



The Mountain Can Wait

Sarah Leipciger

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

The Mountain Can Wait

Sarah Leipciger

The Mountain Can Wait Sarah Leipciger

"Her face in the headlights flashed like a coin. She was an instant, the sulphuric flare of a match."

Tragedy erupts in an instant. Lives are shattered irrevocably. A young man drives off into the night, leaving a girl injured, perhaps fatally so.

From that cliffhanger opening, Sarah Leipciger takes readers back and forward in time to tell the haunting story of one family's unraveling in rural logging country where the land is still the economic backbone. Like the novels of Annie Proulx, this extraordinarily lyrical debut is rooted in richly detailed nature writing and sharply focused on small town mores and the particularities of regional culture.

Marrying the propulsive story of a father and son who, in the wake of catastrophe, must confront their private demons to reach for redemption with an evocative meditation on our environmental legacy, *The Mountain Can Wait* introduces Leipciger as a talent to watch.

The Mountain Can Wait Details

Date : Published May 19th 2015 by Little, Brown and Company (first published May 1st 2015)

ISBN : 9780316380676

Author : Sarah Leipciger

Format : Hardcover 320 pages

Genre : Fiction, Cultural, Canada, Environment, Nature

 [Download The Mountain Can Wait ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Mountain Can Wait ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Mountain Can Wait Sarah Leipciger

From Reader Review The Mountain Can Wait for online ebook

Jenny says

Flawless. Beautifully raw and real characters

Leni Iversen says

The wonderful thing about reading challenges and book clubs is that they can get you reading some great books you otherwise would never have looked at twice. I didn't think I would like this one, and I kept postponing the reading of it. I figured it would be a lot like a Scandinavian movie, you know the ones with lingering panoramic shots of gloomy nature lit by a weak bluish grey light. With characters who fail at communicating with each other because they are just as rugged and bleak as their surroundings. Well, I was wrong, and I happily admit it.

Or rather, there is plenty of communication failure but the characters and their surroundings are anything but colourless. They make mistakes, but I was never once annoyed with the characters, never lost sympathy even when I saw that they made the wrong choice, said the wrong thing. I found very few, if any, traits that I have in common with the characters but there are some things that are universal. The misunderstandings and differences in expectations between generations. The insights about parenthood made by the father in the story. They gave me the chills. I was wondering what the title meant, and thought maybe it was something that would be revealed at the end. But it was revealed in the middle, and it was so simple and so profound that I had to stop reading for a while.

The mountain view is spectacular. There are flowers and berries, wild goats, skinny dipping in cold ponds, hunting, and tree planting. Yes, there are several chapters dedicated to tree planting and I wasn't bored once. I was submerged into the story to the extent where I was barely aware that I was reading. Every now and then some plot element would be advanced, some repeated phrase made clear, and I would nod in admiration and think "I see what you did there". But for the rest of it I was riding along in the mountains. Considering the sheer amount of mosquitoes, blackflies, and bears I am happy to experience British Columbia vicariously through this book.

But what is it about, you might ask. Surely it is not about romping around in the mountains hunting and planting trees? Well, yes and no. Mostly no. It's about life. And death. And life choices. That's all I'm going to say. In fact, don't even read the blurb. Just read the book and let the story unfold at its own pace.

Jamie says

Sometimes I just wander the library, seeing what books will speak to me from the shelves. This was stuck down near the floor on the bottom shelf of the "L's," one I'd never heard of before, and it might as well have reached out a hand and grabbed hold of my ankle.

It was lovely. Unexpected and lovely. The story takes its own time to wander, and instead of feeling bored, I was entranced. It felt like a good meal when my stomach is growling from a long walk in the woods.

Leipciger is skillful and articulate without pulling tricks, and that was the exact thing I wanted.

Contemplative and lovely. A January book.

Sandra Wolf says

I really liked that book. I picked it randomly and was surprised about how much I enjoyed reading it. To me the story with the hit-and-run was backstory to the real story of living in British Columbia. It wasn't so much about the plot but the wonderful way and love the author uses to describe this beautiful place to live. I enjoyed the slow pace, which is rare for me.

Laura Anderson says

I loved this. It's sparse in plot from the outside - the quiet aftermath of a hit and run - but it's deceptively rich.

The characters were all flawed, often making them hard to like, but I still rooted for them. For each you could see something in their past that had made them the way they were. I don't want to go into too much detail as that would be spoileriffic, but it worked, and the exploration of 'family' was great.

The writing is deft, simple, effective and lovely to read. I went through the whole book quickly, and thought the length was pretty perfect for the story. Highly recommend this.

karen says

j'accuse!
this book totally roofied me.

i don't know how else to account for the fact that **every single time** i had to put it down to do the other things that life requires of me, i would completely lose the thread of the story, and i would have to go back and reread a few pages just to remember even the very basics of the plot. which is unusual, for me. and my lukewarm response to the book overall was completely unexpected. on the surface, this is totally my kind of book: it's canada, it's woodsy, there's a crime, there's a stoic central character for whom communication is difficult - these are all my kinds of themes. but for some reason, this story just rolled off of me without leaving any impression. again - i suspect book-roofies. it is by no means poorly written - her descriptions of nature are phenomenal, but the woods end up feeling more alive and more memorable than any of the characters or the story itself.

this is a fractured family novel (another thing i usually dig): elka, (existing only in backstory and memory) a tragic-figure mother who abandoned her family and later died alone in a snowbank, tom - the frequently absent father of few words, erin; the (barely-featured) sweet but tough teenage daughter who has basically had to raise herself, and curtis - a young man who is drifting through life, rudderless. in the opening pages, curtis is involved in a drunk driving accident - where he hits a young girl with his car driving home from a party late at night. addled and terrified, he flees the scene without even checking to see if the girl is still alive. he retreats into a haze of guilt and marijuana and at one point he tries to tell tom what happened, but his vague evasive confession is misunderstood by tom. which pretty much sums up their relationship - bound by blood and unspoken love, but so awkward with each other. the lives of a father and son occasionally intersecting or overlapping, but there's little connection.

tom makes his living as a tree planter. he runs a company that seeds the forest all over western canada, and is looking forward to retiring so he can live in the woods full-time, living off the land. he spends much of the year away from home working, and has a closer relationship with his workers than with his own children. tom is a man of few words, but who harbors deep unexpressed feelings - he loves his children but is uncomfortable showing this love, and so he comes across as distant and unfeeling.

a perfect example of this is the way tom fields curtis' questions after he has had to end the suffering of rocky, his fourteen-year-old dog and companion.

"But how are you, Dad? That must have been pretty bad, doing it yourself."

One of the pieces of meat was stuck to the grill and Tom worked at it with a pair of tongs. He shrugged. The shot had been clean. "Had to be done."

"You could have taken him to the vet."

Tom pointed toward the Suburban with his tongs. "How long has the Suburban been making that noise?"

end scene.

tom is methodical, patient, uncomfortable in civilization but completely at ease in the woods. he is extremely skilled at fixing anything mechanical, or rescuing wounded animals, but cannot fix his broken family. which symbolism is a little too on the nose for me. having said that, one of the best scenes is the one where tom is repairing a pipe in the basement where curtis is living while curtis is trying to tell him about the hit and run, and tom's later musing, when he realizes what he missed that day:

Maybe he should have said more to the boy, opened him up like some piece of machinery and taken the wires out. Switched a cable from one power source to another, eliminated all the possibilities until he found the fault, and maybe then he would have figured him out. But he had done the thing that came most naturally to him - played down whatever it was Curtis was upset about because that's how he, Tom, would have wanted to be treated. Sometimes it was hard to remember that other people didn't go by the rules you set for yourself.

which is a beautiful moment, but then the same epiphany pops up again about fifty pages later, just in case you missed it the first time, which weakened it somewhat for me.

Tom went over that last conversation he'd had with Curtis. Curt had been trying to talk to him, and all he could remember now was how hard it had been to get at that valve, how easy it had been to avoid whatever it was Curt was upset about.

but tom is my kind of character; a practical, competent man who thrives in isolation. a man who does what needs to be done in an outwardly dispassionate way. but his interior life is rich, and during woodsy ruminations, we learn about his family's past and we get a better sense of who tom really is. elka ran out on the family when erin was only a few months old, and tom was forced to become the sole caregiver to their two children. he taught them how to shoot and other necessary tasks, but he was never able to make himself vulnerable enough to show his deep love for them. he kept them safe and he provided for them, but he was unable to navigate his own emotional landscape.

this is this is not a crime novel. a crime occurs, but the story is not shaped like crime fiction in any way. after the opening scene's hit-and-run, the story spends a great deal of time with tom in the wilderness, with his adopted family of workers and his business concerns and his lover and his memories. this is a quiet family story that is also a quiet nature story. the beauty of the forests and the lakes, the peace of the land inhabited

only by moose and bears, the contemplative camping scenes - lepciger is excellent at these details. the nature writing is as lush as her characters are distant and clinical.

i loved the nature writing, i loved tom's character, and i loved all the scenes he shares with elka's mother bobbie - a firecracker of a character who lives even further off the grid than tom. there's a lot of good writing in this book, but the story never grabbed me by the throat. which, in a reading experience is a good thing, as opposed to that happening on the street.

i am putting this author's name in my mental "authors to watch" list, because i think she is definitely a skilled writer, even though this book wasn't "my" book.

Claire Fuller says

Very immersive; beautiful nature writing in fiction which really took me to the locations, especially the Canadian forest and the island where the grandmother lives, and a great story.

Rebecca says

(3.5) The novel opens and closes with a hit-and-run, but in between those momentous peaks it's a quieter tale of a single father trying to guide his son and daughter into young adulthood in the wilds of Canada's west and islands. Tom Berry's work is not cutting trees down but planting them – an interesting adaptation of a traditional woodsman's activity to a new eco age. Although he still has the old hunting skills, he's more often involved in diplomatic negotiations with his son and his crew of planters than he is with wild animals.

I found the story a little sleepy but loved Leipciger's writing, especially her account of the daily drudgery of manual labor and her descriptions of wilderness scenery:

“These were long, arduous days, one rolling into the next, broken only by the lacing and unlacing of boots, the taping of fingers, the washing of tin plates. Every day, slotting one or two thousand trees into the hard ground, trudging through unsympathetic terrain”

“Tom and Bobbie walked through the trees, long bars of shadow and silver-blue bark, stepping in the dead, slippery mulch of dropped cherries and peaches, to find a dark cabin with the door unlocked and no one inside.”

Leipciger is a Canadian settled in the UK; her debut novel is obviously born out of nostalgia for the possibilities of a wide open country. I'll look out for her next book.

Related reading: Something about the emotional tenor reminded me of *Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng, while *Road Ends* by Mary Lawson shares the rural Canada setting.

Abbie | ab_reads says

3.5 stars

This little book really surprised me by how moved I was by the ending! It was slow to get going though, the first 100 pages don't really do justice to the character exploration and development that comes later, although there is truly stunning descriptions of Canadian wilderness (I got *Revenant* & *Surfacing* vibes). I loved the slow progress Tom makes to becoming a good father, when his son does something terrible and must face the consequences. Quietly profound.

Claire says

Review: *The Mountain Can Wait* by Sarah Leipciger Published by: Tinder Press (7th may 2015)

ISBN: 978-1472223890

Source: Netgalley

Rating: 3*

Synopsis:

Set in a stunning but scarred Canadian landscape, *THE MOUNTAIN CAN WAIT* is a story of fathers and sons and the heartache they cause each other, in the tradition of Annie Proulx.

Tom Berry has always been a loner, a man content to live out his days in the wilderness with just enough ammunition and kerosene to last out the winter. A single father, he has raised his children with the same quiet and absolute dedication he brings to his forestry business, but now he's discovering that might not have been enough.

When his son, Curtis, on the brink of adulthood, disappears after a tragic accident, it falls to Tom, the hunter, to track him down. Whether he can truly reach Curtis is another matter.

Review:

I have very mixed feelings about Sarah Leipciger's debut; some parts I really enjoyed but others didn't engage me fully. Tom's character is quite well developed but I found other characters less so.

The setting, rugged Canada, is so beautifully described, I could almost smell the air, but parts of the book featuring Tom and son Curtis are my least favourite. It seemed like a lot of time was devoted to this but, for me, the conclusion was a huge anticlimax.

I received an Advance Readers Copy of this book via Netgalley.

Renita D'Silva says

Emotional and poignant. Beautiful writing.

Dee says

Review Copy Provided by Hachette Audio

As I started listening to *The Mountain Can Wait*, I realized early on that a key theme/echo through-out would be, 'the mountain can give and the mountain can take' and that is how I would describe this book by Leipziger in 10 words or less. From the description of the book, the reader (or in this case, listener) goes into it knowing that there is going to be an element of mystery (although not really suspense), but that there would be more of a focus on family ties and character interaction. Its actually kind of hard to describe without giving huge spoilers.

For me the most enjoyable part of the story (aside from the narration which is a whole separate beast) was seeing the representation of different cultures that the author managed to weave into the story. Having never been to Canada, and not growing up in the US, my knowledge of geography in the British Columbia/Saskatchewan area is basically nonexistent, as well as my knowledge of the indigenous people that live in the area. The relationship between the main character, Tom and his children (Curtis and Erin) seemed very distant and potentially almost neglectful at times – although it was written in a way to make the reader try to understand the hard life that loggers have – when they have to leave their families/homes for potentially weeks/months on end in order to earn money to survive and especially in the sense that they might not have support systems; or their lack of presence may cause issues with their support system (in this instance, Tom's wife who disappeared prior to the book starting).

I really liked/appreciated how the author approached the writing – taking a certain event that occurred and then going back in time and working forward to the event; and even then continuing on until the story completion in the epilogue. While its a harder style to write than a true linear one and it needs the right kind of story to use the style, it was definitely suited for this book.

I will admit that if Robert Petkoff hadn't been the narrator that I probably wouldn't have picked it to read/review. There are some narrators that I will automatically gravitate to, no matter the style of book, or if its a genre of book I normally read or don't read – and Robert Petkoff is one of those narrators. For me, the strength in this audiobook was that it was told predominantly from a male POV. At the same time, the cast of characters wasn't necessarily as diverse as other books I have listened to and since the two main characters (Tom and Curtis) were family, it made for some similar voice intonations during the narration (although I would expect that if the book revolved around family, since it is often the case). While *The Mountain Can Wait* was 8hrs long, it flowed it a way that made it feel substantially shorter – which is always good for me when it comes to listening.

Overall, I was intrigued by Sarah Leipziger debut novel and I'm intrigued to see what she writes about in the future. I gave *The Mountain Can Wait* 3.5 stars for writing and the narration 4 stars with a solid performance by Robert Petkoff like always.

Jo Barton says

The story starts with an event which shapes the narrative so subtly, that at times, you almost forget just what tragedy started the story off. Such is the mesmeric quality of the novel that the pages pass silently, and almost without realising, you are drawn into a story about tangled relationships; namely, that of a father with his children, sons with their fathers, and lovers with lovers. It's also the story of a Canadian mountain and its mercurial and beautiful landscape and the force that the environment plays in nurturing those souls who live within its harsh confines. The story is slow, almost meandering in style but this adds depth and even as an air of suspense pervades the narrative, its underlying message is one of lives being played out in the shadow of deep wrongdoing.

Beautifully written, the slow and measured writing style draws you in from the beginning, and rather than being a page turner with lots of action, the story is more of a slow burner, with subtle nuances and understated light and shade. To say more would be to spoil the effect of the story and do a complete disservice to the author, but what I will say is that days after finishing the novel, my thoughts return to this remote and beautiful place, and such is the emotional pull of the story, that I still stop and wonder just how everyone is doing and hope that they will be ok.

The Mountain Can Wait is a commendable debut novel by a talented new author. I can't wait to see what she does next.

Annet says

Clear and beautiful, like swimming in a mountain lake - Mark Haddon

This is a very good read, cleanly written though touching at the same time. Beautiful in its simplicity. 'Leipciger beautifully captures the tender and mercurial relationship between father and son. These are the characters you care about, flawed and haunted, existing in the harsh yet undeniably radiant world of the Canadian mountains'.

The son, Curtis, is driving home from a party, high, through the Canadian woods when suddenly a girl appears in his headlights. Before he can react he hits her, and in an instant decided to keep driving.

Tom Berry, foreman of a planting operation in the wilderness, is a single father who has raised his son and daughter alone, his wife mentally ill and having died early age, with the same quiet and absolute dedication he brings to his forestry business. When the police contact Tom to tell him that Curtis has gone missing, Tom sets out to track his son. A haunting story of a family in crisis.

I loved the setting, having been there several times, Western Canada, camped and hiked there. Apart from the intriguing story about father and son, and the eccentric grandmother, also liked the scenes of the planters in the wilderness, an operation that Tom heads, the rough life they lead there and the turbulence among them. Beautifully set in Western Canadian wilderness, the story is written very much to the point, without much poetry, and the result is a very simple and beautiful story. I liked this, no frills, just a great story. Debut of a great writer. Recommended.

Thebooktrail says

For a map and pictures of the literary locations Booktrail of The Mountain Can Wait

The haunting relationship between father and son against the raw rugged mountains of British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

Story

Tom Berry is a single father and a loner – quite at home and at peace with his wilderness home. He's struggled since the death of his wife to raise his sons with the tough love and respect he shows the mountains. His forestry business has taught him all about strength and perseverance and the need for man to respect his surroundings. His relationship with his sons may not be as easy however.

When Curtis is involved in a tragic accident and then flees the scene, Tom goes off hunting once again but this time for his son, Whether he can really track him down and reach him this time however is another question.

Set in a stunning but scarred Canadian landscape, the landscape is at one with the story unfolding and the characters involved in it.

The story takes us from Whistler to Quesnel, Vanderhof, Fort St James and Takla Lake. A significant place is Aguarish Island near Vancouver island and the ferry ride to that place. The place names – Crossbow Creek, McCleod River and Black Pond reveal the close relationship of man and earth.

But the landscape here is something more of a persona experience too for the author not only evokes but recreates the raw and rugged life as a worker on the lumber plantations of the Canadian Pacific Ranges. This is a lifestyle and setting unfamiliar to many but the details from the author bring this to life –

The logging camp in a dusty, rocky clearing, was small and functional; five long boxcars couple together in a row, elevated on concrete blocks

Accustomed to waiting the planters dropped their bags to the ground, sat against them, and smoked.

As well as the lumber workers however this is the story of the lesser known planters and the competition they face working on the mountains. The main threat however is the climate and the weather where a life in the mountains shapes everything in daily life –

“Weatherman says it only going to keep getting hotter and drier, we'd like you to move to fire hours”

The planters are known to smoke which is a fire hazard and so ‘if seedlings were handled in the middle of the day when it's baking’ they will dry out. Weather here more than anywhere dictates the rhythm of life and work.

The landscape which dictates and shapes everything in this place –

The uniformity of this place had a way of lulling a person into something like a dream

Land and people as one.

Bookish musings

Stark raw prose blends landscape and story well together. Tom searches for his son in a physical and emotional sense and the pain and scars are hard to face. Having had no knowledge of this part of the world and the world of the loggers and planters, it was a fascinating read of the mountains and the superiority of the landscape versus men. In fact the landscape was the central character for it shaped characters and story and I

felt drawn into the land and its weather beaten ways.

A slow story for characters and plot but one which lingers with you and builds up a picture of a different life, a different way of thinking, and a father searching for his son in every sense of the word.

The relationships between a single father and his son is not one I've read much about and so this was both unique and interesting in equal measure. But it's the setting which really shines.
