I woke up at 4
And glanced out the door.
And the room got so quiet,
And the porch spinner twirled,
And I packed my old suitcase.
So long, Great Expectations.
Hello, Brave New World.

GPS

The blue barn light flickers
And then it fades.
I-80 is a scattering of semis,
And nothingness,
and stars.
Somewhere near Sterling
My GPS freaks,
And it feels like I'm driving through Texas,
Or Weirdsville,
Or Mars,
Instead of rural Colorado.
I've lost my signal.
I'm out of range.
And I'm feeling pretty stupid.
Chin up.
Morning comes
like it always does.
I stop for coffee,
Brush my teeth,
wash my face.

For a moment I consider the repercussions
Of the last 24 hours
and how instead having thoughtful
discussions
With my professors,
And my friends,
And my family.
I've effectively orchestrated my own cataclysm.
Maybe I should go home.
Man, I kind of wanna go home.
What would people say?
Most of them think,
That I'll never amount,
To anything special anyway.
Anyway . . .
The GPS is working
And I'm tired.
But I drive.
Toward the Rockies.
Until morning.
And I'm super amped,
When I roll into town.

MAKE GOOD

"If you gave this place a chance,
You could make something good,"
That's what my mother said to me.
But running hard and breaking free
Always sounded better than it should.
Always sounded better than it should.
My story's pretty typical.
No vacancy
For a girl like me.
Nebraska . . .
Where sunsets last for hours,
But what does that mean,
When you're running toward a dream?
And yeah, it's beautiful back there
But I don't really care now.
I'm trying to make my way somehow,
A new life.
We used to drive up Boot Hill.
Gold skies at dawn,
Radio on,
Nebraska.
Where you won't find any rat race,
Just cats out in the barn,
And haystacks like spun yarn.
And yeah, I guess it is unique.
A stone across the creek now.
I skipped one and it disappeared
And so did I.
I use to gaze up at the stars,

When I was a little girl
And if I squinted my eyes just right
I could pretend on a summer night
That I was looking at a city sky . . .
Lincoln or Denver
Or somewhere close by.
I've landed close by.
I guess I'll miss the landscape.
All hills then flat
I promise that
You can drive the whole state
Without opening your eyes
And the scenery flies.
And yeah, these mountains take up space,
But I'm not out of place here.
I've learned to look toward bigger things.
"If you ever change your mind,
You can always come back home,"
That's what my mother said to me.
The mountain air, it doesn't care,
Not the way my hometown would.
Still, I think I'll make it good.

JOB OPENING (WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 10 YEARS)?

I see myself probably revolting,
Or drowning in crippling debt.
Let's not talk about school,
But adventure is cool.
I could join the Peace Corps
Or write a novella on epic regret.
Let's see, I have no real experience.
I don't even know what that means.
But if you're in a bind
I can give you some time.
Yes or no?
What's your deal?
Do we fit?
How does it feel?
I don't like in-betweens.
Look.
I didn't expect to walk in here today.
I wanted a place to just "be."
Need a body? I'm here.
If I sound insincere,
It's just nerves,
Don't give up on me.
I just really want to work in your bookstore.

BAD DREAM

Something is very wrong right now.
Bizarre and strange.
Yellow sky.

Not quite right.
Day or night?
I can't tell.
Why?
I'm hearing familiar sounds.
Words arrange,
Sad goodbye.
Sudden fright.
When I wake up,
World is sleeping,
It's barely after four.
Heart is pounding,
Heavy breathing.
This is not fun anymore.
It's my first night on my own.
Had a bad dream all alone.
All alone.
Drink some water,
Lay back down,
"You're ok."
I hear my mother say,
"Keep your head up . . ."

RETURN TO A FIELD

When I was a kid
I lived for the fair.
I got so caught up
In all the attractions.
Big carnival rides
And rodeo nights,
One week in July,
Familiar distractions.
But the big tents come down
And the earth becomes flat
When make-believe places,
Return to a field.
I found my own place,
The contract is signed,
The future is mine,
Without complications.
Sleep until noon
And do what I like.
Build a new life
Explore variations.
But big dreams fall down
When the day feels so flat
And you'd sell you own hand
To return to a field.
I made my own choice,
I hear my mother's voice . . .
"Home is a place where special things happen.
What sometimes looks empty is space for a
dream.

Working hard means you build your own
future,
And walking away is like swimming upstream.”
When everything I needed to be me was
around me.
This whole grown up thing isn't quite what it
seems.
So . . . overrated.

FANCY MOUNTAIN PARTY

Some weeks have passed.
I'm settling in.
Having a blast!
Beginning once again.
My digs are sweet
And cozy too,
A chill retreat with not so much to do.
I'm lonely here.
Then one day,
I go to get the mail,
There's a light pink envelope,
Hand addressed.
I tear it open . . .
Looks like I'm not interloping!
“You are invited,
To a fancy mountain party.
Dress in your best!
Hors d'oeuvres begin at 2.
Then a silent auction,
Followed by champagne toast.
RSVP, if you please.
We'll see you there,
Adieu.”
What should I wear?
And will they care
That I come from the Sandhills?
One look at me
And they'll all see,
I'm barely paying my bills.
A grand affair!
And once I'm there
I'll hob knob with influencers from Insta.
My rich new friends
Whose fun depends
On whether they've evinced an army of
followers or not.
Am I?
Am I?
Am I a follower?
And what would my mother say
If she heard me talk this way?
I am invited
To a fancy mountain party.
I'm kinda missing home now,

But I'll show up anyway.
You don't get invited
Unless you're really wanted.
Hello, brand new day.
Hello, brand new life.
Hello, brave new world!
I should probably go and buy myself a dress.

SKI BRAT

Lately I've been thinking
As I squander my best years away in this
mountain town,
About the complexities that must come with
having famous parents.
Particularly those who are more obscure
But their names get around
In modern elitist literary circles.
I mean,
If you get a book deal of your own
Does it count?
Or whatnot.
It makes me think of a story I once heard,
About Emilio Estevez,
And how he took the family name
“Estevez”
Because he wanted to earn his way
Without the help of his father.
I think honestly, I prefer the Charlie Sheen
method.
I mean we all know, they both came from
Martin.
Martin Sheen, that is.
You can run from who you are.
Or you can own it.
But either way
Your famous parents might be the only reason
you're out skiing
While I'm buy canned green beans at Safeway.
Could you have ever made it on your own?
Maybe so.
The possibility exists.
I'm certain you possess,
Many many qualities that might have helped
you get there.
Without your mom in tow.
But I guess we'll never know.
We'll never know.
Emilio.

THE LETTER

I think I've been avoiding the mailbox.
It's stuffed full of stuff from the week.
I decide to pull out all the junk mail,
Break my own avoidance streak.

A piece of it falls down to the curbside.

It's a letter.

Hmmm . . .

Little Girl,

I know, I know,

You're not so little now.

I thought twice,

But made the choice,

To write that anyhow.

Because no matter where life leads you,

Or how far away you roam,

You'll always be my baby,

And this place will be your home.

I know, I know,

This farm isn't L.A.

But there are people here,

Who dream big dreams,

And have cool things to say,

Making space for thinkers,

And for those who really shine.

Just imagine what your spark could add,

To your hometown and mine.

The day you left,

The earth felt flat,

I guess I never,

Told you that,

And I forgot,

The most important thing

A mom should say.

To my only daughter.

The dreamer.

The schemer.

The pain in the neck.

The writer.

My very own heart.

We love you as you are.

I know, I know,

I probably blew my shot,

But I want to take

This chance

Here's what I've got:

Go on and build you bright new future,

Take the time you need to roam,

And when you're done,

Follow the sun,

It shines for you back home.

If I wasn't clear,

We want you here . . ."

Signed,

Mom

THE DREAM SWITCH

I can feel my whole heart awaken,

The hardest part is over.

I'm dreaming tonight.

Stronger than ever. I'm ready.

Unshaken.

Twilight to sun bright, darkness to light.

Bursting with promise,

You ready? I'm coming.

Heart beating fast now,

Fingers are drumming.

And I'm gonna turn this thing up,

Wait and see,

Becoming who I'm supposed to be,

Just flip the switch . . .

I feel the pounding of tomorrow.

Rocking the pasture, return to a field.

So long there, pent up sorrow,

My future's sandhills sealed.

Get ready. Returning.

Stars flying by me

Like the pavement I'm burning.

And when I finally turn up,

They'll know who I'm meant to be.

Just flip it.

I've got places to go and places to grow,

And now I finally know which is which.

My story's just started, I'm turning the pages.

My home is the place where I'll turn up my
dream switch.

I've got thoughts to share and people who care,
Ideas to pitch.

A story to write on a hot prairie night,

I'm coming to life,

Let's flip the switch.

I'm writing my life's story.

Bursting through the binding,

I'm living out loud.

Waving like tallgrass,

"Hey, how's it going?"

Welcoming faces.

Making them proud.

Best me beginning,

No sad song bad ending.

Pages are filling,

No more pretending.

And I'm gonna straight out turn up, find my
way.

A springtime spun homecoming day.

Cather and Kooser and Pipher and Pound,

They better make space cuz I am coming back
around!

Just a girl with a dream and a fire in her belly,

Just a girl with a dream . . .

COMING HOME

So, I packed up my blue suitcase,
Walked one last time to the door,
Tattered armchair,
Plans I made there,
Made my way toward the bookstore.
Sun was setting,
Drove up Main Street,
And I stopped to say goodbye.
Thanks, Rock Eerie . . .
Coming home was really good.
If you ask 'round town,
I think it's understood
I'm more at peace here,
The farm is like an old friend.
The weather changes,
So do I.
I'm a summer storm,
And shining westward sky.
Imperfectly authentic,
And learning to comprehend,
That if you're lonely for home,
In the place you've been planted,
Let your roots take hold.
You will grow . . .
I don't waste moments on regret,
Don't hold onto pride
Or try hard to forget.
I make bold choices.
Hey, go big AND go home.

Next fall I'm going back to school.
Chadron's not too far,
And giving up's not cool.
My folks gave me a mailbox,
For when I come back for good.
And if you're lonely for home,
And you want to return there,
Let your brilliant spark shine,
In your own middle of somewhere.
The night I packed and left here,
I thought failures stay.
But thinking like that,
Got in my way.
Because my story starts and ends right here,
And when the day is through,
I'm grateful for my sweet sandhills view.
I think I'll take a walk today,
Take some time to write,
With big plans underway.
The future's calling,
A voice that invites me to stay.
And if you're lonely for home,
But you know you belong there,
Take a chance, make your mark,
In the middle of somewhere,
Doesn't matter how you get there,
Don't give up on yourself,
Or the home that your heart belongs to.
Because your story starts with you,
Right here.

