

The Blue Lettuce

By

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1 INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

DAVID GIVEN (65), a small man with a kind face, who is capable of sticking up for himself, is dressed in dirty farming clothes, limply paces around the table, occasionally looking at his watch with agitation.

An empty money jar sits on the counter next to a rent eviction letter. A quote picture frame hangs on the worn wall reads: "A fool is a fool. A farmer is no fool." The sparse food cupboards are damaged and some of the tiles on the floor are missing or cracked. Next to a bag of rusty gardening tools on the table, a newspaper headline reads: "ENVIROTECH HELPS SMALL FARMS."

David watches as a hand on his watch ticks over a minute, and then picks up his bag of gardening tools and heads outside.

2 EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

David's farm is the only functioning one in the area. The others are abandoned and lifeless with dead crops.

David's small isolated farm consists of six vegetable patches, half of which are diseased or dead. A battered wooden fence surrounds the house and farm. A broken wooden gate leads to a dirt road towards a futuristic city in the far distance. A far cry from David's farm.

David heads towards his lettuce patch, while ritualistically looking over at the field adjacent to his farm. MAGGIE ROSE (67), a tall stern, confident and domineering woman, wearing a shabby dress with a threadbare straw hat walks her Shih Tzu, DAFFODIL (3).

David reaches his lettuce patch.

MAGGIE (O.S.)  
Good morning, David!

DAVID  
Good morn-

David looks at his lettuce patch with confusion and fear as Maggie picks up Daffodil and hurries over.

David and Maggie are fixated on the patch. There are ten lettuces: six of which are dead, three of them are greenish-brownish, and in the middle, a blue lettuce.

David and Maggie are speechless. Maggie holds onto Daffodil

tightly, clearly concerned for the well-being of her pet.

David takes out his gardening gloves from the tool bag and places the bag on the ground.

David carefully moves onto the plank running through the middle of the patch. He slowly bends down to examine the blue lettuce, without touching it. David sees no sign of green on the lettuce, just blue.

David's hand slowly moves closer to the lettuce. Maggie can see what is about to happen and carefully moves onto the plank next to David while holding gently onto Daffodil with one hand, and with the other slaps David's hand, preventing him from touching it. David looks at Maggie's scared face, infatuated with the lettuce, in a trance-like state.

David gets up and heads into the house with Maggie following.

### 3 EXT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

The sun is higher in the sky as David and Maggie impatiently look down at the path leading to the city, standing by the blue lettuce, giving it precarious looks occasionally. Daffodil rests in Maggie's arms.

DAVID

I appreciate this, but you don't have to stay-

MAGGIE

The CEO'S son, David! Just you wait until he gets here! Enough is enough, I want my say. These big corporations think they can do what they want to whom they want.

David nods gratefully.

A BMW-I8 soars towards the house sending dirt swirling into the air, the backdrop of the big city prominent. Daffodil has now woken due to the sound of the loud BMW engine and loud music coming from the car.

### 4 INT. BMW-I8 - AFTERNOON

CHARLES WINTON (28), a tall immature snobbish suited man with the word "EnviroTech" on his suit, wearing expensive sunglasses, listens to *50 Cent: In Da Club* on full blast. He confidently nods to the music and taps his hands on the steering wheel.

His phone rings and he lets go of the steering wheel as the car continues towards the farm, and takes the phone out from his suit pocket. The screen says "Father" with a picture of CHARLES WINTON SR (58), another snobbish man wearing a suit with the word "EnviroTech" on it. The music continues to play loudly. Charles starts to excitedly move his head from side to side, jamming to the music.

CHARLES  
(into phone)  
What up, Dad?

FATHER (V.O)  
(into phone)  
Where are you? I need you to run an errand for me before the press gets here...

CHARLES  
(into phone)  
Alright, alright. I'll be done with this old man soon. He sounded like a nutter, I shouldn't be too long.

Charles hangs up the phone and puts it in his pocket. Not bothering to put his hands back on the steering wheel, he continues to dance to the music using his hands.

##### 5 EXT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Charles exits the car, does up his suit button, surveys the area in distaste, takes out a comb from his pocket, combs his stylish and lavish hair, almost as if to protect it from the environment of the farmland. As he walks over to David and Maggie, he takes out a handkerchief, covering his mouth.

Daffodil barks sharply at Charles. Maggie simply pats her.

David holds out his hand.

DAVID  
Thank you for coming on such short notice, Charles.

Charles pockets his handkerchief and looks at the hand, but doesn't take it. He looks at his watch and then stares at Maggie and Daffodil in confusion. He sighs impatiently and looks at the blue lettuce, smirking.

CHARLES  
Well-

MAGGIE

Now, you listen to me, you.

Charles looks at Maggie, raising his eyebrows. He takes off his sunglasses, showing a menacing pair of eyes.

MAGGIE

Your tech, gadgets, and gizmos have ruined too many farms! You fiddle with nature, you break the natural! Did you ever think about us? Now, look at what you have done!

Maggie madly points at the blue lettuce and then at the abandoned farms in the area. Daffodil barks as if she were egging Maggie on. Charles ignores them, and David notices that Charles' impatience is bordering on the edge of departure as he stares at his BMW, clearly wishing to get into his car and drive away from this place.

MAGGIE

Now-

DAVID

Thank you for your support, Maggie.

Maggie knows this is a polite cue for her to leave and kindly nods to David. She then stares at Charles, lifts her head up high and walks away with Charles looking half-irritated, half relieved. Charles looks at his watch and then turns his attention to the blue lettuce for a few seconds before then taking out a small Ipad from his suit pocket and loads up *Da Streets*, a shoot em' up game.

DAVID

Look, when I signed up for this tech programme I was promised pristine crops.

David looks deeply concerned at the blue lettuce. Charles starts to play his game, clearly uninterested in what David has to say.

CHARLES

Promised is a bit of a strong word.

DAVID

Yes, you promised. I trusted your company. My farm is now a wreck.

David and Charles look at the farm, which is dying and then

at the blue lettuce. David and Charles' eyes meet. Charles is finding the exchange funny. Charles goes back to the game, killing four civilians with a shotgun.

DAVID

Not only my poor farm, but dear  
Maggie's farm, too.

Charles goes back to his game: he sees a farmer character and brutally kills him with his shotgun and shoots him a few more times, even after he has been killed.

DAVID

I wish I hadn't got the product  
installed.

Charles rolls his eyes, unconcerned by David's complaint.

CHARLES

That's not my fault, is it?

DAVID

But you lied. EnviroTech was supposed  
to be the best technological crop  
development out there. A blue lettuce  
and a dying farm are what I get.

Charles, annoyed, has had enough of David's complaining.

CHARLES

Well, I don't think there's anything I  
can do here. Much more pressing issues  
to be dealing with...

A message pops up on the screen of his Ipad from his father saying, "Hurry up...the PRESS!" Charles replies to the message, "On my way."

Charles puts his sunglasses back on and looks at his car. David stares concernedly at the blue lettuce, at his dilapidated farmhouse and the failed crops around him. Charles pockets the Ipad and walks toward his car.

CHARLES

(under his breath)

That's enough nutters for one day...

Charles reaches his car. He presses a button on his keys, the stylish door to the BMW-I8 opens.

Charles is about to step into the BMW, as David calls:

DAVID  
I think the press would find this blue  
lettuce very interesting, don't you  
think?

Charles stops halfway getting into the car, paralysed. He gets out and frowns, and slowly walks over to David, showing worry for the first time.

CHARLES  
What did you say?

DAVID  
You heard me.

Charles looks sternly at David.

CHARLES  
You're buffing.

David smiles. Charles grows red in the face.

DAVID  
I'm not.

Charles scoffs. David walks toward his house, leaving Charles rooted on the spot.

Charles grows redder in the face and runs his hands through his stylish and lavish hair, ruining it. Charles hears a *ping!* and looks at his phone. Another message from his father, "HURRY UP! THE PRESS!"

Charles looks at David walking away and then looks back at the message on his phone.

David has reached his house, puts his hand on the doorknob and turns it slowly.

Charles, frustrated, runs his hands through his hair again, looks at David and then at the city, and then at David again.

David turns the doorknob further.

CHARLES (O.S.)  
Wait!

Charles is defeated.

David smiles, takes his hand off the doorknob and turns to look back at Charles.

Charles has taken out his chequebook from his suit pocket and leans on his car to hastily write out a cheque, swearing under his breath as he does. He pockets his chequebook.

David reaches Charles.

CHARLES  
This should settle it.

Charles reluctantly hands the cheque to David, who looks at the amount.

DAVID  
I was thinking triple this, actually.

David looks directly into Charles' eyes. Charles looks impatiently back at him while a vicious rage of annoyance crosses his face. His hair is no longer stylish and lavish, but a mess; his face looks like a tomato. Charles no longer looks like the man who came to David's farm.

Charles sighs angrily, takes his chequebook out of his pocket again, but this time with force, ripping part of his suit jacket, without him caring. He quickly writes out the cheque for triple the previous amount, forces it into David's hand, looking at him with vengeance.

David nods and stares into the eyes of Charles, who quickly gets into his BMW and drives off back to the city; a storm brewing over it, while the sun calmly goes down over David's farm. David doesn't take his eyes off the car until it is gone. David looks at the cheque amount again and then at the blue lettuce, smiles, and turns to go inside.

6 INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

David places the cheque safely in his pocket. He then goes to the quote picture frame "A fool is a fool. A farmer is no fool" and opens it, revealing a secret hidden compartment.

David looks up at the compartment. A bottle of blue paint sits next to a bottle of gold paint. He picks out the bottle of blue paint and nods happily at it as if congratulating it for a job well done. He puts the blue paint back into the compartment.

He takes out the gold paint and then looks outside towards his green spinach patch, then back at the gold paint and smiles.