

What Four Cannot Do

By

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The Four Humors

DESERT BATTLEFIELD, LIBYA. EXT. AFTERNOON. (PRESENT DAY)

It is silent except for the rattle of a dry wind upon fine sand. All around are the decaying, mutilated bodies of soldiers and innocents alike. Dusty rifles and burned out armored vehicles lay motionless in the lifeless desert. Only ZANGREEN, a tall, beautiful North African woman with a firm, proud look on her face stands among the living. A violent scar begins from her cheek and spirals around to the top of her head, disappearing underneath her white headdress that flows loosely in the wind. An AK is slung firmly around her shoulder. She holds a sword that trails behind her in one hand - the other, an iPhone she uses to scroll through Twitter.

A faint whistle approaches from the distance. Zangreen pays no attention. She heeds no warning as she continues to scroll down her iPhone. The whistle comes closer and closer until it finally nears Zangreen. An arrow strikes the ground in front of her, penetrating the foot of a corpse. Zangreen casually looks down unamused and retrieves the arrow. A message is attached to the tail. She detaches it and reads the parchment. Her face widens into a devious smile.

FOOD COURT, UNITED STATES. INT. MORNING.

The food court of a non-descript shopping mall on the East Coast of the United States is packed with the frenzy of weekend shoppers. Their chatter dominates the cavernous structure of glass and steel. The pale morning light filters in through the transparent ceiling.

MELANIE sits alone at a table in the middle of it all. Her hair is a tangled mass of brown curls. She intently watches the other people around her eat their tray's worth of junk food. She is extremely thin, but a large tray piled with food rests before her on the table. The food is delectable. Five unwrapped Taco Bell Burrito Supreme, two different combo plates of Panda Express, a slice of Sabarro pizza, a Big Mac, two large fries, and three large drinks. On closer inspection, they're actually a putrid mass of decrepit matter teeming with maggots and septic growths. No one seems to notice.

A CASHIER in a Taco Bell uniform approaches Melanie. His face is unsure, but he holds out his hand anyway. A receipt hangs flaccid between two fingers.

CASHIER
Excuse me, you forgot this.

(CONTINUED)

Melanie looks up at the cashier then down at the receipt, her expression unchanging. She grabs it and the cashier walks away. Melanie studies the receipt, holding it closely to her eyes. She then crumples it, drops it on the ground, stands, and leaves the food court. She walks down the aisle flanked by customers. They begin vomiting their food as Melanie strolls by. The masses pay no attention to her.

COMMAND CENTER, CHECHNYA. INT. DAY.

The dark command center of an underground bunker is lit only by the glow of Cold War-era computers and the neon-green plotting board marking the front lines in the center of the room. Liaison officers sit with headsets listening to battlefield chatter. Their shoulder sleeves are embroidered with the flag of the Russian Federation. Communications officers walk about with folders in hand, delivering them to commanders standing around a large table illuminated by a single light above. The table is scattered with papers and documents.

In the shadows, ERIS sits at the end of the table, leaned back in her seat in a blood red cloak. Her arms rest on the chair. She leans her head against one hand as her cold, roman face stares firmly ahead from the darkness. In the other, she twirls a silver pen. Her silver-blond hair is pinned neatly.

A commander reads a document handed to him. His face turns to frustration and he slaps the pages. The other commanders argue over battle plans.

ERIS
(Russian: SDELAT')
Do it.

The officers flinch. They scramble to positions, tossing papers and shouting orders. Chaos. Eris rolls her eyes. She leans back further and crosses her arms.

A young liaison appears before Eris. She nervously clutches a document to her chest, terrified that she might disturb Eris's repose. Eris's eyes snap open and she receives the document. She scans the parchment and her eyes become bright and a fierce set of her jaw and slight smile takes over her face.

TRAFALGAR SQUARE, LONDON. EXT. NOON.

A crowd of people, mostly disgruntled, shaved men, are gathered in crowded Trafalgar Square. They hold signs and shake their fists. ALISA, an unassuming girl in her mid-twenties with tangled, sandy hair sits on a park bench and observes from behind. She tosses bread crumbs to pigeons lying dead on the old masonry. A DEMAGOGUE stands at the base of Nelson's Column with a megaphone in hand.

DEMAGOGUE

(Megaphone)

And we, the people, shall seize the day and show the world what we are capable of. We will win the hearts and minds of the oppressed masses. We will show parliament, we will show the world the righteous might of our just cause and ascend this dispirited nation once again to glory. Our England, our future!

The crowd roars. They throw their fists and signs up toward the heavens. They shout: ENGLAND IS OURS. Alisa raises an eyebrow and shakes her head.

ALISA

(Muttering)

Never gonna conquer their hearts that way, buddy.

Alisa stands, stretches, and looks around. She sits down and tries to call out to someone at the back of the crowd.

ALISA

(Shouting)

Oi, what's trending on Twitter?

One MAN in the back turns to look. His eyes are a furious red. His brow, furrowed. His bald head gleams in the noon sun. He raises an eyebrow.

Alisa shrugs her shoulders and holds her empty palms out. Her mouth is half-open. She shakes her head, both eyebrows raised. "What are you waiting for?"

The man remains perplexed. Alisa shakes her hands violently to signal him into action. The man then quickly reaches for his phone and reads off a list of tweets.

MAN

(Shouting)

One Direction, Miley Cyrus, Justin Beiber, Swag, Yolo,

(CONTINUED)

(Pause, brow furrowed)
ZangreenToAlisa, Apocalypse Now.

The man stares back and scratches his bald head. Alisa nods. Her lips tighten while her eyes widen.

ALISA
(Muttering)
Well. Shit.

PASTURE. EXT. DAY. LATER.

There are four horses grazing in this pastoral (or pastel, whichever) setting. One is ebony, the second is pale white, the other is large red, and the fourth is an average chestnut horse. Eris stands to the side observing the horses. She checks her watch thrice in the span of five seconds and looks around impatiently.

A low rattle approaches. It draws nearer every moment, transforming from a rattle into a deep roar. Zangreen arrives on her BSA M20 motorbike, the olive green paint faded from the desert sands. Melanie soon arrives, walking in from seemingly nowhere with a backpack hanging from her shoulders. Each of the three present nod their heads and exchange calm looks.

Melanie takes off her backpack and opens it in front of Eris and Zangreen. The two peer inside. It is filled with snacks: chips, chex mix, candy bars, and cookies. Neither of them take anything. Eris glances at Zangreen's scar on her cheek. Melanie closes her bag.

ERIS
(To Zangreen)
Really?

ZANGREEN
Just felt like I needed a scar, so
I gave myself one.

Zangreen draws her combat knife. The tip of the steel is splattered with dried blood. She nods her head as she shows it to Eris. Eris raises an eyebrow before giving off a furrowed look.

Another rattle approaches from the distance. Alisa arrives in an old, beat-up, yellow Mini 1000. She drives beside the trio who stands and watches. Alisa stops the car beside Zangreen. The window is rolled down.

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ALISA

Oh come on, Zangreen. Knife out already?

(Glancing at Zangreen's scar)

Unless Eris was so impressed by your cut work that she decided she wanted the same facial decoration.

Alisa continues on to park the car off somewhere. Zangreen sheathes her knife. Alisa gets out of the car and joins them on their short walk to the horses straight ahead in the middle of the pasture.

The four stand by their horses and prepare to mount.

ALISA

You know, I don't even remember how to ride one of these things.

For a while the four of them stand in silence with their horses. Each of them looks to be reuniting with a long lost friend. While the others dither, Zangreen suddenly mounts up.

ZANGREEN

Okay. Let's go.

ERIS

Yes, we haven't the time for this.

ALISA

Actually, we definitely do have the time, and, once again, it isn't the Eris and Zangreen Show. We all four have to decide together. Right, Melanie?

MELANIE

(wistful, looking in the distance)

Yeah... All four must agree...
(gaze snaps to the other three)
unanimously.

ALISA

(whispers)

Why is crazy always on my side...?

ZANGREEN

Stupid rule. We should just abolish it now. All in favor?

(CONTINUED)

ERIS

Oh, yes, definitely me.

ALISA

No! That is not how it works. Also, morons, how are you going to change a rule about voting problems by voting? Like, what...that doesn't even?

Everyone watches Alisa get flustered. Melanie solemnly reaches into her pack and pulls out a bag of Cheetos for Alisa.

ALISA

Thanks, Melanie, but these aren't Cheetos. These are green and fuzzy. They're caterpillars.

There is uneasy silence as Alisa opens the bag of Cheetos and tips is over, spilling the molding chips onto the ground.

MELANIE

They were still edible. You could have chewed them.

ZANGREEN

See! Melanie probably can't even cast a vote anymore! She's finally lost it.

ERIS

I agree. Melanie's brain has finally begun to degrade as much as her body.

ALISA

Shut up, Eris.

MELANIE

I have an idea.

They all look at her expectantly, but she is not looking at them. The other three look to each other with confused expressions.

ZANGREEN

I'm going to kill her. I hate when she does this.

(CONTINUED)

ERIS
If she would just eat.

ALISA
Why are you two so dumb?

SIBERIA, RUSSIA. EXT. DAY

Montage. Alisa speaks four lines over four scenes. The first is a village in the Siberian tundra. People are lying on the ground, feeble and obviously starving. A child chews on a piece of bark.

ALISA (O.S.)
If Melanie would just eat?!

RIVER STYX. EXT. NIGHT

Zangreen stands in a typical Grim Reaper outfit, leaning on her scythe, flicking through Twitter on her phone.

ALISA (O.S.)
If Zangreen would just stop killing
people?!

TABLE OF THE GODS ON MT. OLYMPUS. INT. DAY

Eris is cutting words into an apple. Then she rolls it across the table, and we see it says "to the fairest."

ALISA (O.S.)
If Eris would just stop starting
wars?!

LIBRARY. INT. DAY

Alisa is sitting at a library computer. We see Reddit on the screen with several tabs open to Youtube, Fox News, The Blaze, Drudge Report, and Ann Coulter.

ALISA (O.S.)
If I would just stop sparking
public debate?

PASTURE. EXT. DAY. CONTINUOUS.

ALISA

I mean, what? Fuck you!

While Alisa is ranting, Melanie murmurs softly.

ERIS

Sorry, Melanie. It was hard to hear you over Alisa's inability to shut up.

MELANIE

We need to make an informed decision. Riding forth to bring Armageddon upon the universe is not something we should do lightly.

ALISA

(mutters)

It's not something we should do at all...

ZANGREEN

SHUT. UP.

MELANIE

Our emotions are too high because we all have our opinions, but each of us does not understand the others. We need to explain ourselves to each other.

ALISA

Excellent idea! One of us will have to conquer the others with our arguments!

ERIS

That will take forever, and you two just don't want to ride. This is just a filibuster to keep that from happening. It's a dirty trick.

ZANGREEN

No. We don't have to talk. We could just show our reasons.

MELANIE

Reason. Just one. Zangreen gets it. We could each just show one thing that proves why we should or should not begin Armageddon.

(CONTINUED)

There is silence.

ERIS

I agree.

ALISA

Me too. I don't need words to
conquer you fat bastards.

ZANGREEN

What? Why are we fat now? No,
don't...just shut up. I agree too.

MELANIE

Good. Eris first.

ERIS

Good. Let's go.

Eris snaps her fingers.

THE VATICAN. EXT. DAY

The setting is busy. Many people are moving about. Others loiter, taking pictures. Zangreen is looking around her with a confused expression. Melanie's face is blank, and Alisa cocks her head and makes a sarcastic expression at Eris who stands in the front of them. Her stance is powerful, and she looks about her with a proud expression.

ALISA

So obvious, Eris. Yawn!

ERIS

Maybe.

ZANGREEN

I don't see what's so obvious.

MELANIE

Same here.

ALISA

(rolling her eyes)

The Vatican. The center of the
Catholic Church. The essential
center of the group of people who
BELIEVE WE EXIST. So obvious. Oh,
no, it actually hurts.

Alisa doubles over in pretend pain.

(CONTINUED)

ERIS

You're an idiot. But, yes. I'm showing you the Vatican because this place is the visual way of saying that this is our function. This is what we were made for. This is our only purpose, and we're not going to do it? We're arguing about it?

ZANGREEN

You wasted your place. Seriously? That's your point. How ridiculous. Just because something is made doesn't mean it has to be used.

ERIS

You're kidding me? This is the ONLY argument that works. Shut up, Alisa!

Alisa is doubled up laughing.

ALISA

Wow! And she's on your side, too! That kills me!

ERIS

You little-

MELANIE

Wait! I know! My turn!

Everyone stops to stare at Melanie as her hand raises in the air to snap her fingers. Then her expression becomes puzzled. Zangreen groans with frustration. Then Melanie seems to remember herself and snaps her fingers.

SMALL AFRICAN VILLAGE. EXT. DAY

The sun is shining furiously. Everyone except Melanie is shading their eyes and looking around them.

ALISA

This is what I like about Melanie. Nothing she says or does makes any goddamn sense.

ERIS

You're serious? We're in Africa, you idiot. The center of Famine.

(CONTINUED)

ALISA
So? Why would that prove
anti-Armageddon?

ERIS
Obviously she's not on your side
ever since the Vatican.

ALISA
What? No! Melanie!

MELANIE
No. I'm still with Alisa.

ZANGREEN
Is it my turn yet? It's gotta be my
turn.

ALISA
Jeez, Zangreen. Chill out for once.
Let the blood stay still for a
minute.

ZANGREEN
Gotta let it flow. We're taking too
long.

ALISA
Let Melanie speak.

Zangreen rolls her eyes, pulls out her knife, and begins to
clean her nails.

MELANIE
How can we condemn an entire
universe of people to nonexistence
without their consent?

ERIS
Very easily.

MELANIE
(staring at Eris)
How can we condemn people who have
never even heard of us (gestures to
a group of children from the tribe)
to nonexistence?

ERIS
Shit. I see what just happened.

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE

I supposed I can't talk since I've mostly focused my work on this part of the world, but they've never heard of us. The Vatican is what Eris showed us because in the Bible God made us for Armageddon, but not everyone has read the Bible, so does it apply everywhere?

ALISA

I love you, Melanie.

MELANIE

(surprised but smiles)

Oh. Um.

ZANGREEN

I know what I have to show you.

Before anyone can react, Zangreen snaps her fingers.

ALLEYWAY IN CHINA. EXT. NIGHT

A man is dying. He is bleeding profusely from a knife wound in his stomach. His breath is loud, short, and labored. Zangreen approaches the man, and the others are very silent as they watch her kneel in front of the man. Zangreen suddenly is wrapped in a black cloak, and her face is a skull. A skeletal hand peaks out from her voluminous robes, and a finger touches the man's forehead. He sighs and closes his eyes. The skull opens its mouth and takes a rattling breath, and some wisp of spirit exits from the man's head where the skeleton touched him and enters the skull's mouth. The other three look very solemn, and Melanie is even crying quite a bit. Zangreen resumes her other form.

ZANGREEN

I'm done with this. I'm done with Death. I want them all gone so they'll stop dreaming. I am always taking. I take their dreams, their loved ones. And I'm done with it.

Melanie bursts more fully into tears, but Alisa is over it, folding her arms and flicking her head in mockery.

ALISA

(muttering)

Didn't know we were going for an Oscar here.

(CONTINUED)

ERIS

You are disrespectful.

ALISA

And your argument came nowhere near
as close to convincing me as this
one, sourpuss.

ZANGREEN

Yeah, yeah. When you're done
calling each other idiots. You're
up, Alisa. Then we decide.

Alisa glares at Eris and snaps her fingers.

STUDY ROOM. INT. DAY.

An old man sits at an old writing desk. The entire room is
very neat, and the desk is no exception. The man is writing
very slowly and carefully on a piece of good stationery.
Alisa approaches him, but he doesn't seem to notice her or
any of the others. Alisa glances over his shoulder to read
what he is writing and smiles on one side of her mouth. The
paper begins: DEAR SENATOR DAVIS. Alisa points to the man.

ZANGREEN

That will get him exactly nowhere.

Eris starts laughing.

ERIS

He's as stupid as you, Alisa.
Democracy! What a sham!

ALISA

It's better than the alternative!

ERIS

Not really. More wars the other
way.

ZANGREEN

I'm not actually into politics. Is
this all you had to show us? Let's
go. I'm bored.

MELANIE

No. I get it.

ALISA

Melanie gets it!

(CONTINUED)

ERIS

There's nothing to get. A stupid man writing a stupid letter.

ALISA

Of course you were all respectful when someone was dying in front of you. Or watching the starvation. But an old man writing a letter, using minutes of his life because he has the audacity, the HOPE enough, to think that it will make the world a better place? NO. That doesn't deserve your attention. And don't you roll your eyes at me, Eris! You destroy things! So obviously you want to destroy the biggest thing you can! Well, look at the small things for once and see that, maybe, there is something in the slow pace of life. And maybe there is something in letting it keep on.

Silence while Alisa fumes. Melanie starts crying again. Zangreen pulls out her knife and begins throwing it in the air while Alisa and Eris stand face to face.

ERIS

Puh-leeze. You are just too lazy to begin Armageddon.

Alisa's lip curls.

ZANGREEN

Seriously. I'm bored. Let's go.

Zangreen snaps her fingers.

PASTURE. EXT. DAY. CONTINUOUS.

The four are back in the pasture, and they are very quiet.

ERIS

Well, that was all very uplifting and beautiful. Really brought tears to Melanie's melodramatic eyes. But let's do our job now.

ALISA

Good grief, Eris!

(CONTINUED)

ZANGREEN

Let's just do it! Let's go! Now!
We're taking too long!

ALISA

We haven't agreed on anything!

ERIS

Because you, for some reason, won't
LET. GO. It's because of me, isn't
it? You don't even like this rock!
You don't even pay attention to or
care about anything!

ZANGREEN

It's true. Your obsession with this
is weird.

ALISA

Fuck off the both of you! We have
no right!

The three of them argue, screaming mutely in the background.
Melanie is stroking her horse as the deadened sound of their
voices reach us. She smiles slightly and cocks her head.
Then her lips quiver, and a tear falls from her eyes. Then
she smiles again.

MELANIE

We will be here forever, I think.