

## THE PEOPLE'S TOAST

“Vaněka Today” in Three Scenes:  
*The People's Toast, Shavasana, & Critical Acclaim*

### CAST OF CHARACTERS (4)

FRAN VANEKA (f): Writer, political activist, traveler. 20s-30s.

ALEK (“The Coffeemaster”) (m): Restaurant manager. 60s.

VERA: Social media influencer. Same age as or slightly older than Vaneka.

MICHAL: Coder for tech startup. Same age as Vera.

PHONE: Voice. Could be Fran's, pre-recorded.

### RUN TIME

~20-25 min.

### HISTORY

- Staged Reading, World/International Premiere and One-Month Residency, Prague Performing Arts Academy, Czechia, *Nov 2019*.
- 1st Place Winner, Vaclav Havel “Vaněk Today” Playwriting Competition, Vaclav Havel Library Foundation and NYU Tisch, *July 2019*.

Storyline, characters, and motifs are inspired by Vaclav Havel's Vaněk plays.

SCENE 1: The People's Toast

AT RISE: Curtain up on the outdoor dining section of a bistro, along the sidewalk. Umbrellas stretch over tables topped with plastic menus. Ambiance is nothing fancy, in fact slightly shabby, but sincere. ALEK is by the entrance writing on an A-frame sign, advertising "Avocado Toast" as the daily special.

*(VANEKA ENTERS, smoking a cigarette. She passes the entrance.)*

PHONE

You have arrived at your destination. Stop walking.

*(VANEKA falters abruptly, surprised. She paces onward a few steps to finish and dispose of her cigarette, while her phone keeps reprimanding:)*

PHONE, CON'T

Stop walking. Stop walking. You have arrived at your destin-

VANEKA

Shhh! I know!

*(Managing to silence it just as ALEK notices her)*

ALEK

Vaněka?

VANEKA

Yes, *ahoj*. Hello.

ALEK

You're Fran Vaněka?

VANEKA

Guilty as charged.

ALEK

Can I call ya Fran?

VANEKA

No, yeah. I don't mind-

ALEK

"No, yeah?" *Ne* or *ano*? That's American slang, isn't that, little lady? Every word they babble over there is so wishy-washy. It's so... What's the word?

VANEKA

Convoluted? Indecisive? Ambiguous?

ALEK

Wishy-washy. That's the one I was looking for.

VANEKA

Oh. Yeah. That would suffice.

ALEK

*(With a scoff)*

Suffice.

VANEKA

I'm sorry? Did I-

ALEK

I'm Aleksander, the manager. The boss. Not like anyone cares. You can call me Alek. Here, little lady. Have a drink.

VANEKA

Oh. Thank you.

*(THEY sit. ALEK pours two glasses, downs his immediately. VANEKA takes hers and sips gingerly.)*

ALEK

Let's toast. Cheers to your new home!

VANEKA

It's lovely.

ALEK

Now, don't mock me like that. Don't... What's the word I'm looking for?

VANEKA

Condescend? Patronize? Satire?

ALEK

No, just... Just don't mock me like that.

VANEKA

I'm sorry, sir. I really don't intend-

ALEK

No need to pretend, Fran. I know this isn't the trendy coffee shop scene you're used to. The Cafe Nerro or The Pret or The Starbucks, where you worked last. Saw that on your resume.

VANEKA

Oh, I actually quite dislike corporate chains. I applied here intentionally, to support a traditional, local spot. I only worked at Starbucks until I could find another job.

ALEK

Of course. You can afford those places, so you don't like 'em.

VANEKA

That's not quite it, actually-

ALEK

Hey now, I don't need to know your personal history. I don't know it. I don't need to.

VANEKA

Thank you. I appreciate that.

ALEK

*(Refilling his glass)*

I know you're a felon, that I do. Saw that on your resume.

VANEKA

That wasn't on my-

ALEK

In the application, little lady.

VANEKA

Oh. Um, yes.

ALEK

Why'd you write that, Fran?

VANEKA

I am legally obligated to.

ALEK

I mean, why'd you write all that *hloupost* that got you in trouble?

VANEKA

Oh. I uh, feel humanly obligated to.

ALEK

You're a dissident, or whatever they're calling themselves these days. You were one of 'em in the States. An activist.

VANEKA

I suppose... It's 2019. Everyone's an activist.

ALEK

But you were screaming? Protesting? Got caught?

VANEKA

Guilty as charged.

ALEK

Against their president, old Donald Trump. For immigration and, and climate change, and all that *hloupost*. I see that on the news.

VANEKA

No, yeah. For claiming to know nothing of my personal history/ you seem to actually know quite a lot-/

ALEK

/Are you gonna do that/ back here in Prague now? With President Milos Zeman?

VANEKA

Oh, I-

PHONE

Stop walking. You have arrived at your destination.

VANEKA

*(Silencing it)*

Sorry. I'm so sorry about that.

ALEK

He's got a mansion, doesn't he? A couple mansions, all white marble and damn Renaissance gold. And a supermodel wife with platinum hair and designer sunglasses in each one, like a glossy, polished little doll. A couple supermodel wives, probably.

VANEKA

I'm sorry, who?

ALEK

President Donald Trump, Fran! Come on!

VANEKA

Oh, well perhaps-

ALEK

Don't you want a couple?

VANEKA

Supermodel wives? Um, sure, if they consented to-

ALEK

No, Fran, mansions! Don't you want a couple mansions?

VANEKA

Oh. I wouldn't know what to do with only one mansion.

ALEK

*(Scoffs)*

You wouldn't know what to do with only one mansion.

VANEKA

I would not.

ALEK

You'd live in it, little lady! You millennials. *Legrační*.  
Can you even operate a basic coffee machine?

VANEKA

No, yeah, I can.

ALEK

Now where'd you learn that, Fran?

VANEKA

Starbucks.

ALEK

You worked at Starbucks.

VANEKA

Yes. You saw that on my resume, didn't you?

ALEK

*(Scoffing again)*

Your resume.

VANEKA

Ah, was it weak? I'm sorry. I can forward you my updated CV in PDF format, with my cover letter if you'd-

ALEK

You millennials. They teach you, at the universities these days, how to write a cover letter but not how to operate a basic coffee machine. *Legrační.*

*(He begins refilling the glasses to Vaneka's dismay. She struggled to finish hers.)*

ALEK, con't.

Here, little lady. Have another drink, and I'll tell you a bit of our history. Then I'll teach ya how to fold utensils into a napkin and toss a side salad in a flash and change the daily specials board. You smoke?

VANEKA

*(Relieved, reaching for her cigarettes)*

I thought, of all these questions, you'd never ask-

ALEK

You shouldn't.

VANEKA

Smoke or ask questions?

ALEK

Let's toast. Cheers to the establishment!

*(ALEK toasts then gulps his.)*

We've been here a hundred years. We're part of Prague. This is where, back in the day, folks would come toast their sloshy pitchers and play cards, not just type away alone on their computer keyboards. To talk, about the movies or sports or their families, not just Twitter about politics. To get along, not dissent.

... But of course, we've had to adapt to this modern demand, you know? We have to... What's the word I'm looking for? It's on the tip of my tongue so the beer keeps getting in the way. What's the word I'm looking for?

VANEKA

Adhere? Comply? Tailor?

ALEK

We have to adapt. See here; we've gotta craft "artisan delicacies." We have to make *brunch.*

*(Stands to snatch a menu from another table, slides it to her)*

Quinoa and kale and bowls - breakfast bowls, lunch bowls, millennials for some reason want everything in bowls. And avocado toast. We have to serve avocado toast!

VANEKA

*(Nodding to the outdoor A-frame sign)*

I see that. On the sign.

ALEK

Ignore the sign, Fran.

VANEKA

Alright.

ALEK

But we still stay true to our original establishment and values, Fran. I know you don't believe me.

VANEKA

I believe you. It's quite beneficial to combine traditional elements with progress. You're doing what you can to survive-

PHONE

Stop walking. You have arrived at your destination.

VANEKA

*(Silencing it)*

Sorry. I'm so sorry about that.

ALEK

Now, I don't care if you're a felon, Fran.

VANEKA

I appreciate that.

ALEK

I don't need to know your personal history.

VANEKA

Alright.

ALEK

But I know you write. I saw that on your resume, and the Internet. You don't believe I can read Facebook and Twitter and *The New York Times* and all that *hloupost* but I do, little lady.

VANEKA

I believe you.



ALEK

Some of your little stories have been in *The New York Times* and all that *hloupost*.

VANEKA

Yes.

ALEK

And plays in the big city theatres.

VANEKA

Off-off-Broadway, but sure.

ALEK

So what're you doing here, then, you intellectual?

VANEKA

It's 2019. Everyone's an intellectual.

ALEK

Come on! Some of your little stories have been in *The New York Times*.

VANEKA

It's 2019. Everyone's had a little story in *The New York Times*. My few that have been picked up, that means nothing. That pays nothing-

ALEK

You millennials, Fran. You've all had a story in the papers. Or the web. Not me. Here. Have another drink.

*(He refills the glasses. VANEKA, feeling ill, does not drink anymore.)*

ALEK, con't.

What do you mean by that, everyone's an intellectual?

VANEKA

Well, any of us who could mash even three words together back in grade school was dubbed Gifted and praised by our parents, who worked steadily so we could take risks, and encouraged us to jet overseas and earn MFAs in Creative Writing. And there, we learned how to write theses but not a cover letter.

ALEK

You think that's bad, Fran?

VANEKA

No. Just uniquely challenging.

ALEK

We've been here a hundred years, little lady. We're part of Prague. You don't believe me.

VANEKA

I believe you. You're doing what you can to survive-

ALEK

But we still stay true to our original establishment and values, Fran, but you don't believe me. Can you even operate a basic coffee machine?

VANEKA

No, yeah. I can.

ALEK

I'll teach you how to fold utensils into a napkin and toss a side salad in a flash and change the daily specials board.

VANEKA

Alright.

ALEK

It used to be, the boss says "Run," the employees ask "How far?" Now, the boss says "Run" and the employees just blink back and ask: "Why?"

VANEKA

I'm sorry.

ALEK

And that! You all, you millennials, you all say sorry too much.

VANEKA

Yeah, sorry.... I'm sorry.... Ah! Sorry.

ALEK

Damn, it's so... The beer has numbed the taste buds on the tip of my tongue. What's the word?

VANEKA

Self-deprecating? Cynical? Depressing?

ALEK

No, come on, it's so...

VANEKA

Oh, you mean: Ironic? Juxtaposing? Contrasting?

ALEK

No. Sad. It's so sad. You're intellectuals, right, little lady? Now, the boss says "Run" and the employees just blink back blankly and babble: "Why?" You know your value. You know you're worthy and safe and protected. More than I was, of course. So why say sorry?

VANEKA

Because that value is worthless in the current economy.

ALEK

What *isn't*, Fran, ya intellectual?

VANEKA

... Avocado toast?

ALEK

*(Scoffs)*

We have to adapt. We've gotta craft "artisan delicacies." We have to make *brunch*.

VANEKA

You're doing what you can.

ALEK

*(Scoffs)*

I know this isn't the trendy scene you're used to. The Cafe Nerro or The Pret or The Starbucks, where you worked last. I saw that on your resume.

VANEKA

Oh, I actually quite dislike corporate chains. I applied here because I prefer supporting traditional, local spots. I only worked at Starbucks until I could find another job.

ALEK

You millennials. You only work until you can find another job. You smoke?

VANEKA

*(Relieved, pulling out her cigarettes)*

I thought, of all these questions, you'd never-

*(ALEK swipes the cigarette from her fingers and flings it across the stage)*

ALEK

Don't you want a couple, Fran?

VANEKA

*(Blinking, still startled)*

A couple what? A couple jobs? The market *is* a gig wasteland, sure. Everyone has two, /or three or four if they're lucky-/

ALEK

/No, Fran, a couple *mansions!*/ Little lady, *legrační*.

VANEKA

Oh. I wouldn't know what to do with only one mansion.

ALEK

*(Scoffs)*

You wouldn't know what to do with only one mansion. You millenials want your tiny Airbnbs and hostels and to live out of cars. You don't want a house. Do you have a house?

VANEKA

No. I live in a hostel a few stops away.

ALEK

Of course you don't want a house. You can afford those places, so you don't like 'em.

VANEKA

That's not quite it, actually; I'd love a house. I'd love space. But I don't *need* it, and can't aff-

ALEK

Stubborn smart kids.

VANEKA

Resilient. And optimistic and ambitious-

ALEK

Ambitious, come on. Because you can afford to be. I can't.

VANEKA

Sorry. I'm so sorry about that.

ALEK

And that! You all say sorry too much. You want to keep moving place to place and all that *hloupost*. Meanwhile, I've been here a hundred years, little lady. Didn't have no teachers calling me smart. No participation trophies, or even ribbons or participation high-fives. My folks couldn't ship me off to the States for an M.F. Whatever. I got to work here and considered myself lucky, you know? At a cushy restaurant instead of in a

factory, operating a coffee machine instead of a massive conveyor belt. Tossing salads instead of constructing buildings. Changing this here sidewalk sign with daily specials instead of the train station board with daily delays. Nobody cares or praises or encourages me to take risks. I've been here a hundred years, little lady. I'm an old dog. Your texts and Twitters don't last longer than a minute.

VANEKA

*(Quietly, aside)*

I actually quite dislike social media.

ALEK

I'm the manager, the boss, but now the boss says "Run" and the employees just blink back and ask "Why?" Donald Trump, Fran, and President Milos Zeman - they're the people's politicians. Are you gonna do that back here in Prague now? With President Milos Zeman?

VANEKA

Do what?

ALEK

Write stories and plays about him? Are you gonna do that back here in Prague now?

VANEKA

*(Rising nervously, planning to exit)*

Perhaps I should be leaving-

ALEK

Come on, little lady! Have another drink! Finish this one, then have another. Cheers to the people.

VANEKA

Thank you. But um, actually-

ALEK

*(Sarcastically)*

Or would you prefer a kale smoothie, little lady? A craft beer? An IPA or MFA or whatever?

VANEKA

No, I'm sorry. Just um, I suppose a coffee, if anything?

ALEK

*(Scoffs)*

A coffee. *Legrační.*

*(Long beat... )*

I don't know how to operate the basic coffee machine.

*(Another long beat. Then, drunkenly-)*

So what *are* you doing here, you protesting, screaming, fighting, mocking, adapting, wishy-washy, sad, *legrační*, *New York Times* writing intellectual?

VANEKA

Uh, well. Since I dislike social media, I'm pretty much barred from any corporate career. Not like I'd know what to do with a mansion, or even want to know. I just need enough income to survive, in order to help others thrive-

PHONE

Stop walking...

VANEKA

To write words for the people, that will improve and progress our situations. But I'm no martyr; it's for me, too. Despite everything, despite my economic worthlessness in this gig wasteland, I still feel my words have meaning.

PHONE

*Stop talking...*

VANEKA

I still feel excited and inspired and driven to wake up and hit the ground running, to put pen to paper. Or fingers to keys, mashing letters together into words. And I still - guilty as charged - feel humanly obligated to share them. I still-

PHONE

STOP TALKING, VANEKA! YOU HAVE ARRIVED AT YOUR-

VANEKA

*(Silencing it)*

Sorry. I'm sorry about that.

*(Suddenly embracing a chippier can-do enthusiasm)*

I'm so excited to begin work, Alek! Manager! Boss! This place has been here a hundred years! Can ya teach me how to change the daily specials board?

ALEK

*(Matching her energy)*

Why of course, little lady!

*(Beat, before drastically dropping to usual self)*

It's avocado toast every day.

*(Silence. ALEK finishes his beer. VANEKA stares off into space. Lights fade.)*

PHONE

You have arrived at your destination.

SCENE 2: Shavasana

AT RISE: VANEKA hovers by a table, wearing an apron and folding utensils in napkins. She appears comfortable, though slightly bored; she's worked there a few weeks.

*(VERA and MICHAL enter boisterly and flamboyantly. At sight of VANEKA, they squeal with happiness, startling her.)*

VERA

Vaneka! Honey! Hi!

VANEKA

Wow, uh, hello! What're you doing here, Vera, Michal-?

VERA

We saw you work here now. Your mom mentioned it on Facebook.

VANEKA

Oh. Yikes.

MICHAL

We thought you were still stuck in the slammer, man. We hate to have you serve us.

VERA

You can just fetch us whatever we want. Bring it over when it's ready.

VANEKA

That's um, pretty much my job.

VERA

No rush, no pressure. If you want anything, go ahead and order on us, honey.

VANEKA

Oh, I couldn't-

MICHAL

Fran.

VERA

Treat yourself!

*(To MICHAL)*

Babe, check it out! They serve avocado toast!! And - oh my god - breakfast bowls!

MICHAL

Fran, you should see how Vera combines those two artisan delicacies into one. She bakes the toast, spreads the avocado slices on top, and then mashes all that together with a massive mortar and pestle set and serves the grounds in a bowl over quinoa and kale.

VERA

With a pinch of garlic and cayenne pepper, to taste obviously. Do they do that here?

VANEKA

Oh, I don't believe so-

MICHAL

They should. It's so simple, man.

VERA

So pure. You can whip it up in a flash.

MICHAL

Vera meal preps the dish in these bantam bento brunch boxes to take to hot yoga.

VERA

*(Modeling her getup, maybe flexing a leg up on the table)*

What do you think, Fran, of my ensemble?

VANEKA

It's um, very nice.

VERA

Have you tried it yet, Fran? Hot yoga? You haven't, obviously-

VANEKA

I have not.

VERA

Oh my god, you absolutely, totally must! It cleanses and detoxifies our lives and souls, Fran. Believe us. It keeps us simple and grounded.

MICHAL

It takes this difficult challenge and makes it even *harder*. We're obsessed with that.

VERA

And the literal steaminess translates seamlessly into our sex situation. We think you may appreciate that stimulation and purification. We care about your health.

MICHAL

We're obsessed with downward-facing dog.



*(HE wiggles his brows. VERA giggles. VANEKA stands by uncomfortable.)*

VANEKA

So, can I get you two anything, or...?

MICHAL

We hate to have you serve us. You can just fetch us - well, we'll start with drinks - two mimosas-

VANEKA

Alright.

VERA

*(To VANEKA)*

And two for me, as well, honey.

MICHAL

And I'll take a cappuccino.

VERA

And I'll start with a vanilla caramel mocha latte with soy milk and chocolate swirls and extra foam on top. Skim. Just bring them over when they're ready.

VANEKA

*(Scrambling to take order)*

That's... yeah, pretty much... my job-

MICHAL

No rush, man. No pressure.

VANEKA

We care about your health. We're obsessed with yoga.

MICHAL

*(To VERA, an inside joke)*

Especially downward-facing dog...

*(THEY chuckle and gaze into each other's eyes, endeared. VANEKA backs away awkwardly, then disappears into the restaurant. Immediately upon her exit, MICHAL and VERA's giddiness dissipates into nothing, a flat emotionless void, as they stare blankly at their phones till VANEKA returns.)*

VERA

*(Coming alive again)*

Oh my god, behold these beverages, babe! We better toast at once.

VANEKA

To what?

VERA

*(Ignoring the question)*

You can use my water, honey.

*(VERA hands VANEKA her water, while VERA and MICHAL each struggle to juggle all their various fancy beverages. Vera snaps some pictures, then she and MICHAL return their drinks to the table. No toast occurs.)*

VERA

*(To VANEKA)*

We saw you work here now. Your mom mentioned it on Facebook.

VANEKA

Oh. Yikes.

VERA

Why *are* you working here now, honey?

VANEKA

Uh, for money. I guess. Rent. Groceries. Cigarettes.

MICHAL

Fran!

VERA

Cigarettes are absolutely totally terrible for you!

MICHAL

It's 2019. Nobody smokes cigarettes.

*(HE hits off a juul or dab pen.)*

VERA

We care about your health.

MICHAL

We're obsessed with downward-facing dog.

VERA

And rent? Prague costs nothing for millennials, Fran. A flat is so cheap, they're basically handing them out.

VANEKA

Yes, if you pay for one...

VERA

They fling fresh fruit from the sidewalks!

VANEKA

If you pay for it... And by "they," you mean-?

VERA

You've watched our renovations, right? On my Instagram story? I'm an influencer now, obviously. So I highlight our loft, our bright airy space, our house plants, and all our minimalist decor. We have massive, massive amounts of minimalism. Have you seen it?

VANEKA

I have not.

MICHAL

Fran!

VERA

Oh my god, you absolutely, totally must come by. Michal just jetted over to Amsterdam last weekend for this hot and trendy music festival. EDM right, babe?

MICHAL

*(Nodding, hitting the juul)*

It was lit.

VERA

And he bought all these records we hung up on one wall. We have a whole collection.

VANEKA

Oh, I'd actually love to listen to some.

MICHAL

Of course, we don't have a record player.

VERA

But we do have a spin bike, and the most recent smoothie shaker, and stellar speakers. The contemporary minimalist decor cleanses and detoxifies our lives and souls, Fran. We're obsessed with it. Everything is voice-automated, obviously. You just tell the house what to do. It's so pure. Keeps us simple and grounded. It's connected to Michal's watch. Want to see?

*(MICHAL holds up his wrist eagerly, but VANEKA begins stepping away.)*

VANEKA

I'm going to slip inside, actually, check on the other tables-

VERA

Oh my god! What? No!

MICHAL

Dude! You can't.

VERA

You absolutely totally can't.

VANEKA

But the other tables-

VERA

But OUR table!!

MICHAEL

OUR table, Fran!!!

VERA

We have...

MICHAEL

MORE TO ORDER!

VERA

We have MORE to ORDER, Fran!

VANEKA

Alright, alright, alright.

*(Beat. SHE waits, uncertain, as the couple sighs relief.)*

VANEKA, con't.

So... Can I get you two anything, or...?

MICHAL

Fran.

VERA

Oh my god.

MICHAL

We hate to have you serve us.

VERA

Why are you working here anyway?

MICHAL

Why not get a gig at a startup, like me?

VERA

*(To VANEKA)*

It's 2019, honey. Everyone works for a startup. If you coded like Michal you could type all day, like a laborious little robot, just like you love! You'd be obsessed with that.

VANEKA

Yes, thank you, but that's uh, not really the typing I prefer.

VERA

We know, Fran. You do your sweet little stories.

MICHAL

Why not just write at the *The New York Times*, dude? Of course, it's because they only publish and pay their most popular content producers-

VANEKA

No, yeah. Pretty much.

VERA

Oh my god! You should start a BLOG!

VANEKA

Oh, I-

MICHAL

We have a podcast. We sit down together and record weekly.

VERA

It cleanses and detoxifies our lives and souls, Fran. Believe us.

MICHAL

You should absolutely, totally write something like that, man. For all your activist... *hloupost*.

VERA

True! Put that on the Internet where it belongs!

MICHAL

Finally kick it off the ground! It'll be so simple.

VERA

You can whip it up in a flash. I'll "like" and re-share to my follower base.

MICHAL

Me too! As long as it's not too political, of course.

VERA

*(Nodding in agreement)*

The people dislike too much resistance. Just a pinch of passion, a smidge of stimulation to taste, and then lots of cute, quirky pictures. You could call it "Fran of the House" - like man of the house? Obviously, you'd need a house. Or, what about "Fran and Friends?" Obviously, you'd need some friends. But wait - we're your friends, honey! We could be on it!

MICHAL

Dude, we could be on it!

VANEKA

Good ideas, you guys, thanks, but um, that's not really my vision or goal...

VERA

We know, Fran. You do your sweet little stories.

MICHAL

Why not get a gig in the streaming service industry? You could do closed captions! Ka-pow!

VERA

Or time social media alerts! Buzz beep!

MICHAL

Or run a dope Twitter! Tweet tweet!

VERA

That wouldn't be selling out, honey, no way.

VANEKA

I know it wouldn't.

MICHAL

*(Hitting off his juul, whenever he wants)*

Fran. My man.

VERA

Are you seeing anyone, honey? A girlfriend? I don't mean to assume, but obviously...

VANEKA

Oh, uh-

VERA

What about dating apps, do you use them? With a dating app, you can put yourself out there without ever leaving your flat. Get one today!

*(She flashes an Orbit smile to the audience.)*

MICHAL

A flat is so cheap. Do you have one today?

VANEKA

A flat or a...? No, none. Neither. Not currently. I'm uh, focusing on my writing.

*(MICHAL and VERA share a blatant worried glance.)*

MICHAL

Fran. Don't you wanna meet mindful "meats" who are massively minimalist?

*("Meats" is a sexual innuendo; he winks.)*

VANEKA

Well I'm a vegetarian, but I mean-

MICHAL

Just go to...

VANEKA

... Hot yoga?

VERA

Hot yoga!!

VERA

You absolutely, totally must try it. It cleanses and detoxifies our lives and souls, Fran.

MICHAL

Keeps us simple and grounded.

VERA

We're obsessed with your health, Fran.

MICHAL

We care about downward-facing dog.

VERA

We're downright devoted to it! It's an easy home base you can always return to, like a flat. Adho mukha svanasana. That's the full real name.

MICHAL

Most of our classes we spend, instead of trying other positions, entirely in downward-facing dog.

VERA

And shavasana. That's called corpse pose.

MICHAL

In hot yoga, you always end your sessions with corpse pose. We're obsessed with it.

VERA

We're in love with it. And - oh my god - we can teach it to you right now!

VANEKA

Oh, um, thanks, but... You don't have to-

MICHAL

Dude! We absolutely, totally must!

VERA

Let's do dog. You'll be obsessed with it.

*(VERA and MICHAL help VANEKA bend over and pose, erotically but also ridiculously. They can ad lib lines of motivation, and her of hesitance.)*

*(ENTER ALEK, busily yet sloppily, puffing on a cigarette with his characteristic pitcher of beer.)*

ALEK

Fran, little lady, come on!!! The side salads need tossed! The utensils need folded in napkins! The napkin salads want folded! The side utensils want tossed! The coffee MACHINE NEEDS FIXED!!!

*(Beat. He takes in the sight. After a moment, he scoffs.)*

Millennials. *Legrační.*

### SCENE 3: Critical Acclaim

AT RISE: VANEKA struts into the cafe, newly efficient, confident, business-oriented. She flaunts yoga clothes, a mat in her tote. Hardly before seated, she pulls out her laptop, checks for Wifi, then calls out:



VANEKA

Excuse me. Hello? *Pane vrchni?*

*(Immediately annoyed, raising in arrogance)*

*Ó můj bože*, I will post a terrible review of this crusty old establishment, and I've got a follower base massive as a black hole. You call yourselves a trendy coffee shop, but you've clearly been here a hundred years...

*(ENTER ALEK, busy.)*

ALEK

Hello, ma'am. I am so sorry to keep you waiting. So so very sorry. I'll fetch whatever you want and bring it over as fast as possible. What can I get you?

VANEKA

*(Totally seriously - this is all satirical)*

I'll take The Wifi Special, and one vanilla caramel mocha latte with soy milk and chocolate swirls and extra foam on top. Skim. I'll also take a slice of your avocado toast. Mashed up in a bowl.

ALEK

Coming right up. The Wifi server is the name of the establishment.

VANEKA

*(Doing this, looking down at her computer screen)*

Alright, now I need the password. What's the word?

ALEK

Run.

VANEKA

Excuse me?

ALEK

The password is run. Like the boss says run, and... Old proverb. Never mind.

VANEKA

Alright.

ALEK

Sorry, ma'am. Thank you, ma'am.

*(HE EXITS. VANEKA works fervorously for a moment on her phone and computer. She maybe snaps a couple pictures of the cafe, but then-)*

PHONE

Keep walking.

VANEKA

What... ?

PHONE

You have not yet arrived at your... Keep walking, you have not yet arrived...  
*(Its words fade out, distorted, as it dies. SHE stares at it.)*

VANEKA

Shit. Dead. Oh, well.

*(Sighing, VANEKA takes out her charger and plugs phone into laptop. As it charges off this life source, she - void of emotion - moves forward, lies down flat on her back in corpse pose, and, from this position, hits off a juul.)*

*(Lights down, slowly, to BLACKOUT.)*

*(End of scenes.)*