

Valentin Krasnogorov

Pelicans of the wilderness

A short play

ATTENTION! All copyrights to the play are protected by the international legislation and belong to the author. Its edition and reprinting, duplication, public performance, translation into foreign languages, without a written permission of the author is forbidden.

Contacts:

St.-Petersburg, Russia

+7(951)689-3-689 (cell.)

e-mail: valentin.krasnogorov@gmail.com

My site: <http://krasnogorov.com/english/>

I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.
I lie awake, I have become like a lonely bird on a rooftop.

PSALMS 102:6-7

CHARACTERS

MAN

WOMAN

DOCTOR

GUEST

A MAN IN DARK GLASSES

HIS COMPANION

OLD WOMAN

The setting is an assortment of furniture pieces of various kinds and styles: a table, a few chairs, an unmade king-size bed, a refrigerator, a mirror, a gas stove, a wardrobe, a folding screen, and an armchair. These disarrayed items are arranged on the stage without any particular order. In the back of the stage there is a copy or a poster of the Rodin sculpture L'Éternel Printemps: a nude girl embraced by a young man.

The OLD WOMAN has stiffened in a deep, shabby armchair; her withered, scrawny figure is almost unnoticeable. There is a small table with medicines by her side.

A WOMAN in a colorful house dress appears from behind the screen. She walks to the telephone, takes it with her to bed, sits down and dials a number.

WOMAN. Laura, good evening. Where have you been? I'm calling you the fourth time. No, nothing's happened. It's just that he is coming soon. Really! And I haven't yet told you the main thing: he will propose tonight... Oh yes, I am pretty certain. I feel it... If you could only see the way he looked at me yesterday... Well, I must finish baking the cake and tidy myself up. I'll call you later.

She puts the phone down, walks to the oven, opens it, checks the cake, puts a tablecloth on the table, then walks to the mirror, takes off her dressing gown and studies her reflection closely. Then she picks up the phone again.

It's me. I don't know what dress to put on. He's coming, and I'm not dressed yet. What evening dress, the black one with a low neckline? I think so too... Of course I'm nervous. So many years all by myself, and all of a sudden... I feel giddy.

She puts the phone down, leaves it on the bed and, remembering the cake, hurries to the oven, still without a dress.

An unshaved man in long johns, flings the blanket aside, climbs out of bed and reaches for the telephone.

MAN. Hello, is this the clinic? I'm calling regarding the house call. My number is twenty-two. Am I set? Nothing's changed? Thank you.

The MAN puts the phone down, reaches for his pants thrown over the back of the chair, but after glancing at his watch, lies down again on top of the blanket and stares at the ceiling apathetically.

Meanwhile, the WOMAN comes back from the stove, gets her shoes and a black evening dress out of the wardrobe, takes a string of pearls out of the jewelry box and dresses carefully in front of the mirror.

The OLD WOMAN in the armchair grabs an old photo album and starts browsing it with a sad smile on her face, shaking her head every once in a while.

The WOMAN, having finished dressing, sets the table. She walks to the mirror again, then looks at the china, crystal ware and silverware on the table in doubt. She picks up the phone.

WOMAN. Laura, it's me again. You know what I think? Perhaps I shouldn't wear the black dress? Yeah, it fits me fine, but I look too formal in it. The man will come for an intimate conversation, and I am dressed up for a gala reception... It should happen as if by chance, and instead he'll have an impression I've been preparing for it all day. The cake, the champagne, the pearls... Right?... Yes... Yes... Something simple, yet attractive. Thanks.

As soon as the WOMAN puts the phone down, the MAN lying on the bed picks it up immediately.

MAN. Hello! Is this the clinic? I am calling to double check on the doctor's visit today. Number twenty-three. No changes? Thank you.

The MAN puts on his pants and his shirt; he now looks more decently, but untidy. The WOMAN is slowly changing her clothes. The OLD WOMAN wants to grab a bottle with her medicine, but her hands are too stiff and she drops it on the floor.

A decently dressed elderly gentleman enters, breathing heavily. After making two or three steps, he falls with a groan. The MAN, concerned, rushes to him.

Hey!

The elderly man is unresponsive. The MAN checks the visitor's pulse, then grabs a syringe from the OLD WOMAN's table and gives him an injection. The WOMAN puts away the champagne and crystal ware from the table. The visitor opens his eyes.

Are you feeling better?

VISITOR. Yes, thank you. Sorry. You shouldn't have bothered.

MAN. What happened?

VISITOR. No big deal. Asthma, radiculitis, liver. The fifth floor, not for the first time. The elevator is out of service, and so is my heart. Anyway, thank you very much. *(Gets up and shakes hands with the MAN.)*

MAN. Who are you, anyway?

VISITOR. A house call. Seven o'clock. Number twenty-two.

MAN. *(Surprised)*. So you are the doctor?

DOCTOR. Don't I look like a doctor? May I see your receipt, please?

The MAN digs in his pockets and produces a paper.

Everything is correct. Peter... What's your last name?

MAN. Peter.

DOCTOR. That's your name. What's your last name?

MAN. Just Peter. They told me at the clinic that the most important thing is to pay in advance, and as to my name, I may call myself any name I want.

DOCTOR. Oh well, let it be Peter. Doesn't make any difference to me.

Loosing his balance, he grabs on the edge of the table.

MAN. Are you not feeling well again?

DOCTOR. No biggie. My pulse is ninety, my blood pressure is two hundred, my age is seventy. I'm all right. *(Falls on the bed.)*

MAN *(With a pill and a glass of water.)* How about a heart pill?

DOCTOR. With a great pleasure. *(Swallows the pill.)* Merci. Let me catch my breath, it's only five to seven now.

(The OLD WOMAN tries to stand up to pick up the dropped bottle from the floor, but she can't lift her paralyzed body from the armchair. The WOMAN puts on a modest simple dress now, looks in the mirror and dials again.)

WOMAN. Am I bothering you? No, he hasn't come yet. Do I love him? It's hard to tell: we met so recently. But I do know one thing: I *want* to love him. To be loved too, but more importantly - to love. I want to live for him. I'll surround him with such a care - it's hard to describe... I'll fetch his slippers for him and will bring them to him in my teeth. Yes, he will come. You have no idea how much I believe in him... *(Puts the phone down, but calls back immediately again.)* Listen, I didn't tell you why I called. I've changed the dress, put away the flowers and champagne, and now everything looks bleak and dismal. He may decide that I wasn't waiting for him at all. And I don't look my best... What about that white one? White is always beautiful. Yes, of course!

Puts the phone down, sets the flowers on the table again, takes a white dress out of the wardrobe and begins to change clothes.

A couple enter: a MAN IN DARK GLASSES and a woman - his COMPANION.

COMPANION. Wait here, I'll be a minute.

MAN IN A DARK GLASSES. Please, don't leave.

COMPANION. Just sit here, I'll come back soon. *(Escapes behind the screen).*

The MAN IN DARK GLASSES sits down and freezes in a tense pose.

DOCTOR. *(Lying on the bed.)* It's seven p.m. I'm listening.

MAN. Well, you see...

DOCTOR *(Interrupting.)* No, wait. First give me my stethoscope. It's in my bag. Thank you. Now, take your shirt off, please. Good. Lean forward to me. Very well. Breathe. *(Lying on the bed, listens to the MAN's heart.)* The damn heart... No, not yours. Mine. Everything sounds alright with you. Actually, where do you have pain?

MAN. Nowhere.

DOCTOR. *(He is so surprised, he sits up.)* What do you mean - nowhere? Why then did you call a doctor, and not a cheap one at that?

MAN. Let me explain this to you...

DOCTOR. I don't need your explanations. Just tell me, do you have pain or not?

MAN. Well, you see...

DOCTOR. *(Interrupting.)* Yes or no?

MAN. Yes.

DOCTOR. Where exactly?

MAN. It's my soul...

DOCTOR. You should've told me right away. *(Stands up and snaps his bag closed.)* When you have a soul pain, you need to call a psychiatrist, not an internist. Good bye. I'm in a hurry.

MAN. You must be kidding! I was so looking forward to your visit... Please stay.

DOCTOR. No way. *(Decisively heads to the door, but suddenly stops and puts his hand on his chest.)* Oh... *(Sinks into a chair.)*

MAN. Another pill?

DOCTOR. I would prefer a glass of cognac.

MAN. Just a moment...

The MAN takes out a bottle with cognac and fills a glass.

The MAN IN DARK GLASSES makes a few restless movements, then stands up as if to leave, but then sits down again.

DOCTOR. *(Having drunk his cognac.)* Five stars. Forty-six degrees. I'm twenty years old again. Merci and good bye.

MAN. Are you still going to leave?

DOCTOR. Sure.

MAN. *(Blocks his way.)* I won't let you go.

DOCTOR. I wonder how you are going to stop me.

MAN. According to the rules of your clinic, a doctor's visit should last not less than thirty minutes if the patient requests it. I checked. If you go now, I'll file a complaint.

DOCTOR. *(Sits down with a sigh.)* Well ok, go ahead, shoot.

MAN. Is it even possible to tell everything that bothers you in a quarter of an hour?

DOCTOR. Tell me just the most important part.

MAN. The most important part... Doctor, the most important part is, I am sick and tired of everything.

DOCTOR. Sick and tired of what exactly?

MAN. Everything. Work, streets, people... I can't watch TV, I don't turn the radio on, I don't read newspapers...

DOCTOR. So what?

MAN. Doesn't it surprise you?

DOCTOR. No.

MAN. Don't you feel any compassion?

DOCTOR. Would you like me to prescribe you a tranquillizer?

MAN. I know what you think: over-fatigue, depression, stress, neurosis and other medical crap. But I'm very healthy.

DOCTOR. Then what do you want from me?

MAN. Compassion.

DOCTOR. Is it also a part of the clinic rules?

MAN. It's a part of any doctor's responsibilities.

DOCTOR. Well, I have a lot of compassion for you. And now let's measure your pressure.

MAN. *(Impatiently.)* What for?

DOCTOR. It's my responsibility. You've studied our rules so well, you should know that.

DOCTOR takes out the blood pressure cuff from his bag and, in spite of the MAN's protests, measures his blood pressure.

WOMAN. *(On the phone.)* Laura, he has not come. I'm sure something happened... Yes, I'm in white, but it doesn't matter. If only he came... *(Puts the phone down and walks nervously around the room, aimlessly rearranging things.)*

DOCTOR *(Putting the cuff away)*. Your blood pressure is good. In fact, it's excellent. I'm jealous big time.

MAN. I told you it was pointless to measure it.

DOCTOR. We all do a lot of pointless things.

MAN. Now that we are done with all the formalities, can you hear me out at last?

DOCTOR. How about a referral to the laboratory or a specialist?

The MAN gestures impatiently.

I say it now because once the half an hour is up, I won't have any time to write a referral for you.

MAN. Doctor, can we talk as a human being to a human being? After all, I paid money for it, damn it!

DOCTOR. *(Having packed his bag calmly)*. I'm listening. *(Glancing at his watch.)* Well, why are you silent?

MAN. Your indifference is killing me.

DOCTOR. *(After a pause.)* You only have four minutes left. If you want to say something, hurry up.

MAN. *(Nervously.)* I can't concentrate... I lost my train of thought...

DOCTOR. The last thing you said - or rather the first thing you said - was that you were sick and tired of everything.

MAN. Oh, yes... That's right... That's the most important part. I'm sick and tired of everything. Fake smiles, impeccable suits, money, money, money... Everything is so repulsive!

DOCTOR. Everything?

MAN. Everything.

DOCTOR. Nonsense. I don't believe you.

MAN. Whatever.

DOCTOR. Tell me, is the scent of a forest, a pine forest on a sunny summer day repulsive to you?

MAN. A scent of forest? Of course not.

DOCTOR. The taste of good coffee?

MAN. No.

DOCTOR. Do you abhor beautiful women? Wild flowers? Mozart's music? See, you are silent now. Then why on earth have you decided that you are disappointed in everything?

MAN. Well, maybe not in everything. But in many things. It's not the point.

DOCTOR. No, it isn't. Do you want me to tell you, what the point is?

MAN. I've been trying to get it from you for a good part of half an hour.

DOCTOR. *(Looking at his watch.)* Which, by the way, is up. *(Stands up.)*

MAN. But you promised to tell me...

DOCTOR. Some other time. Take care.

MAN. No, you can't leave like that!

DOCTOR. Dear Peter, your time is up. I'm so sorry. *(Takes his bag.)*

MAN. *(Blocks his way.)* And yet you will have to tolerate me a little longer.

DOCTOR. The next patient is waiting for me.

MAN. But your next patient is me.

DOCTOR. *(Looking at his notebook.)* Time?

MAN. Seven - thirty.

DOCTOR. Name?

MAN. Paul.

DOCTOR. How come - Paul when you're Peter? Actually, it makes no difference to me. Your receipt, please.

MAN. Here you go. Number twenty-three.

DOCTOR. *(Looking at his notebook.)* Alright. Where do you have pain?

MAN. Nowhere. I...

DOCTOR. Take off your shirt, please. I'll listen to your heart.

MAN. But you've just...

DOCTOR. Dear Paul, that was a patient number twenty-two and you're number twenty-three.

MAN. But both of them are...

DOCTOR. Breathe. *(Listens to MAN's heart through his stethoscope.)*

WOMAN. *(On the phone.)* He hasn't come. I am freaking out... Yes, I know I shouldn't do anything. I know it's best to stop waiting. I can't do it any more... Sorry, I keep bothering you all the time... I'll try to pull myself together. *(Puts the phone down and continues to sit on the bed in a desperate pose.)*

DOCTOR. And now let's take a look at your blood pressure.

MAN. Doctor, please let's stop fooling around. We're wasting our time again.

DOCTOR. Don't distract me, please. *(Takes MAN's blood pressure.)*

The paralyzed OLD WOMAN unsuccessfully tries to reach the medicine bottle again. The MAN IN DARK GLASSES moves restlessly in his chair.

An attractive young man with a bottle of wine and a bouquet walks in.

GUEST. May I come in?

WOMAN. *(She does not believe her eyes.)* You?!

GUEST. You didn't expect me? But I promised to come... Did you forget?

WOMAN. No, of course I didn't!.. I was waiting so... I mean... I wasn't waiting, but... Come in, please! Why are you standing here?

GUEST. *(Presenting the wine and the flowers.)* This is for you.

WOMAN. You shouldn't have to. Thank you so much! What a beautiful bouquet!

GUEST. You look so nice in this dress. Like a real bride! By the way, I wanted to tell you... *(After a pause.)* Are you alone?

WOMAN. Yes.

GUEST. Do you live alone?

WOMAN. Yes.

GUEST. Very nice and cozy. These curtains are so lovely. You have a great taste.

WOMAN. *(Shyly.)* I... I'll make some tea.

GUEST. Let me help you.

They walk to the stove. The WOMAN fills the tea kettle, the GUEST helps to carry the tea cups, uncorks the bottle, etc.

DOCTOR. *(Putting away his blood pressure cuff.)* Your blood pressure is good. I would say, it's excellent. I'm jealous big time.

MAN. Doctor, please stop it, for God's sake. I want to hear your real, human words. You promised to tell me...

DOCTOR. *(Interrupting.)* Yes, I remember. But first take a look at yourself. Unshaved, uncombed, and dressed into God knows what. And your place? It's like a nest of a spider that got caught in his own web. A coffin would be much more comfortable. *(Comes up to the stove.)* I'm sure, you boil your tea in a fish-pot and heat your cutlets right on the open fire, holding them with a rusty fork. Do you even have cutlets? *(Opens the refrigerator.)* But of course, it's empty. Dear Paul, you shouldn't allow yourself to degenerate like this. *(Goes on to critically examine the apartment.)*

WOMAN. Would you get a lemon from the refrigerator?

GUEST. *(Opens the refrigerator.)* Wow, you've got so many delicious things in here! You must be a great cook!

WOMAN. Oh, I don't know... I just like to have everything necessary at home. *(She wants to take the lemon, but the GUEST holds her hand. The WOMAN casts her eyes down.)* I need to slice the lemon.

GUEST. I'll do it.

WOMAN. *(Freeing her hand.)* Then I'll set the table.

The WOMAN covers part of the table with a snow-white tablecloth and sets on it a vase with flowers, crystal glasses, champagne, etc.

The MAN spreads a newspaper on the other end of the table and puts the opened bottle of cognac, a slice of bread and salami on it.

THE MAN IN DARK GLASSES. (*Anxiously.*) Where are you? You promised to come back soon. (*After a pause.*) Why aren't you answering?

MAN. (*Having finished his cognac.*) So you think I'm degenerating. But I'm regenerating. It all depends on how you define up and down. I, too, used to set your ridiculous goals for myself, the main of which was to be liked. By women, by superiors, by a stranger. And I, too, used to have your cherished dreams - money, fame, and power. And I, too, used to have your disappointments. But now I've risen above it. True, I haven't been to a barber's shop for a long time and I wear shabby shoes, but is it really that important whether Albert Einstein shaved often and what kind of shoes Christ was wearing on his way to the Calvary?

DOCTOR. And what do you aspire now?

MAN. I am trying to live truly. (*Pouring more cognac into his glass.*) Not to spend my life worrying about petty things and not to maneuver.

DOCTOR. And how is it working out for you?

MAN. I don't know. So far, I was able to advance only half-way towards my goal. I am not doing evil things, but I am not doing good things, either. I abandoned what I hated, but haven't found what I want. I parted ways with people who were strangers to me, but I haven't met those who would become close to me.

DOCTOR. And this is the reason for your blues. You are lonely, my friend, but you don't like the loneliness. That's how you ended up in the situation when you spend your last pennies hiring a paid interlocutor.

MAN. I am not trying to hide it: I need a friend.

DOCTOR. A woman.

MAN. Yes, a woman. But not any woman; the only one.

DOCTOR. Are you looking for an ideal?

MAN. Not at all. Let her have some imperfections, ridges, and acute angles. But these angles must correspond with my indents.

DOCTOR. Does she even exist, this soul mate of yours?

MAN. She does. But how do I find her among millions? The more sophisticated the lock, the more difficult it is to find a key that fits it.

DOCTOR. And what's the conclusion?

MAN. Let's drink.

They drink in silence.

The WOMAN and her GUEST are sitting at the table, too. The GUEST opens the champagne and pours it into the glasses.

WOMAN. *(With a glass of champagne in her hand.)* What are we drinking to?

GUEST. To us.

WOMAN. *(Clinking glasses.)* To us.

GUEST. May all your dreams come true.

WOMAN. Would you like a cake or a pie?

GUEST. A piece of the pie. Since it was made by you.

WOMAN. *(Slightly flirting.)* And I'll have a slice of the cake, since it was brought by you.

GUEST. Thank you. *(Looking around the room.)* And who lives next door?

WOMAN. No one. I live alone.

GUEST. Nice. So you are your own mistress. Aren't you bored sometimes?

WOMAN. Not just bored, sometimes I am scared.

GUEST. What are you scared of?

WOMAN. Oh, I don't know... For instance, I can get sick, try calling for help, but nobody will even hear.

GUEST. Forget it. Let's drink some more.

WOMAN. I'm not used to wine.

GUEST. Sometimes it's ok to indulge in little pleasures. *(Raises his glass.)* To your beauty and charm.

They drink.

Do you dance?

WOMAN. A little.

GUEST. How about we put on something slow? But first another toast. To you. No-no, don't put down your glass, bottoms up! *(The WOMAN drinks.)* Well done!

They drink. The WOMAN puts the music on and dances with the GUEST. The paralyzed OLD WOMAN slides down on the floor and tries to reach the medicine bottle, which rolled away from her to an unattainable distance - two or three meters. The dancing music is still playing, slow and nostalgic.

MAN. *(After another sip.)* You know what I'm thinking about? Maybe I am really degenerating. You are telling me my pants aren't washed and my apartment is unkempt. And why would I clean it? And who would I shave for?

DOCTOR. For yourself.

MAN. No, that's not serious. No matter what, but each of us, even the most deep-rooted egotist lives for others. We expect love and help from them and we want to love and help them. Even the most notorious scoundrel needs people - if only to do mean things to them. And I have no one by my side. Do you understand?

The OLD WOMAN continues to reach for the medicine bottle.

DOCTOR. I understand. I'm lonely too.

MAN. No, you don't understand. You have a family, a wife...

DOCTOR. A wife is the worst kind of loneliness.

MAN. What about children?

DOCTOR. When you are over seventy, you begin to doubt if your children - or anybody at all for that matter - need you any more. If I now leave your apartment and fall somewhere on the stairs... - do you think anybody will notice my absence?

MAN. Then maybe you should stop.

DOCTOR. Stop what?

MAN. Well, walking up and down the stairs.

DOCTOR. And then what? *(After a pause.)* No, I'd rather continue walking...

MAN. Do you get tired?

DOCTOR. What do you think? So many people, and each one has his or her own story. But go on. You didn't pay me to listen to me.

MAN. Doctor, why don't you come, visit me again some day? You can drop by, just like that...

DOCTOR. It would be my pleasure. But I'm so busy. From eight to three, from four to nine...

MAN. See?

DOCTOR. What can I do?

MAN. Loneliness used to be a burden for me because I wanted something for myself. I wanted to be taken care of and loved. Somehow I thought that I was entitled to it. Now I want to extend my hand to somebody. I want to mean something to somebody. But nobody needs me. Nobody.

The OLD WOMAN stops her attempts to get the medicine and now tries unsuccessfully to get back to her armchair. And the music still plays.

MAN. There must be someone somewhere who needs me. But where is he, this "someone", where? These thoughts drive me crazy. I sit on the bed all day long, swaying from side to side endlessly and repeating: where? where? where?

THE MAN IN DARK GLASSES. Where, where am I? (*Stands up.*) Are you here yet?(*Silence.*) Is anybody here? (*Tries to make a few steps, but bumps into the table, stops and extends his hands pleadingly.*) Help me, I don't see anything. Do you understand what it means, not to be able to see? (*The light on the stage goes out. The voice of THE MAN IN DARK GLASSES sounds in complete darkness.*) I am asking you - if only anyone is here - do you understand what darkness and uncertainty mean? (*Silence.*) You may ask, why I am talking if there is nobody here. But to me, there is always nobody and nothing around. Perhaps I'm mistaken? (*After a pause.*) Tell me - do you exist? (*Not having received a response, he shuffles off to his place, bumping into the furniture. The light comes back on with the first words of the WOMAN.*)

WOMAN. (*Stops dancing.*) I feel dizzy. Shall we sit down at the table again?

GUEST. (*Still hugging the WOMAN around her waist.*) No. Staying at the table all the time is... monotonous. I like to stand like this a lot better, feeling you so close...

WOMAN. (*Tries to free herself.*) Let's talk about something.

GUEST. We've already talked enough. I figure, we can find some other things to do. (*Hugging the WOMAN even more persistently.*)

WOMAN. I am afraid, you've drunk too much.

GUEST. I'm absolutely sober.

WOMAN. I am asking you, please, let's return to the table.

GUEST. (*With a snicker.*) I prefer a different kind of furniture. (*Drags the stunned woman to bed.*)

WOMAN. What are you doing? Let me go!

GUEST. (*Rudely.*) Stop putting on an act. We've played decent long enough.

WOMAN. Let me go!

GUEST. Don't pretend to be a virgin.

WOMAN. (*Freeing up.*) So that's what you are like? Get out of here!

GUEST. First I'll get what I've come for.

WOMAN. (*In despair.*) And what have you come for?

GUEST. You know it, you're not a baby. (*Comes very close to her.*)

WOMAN. I am asking you, don't.

GUEST. Then why did you invite me?

WOMAN. Don't touch me! I'll scream!

GUEST. Who will hear you? (*Rips her dress off her.*)

WOMAN. Help! Help me somebody!

The MAN and the DOCTOR are drinking their cognac melancholically. The OLD WOMAN is helplessly laying on the floor a few centimeters away from the medicine bottle. THE MAN IN DARK GLASSES makes a few steps forward. With his first words the stage plunges in darkness.

THE MAN IN DARK GLASSES. Why did you do it? Why did you leave me alone? *(The sound of his uncertain, stumbling steps is heard.)* Where's the way out? If there's anybody here, help! Is it so difficult - to show me the way out? Or you can't see each other either? Or you don't exist at all? *(Pause.)* Tell me - do you exist?

THE MAN IN DARK GLASSES falls silent. When the light is back, there are no MAN IN DARK GLASSES, the DOCTOR, or the GUEST on the stage. The MAN is sitting alone in his old place at the table with a glass in his hand. The OLD WOMAN flounders on the floor. The WOMAN lies in bed. The telephone rings. The WOMAN picks it up. Her voice is bleak and empty.

WOMAN. Yes. Of course it's me. Nothing happened. You are imagining. No. He hasn't come. I'm saying: the man I was waiting for, never came. I don't know. I think, never.

While the WOMAN is talking, the MAN finishes the bottle, takes off his shirt and pants, and climbs into the bed, but does not lie down. He remains sitting, swaying from side to side endlessly and repeating the same word.

WOMAN. Don't console me, I'm absolutely calm. I've learned long ago that nobody needs me and never will need me. I must face the truth. Perhaps, He does exist somewhere in the world, but I will never meet him. You don't agree? Then answer just one simple question: where is he? Where?

MAN. *(Swaying.)* Where?... Where?... Where?...

And in the L'Éternel Printemps the young man and the girl, youthful, beautiful, full of life and love, are forever fused in an inseparable unity of their bodies and souls.

THE END