I often look up at the house on the hill

and wonder could I climb it for a gigantic thrill.

The house has porches and walls made of stone.

It looks so pretty and stately and home.

My friends could join me and see the blue rose.

I spy it from here by the porch; it glows.

I feel in my heart it is special and sweet,

I'd feel the soft petals across my cheek.

I want to see everything and the house up close.

This would be a dream, a dare I want most.

Danica loves to dream. She wonders about everything from morning to night; then dreams of people, feelings, and sights that she read in a book, heard in a good tale, or simply created for an adventure.

She lives in the country, so her friends are mostly in her backyard, which includes a forest of animals, and spends most of her time outside.

Sitting next to her purple wagon, she meets a new friend, Hoppity, at the edge of the forest eating clover. "Hi, little bunny," she exclaimed with delight. Holding her hands out, she wanted the bunny to jump into her arms so she could feel her soft fur and hug her tight.

Hoppity looked at the girl and wondered why she had an empty purple wagon. She just sat still, next to her wagon, watching the world around her, and glancing at the house on the hill. Sensing only love would be given by the girl, Hoppity moved up close, and Danica reached out to feel her soft fur.

"Hi, I'm Hoppity. What is your name?"

“I’m Danica. Your fur is so white and soft. You are very pretty, and I love the ribbon you’re wearing. Can we be friends?”

“I would love that,” Hoppity shouted. “Jacket, Jumper, Little Wing, Tapper, Fidget, Boo, and Carikee, also my friends, could be your friends too. There are more, but some live a little further away.”

“Do you or your friends live in the house on the hill?” Danica asked, pointing at the stone house high on the hill.

“No, no one lives there right now, but Little Wing likes to perch on the highest peak so he can sit and look far out over the forest to the rivers and ocean. We can go see it up close if you’d like.” Hoppity said, jumping up and down, excited to explore with her.

“I would love that, but it will be a slow climb for me. I hope you don’t mind.” Danica said, petting Hoppity as she sat on her lap.

Hoppity looked at her new friend. “Of course I don’t mind, and neither will my friends. We can climb to the house tomorrow, all of us, okay? We can meet back here in the morning.”

“Thank you, Hoppity, that is so exciting. I can’t wait now.” Danica had a grin from ear to ear and giggled with excitement. Hoppity jumped up and down, then hopped off to tell all her friends.

The next morning, Danica and her wagon walked slowly to the edge of the forest to meet her friends. Bubbling with joy at seeing the house on the hill, Danica dared a new dream. She had often wondered about that house, who lived there, and what fun the family had there.

“Hey, Danica,” Hoppity called as Danica drew near. “Come meet your new friends.” Hoppity introduced all her friends, calling out their names to Danica.

Waving to each one as she called their names, she announced Jumper, Jacket, and Tapper. They each stood on their back legs and greeted Danica with a bow and a thump of one foot, which made Danica smile.

We also have Little Wing, Boo, Fidget, and Carikee. When their names were called, all except Fidget flew close to greet Danica, hovering in front of her. Fidget, however, landed on her shoulder and pecked a kiss on her cheek, then chirped into her ear.

Danica looked at Fidget, then back at the others, and returned their greetings. "Oh, I am so happy to meet you all. And Fidget, I always bring my purple wagon with me because it helps me keep my balance while I walk, and I can sit and rest when I need to. And sometimes I do fill it with treasures. Is that okay with everyone?" she asked in a nervous voice.
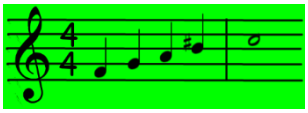
"Of course, yes, absolutely," her new friends all chimed back.

"Let's go see this house, shall we?" Hoppity asked, delight bubbling in her happy voice.
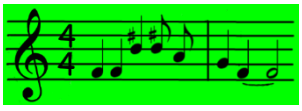
The group cheered their agreement, their joyful cries ringing in the air as they began their trek up the hill.

At first, Danica was the last in line climbing the hill, but soon, Tapper, Hoppity, Jacket, and Jumper were following behind to make sure Danica didn't fall. When she stumbled, they gathered around to help her. When she stopped to rest, they sat down beside her, and the birds flew down beside her, too. Danica's new friends already loved her and cared for everything about her. She was their champion. She was their friend for life.

Danica started singing:



Up the hill we climb,



To the top so we can find,