

ACT 1

(An empty street with the entrance to a café bearing the sign U Labutě [At the Swan].)

Faltejsek: *(A man in his early middle age enters the stage and looks at the audience.)* It's boring, isn't it... *(he says, half thoughtfully, half disappointedly)*. We have to do something to make it less boring. Well *(he thinks)*, maybe it's not so boring, but there's a feeling of emptiness or dissatisfaction *(he shrugs his shoulders)*. We need something to fill the void *(he thinks)*. Like a woman, right? That would be something. What do you say, gentlemen *(looks around at the audience)*? I see you agree! But where to find her?

Option 1. In the summer

Girls: *(They walk across the stage modestly dressed, light music plays.)*

Faltejsek: Well, on the street, that's it. Now it's summer, so it's fine. I really like that. Girls like to walk around. They take off *(points with his hand)* coats, sweaters, long pants, sometimes even bras, and some even panties. It's beautiful. But in winter, it's horrible.

Girls: *(A woman dressed and covered up walks by, the lights dim, the music changes to somber.)*

Faltejsek: It's dark, everyone is wrapped up and rushing to get warm. Are they young or old *(shrugs)*? Pretty or ugly *(shrugs)*? Yeah, who knows? It's hard to tell. But what *(waves his hand)*, luckily we have summer.

Girls: *(They walk around modestly dressed, light music plays.)*

Faltejsek: Yes, that's how I like it. We can also judge their personalities by their clothes. The more revealing, the more confident, and perhaps even with a tendency toward exhibitionism *(shakes his head)*. And those covered up to their necks? Do they even have any motivation for romantic encounters? It seems not? Sometimes, but appearances can be deceiving, and the opposite is true.

Option 2. In winter

Girls: *(They walk around dressed up, the lights dim, the music becomes somber and changes to gloomy.)*

Faltejsek: In winter, it's awful, dark, everyone is wrapped up and rushing to get warm. Are they young or old *(shrugs)*? Pretty or ugly *(shrugs)*? Yeah, who knows? It's hard to tell. But let's make a miracle happen. They do happen sometimes. Let's imagine it's summer.

Girls: *(Only modestly dressed girls walk by, light music plays.)*

Faltejsek: That's it, a feast for the eyes. Girls like to walk around. They take off *(points)* their coats, sweaters, long pants, sometimes even bras, and some even their panties. It's beautiful. We can even judge their personalities by their clothes. The more revealing, the more confident, and perhaps even with a tendency toward exhibitionism *(nods his head)*. And those covered up to their necks? Do they even have any motivation for sexual intercourse? It seems not? Sometimes, but appearances can be deceiving, and the opposite is true.

End of options

Pakosta: *(A smaller, younger middle-aged man enters the scene and walks to Faltejsek.)*

Faltejsek: Well, you're just what I needed. You bring me nothing but bad luck.

Pakosta: Bad luck, are you kidding (*shakes his head*)? What are you doing here?

Girls: (*Walking by.*)

Faltejsek: I'm just looking at the beauty. You don't see that much anymore these days. Yeah, it used to be something. Every small town had its promenade. You would walk there and meet all the girls from town. And not just once (*he gestures with his hand to indicate one circle*), but several times (*he gestures with his hand to indicate several circles*). Depending on the length of the promenade, you could calculate how long it would take to meet her again, whether in five or ten minutes. You could figure that out exactly and prepare yourself. In the meantime, you could think about what to say to her.

Pakosta: Yeah, today everyone's staring at the internet (*he shook his head*).

Girl: (*Passing by and tapping on her phone.*)

Faltejsek: Exactly, or they're on the phone or texting and don't even notice you.

Pakosta: Yeah, they're always on the phone or someone's calling them. They ride their bikes and talk on the phone (*shakes his head*), they run and talk on *the phone* (*shakes his head*), they wait for the train or are somewhere in a waiting room and talk on the phone (*shakes his head*).

Faltejsek: It's a mystery to me where. One girl was always calling me and talking for ages. Always at the most inconvenient times. It got on my nerves so much that I broke up with her because of it.

Young girl :(*Walking by, energetic music playing.*)

Faltejsek: Well, young lady, that's just how it is. The older I get, the more I like younger women. Youth, desire, carefreeness. It gives a person strength and energy. It kind of rubs off on me. I'm a complete youngster. And that innocence, older people are too cunning, crafty, worldly.

Pakosta: But then again, if she's too young, she doesn't have any experience. And there are risks involved, it's not a good thing. You'll grow old and she'll still be active. Can you imagine that (*shakes his head*)?

Faltejsek: I can. I don't imagine anything else in bed at night.

Beautiful Girl: (*She walks by, captivating music plays.*)

Faltejsek: Yes, beautiful, that's it (*he says dreamily*). One could feast one's eyes on her. I am an aesthete, I like beautiful things, luxury, and there is nothing more luxurious than a beautiful woman. Everyone would envy me for her.

Pakosta: That has its downsides. They say that a pretty woman means double the expenses and often a total loss. She also has too many suitors, you have to watch her all the time. Marrying a beautiful woman is a tragedy, it must be awful. That's the stupidest thing you can do. Can you imagine (*shakes his head*)?

Faltejsek: I can, and I imagine it quite often. Just like the young one. Especially when I go to sleep.

Pakosta: She doesn't even look at us, so as not to appear cold. Her face is neutral, revealing nothing—no joy, no disgust, no satisfaction, no disgust. No movement of mind or emotion. I think that rather than beautiful and cold, it's better to be ugly and temperamental. I like it when they have

a certain perversity in their expression; I prefer that to classic beauties with showy bodies but empty, emotionless gazes.

Faltejsek: Well, I like a perverse expression too. Take Jirka Svoboda, for example, you know him, he used to date a girl who was almost ugly, I would say, but she had such a perverse expression that I