

May 2005, Ljubljana

Jera Ivanc:

ALL ABOUT SMOKERS

*a smoker**

with

Marla

Camilla

and

Gypsy

* a smoker: 1. person who habitually smokes tobacco, 2. a concert or a play where smoking is allowed, 3. company of men

Author's wishes:

MARLA smoking all the time (rolling her own cigarettes); GYPSY just about to light one (but never does); ALL serious and not, laughing a lot (maybe tipsy); 'LAW' being pronounced as law only few times, otherwise as L-A-W; use as few props as possible.

GYPSY enters, (hands up):

Am I at least allowed to smoke the 'Last One'?

MARLA enters, (as if) pointing a gun to Gypsy:

I'm sorry. It's against the 'LAW'. (*shoots Gypsy*) In the name of Liberation, Army and Women.

GYPSY drops (as if) dead

Urgh ...

CAMILLA enters:

It's the Liberation Army of Women and it's not funny. They'd kill me if they knew I was showing my gun around.

MARLA:

Nice friends you got there.

GYPSY to Camilla:

So... you get a gun if you stop smoking?

CAMILLA:

It's not that simple. One has to earn their trust and I don't want to blow it this time.

GYPSY to Camilla:

I still don't understand what was wrong in *you* giving *your* cigarettes to *your* best friends after *you*'ve decided to stop?

CAMILLA:

'LAW' isn't just about liberating yourself. It's about liberating others as well.

MARLA to Camilla:

If you want us to help you with earning their trust, you'll have to tell us more.

CAMILLA:

All I can say is that there's something big in the making and that I'm not supposed to say anything.

MARLA:

OK, but if you're talking about that reception you and your girlfriends are giving next Wednesday – I'm not coming.

CAMILLA:

Ha, ha. I just wish you'd stop smoking. (*to Gypsy*) I couldn't help noticing, dear, that you haven't had a cigarette the whole evening.

MARLA:

Indeed. How come?

GYPSY:

I don't need to smoke before, during and after everything I do.

CAMILLA to Gypsy:

Do you prefer to smoke alone?

GYPSY:

Exactly. That's what I do. I smoke alone.

CAMILLA:

In your cellar, where there's nothing but cigarette boxes and tobacco leaves hanging from the ceiling – quite a supply you got there – overwhelmed by feelings of guilt and sorrow afterwards?

GYPSY:

What?

CAMILLA to Gypsy:

You show all the signs of, what we at 'LAW' call, Smoking Disorder Syndrome.

GYPSY:

(*with sarcasm*) Oh, that's how you call it?

CAMILLA:

Yes. Smoker's anorexia combined with bulimia. Piling cigarettes up and not smoking them.

GYPSY:

I'm just being reasonable. I don't want some nut health-terrorist blowing my head off for smoking. Or some desperate smoker breaking into my cellar, killing me and stealing my supply. A smoker just can't be careful enough these days. Isn't that so, Marla?

MARLA:

A smoker is what smoker does.

GYPSY:

Don't worry about me, Camilla. I'll just blame my possessive mother and my absent father.

MARLA:

You were raised in an orphanage and adopted by a gay couple at the age of 18.

GYPSY:

It was a joke.

MARLA:

So Gary and John didn't adopt you?

CAMILLA:

Oh, God!

MARLA:

What!?! She can joke and I can't?

CAMILLA:

Smoking Disorder Syndrome is a serious problem.

GYPSY to Camilla:

Oh, please! My smoking might have caused yellow teeth, it might someday influence the development of a lung cancer, but it has nothing to do with what you at 'LAW' invented to terrorise decent smokers with only so you can persuade yourselves and others how 'liberated' you all are. Liberated my arse!

MARLA:

You call yourself a decent smoker?

GYPSY:

I don't smoke while others eat and I deny the existence of the 'Last One'. Yes, a decent smoker is what I am.

CAMILLA:

Each time I listen to you two I find proof of how damaging to one's inner growth earthly desires can be.

MARLA:

And deprivation of earthly crops may cause serious damage to one's brain.

CAMILLA:

It's really not hard.

MARLA to Camilla:

OK, you stopped smoking. And looking at where things were going for the past five years – our beloved tobacco plant wiped from the face of this planet by a virus, black market crashing, each smoker with his own supply, hidden somewhere, living in constant fear of what might happen, waiting for the come of the 'Last One' – From that point of view, that was a very good decision. A right one. No doubt about that. That is, of course, for someone who needs decisions. But, my dear, your reasons were wrong. All wrong. It was not your

skin, smell or money, not even the environment, hungry children or world peace. No. It was the fear of the 'Last One'. Fear of mortality. You are weak, not liberated. Needing the 'LAW' and big decisions and guns to stop!

CAMILLA:

That's so not fair! My life has improved since I stopped smoking and joined the 'LAW'. You know that. And why should reasons matter? There is a 'Last One' for each smoker as there is a concept of the 'Last One'. I've already faced both, weak or not weak, and moved on. It's all behind me. Gone forever! Shwist. 'Last One' all history for me. Finito. Schluss. All gone... But you... There still is a 'Last One' for each of you and you'll have to face it – sooner or weaker. We have some really good and effective programmes at 'LAW'.

MARLA:

I'd rather die. But you already know that.

GYPSY:

And do you want to know something else? I don't have a - what your girlfriends at 'LAW' call - Smoking Disorder Syndrome and there can be, if you need it for your facing, a concept of the 'Last One' but there never was, is or will be a 'Last One' for me. I have enough tobacco to last me...

CAMILLA:

Everything that has a beginning has an ending. Apply this wisdom to a particular cigarette or to the concept of a cigarette – but there *is* a last cigarette. It does exist. All you have to do is admit it and then decide on it. It's all about ...

MARLA:

Deciding, yes, yes, yes.

CAMILLA:

Yes. About becoming a man of decision.

MARLA:

It takes more than a moustache to become a man.

CAMILLA:

Let's not get into this endless debate about how many facial hair makes a moustache.

MARLA:

I'm sorry. I forgot.

CAMILLA:

Never mind. So... where was I? Yes. (*to Gypsy*) You just have to decide and smoke the 'Last One' up!

GYPSY:

Oh, no! Because it will never happen!

CAMILLA:

You can delude yourself in thinking your tobacco supply will never run out,

MARLA:

But if she has anorexia,

CAMILLA:

(silencing Marla) Please... *(to Gypsy)* but *you* will. *You will* run out.

GYPSY:

So?

CAMILLA:

So ... you'll die!

GYPSY:

Is that so?

MARLA:

Oh, my God! She plans to smoke even after she's dead.

GYPSY to Marla:

What about you?

MARLA:

What about me?

CAMILLA:

When are *you* going to decide on your 'Last One'?

MARLA:

I don't need to make decisions. Some people, you two included, need a concept of decision because it gives them feeling that they are the ones who control their lives. I don't need that. On my way there are no crossroads and thus no need for decisions. I see things as they are and it's all straight forward for me. I will stop when the supply stops. Until then I will smoke and enjoy each cigarette as it is. Carpe diem is about seeing things as they are. I, unlike you two, live now, in the present and not in fear of the 'Last One' somewhere in the future. When the tobacco highway on my way ends it ends. No crossroads. No decisions. *(pauses)* And by supply I mean *my* supply. I'll stop when *my* supply ends up in smoke.

GYPSY to Camilla:

I would really like to see that.

CAMILLA to Marla:

When you run out on tobacco you'll be sweeping up the house, desperately trying to find the 'Last One', but there won't be one. Why? Because in your head you'll mix the concept of the 'Next One' and that of the 'Last One' and will than come running to her (*i.e. Gypsy*) throwing yourself at her feet begging her to give you your next last cigarette.

GYPSY:

And by not getting any end up in prostitution.

CAMILLA:

No. At the end they all end up at 'LAW'. 'LAW' ... will ... eventually (*pauses, to both*) I do love you, you know that? You're my best friends.

GYPSY:

We love you to and (*to Marla*) what are those women doing to her?

CAMILLA to both:

I shouldn't be saying this, but be careful. Don't talk so carelessly about the 'LAW'. And, as a friend, do stop smoking! Something big is in making and when it starts, you better not be smoking.

MARLA:

When what starts? Why are you being so mysterious? Does this have anything to do with you earning their trust?

CAMILLA:

It's much bigger. And when it starts, you better be on their side.

GYPSY:

Uuu, I'm so scared.

MARLA to Camilla:

You're not making any sense. What does Erik think about all this 'LAW' thing?

CAMILLA:

It's none of his business anymore.

MARLA:

I'm sorry. I forgot.

CAMILLA:

The little one still wakes up in the middle of the night crying and asking about the smoke coming out of daddy's mouth. I just want my children... (*telephone ringing from the inside*)

MARLA:

What?

CAMILLA:

Just a second. *(leaves)*

MARLA *shouting after her:*

To be raised by some frustrated women? *(to Gypsy)* Or by good old aunties Marla and Gypsy?

GYPSY:

We shouldn't be too hard on her. She just went through a divorce and we haven't been much of a help.

MARLA:

Unlike those at 'LAW'. I know.

CAMILLA *enters:*

It's started.

MARLA:

Come here. We're bestest and oldest friends! Nothing can come between us. *(hugs both)*

GYPSY:

Let's just not argue about *(looks at the cigarette in her hands)* these anymore. Let's just enjoy! Carpe diem! *(lights it)*

MARLA *looking at her cigarette:*

Yes, carpe diem! It's just a thing, anyway. A thing as mortal as anything that gives us joy in our, oh, lives so fragile.

CAMILLA *takes Marla's cigarette, looks at it:*

I wish *(pause)*... I'm sorry. *(shoots both)* No exceptions. *(takes a deep sigh, smokes in silence, gun-shots from far away)*

DEA EX MACHINA *with a moustache, enters:*

Oh, my God! Well done! *(pause)* Are you smoking?

CAMILLA:

I just killed my ex and my two best friends. *(pause)* I mean, God! Why does everything have to be so strict with you women?

DEA EX MACHINA:

I'm sorry.

CAMILLA:

I just wish

DEA EX MACHINA *shoots Camilla:*

Not enough facial hair anyway. *(leaves)*

MARLA *getting up, leaving:*

Oh, God! Don't you just hate being terrorised by the 'LAW'? I mean... really!

CAMILLA *getting up, leaving:*

I just wish those damn Indians could keep a secret!

GYPSY *getting up, leaving:*

Dear ladies and gentlemen, don't let something like this happen to you. Stop now!

DEA EX MACHINA *reenters:*

What you've just seen was a first in the series of anti-smoking theatre advertisements, that our theatre decided to start after the 'WHO' published state-of-emergency-calling data about the number of active and passive smokers among children. Our theatre tries to make a difference. *(pause)* You make it happen. Thank you very much and enjoy the rest of the show.

KONEC

