

# Amanda!

*Every child feels that she/he is controlled and instructed not to do one thing or another. You too may feel that your freedom is curtailed. Write down some of the things you want to do, but your parents/elders do not allow you to. To read the poem aloud, form pairs, each reading alternate stanzas. You are in for a surprise!*

Don't bite your nails, Amanda!  
Don't hunch your shoulders, Amanda!  
Stop that slouching and sit up straight,  
Amanda!

(There is a languid, emerald sea,  
where the sole inhabitant is me—  
a mermaid, drifting blissfully.)

Did you finish your homework, Amanda?  
Did you tidy your room, Amanda?  
I thought I told you to clean your shoes,  
Amanda!

(I am an orphan, roaming the street.  
I pattern soft dust with my hushed, bare feet.  
The silence is golden, the freedom is sweet.)

Don't eat that chocolate, Amanda!  
Remember your acne, Amanda!  
Will you please look at me when I'm speaking to you,  
Amanda!

(I am Rapunzel, I have not a care;  
life in a tower is tranquil and rare;  
I'll certainly *never* let down my bright hair!)

Stop that sulking at once, Amanda!  
You're always so moody, Amanda!  
Anyone would think that I nagged at you,  
Amanda!

ROBIN KLEIN

### Glossary

- languid:** relaxed  
**drifting:** moving slowly  
**pattern:** make patterns  
**tranquil:** calm

### Thinking about the Poem

1. How old do you think Amanda is? How do you know this?
2. Who do you think is speaking to her?
3. Why are Stanzas 2, 4 and 6 given in parenthesis?
4. Who is the speaker in Stanzas 2, 4 and 6? Do you think this speaker is listening to the speaker in Stanzas 1, 3, 5, and 7?
5. What could Amanda do if she were a mermaid?
6. Is Amanda an orphan? Why does she say so?
7. Do you know the story of Rapunzel? Why does she want to be Rapunzel?
8. What does the girl yearn for? What does this poem tell you about Amanda?
9. Read the last stanza. Do you think Amanda is sulking and is moody?