

# THERE IS NO HOPE IN THE CITY OF CHAOS

By Elizabeth Ung

## **CHARACTERS---**

AMELIA, female, 20's

ACORN, male, teens

FAYE, female, 20's

Note on Casting: AMELIA, ACORN, and FAYE are people of color. They may also be portrayed as any gender identity and pronouns may be changed to reflect those identities.

## **Setting---**

The possibly-not-so-distant future. Apocalypse and all that.

## **Pacing---**

Dialogue and action should be urgent. Until it calms down. And then it picks up again. And calms down.

*(Concrete walls and a creaky table. A musty, rusty space. Amelia sits at the table smoking a cigarette. She is bloodied, bandaged, and badgered. Acorn enters with a backpack. He is also bandaged up.)*

**AMELIA**

Holy shit. You did it.

*(Acorn sets the backpack on the table. Amelia approaches it but Acorn stops her.)*

**ACORN**

Hold on. Wait until Faye gets back.

**AMELIA**

Faye? Why wait for her?

**ACORN**

Because she helped me.

**AMELIA**

C'mon, at least give me a peek.

**ACORN**

No. You'll damage it.

**AMELIA**

What do you mean I'll damage it?

**ACORN**

Don't open the backpack yet.

**AMELIA**

Why? It's just a simple fucking glance.

**ACORN**

You can't touch it or see it or anything---

*(Acorn takes the backpack and carefully holds it against his body.)*

**AMELIA**

What's the matter with you?

**ACORN**

Nothing. You can't see it yet.

**AMELIA**

Of course, I can. What the hell, Acorn?

*(Amelia tries to get the backpack. Acorn and Amelia do a round of "keep-away." Amelia then punches Acorn in the face, knocking him and the backpack down. Amelia takes the backpack. Acorn then clamps onto Amelia's legs, stopping her.)*

Don't you dare!

**ACORN**

Why can't I have a peek?

**AMELIA**

*(Acorn chomps on Amelia's leg and she drops the backpack. Acorn scavenges it and scurries to a corner.)*

Give me the damn food!

**AMELIA**

It's not food!

**ACORN**

What's not food?

**AMELIA**

This is not food!

**ACORN**

What?

**AMELIA**

It's *not* food.

**ACORN**

I know what you fucking said. What the hell did you get from the greenhouse?

**AMELIA**

A plant.

**ACORN**

I believe that's food.

**AMELIA**

No.

**ACORN**

Then what? Why are you being so difficult?

**AMELIA**

It's not food!

**ACORN**

If it's not food, *then what the fuck is it?!*

**AMELIA**

**ACORN**

It's hope.

**AMELIA**

Bullshit.

**ACORN**

It is!

**AMELIA**

Really?

**ACORN**

Yeah. It is.

**AMELIA**

*You're kidding me.*

**ACORN**

This is our chance to have hope for once. We haven't had it for a long time.

**AMELIA**

What exactly is this "hope" you have in your backpack, Acorn?

**ACORN**

It's a seed for the future.

**AMELIA**

Yeah. Sure.

**ACORN**

I'm being serious here, Amelia. We can't live forever on these stupid rations and spoiled food laying around. We have to think ahead and make food that's actually good for us. This will save us from both the hunger and the insanity of it all.

**AMELIA**

Right. I get ya. But there's just one, itsy-bitsy, teeny-weeny problem. *We ain't got no fucking food right now!*

**ACORN**

Faye is bringing more food from her home.

**AMELIA**

What?

**ACORN**

She said that she'll take some food from her dad's ration pile and---

**AMELIA**

Wait? What the hell? Her *dad's* ration pile? That's stealing, Acorn! *(recollecting herself)* I needed you to get the last plant from the greenhouse for *food*.

**ACORN**

And you don't think *that* was considered stealing?

*(Amelia slaps Acorn on the head.)*

**AMELIA**

*Idiot.* It's about *who* we steal from. We haven't eaten in two days. We are on the brink of either starving to death or dying from our wounds. We can't wait any longer.

**ACORN**

Well, *you* can also add to the fact that you're smoking your days away.

**AMELIA**

Shut up. It's my choice.

**ACORN**

You make no sense.

**AMELIA**

Neither do you!

**ACORN**

I found this plant. I took this plant. It's mine and I decide what to do with it!

**AMELIA**

Then die for all I care!

*(Amelia sits back down and relights another cigarette. Acorn sits on the floor. Small pause.)*

**AMELIA**

How the hell are you going to plant it if there's no soil?

**ACORN**

I took some soil from the greenhouse. I'm not stupid.

**AMELIA**

Are you actually going to put it anywhere?

**ACORN**

Outside. Where mom and dad are.

*(Another short pause. Just then, footsteps. Faye enters with a limp. She is holding a couple of rations in her arms. Amelia and Acorn immediately help her.)*

**THANK YOU FOR READING!**

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