

ANARCHY AND AMANITAS

By Maya Lerma

CHARACTERS

AEDES - A forest creature. Human-like but smaller, with oddly toned skin and slightly disproportionate features.

MILIK - Appears to be a similar forest creature. Is not one.

SETTING

A crumbling stump in a wide, charred field, surrounded distantly by a forest that is scorched to varying degrees. Dust and ashes scatter through the air. Two small, anthropomorphic creatures sit on top of it, taking shelter from the blistering soil glowing faintly with fading heat.

EXT. A FOREST - MIDDAY

AEDES picks at their nails from where they sit on the stump alongside MILIK. MILIK turns to look at them.

MILIK

I want a mushroom hat.

AEDES freezes, slowly turning to look at them.

AEDES

(deadpan)

You want a mushroom hat?

MILIK

You have repeated what I said,
yes.

AEDES looks at the ruins surrounding them. Turning back, they stare at MILIK for a moment.

AEDES

We can't afford that.

MILIK

I'll be honest, I was expecting
you to mention all the
destruction.

AEDES

I was getting to that, you idiot.

MILIK crosses their arms and scoffs.

MILIK

Glad to see we're resorting to
insults again.

AEDES turns away, directing their annoyed glare at the crumbling branches a little ways ahead.

AEDES

I am not having this conversation with you right now.

They sit in agitated silence for a while, before AEDES finally cracks.

AEDES

Where would you even get an
amanita around here, anyway?

MILIK gives them a sideglance from where their chin rests in
their palm.

MILIK

We're back to the mushrooms then?

AEDES grits their teeth.

AEDES

YOU brought them up in the first
place.

MILIK

Alright, alright.

MILIK rolls their eyes.

MILIK

(cont'd)
Enlighten me on your thoughts on
mushrooms.

AEDES

I was saying, there is no way
you'd get your hands on an amanita
around here-

MILIK

Who said I wanted an amanita?
Didn't know you were so
judgemental about mushrooms.

AEDES

(scoffing)

Everyone knows mushroom hats have to be made out of amanitas. It's iconic, alright?

MILIK

Well as a part of this "everyone", I'm telling you I don't want an amanita. I could go for those weirdo looking brown ones, or the ones that taste like chicken.

AEDES

I am convinced you are an aberration to the natural order of this world.

MILIK

(huffs)

Well, you're not wrong.

They turn away from each other, returning to silence for a while. AEDES eventually breaks it once again.

AEDES

Even if you wanted a different mushroom, I doubt you'll find a forest spirit to get you one, and I'm not digging through the underbrush on your whims.

MILIK

We're still on the mushroom thing?

AEDES

Oh, I'm sorry, did you have something better to talk about? "Those charred ruins over there are looking particularly

distinguishable from the rest of
them" maybe?

MILIK

(sighing)

Fine, fine. tear apart my dreams
some more, why don't you.

AEDES

You're insufferable.

MILIK

You've been doing a fine job of
suffering it so far.

AEDES

I wasn't aware I had a choice in
the matter.

MILIK

You're right. You don't.

AEDES sneers, but there is a hint of despair in the curl of
their lips as they gesture at the torched surroundings.

AEDES

As I was saying, there is no way
a forest spirit will ever live
here again.

MILIK

You can't seriously tell me you
aren't planning on moving.

AEDES

You know, I might just stay here.
Out of spite. Wait for a local
deity to come fix the place... make
the grass a little less...
dust-like, and all.

MILIK

Your trust in them is as
ill-advised as always, Aedes.

AEDES

Ugh, don't call me that.

MILIK

That is literally your name. What
else could I possibly call you?

AEDES

I'd like to think we're
strangers. Don't refer to me at
all, if possible.

MILIK recoils dramatically.

MILIK

Strangers?! We live together!

AEDES

Live together? You broke into my
house four months ago and have yet
to leave. This is just extended
breaking and entering. Emphasis on
the breaking!

MILIK stares.

AEDES

(cont'd)

I mean-! The house left before
YOU did! It's all dust now, isn't
it?!

MILIK

Oh and now you're blaming me for
it, aren't you.

AEDES seethes in rage.

AEDES

BLAMING you?! There is no blaming going on here! This was absolutely, unquestionably your fault!

MILIK suddenly cracks into a sneer, looking down at AEDES in an outburst of sadistic glee.

MILIK

OH. You're truly angry this time, aren't you?

AEDES deflates immediately at these words, losing all of their steam. They sigh begrudgingly and turn away.

AEDES

This is why I don't talk to you.

MILIK grins with an incredulous amount of teeth, but does not speak further. They sit in silence for a while, before MILIK begins to speak.

MILIK

(laughing)

I could probably fix all of this, you know.

AEDES stares into the distance.

AEDES

(mumbling)

If you managed to destroy it all, I wouldn't be surprised if you could do the opposite.

MILIK

I suppose I am the most local of local deities at the moment, aren't I?

MILIK laughs to themselves, but nothing else is said. The two return to silence, before AEDES finally opens with a subdued tone.

AEDES

Are you actually going to fix everything?

MILIK laughs before they slide off the stump. They show no reaction to their bare feet on the scalding soil. They cross their arms, looking at AEDES from slightly above.

MILIK

I'm feeling a change of location would be nice, aren't you? I say we move.

AEDES stares, quiet for a moment.

AEDES

I despise you.

MILIK laughs and holds open their arms, a silent offering to carry AEDES past the scorched clearing and the ruptured, blistering earth underfoot.

MILIK

That's the best part, darling.

END.