

**LACK**

Arnis  
Aleinikovas

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Contemporary theatre play "LACK" was created in 2022-02-18 in English. The author - Lithuanian interdisciplinary artist M.A. Arnis Aleinikovas.

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Editorial team - Katharina Amelia-Zelinska, Lara Wüster and Leonie Winter.

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Lack is "the fact that something is not available or that there is not enough of it" (Cambridge Dictionary). These stories deal with it.

### **CHARACTERS**

MAN, 20s

2.

3.

4.

REPORTER

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

WOMAN, 30s

CHATBOT

A., 20s

B., 20s

OLD MAN, 60s

### **TIME**

The present

### **LOCATION**

This play is to be performed in theatre. Since there are many rapid changes in between the scenes there would be multiple ways of putting it on stage: several settings on one stage, changed by different lightening, or including the change of scenery into the play. This is of course, ultimately, left to the director of the play.

(on screen)

You are here.

SCENE I

EMPTY ROOM: MAN IN HIS 20S

MAN (*internally*)

I am thinking about these people on the street. I am looking at their faces.

I am looking them straight into their eyes, and they are barely looking back. I am seeking for connection. A primal animal instinct – I believe.

But they turn their eyes to the ground

Or their phones.

So, we rarely meet.

Then I look at the ground. Or trees.

Or the sky.

When it's blue, I have this "opening" feeling.

You know, when you are looking at the blue sky for a long time, it flows into you. Then you realize how big the sky is and how small your problems are.

I can breathe with my empty head

And feel my body,

Feel that I am alive.

Cliché.

This girl just smiled.

SCENE II

**Phone call**

MAN.

Hey, I missed your call.

2.

Hey, yeah, it was, ehm... nothing important, I called to ask how you are doing these days.

MAN.

I am ok. I guess.

2.

You guess.

MAN.

Yeah, I mean. It is a weird time. I feel my body is in pain and I have no idea what to do with it.

2.

Hm.

MAN.

Yeah.

2.

Do you want to tell me more about it?

MAN.

Mhm. Sometimes I feel like I am about to faint. All these boosters - spirituality, coffee, porn, books... nothing really works for a longer time. Sometimes, it feels like I am sleeping. No, it feels even worse. It feels as though I was awake in my sleep feeling pain. Not like torture or something similar. It is more like...  
I cannot talk, I am sorry.

SCENE III

**Reporter, TV**

Effects, which scientists had in the past predicted would result from global climate change, are now occurring: loss of sea ice, accelerated sea level rise and longer, more intense heat waves.

Scientists have high confidence that global temperatures will continue to rise for decades to come, largely due to greenhouse gases produced by human activities. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which includes more than 1,300 scientists from the United States and other countries, forecasts a temperature rise by 2.5 up to 10 degrees Fahrenheit over the next century.

SCENE IV

**INT. PLANE**

*(on the screen)*

PLEASE FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELTS

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Dear passengers, our plane is ready to land in Barcelona.  
We kindly ask you to fasten your seat belts and prepare  
for landing. Thank you.

(The same in Spanish)

WOMAN, *in her 30s.*

WOMAN. (*internally*)

There is a woman. Sitting two rows in front of me. Her hair is  
perfectly brushed. She is blonde and in her 30s. She looks so  
elegant and it seems she knows her worth. I am wondering how  
she keeps on going. It is hard to keep on going in this world  
now. It is easy. And it is hard.  
Or is it just me?

(*interrupting*)

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Miss, could you please fasten your seat belt?

(*fastening seat belt sound*)

WOMAN. (*internally*)

Maybe it's not that hard. It's just that social media makes  
us lose who we really are. We are focusing on the image of us  
for others.

I am thinking about me. About this never-ending sadness. I am  
worried I cannot be part of this world anymore,  
Of people like this woman.  
I cannot walk like they are walking.  
It is too fast for me,  
I will be out of breath.

"Keep smiling and keep walking",  
somebody said once to me.  
"Everything is fine. You are fine."  
It is just a bad day."

What if it is not just a bad day? What if it is *just* a bad  
life?

But you do not believe in that, do you?

You cannot.

SCENE V

**INT. EMPTY ROOM:** MAN IN HIS 20S

MAN. (*internally*)

This family with a child I saw in the park yesterday.  
They were just walking there. I like watching kids.  
It seems like they have no problems in this life.  
I enjoy observing them play.  
They play.  
They just play.  
Why can't I?

They have emotions they do not know what  
to do with,  
But they show them.  
We adults look each other in the eyes and  
somewhere in the back of our heads,  
we both think the other one is lying  
since it is too painful to be real,  
to be honest.

Add an Instagram filter.

I think there is a huge amount of information behind eyes.

Did you know that already at the age of four children are very  
good at lying?

(*pause*)

(*on the screen*)

"WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR VISIT TO OUR WEBSITE TODAY?"

MAN.

I think that I have some health problems, like cancer. And I  
am scared that it will happen one day, because I am thinking  
about it too much?

CHATBOT.

(*here and in the future appears on the screen*)

Thoughts are powerful.  
Your thoughts become your reality;  
as Tony says:  
"Whatever you hold in your mind is exactly what you will  
experience in your life."  
This is something that the world's most successful people  
realize – and the only difference between them and everyone

else is that they have learned how to harness the power of thoughts to help them achieve the things they want.

MAN.

I am constantly thinking about me being sick. I am scared.

CHATBOT.

There is no need to be scared. Everybody in their life sometimes has this type of thoughts. This is why it is very important to have thoughts that are helpful to you. That keep you on track, that keeps you healthy.

MAN.

So, can we program ourselves? Is this what you are saying?

CHATBOT.

Yes, you can add thoughts, and exchange old ones – renew yourself/them.

(text on screen)

**"RENEW"**

CHATBOT.

We are all telling ourselves stories  
The question is, does your story empower you or hold you back?  
They say:  
"I've always been a worrier"  
"I'm just naturally more anxious than everyone else."  
"Why am I like this?"

SCENE VI

**INT. PLANE**

FLIGHT ATTENDANT.

Would you like something to drink?

WOMAN.

I think I am okay for now. Thank you.

*Sound of an airline service trolley passing by*

FLIGHT ATTENDANT.

Sir, would you like something to drink?



WOMAN (*internally*)

Maybe it is just the feeling of not being safe enough. Or not feeling safe at all. Breathe. What am I doing with my life? Why am I not trusting myself?

SCENE VII

MAN (*internally*)

I am thinking about those kids in the little carts. Trying to imagine their heads, their nervous system. They are looking at the world without any pre-recorded knowledge.

They are building their own lives. From scratch. From nothing.

From "You are my mom, and this is - Who is this?"

Later - they will be given our constructs to live in.

(on the screen)

**Loading...**

MAN (cont'd)

Then they will be fighting and willing to change the world... And it is a never-ending story For a better tomorrow. But now, They are little kids in little carts With expanding neurons and unknown realities.

SCENE VIII

**INT. BEDROOM - MORNING**

3.

Hey babe, good morning.

4.

Uhh... (*takes a deep breath*) good morning.

3.

Did you sleep well?

4.  
Well, I guess so. And you?

3.  
I could not sleep for a while, but then the rest of the night was great.

4.  
Did you dream anything?

3.  
Nothing I could remember.

4.  
I dreamt I wanted to go to Barcelona.

3.  
Barcelona? Uhm... ok. Why Barcelona?

4.  
I have no idea. Maybe because it is warm there and people somehow, in my head, live a better life.

3.  
What do you mean?

4.  
I don't know, I feel like they are more relaxed. And they have more sun than we have over here. Sun really makes a change.

3.  
Do you want to go to Barcelona in this reality?

4.  
Well, I have never thought about that.

3.  
We can check for flights.

*Pause.*

4.  
Can you kiss me?

*They kiss.*

3.  
I love the smell of your skin. I really, really do.

SCENE IX

(on the screen)

Please choose a place where you feel that you belong:

- a) School
- b) Team
- c) Family
- d) Neighborhood
- e) Church
- f) Band
- g) Social media
- h) Work environment
- i) Planet Earth
- j) Universe

CHANGE YOUR STORY

Now - the way you observe the world affects the story that will be told about your life. Your story is one of three elements that can lead you to finding a breakthrough - that is, learning how to create lasting change in your life.

What is on your mind?

SCENE X

**INT. BATHROOM**

*A is in the bathtub, naked, imagining talking to B.  
A is a man in his 20s.*

A.

Why are you here?

Why are you still coming here? What are you saying? I cannot really hear you. Come closer.

I thought maybe you will never come here again.

V.O.

*Forty-three.*

*(here and in all the numeration till zero we hear an A's voice-over, a count down from one hundred by sevens; it is a clinical test for your cognition)*

A.

Tell me. Tell me something.

Silence.

A.

Maybe you want some tea? You are not talking much these days. It's okay. I don't really mind being silent.

A.

No, it's not working that way, maybe with some music.

*Thirty-five.*

*Music starts playing. A is acting as if B were in the room.*

A.

Oh, I haven't seen you for ages. Let me kiss you on the left cheek, and now right, and now left again. This is how you do it right? Just without touching the cheek of course.

*(text on screen)*

"Belonging means acceptance as a member or part. A sense of belonging to a greater community improves your motivation, health, and happiness. When you see your connection to others, you know that all people struggle and have difficult times. You are not alone. There is comfort in that knowledge."

A.

So, tell me, tell me. Tell me everything - how's your wife, how are your kids. How's this new world you are living in? Are you happy?

*No answer because A is still alone.*

*Twenty-seven.*

A.

*(over-playing that B is saying something)*

M, yeah. Yeah. I do understand. M, yeah, m. Yeah, so interesting. M, yeah, yeah. Mhm. Mhm.

A.

Yeah, I remember you have always believed in God. Once you had told me, you lost the connection. I remember I was laughing inside of myself, and you will never know about it, because I respect what you choose to believe in. But I still think it's a bit weird. To believe in something that was created by humans. Some story that was created by humans.

A.  
Are you smoking?

A.  
I was, oh God, I was smoking like hell, but now I am trying to smoke less.

*Twenty.*

*B enters the room.  
B. is male in his 20s.*

*Atmosphere changes and we play like the previous scene didn't happen at all.*

A.  
I remember you have always believed in God.

B.  
That's true.

A.  
Hm.

B.  
Do you?

A.  
Well, it's complicated. We went to church from time to time, but my parents did not really believe in God. So, it was more like a social ritual.

B.  
Interesting.

A.  
Yeah.

*Pause.*

A.  
I think you were never honest with me.

*Fourteen.*

B.  
Were you?

A.

We are not asking each other questions. It's not the way people are supposed to talk to each other.

I was honest with you.

B.  
You were not supposed to start developing these kinds of feelings for me. It's just..

A.  
Just what?

B.  
It's just we were having fun from time to time. You know – people do that sometimes.

A.  
Is it really bad to start feeling something, maybe love, for a person after having slept with them? Is it bad to dream?

B.  
There is nothing inherently bad about it, it's just not the right time. And me – I am not the person you want to fall in love with.

A.  
When is the time to fall in love with you then?

B.  
Listen...

A.  
And how could you know who is the right person to fall in love with for me?

*B doesn't answer.*

A.  
Tell me! How could you know?

B.  
I don't. It's more like I am not the person you want to fall in love with.

A.  
But I already did.

B.  
I am not responsible for that.

SCENE XI  
INT. PLANE

WOMAN. (*internally*)

I just remembered this weird dream that I had last night. Why do I remember it now? I guess it doesn't really matter why.

I was dreaming I was in the forest at night. My phone was on the brink of dying and I was walking under these trees, searching for an exit, but at the same time, keeping still and calm. It's hard to imagine a person being peaceful in a forest at night.

I don't know this forest. But we don't dream about things that we haven't seen before, right? I read somewhere that our imagination cannot make up things from nothing. Of course, I have been in forests before and I know what they look like. This forest might just be an adaptation of them. So, I am in this forest. With my phone flashlight on, illuminating the trees all around me and patches of grass beneath my feet. And then I stop. I move my flashlight a little bit upwards, and there's a deer, looking straight into my eyes.

It is not moving. I am not moving. My breathing changes. We are staring at each other. For a long moment. And it is so calm. It feels like we have met before. Like we had known each other for a long time and today we met. Finally.

It was looking at me – somehow pure.

Then I woke up with my eyes full of tears. I was smiling.

SCENE XII

**Phone call continuous**

2.

Please try to describe the pain.

MAN.

I can't.

2.

Please... close your eyes. Imagine an empty room. Do you hear me?

MAN.

Yes.

2.

...there is nothing in there. It is dark. Some people are scared of darkness. But there is no need to be. Look. What is darkness? It's the absence of light. So, there is no light.

MAN.

I don't think I am afraid of darkness.

2.

That's great. Just stay there. Listen to my voice and keep your eyes closed. Find your breath. Are you taking deep breaths?

MAN.

I guess so.

2.

Right now, you are in whatever place you want to be. Stay there. And try to describe the pain.

*Long pause.*

MAN.

Something is locked. There is... I have no access to it. I cannot breathe because my body is obstructing me from doing so. It's this part close to my ribs. Sometimes it's moving up and down, but it's always on the right side of my body.

*The sound of a fastening seat belt.*

*(text on the screen)*

It's not us who made things so strange.  
What made us so unfamiliar -  
Is a big distance between us.  
A big distance to realize the' inner intentions of the other  
The big step is really not so big  
To trust,  
To reach the other.  
Most of the times the other is only a step away.  
A step,  
A word,  
A gesture,  
A glimpse.

SCENE XIII

**INT. BATHROOM**

A.

Are you still smoking?

*B. is not answering*

A.

Stupid question. I think you will never quit.

V.O.



Seven.

A.

When you are here, I always want to smoke. Maybe because I always feel nervous when you are close by, and maybe I was too fucking stupid – I couldn't see that before. I said to myself that maybe I could wait, I could suffer in the name of love... and I tried.

B.

I didn't ask you to do this.

A.

Of course, you didn't. You didn't ask me to do anything. Why did you come here?

B.

Because I wanted to check in on you. And I think you need help. I think you need to start everything anew. You need to start trusting people, you need to fall in love again, you need to start creating, you need to keep going. There is no us in the future.

*A is silent for some time.*

A.

I will never forget your smell. Your armpits had a beautiful smell. When you were nervous or at the very beginning of "us" – your armpits were sweat. In this very sexy way. Your arms were gentle, I felt safe when you touched me. Your legs... I love your skinniness – I guess you will always be delicate.

We didn't know anything back then. You were my first. I was the first for you. Was I though? Not sure anymore. You told me so, but...

Anyways. I remember I was looking at you naked. You wanted me and I wanted you back.

Do you remember when we went to bed?

*A. smiles.*

A.

We were lying there for some time. Not saying anything, but we both felt the same. We were into each other, and we both were thinking about how to begin. Do you remember that?

B.

I do.

A.

And doesn't it make you feel something? Anything? No emotion? Nothing?

B.  
Look, it was quite a long time ago.

A.  
Yes, I know. But this just goes straight to your body memory. It goes very deep and you cannot forget that easily.

B.  
I do prefer to think about memories as something outside of my body. I am trying not to grow attached too much.

A.  
So, you prefer to lock them inside and tell yourself that it never happened?

B.  
Where are you going with this?

A. steps out from the bathtub.

A.  
Can I hug you?

*B doesn't reply.*

*Zero.*

*Fastening seat belt sound. A hugs B. Stays there for some time.*

A.  
Can you hug me back?

*B hugs him back.*

A.  
Could you try to be more sensitive about it?

B.  
What do you mean?

A.  
I mean – can you hug me with the intention of really hugging me?

SCENE XIV  
**Phone call continuous**

MAN.

It might be my nerves. I am just nervous.

2.

Why are you nervous?

MAN.

Sometimes I just feel that I do not belong anywhere. Sometimes I think that no matter what I do, I will be judged for it and at the end of the day – it is not enough. Sometimes I feel that I am nothing. That no one needs me in this world. You know what I mean? Like – no matter what I will do – it will not change anything or have any major influence on anyone. My grandmother does not ever call me. She says she doesn't want to disturb me. Do I look busy? No, I am busy. But I am busy working because I have nothing else. I have nobody to hold before falling asleep and I have no one to hold me.

*Long pause.*

MAN.

You know what? That pain feels like something cutting into my thighs, my chest, tying me down and I can neither move nor breathe...

*Fastening seat belt sound.*

SCENE XV

**INT. BEDROOM**

OLD MAN *in his 60s* and MAN are sitting close to one another on a bed, both are half naked. Minimal ambient music is playing. OLD MAN is slowly putting a hand on MAN's leg. MAN closes his eyes. OLD MAN is moving closer to MAN and starts slowly kissing him. MAN is not moving. OLD MAN takes off MAN'S underwear and takes his own off, too. OLD MAN kneels and starts sucking MAN's dick. By the end of the scene, we can see MAN crying.

*Parallely:*

3.

*(touching the hair of 4).*

What is your biggest fear in life?

4.

Hm. Well, I have several for sure. But I am not sure which one is the biggest.

3.

Well, then tell me all of them.

4.

I fear death. I think not precisely death, but what happens after. I think it's something like never ending darkness. You sleep. Forever. It might be terribly boring.

3. *doesn't reply anything.*

4. (cont'd)

Or actually, no. Now, that I am thinking about it – I am not that much scared of “what happens after”. I think it was the safe answer to say so, because more or less everybody could relate to that, right?

I also fear pain. My brain makes every small thing a big one and I end up with (self-diagnosed) cancer. But also, come to think of it, I guess I am afraid of the never ending pain. Like, to be in pain for one day is okay, but when it lasts for 20 days or weeks, or months...

*On screen:*

“Belonging means acceptance as a member or part. A sense of belonging to a greater community improves your motivation, health, and happiness. When you see your connection to others, you know that all people struggle and have difficult times. You are not alone. There is comfort in that knowledge.”

SCENE XVI

**INT. PLANE**

WOMAN (*internally*)

I cannot remember the last time somebody touched me in a way that would make me feel safe and needed. In a way that would help me forget about the rest of the world. Forget about my pain and the pain of the world. I am tired of feeling hopeless. I am tired of scrolling through pictures, where everyone is smiling and pretending that nothing is happening while everything is.

SCENE XVII

**INT. BEDROOM**

MAN. *is pacing the room nervously. OLD MAN is gone.*

MAN

Okay, okay, okay. It is very important to think rationally now. Are there any correct decisions I could make? Okay, okay, calm down. This is too emotional, too much pain. Think.

Try to separate what happened and what is happening inside of you now. Try to remember. Fuck. Everything. Very clear. Try to focus.

*Soliloquy:*

MAN.

I cannot do this.

MAN.

You must do this. This is the game. And in this game, you went too far already. To be more precise, he went too far, but you allowed it to happen.

MAN.

Did I?

MAN.

Yes.

MAN.

No, I didn't. I didn't give him my permission.

MAN.

But you didn't do anything against it.

MAN.

I did not expect this to happen. I thought we were friends who were spending time together, talking about art, culture and music.

MAN.

Yes, but he interpreted it differently. You let it happen. It's your fault.

MAN.

No, it's not my fault. I just couldn't say no.

MAN.

Maybe... everything is not that bad?

MAN.

He was sucking you off. He is over 60. You are just starting your 20s. You are not feeling anything for him, are you?

MAN.

He told me that he loves me.

MAN.

Yeah, loves you. Sure. Do you believe that?

MAN.

No. I mean... I don't know how he understands love. I think he needs someone to be close to. And this need for intimacy he mistook for love.

MAN.

Okay, okay. Yes. It's what you think. But... Okay. Come back to what happened. What answer did you give him?

MAN.

What did I answer? Nothing. I didn't have any courage to say fuck you, didn't have the courage to stand up and leave. So, I decided to take an easier path – to close my eyes -- and I kept on repeating that I was not there.

I am not there.

I am not there.

I am not there.

**Reporter, TV**

*The same TV as in the beginning, different appearance.*

There was a man, who was living a simple life.

You could say that he was just like millions of others. He ate three times a day, snacking from time to time, drank enough water, did some meditation in the morning and some running two to three times a week. He took a shower at the end of the day, he tried to go to sleep at 11 in the evening and most of the time it worked for him.

Though, he had several fears. The biggest ones were to lose his mind and to get cancer. Statistically, one of these things is most likely going to happen to him.

A few months ago, he noticed that he was spending all his evenings alone on his couch, staring at the news. Staring at the reporters, who were one after another announcing the apocalypse. Global warming. Floods. Wars. COVID-19. Mass shootings.

"Isn't it interesting" – he thought – "that we're all so tired of our lives we forget to be curious? Now we are building walls to hide behind – while craving impossible intimacy and healing".

SCENE XVIII

**INT. BATHROOM**

B.

I think I need to go.

A.

For good?

B.  
Unless you still have something to say to me.

*(A. smiles)*

A.  
I think I said everything I wanted.

B.  
Then...

*(long pause)*

A.  
I really, really love you.

B.  
Goodbye.

SCENE XIX

*MAN still pacing the room, still talking to himself.*

MAN.  
It's not your fault. It's not your fault. It's not your fault.  
It's not your fault.

*Fastening seat belt sound.*

MAN.  
It's me who let him do it to my body.

MAN.  
It's partly your fault, because you didn't say "no", but...

MAN.  
But if I had said no, he wouldn't have done it.

*MAN starts crying.*

SCENE XX

**INT. PLANE**

WOMAN. *(internally)*

I am just talking to myself, thinking and thinking and thinking, and not doing anything. Not making a step. Not saying "hi" to the person sitting close to me. I do not want

to interrupt them. What comes after Hi?

The commercial on YouTube the other day asked me if I was ready for the Metaverse. The Metaverse is an iteration of the Internet part of a shared virtual reality, often as a form of social media. The metaverse in a broader sense may not only refer to virtual worlds operated by social media companies but the entire spectrum of augmented reality.

And I am not ready.

I am not ready to be an avatar in a place that doesn't exist. Gosh. So, what should I say to a person I don't know?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (*through the speakers*)

Ladies and gentlemen, our plane just landed in Barcelona. Local time is 14:20. It is sunny and 32°C. Thank you for choosing our company and we wish you a wonderful stay in Barcelona.

(*same in Spanish*)

XXI

*A's monologue*

A.

Do you know the song "You were always on my mind"? It is now playing, and I am in my bed.

And you are not here. It might sound cheesy, and it is. But the point is -

I tricked myself into thinking that when you listened to that song you were thinking about me. That this "You" in the song - was "I".

But reality is -

That this "You" was never "me".

"Maybe I didn't love you quite as often as I could have, And maybe I didn't treat you quite as good as I should have"

You never loved me.

*Willie Nelson - "Always On My Mind" starts playing.*

*A's monologue and the scene with 3. & 4. overlapping:*

4.

I want to go to Barcelona. Shall we?

A.

I created a fake reality.



And now you are kissing another man.  
And now you are holding his hand –

3.

Yes, I can check flights.

A.

And I am here,  
Barely standing on the ground,  
watching you go.

4.

I love you.

A.

"You were always on my mind.  
You were always on my mind".

3.

I love you more.

*(on the screen)*

"Belonging means acceptance as a member or part. A sense of belonging to a greater community improves your motivation, health, and happiness. When you see your connection to others, you know that all people struggle and have difficult times."

SCENE XXII

*WOMAN from the plane scene filming herself on Instagram.*

WOMAN.

Hey all, Dorothe here. I just landed in Barcelona. The weather is just great and... no, it's not good.

*She deletes the recording and starts anew, slightly different.*

WOMAN

Hey all, this is Dorothe. I cannot believe I am finally in Barcelona! Fuck... I don't even believe in myself. I mean, of course I am in Barcelona, but so what... ok, ok. Let's try one more time.

*She deletes the recording and starts anew.*

FINAL SCENE XXIII

OLD MAN, *smoking*. He is saying a monologue to the audience. It sounds a little bit as though he was talking to an invisible journalist.

OLD MAN.

(*sighs*) Yeah... I think I am fine. Yeah. Like, life is ok, you know (*he laughs, but not too much*). Yeah. I do have a wife, I do have two kids. Beautiful kids that I love so much. Ehm. (*clears his throat*). What else can I say? Oh yeah, I do believe in God. God is the saviour. He will save us all. Who else could do that? Yeah...

WOMAN.

(*filming herself on Instagram*)

...and recently I have been living with the feeling of lack. Like I am lacking a home. I don't belong anywhere. A real me.

OLD MAN. (cont'd)

I mean, I am kind of, you know, a casual guy, living a casual and not very interesting life.

WOMAN. (cont'd)

Alright, now it would be good not to delete this video... Yeah, I understand that the content... well, it's not really the one people would like to see on Instagram, right? They are dancing, showing their half-naked bodies, adding filters... instead of saying what they really mean, what they really think (which is what the social networks ask you in the first place).

OLD MAN. (cont'd)

You are asking... what is the meaning of life? Huh. Good question. What do you think (*points to the audience member*) is the meaning of life?

**Phone call continues**

MAN.

Can I tell you something?

2.

Of course! This is why I called you. To speak with you.

MAN.

I don't know if you remember... but... I was telling you about one man...

2.

Yeah...

MAN.

I feel he raped me.

REPORTER on the TV

Scientists don't know why Neanderthals became extinct around 40,000 years ago, however, apparently due to climatic fluctuations their population split into smaller, more fragmented groups and large changes in temperature affected plants and the animals they used for food.

The disappearance of the Neanderthals was probably due to a slight decline in the fertility among the youngest women. This is a phenomenon that is limited in scope that, over time, had an impact.

### **Bedroom**

4.

Do you remember when you asked me what I am afraid of?

3.

Yeah.

4.

Back then you didn't share your fears with me.

3.

I am trying not to think about it.

4.

What are you afraid of the most?

3.

To be redundant... I am not really sure what it means, but I am scared to be alone and to feel that no one really needs me anymore.

4. hugs 3.

OLD MAN.

You see, I don't know what the meaning of life is. (*laughs*)

For a while I thought the meaning of life was to live life lightly and have fun... (*blows cigarette smoke*)

Reporter on the TV

In Lagos, lush, green lemongrass bushes, grassier sisters of the yellow lemongrass stalks, grow locally. They're often referred to as "fever grass" since they reduce fever, and I use the ingredient in a citrus tonic when I can find it. Soups are especially important for helping me get back on my feet. And, as anyone who is convalescing knows

*TV turns off.*

*Silence for a while.*

THE END.