

# Journey to the Big Sky

*By Jack Weyland*

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### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

Al McCarty is an elderly construction worker on his first trip with his wife Lisa since his retirement. They're camping in Montana, and though it's been his dream to fish there, Al is bored. He misses his coworkers and the noise of the construction trucks. He's even gone so far as to fix a toilet in the men's restroom.

When an angel in white overall appears telling him "It's time," Al is nonplussed. He demands the angel prove he has heavenly powers, and while they're waiting for the "order" to go through, the angel gives Al a few options for his passing—from drowning, to having a tree fall on him to being shot by a female while he's fixing a toilet in the women's changing room.

Al's not interested until the angel admits Al's construction skills are desperately needed up above where new homes must be built. When he hears this, Al's ready to go, even though he will desperately miss Lisa. But not to worry ... according to the Plan they will be together in heaven later.

About 30 minutes.

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### **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(1 m, 1 w, 1 flexible)*

AL MCCARTY: Recently retired construction worker.

LISA MCCARTY: His wife.

ANGEL: What else?

### **SETTING**

One rough-hewn post with signs for the campsite stands in the middle of the stage. We see about one third of a large camper trailer extending out on the stage. The entrance door to the trailer is off stage. Two folding chairs are set up in front of the trailer.

## **Journey to the Big Sky**

*(AT RISE: It's a pleasant summer day in Montana. LISA McCARTY, sixty years old, sits and reads a magazine. AL McCARTY, recently retired, enters carrying new fishing equipment, but no fish.)*

**LISA:** *(Looking up from magazine.)* Did you catch anything?

**AL:** *(Leans his fishing rod against the trailer and sits down.)* They're not biting yet. Too early. Fella there said to wait 'til five o'clock... *(Looks at lake.)* This is the life, huh?

**LISA:** *(Doesn't look up from magazine.)* Sure is.

**AL:** Just look at that lake! I always wanted to fish in Montana, and now here I am. 'Course I haven't caught anything yet.

**LISA:** *(Reading.)* Hmm.

**AL:** It's sure great to be retired .... Yes sir .... We can go anywhere we want and stay as long as we want.

**LISA:** That's right.

**AL:** They call Montana the Big Sky Country .... Does it look any bigger to you?

**LISA:** No.

**AL:** Well, that's what I thought .... What's that you're reading?

**LISA:** Just a magazine.

**AL:** Oh. Do we need anything at the general store?

**LISA:** No, Al.

**AL:** OK. *(Restlessly looks around.)* I'd better see if the trailer's level.

**LISA:** You've already done that twice today.

**AL:** Well, it won't hurt to check it once more. *(Pulls a level from his shirt pocket and lays it on trailer hitch.)* It's still level.

**LISA:** That's nice.

**AL:** *(Sits down again.)* It's quiet here, isn't it?

**LISA:** Hmm.

**AL:** Do you know what I miss? Beep, beep, beep.

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**LISA:** Oh.

**AL:** Ever since OSHA decided construction crews couldn't tell when a truck was backing up, I've been hearing that ... Beep, beep, beep... You know what? I miss it now.

**LISA:** *(Turns page.)* Oh.

**AL:** Must be interesting ... what you're reading.

**LISA:** It'd be more interesting if you'd let me finish a sentence.

**AL:** Sorry. *(Pause.)* Oh, you know what? I lost that little plastic thing *off* my shoelace.

**LISA:** Oh.

**AL:** Maybe I oughta go into town and pick up a new pair.

**LISA:** Can't it wait 'til tomorrow?

**AL:** Suppose so .... Say, you know when I went fishing this afternoon, I stopped by the changing room near the swimming area to use the restroom. Well, the toilet wouldn't flush. So I took off the top and fixed it. It works good now.

**LISA:** That's nice.

**AL:** Yes sir, this is the life... Just sitting here in Big Sky Country, looking at the lake. *(Looks at watch.)* Four o'clock now .... Another hour and I can go fishing.

**LISA:** Hmm.

*(Pause.)*

**AL:** How do the fish know when it's five o'clock?

**LISA:** I don't know.

**AL:** Four o'clock here .... In Omaha, it'd be five o'clock and our crew'd be on the way home. Maybe we'd stop in and have a cold glass of beer. Play a little air hockey. Unwind. Whole thing'd only cost a couple of bucks.

**LISA:** Hmm.

*(Pause.)*

**AL:** You want to go down and see the toilet I fixed?

**LISA:** Al, no. Just let me read.

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**AL:** Sure .... But sometime could you go into the women's room and see if the toilets work? While we're here, I might as well fix 'em.

**LISA:** *(A little angry.)* Al, I can't get anything read with you around. I'm going inside.

*(AL watches HER leave, starts to whistle. ANGEL walks in, wearing a white carpenter's work overalls and carrying a white brief case.)*

**ANGEL:** *(Eastern accent, tough voice.)* I'm looking for Albert McCarty.

**AL:** That's me.

**ANGEL:** I thought you were .... It's time to cash in your chips.

**AL:** What chips?

**ANGEL:** Let me try it again .... It's time to buy the farm.

**AL:** Are you in real estate? We already had the free dinner and the pitch about Lake Havasu Developments.

**ANGEL:** ...That's all she wrote.

**AL:** Famous Writer's Correspondence School? Aluminum siding? Health insurance? I give up. What's your game?

**ANGEL:** Let me put it to you straight: you're scheduled to die this afternoon. I'm here to help you out-process. I'm an angel.

**AL:** G'wan, you're no angel! *(Laughs, apprehensive.)* Are you? No! The crew in Omaha put you up to this, right?

*(ANGEL shakes his head slowly. AL is worried.)*

**AL:** *(Cont'd.)* If you're an angel, show me a miracle.

**ANGEL:** *(Kindly.)* Whataya talking about? Do I look like Cecille B. DeMille?

**AL:** It doesn't have to be a big miracle .... *(Walks around looking, finally focuses attention on camp post.)* If you're an angel, make this camp post light up.

**ANGEL:** *(Walks over and examines the post.)* You mean just light this up? Shouldn't be too hard.

## **End of Freeview**

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