

Chapter 2: Interactions

Description: Dialogue that comes up when Sam talks to her, and interactions that she can have with other characters.

Sam

You walk up to Dahlia while she's in your apartment, hoping to start some small talk.

Dahlia: Greetings, Sam, how are you feeling today?

>What did you do before all this?

Dahlia: I work as a mortician. Although, I dabble in other fields as well.

>>Other fields?

Dahlia: Well, I wanted to be a doctor, but every medical school I applied to rejected me.

>>So you're not an actual doctor?

Dahlia: No I'm not, I'm afraid, apologies if you thought otherwise. I do know my way around the human body, just usually not living ones.

>What do you think will happen?

Dahlia: You mean after all of this is over? I'm not sure, but I know for certain that our world will be irreversibly changed. For the better or for the worst.

>Did you look outside?

Dahlia: Yes, I did. I'm lucky to have survived with my mind and body intact. Well... *most* of it anyways...

>What's with the smell?

Dahlia: It's more for your benefit than mine, trust me.

>>What do you mean?

Dahlia: Whatever was outside, it made changes to my body that I would rather not discuss.

As you begin to eat your dinner you look over and notice that Dahlia has barely even touched hers. She looks down at it nervously, prodding at some of it with her fork.

>Is something wrong?
Not hungry?

Dahlia: Sam. No, I'm sure your cooking's fine. It's just...

She hesitates for a moment.

Dahlia: I'd prefer to eat out in the hallway or something. I know it's horrible etiquette, but I'd prefer if you didn't see me like **this**.

>> What do you mean?

Dahlia: My face is rather unsightly, and I don't feel comfortable taking off my mask. Even if it is to eat.

>>>I guess you can go.

Dahlia: Thank you, I shall knock on the door when I'm finished.

Without another word she takes the plate and leaves the apartment, gently closing the door behind her.

>>>I'm sure it's not that bad.

She stands up from her seat.

Dahlia: I appreciate your encouragement, Sam, but I must insist.

Without another word she takes the plate and leaves the apartment, stiffly closing the door behind her.

You were just about to begin cleaning dishes when you noticed Dahlia walking up to you.

Dahlia: Oh there's no need, Sam, I'll handle cleaning the dishes tonight.

>Are you sure?
No, I can do it

Dahlia: Of course! You already do so much, the least I can do is help with a few chores here and there.

>>Alright.

It's fine, I'll do it

Without another word you step back and let her handle the dirty dishes. It felt nice to have some weight off of your shoulders, even if it was just a small amount.

You felt a warm glow as you walked past the dining room table. Dahlia had left her lantern there while she was off doing something else.

In all of her time she's been in the apartment, you've never seen it burn out or even grow dimmer. It always stayed the same brightness and emitted the same amount of heat.

>(Approach it.)

(Leave it.)

You approached the small lantern. Its warmth was welcoming, soothing. Like sitting near the fireplace on a cold night. You couldn't help but grow even more curious about what was inside.

>(Open it.)

(Leave it.)

You grabbed the little knob, it was hot, but not enough to burn your skin. Just as you were about to open it a gloved hand quickly slapped yours away. You yelped and pulled your arm back, gaze turning up to meet Dahlia's, she was staring at you intensely.

Dahlia: What. Are. You. Doing?

She punctuated each word the same way a parent would when they caught their child doing something bad. You felt a little ashamed.

>I was just curious.

Sorry.

Nothing.

I thought the flame was dimming.

Dahlia: Well stay curious.

She responded sternly, pulling the lantern away by the handle before walking away.

Rat Baby

The little rat thing skitteres up to Dahlia's feet, eyeing her curiously. Dahlia gasps and quickly scoops it up in her arms, making the creature squeak in surprise.

Dahlia: Well aren't you just the cutest little thing!

Rat squirmed a little in her arms before finally settling as she continued to dote on it, seeming to enjoy the attention. It makes happy squeaking and cooing sounds as she scratches its tummy.

You find Rat in Dahlia's arms once again. She cradles it, gently caressing its fur as it sleeps in her arms. It seems that it has quickly taken a liking to her.

Dahlia: It's incredible that you've managed to potty train this little one, Sam.

>What are you talking about?

Dahlia: Well, there are no diapers lying around. So I'm assuming you've potty trained it, right?

>I haven't

Uhhh...

Yeah, totally

Dahlia: Then where does the waste go?

...You've never thought about this before, nor do you want to continue this line of questioning.

Dahlia: ***Sam, where does the waste go?***

Hellen

Dahlia: Oh, Hellen.

Dahlia points to a cut on Hellen's arm. It was only noticeable at a certain angle and wasn't bleeding very much, but could be a problem if it wasn't treated.

Dahlia: You're hurt.

Hellen: It's fine.

Dahlia: Please, I insist.

Dahlia was already fishing through her suitcase before Hellen could even object, and as Dahlia holds out her hand Hellen reluctantly presents her arm. Dahlia silently gets to work, disinfecting the wound before patching it up. Her hands were unusually shaky, nervously avoiding eye contact with the tall woman, but she got the job done. Once she finishes Hellen pulls her arm away, examining it before turning to leave. Before she walks away she looks back at Dahlia.

Hellen: Thanks.

Dahlia: O-Oh, you're welcome.

Hellen leaves without another word.

Hellen silently walks up behind Dahlia, holding a folded over piece of cloth in her hands. For how big she was she hardly makes a sound.

Hellen: Dahlia.

Dahlia jumps a little in surprise and quickly turns around to face her.

Dahlia: Hellen! S-sorry, you startled me.

Hellen shoves the cloth into Dahlia's hands.

Hellen: Here.

Dahlia takes the cloth and carefully opens it. Inside was a small mound of different flowers and herbs.

Dahlia: Oh my, these are beautiful! Where did you find these?

Hellen: I used to garden.

That didn't exactly answer Dahlia's question, but she seemed satisfied with it nonetheless.

Dahlia: Thank you, Hellen, I'll be sure to put these to good use.

She gingerly folds up the herbs and places the cloth in her suitcase.

Dan

After making another mess at the dining room table Dan attempts to get up to leave, but Dahlia reaches up and pinches his ear, making him yelp.

Dahlia: Oh no you don't.

She drags him back down onto his seat.

Dan: Ow. OW. **OW! OW!**

Dahlia: You're not leaving this seat until you've learned proper table manners.

Dahlia finally lets go of his ear and he instantly rubs the spot.

Dan: Whaaatt? But I was just about to finish a speedrun of Screamatorium.

Dahlia: Quit whining, the faster you learn, the faster you can get back to... whatever it was you were doing.

Xaria and Montgomery

Dahlia: Sam, how come you sleep on the couch while Xaria and Montgomery take your bedroom? Do you guys have some sort of sleeping arrangement?

No, not really.

>Kind of?

Yeah, we do.

Dahlia: What do you mean kind of?

>I didn't really have a choice.

I told them they could stay.

It's complicated.

Dahlia: So they just kicked you out of your own bedroom, in your own apartment.

The way Dahlia phrased the sentence sounded more like a statement than a question.

>Yeah, I guess.

Well, when you phrase it like that.

It's fine, really.

There was a long silence.

Dahlia: Oh, this won't do.

Dahlia storms into your bedroom, slamming the door behind her. Then there was a lot of yelling. It was difficult to make out the words, no thanks to the blaring music until it was abruptly turned off. Next thing you know Dahlia was dragging the troublesome duo out by the ears, both of them yelling in protest while Juicebox silently followed suit behind them. How she also managed to coax that... *thing* to leave your room you have no idea. She let go of their ears and placed her hands on her hips.

Dahlia: Sam was kind enough to give you two food and shelter during such dire times and you dare take advantage of his hospitality. Despicable, both of you.

Xaria: God, what kind of stick is up your ass, lady? We told him we'd give his room back tomorrow!

Monty: Yeah, you're a real tool.

The both of them looked like they were ready to fight, but Dahlia simply ignored them and snatched your pillow from off the couch before walking back to your room.

Dahlia: And if either of you step foot in Sam's room again I'm kicking you two out of the window.

Xaria: We'll get back at you for this!

Monty: Huh huh, you better watch your back.

Papineau

Papineau: It's so refreshing to finally meet someone who also participates in the custodial arts.

Dahlia: Well, cleanliness is a necessity for my job.

Papineau: I can tell, underneath all of those floral scents you reek of rot.

Dahlia clears her throat uncomfortably.

Dahlia: *Ahem* Well, during my time at the morgue I've grown to appreciate the entropy.

Papineau: What do you mean? Have you accepted defeat against this ongoing war against such chaos?

Dahlia shook her head.

Dahlia: Papineau, there is no war to begin with. Entropy, death, filth, it's just a natural part of life. It's like trying to pick a fight with the ocean, eventually we will all get lost in the waves and drown.

Papineau: While what you say might be true I just cannot accept it. I have dedicated my entire life to battling against the grime and rust. Even if I'm the only soldier in this nonexistent war I shall stand and fight until my final breath.

There was a small silence between the two.

Dahlia: Do you know how many chemicals are pumped into a dead body in order to keep it preserved? Far too many for me to be comfortable with. That's why, when I die, I want to be laid to rest in the forest. So that my body can be returned to the soil from whence it once came. You should probably think about what you want to happen to your body after you die, too.

Papineau: Is that a threat?

Dahlia: No, simply a fact. We all die, Papineau, and that is one thing you cannot fight against.

Audrey

Dahlia was curiously circling around Audrey, her eyes scanning the vending machine's frame with intrigue. Occasionally stretching out a hand to poke at her, but always pulling before making contact, afraid to disturb her. Eventually a can clunks into the delivery compartment.

Audrey: **Is there something I can help you with, Dahlia?**

Dahlia: Ah, Audrey, pardon my snooping. I just find your new form to be so fascinating.

Audrey: **Oh, thank you. It's not as fun as it looks, though.**

Dahlia: I can imagine. You have to communicate through cans so I'm guessing you no longer have vocal chords. Not to mention you now need a constant supply of those cans or else you can't communicate at all-

Dahlia continues to list a lot of disadvantages to being a sentient vending machine, mostly through a physical and medical standpoint. It doesn't seem that Audrey holds anything she says against her, though. After Dahlia finishes her whole spiel another can clunks into the compartment.

Audrey: **Yeah, it's difficult, but it's a life I have to live. Regardless of how I feel about it.**

Dahlia: ... If it's not too much trouble, and only if you're comfortable with it, may I have a look behind your casing sometime?

There was a small silence before another can appeared.

Audrey: **I hope you don't plan to dissect me.**

Dahlia: *Heavens no*, Audrey, I would never do something so barbaric towards a fellow companion. I simply wish to observe and record, and I'll completely respect any decision you make.

Another silence as Audrey weighs her options.

Audrey: **I'll consider it, give me some time to think.**

Dahlia: Of course, take as long as you need.