

To the Mountain: Log Line and Synopsis

Log Line:

The story of five hikers who find meaning in their lives after the beautiful yet harsh surroundings of the Rocky Mountains force them to connect with one another both physically and spiritually.

Short:

To the Mountain is an ensemble piece about three sets of hikers: a father and son as they mourn the one-year anniversary of their mother/wife's tragic passing, a retired professor in search of a new meaning to her life, and a pair of young women on their year abroad. All of these stories collide and when the Rocky Mountains finally reveal their darker side these individuals are forced to consider what is truly important to them.

Featuring a truly independent approach to filmmaking, beautiful cinematography, and an original score by Canadian artist Young Neighbours, *To the Mountain* is an emotional exploration of the journey of longing.

Long:

To the Mountain is an ensemble piece about three sets of hikers, a father and son as they mourn the one-year anniversary of their mother/wife's tragic passing, a pair of young women on their year abroad, and a retired professor. All of these characters have come to the mountains for different reasons but each hope to find the answers to their questions there.

The son's name is Jon. He is 25-years-old and is plagued by his mother's death, which resulted from a car accident for which he was responsible. He has now come to the mountains to honour her artistic spirit by taking photos of her favourite places in the Rockies with her 1948 Land camera. He doesn't want to spend the day with his father due to the resentment that has grown since his mother's death.

The Father's name is Chris. He is a 60-year-old mechanic, who wants to reconcile with his son and begin a new chapter of his life. While he is walking along the side of a back road, Julie, the retired professor, nearly hits him with her car. When she runs to his aid, he falls for her. Thinking this may be his chance for a new beginning he convinces the professor to join him on a hike.

Julie is a woman in her 50's who has recently retired and decided she must finally visit the Rocky Mountains located an hour from her home. She is unsure about the whole thing and when she nearly kills Chris with her car, she wants to give up and go home. Chris asks her to stay and because she is charmed by the old man she does.

The young women spending their year abroad are Cate and Ashley. Both in their early 20s, they came to the small mountain town separately to have an adventure and ended up working in the same diner and sharing the same bad accommodations. Cate is due to leave in one week and feels she has wasted her year away from home. Determined to change that, she decides today is the day she is going to climb a mountain. Not wanting her friend to go alone, Ashley begrudgingly agrees to join her. The pair set off and arrives at the foot of the trail at the same time as Jon. He is not thrilled to have company but the girls tag along behind him for the bulk of the journey.

The three young hikers make their way up the mountain, Jon up ahead and the girls lagging behind. Near the top of the tree line, Jon finds bear droppings and mentions to the girls there could be a bear nearby, then continues up the mountain. The girls get into an argument about what to do and when they hear what they think is a bear they start to run back down the mountain. This leaves Jon to carry on the rest of the way alone and what he finds at the top is not a beautiful picture but an epiphany about how precious and fragile life is.

Meanwhile, our elderly couple is having a wonderful time but when they eventually kiss, Chris is struck by guilt and stops himself. Embarrassed, Julie leaves the old man there and starts to walk back alone. After a while though, she realizes she may be lost and stops. Chris eventually finds her and convinces her to give him one more chance. They carry on, and when they reach their destination any regret about going on the hike together disappears.

Meanwhile, Ashley and Cate are halfway down the mountain having an argument about whether they should go back up or not. This argument exposes the tension that has built up between the two friends over the last year and finally Cate is overcome with anger and walks away. As she does, she trips over a rock and falls off the edge of a cliff onto a dry creek bed below. Cate is unconscious and Ashley is unable to get to her. Eventually, Ashley has no choice but to run for help.

Jon is now making his way down the mountain with a new outlook on life. When he stops to take in the view he notices Cate lying in the creek bed below. Without thinking, Jon starts to make his way down to her but twists his ankle trying to scale the cliff. When he does get to her, he realizes all he can do is keep her warm until someone else comes to save them.

After saying goodbye to Julie, Chris is left alone in the mountain town watching the sunset and worrying about his son. Jon is still on the side of the mountain, lying next to Cate in an attempt to keep them both from freezing to death. Suddenly, he sees the light of flashlights and begins calling out. The rescue team locates them and gets them back to safety.

Chris is now sitting in the dark outside the diner. The town is shut down, and he lacks cell phone reception. All seems lost until suddenly his son's truck pulls up and

Jon hobbles out of the car. Chris walks over to his son and tries to help him stand. As he does, Jon wraps his arms around his father and tells him he loves him.

To the Mountain is a film that explores the theme of longing and the journey of life. It features a truly independent approach to filmmaking, powerful performances, beautiful cinematography, and an original score by Canadian artist Young Neighbours.