

QUINZAINÉ  
DIRECTORS' FORTNIGHT  
CANNES 2016



A SHORT ANIMATED FILM BY JAN SASKA



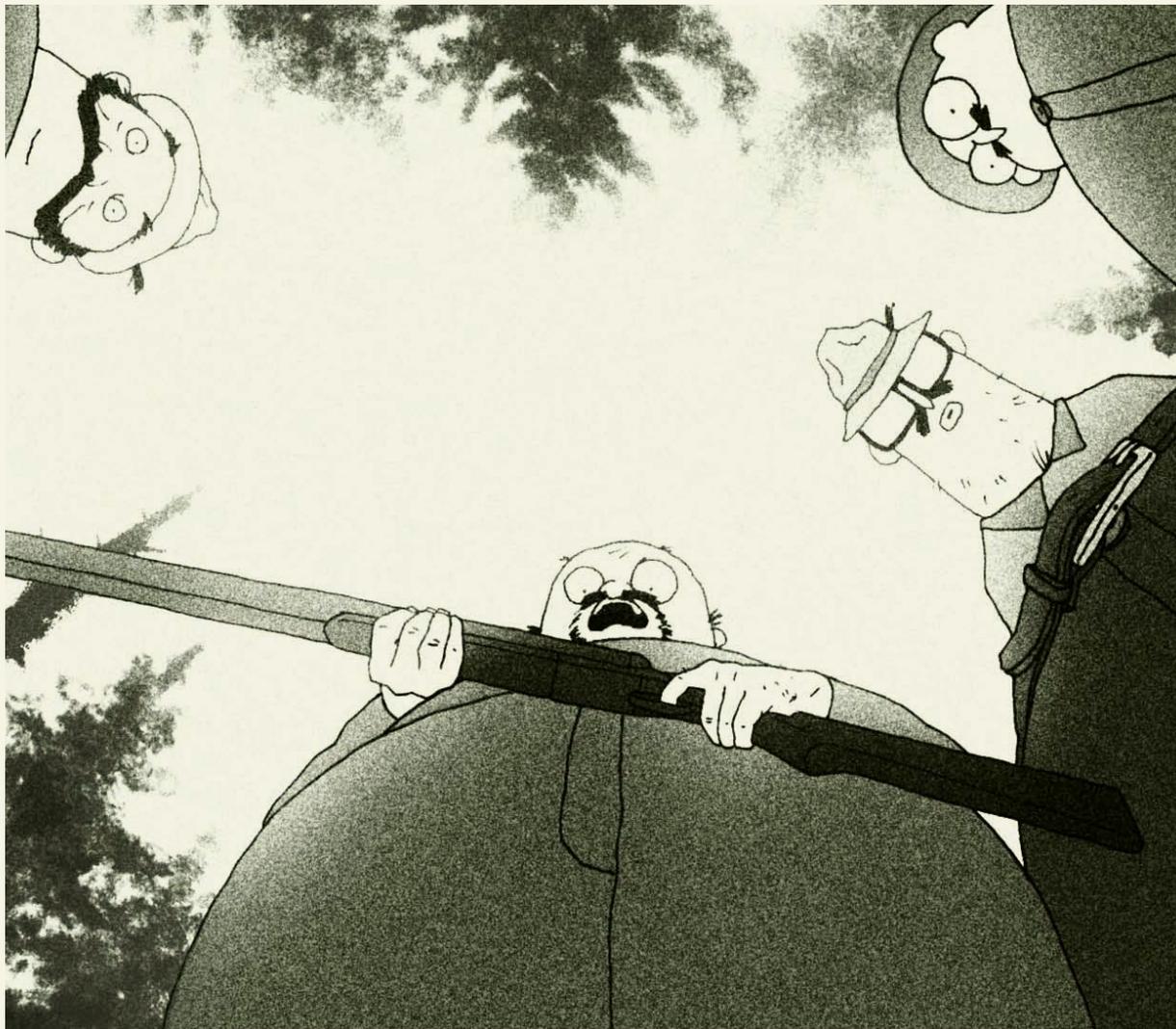
*a black comedy about death with a happy ending*

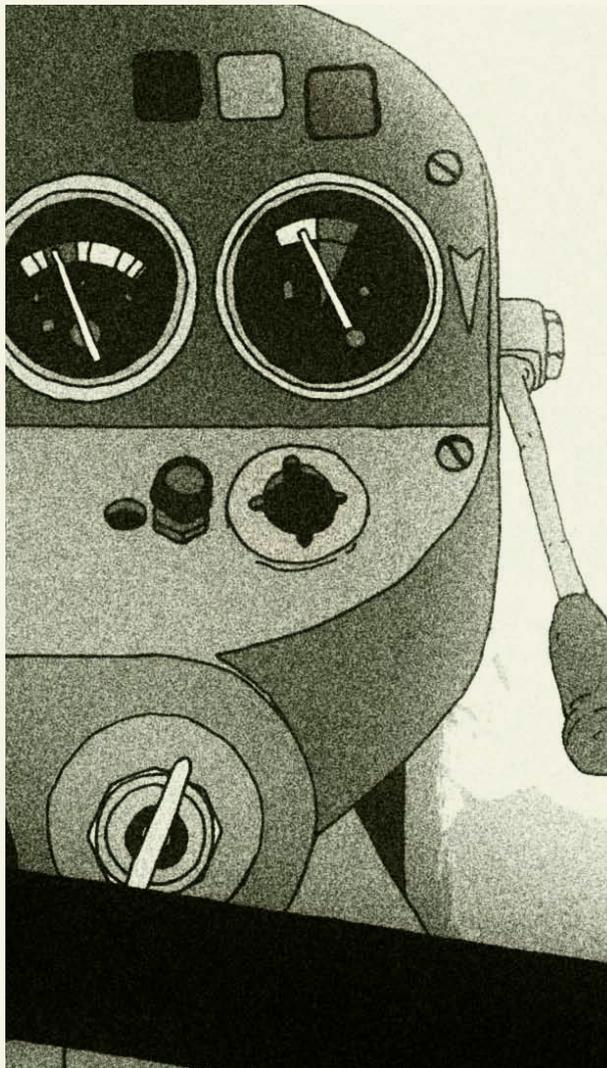


# SYNOPSIS

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A black comedy about death with a happy ending. A splendid chain of unlikely encounters. Hunters, a tractor driver, a disco boy, and a corpse.





# TECHNICAL INFO

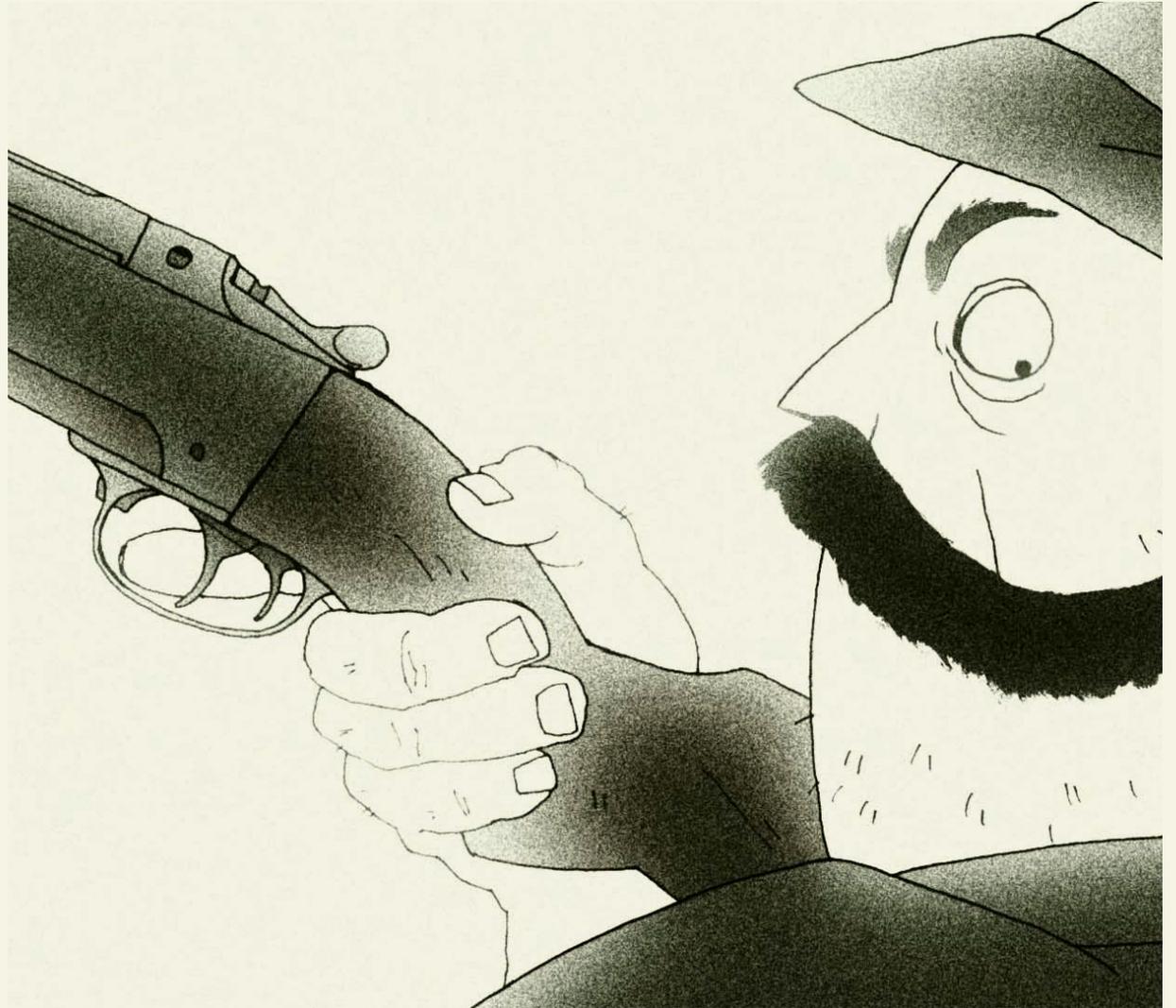
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ORIGINAL TITLE	HAPPY END
ENGLISH TITLE	HAPPY END
YEAR OF PRODUCTION	2015
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	CZECH REPUBLIC
PRODUCTION COMPANY	FAMU
RUNNING TIME	6 MINUTES
LANGUAGE	NO DIALOGUE
SCREENING FORMAT	DCP / HD FILE
ASPECT RATIO	16:9

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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**HAPPY END** represents an in-depth social study with a deconstructive dramatic arc or perhaps a circle or a square. Several storylines, examining human nature in the context of integral coalition of inner and outer determinants in the specific crucial circumstances, gradually develop through a number of plot peripeteias and twists into the universal problem of morality and moral responsibility of the individual. Death and the feelings of guilt are the central motifs of the film, through which the mechanism of inner conflict and the discrepancy between conscience and constitutional making are analysed.





## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

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**JAN SASKA** (\*1987, Praha) is a czech animation director and comics author. After graduating from Tomáš Baťa University in Zlín (Classical Animation studies), he now continues his studies at Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (FAMU). Happy End is his graduation film.

# DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

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## **HAPPY END / SHORT ANIMATION, 2015**

- ANIFILM 2016 – The Award for the Best Film in the International Student Competition
- VISEGRÁD ANIMATION FORUM 2013 – Special Mention

## **PŘEPADENÍ (THE ROBBERY) / SHORT ANIMATION, 2012**

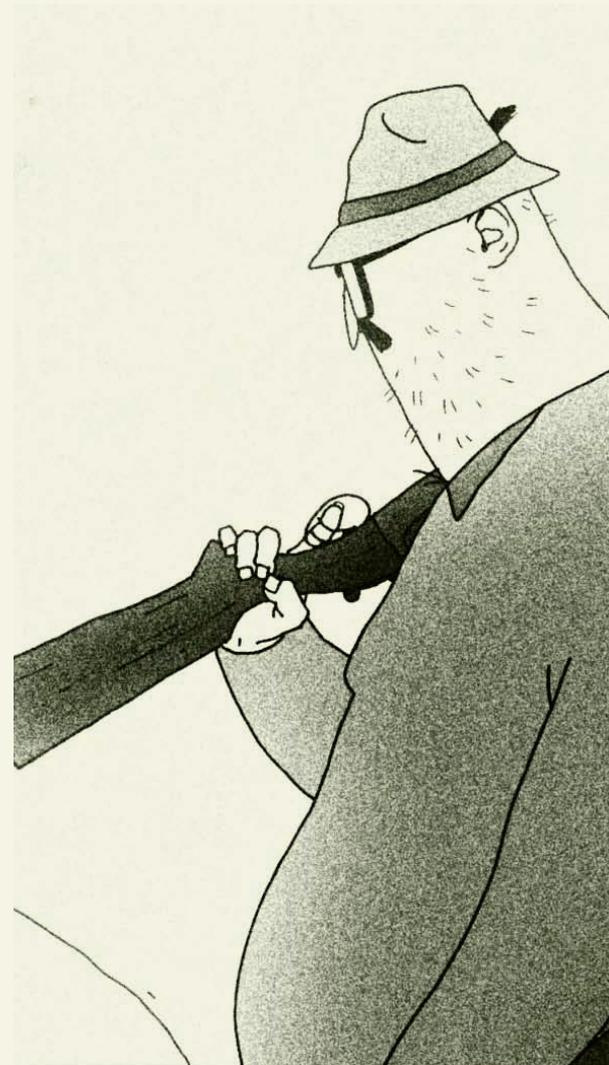
- MONSTRA LISBON ANIMATION FESTIVAL | MONSTRA 2014 – Best Super Short
- GELENDZHIK INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN ANIMATION FILM FESTIVAL 2013 –  
Gold Fish – Best Student Short

## **TENKRÁT POPRVÉ (THAT FIRST TIME) / SHORT ANIMATION, 2012**

## **MYSLIVCI (THE HUNTSMEN) / SHORT ANIMATION, 2012**

## **HURIKÁN 2 (HURRICANE 2) / COMICS, 2013**

## **HURIKÁN (HURRICANE) / COMICS, 2012**





# HAPPY END AWARDED AT ANIFILM 2016

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*Happy End won the International Competition of Student Films at Anifilm,  
International Festival of Animated Films in Třeboň, Czech republic*

## **JURY MEMBERS:**

CHINTIS LUNDGREN, JAN PINKAVA, ROSTO

## **JURY STATEMENT:**

THIS FILM KNOWS WHAT IT WANTS AND KNOWS HOW TO GET IT. WITH ITS SURPRISING, ADVENTUROUS STORYTELLING AND CLEVER SENSE OF HUMOUR, WE ENJOYED IT AS MUCH AS IT ENJOYED ITSELF.

Happy End is a dark comedy about death but, as the title suggests, with a happy ending. The story revolves around a series of strange accidents connected with the recurring discovery of the same corpse. The individual situations are so specific though, that several suspects come to mind. The filmmaker's original style permeates both the visual aspect and the story of the film.

# ONLINE INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR

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MICHAELA PAVLÁTOVÁ...

*Famous Czech animator and Jan Saska's teacher. The awards she received for her animated short film Repete include the Golden Bear, the Special Jury Prize at Annecy and the Grand Prix at the Hiroshima International Animation Festival. She won the Annecy Cristal in 2012 for her short film Tram, which was also shortlisted for an Academy Award and shown in the Directors' Fortnight section at the Cannes International Film Festival in 2012.*

...TALKS TO JAN SASKA IN AN ONLINE INTERVIEW:

**MP: Are you there?**

*JS: Yes.*

**MP: So, are you finally happy? Do you realise how big this is?**

*JS: You mean Cannes?*

**MP: Sure.**

*JS: Yes, I am. And yes, I do)*

**MP: How was the idea for Happy End born?**

*JS: Happy End is an adaptation of a joke that a friend once told me at university in Zlín.*



I remember I didn't even laugh too much back then, but I liked the structure and immediately had a visual idea of the situations. Then one day I needed a film idea at university, and I decided to use it. When I transcribed it onto a storyboard, I realised it was all silent, except for one verbal reaction, at the end. That's where the disordered structure of the film originated. I wanted to avoid the verbal punch line and to be able to narrate the whole thing just with images... which turned out to have added value.

***MP: Why didn't you finish Happy end in Zlín?***

*JS:* In Zlín it was impossible for me to stretch my studies any further, and the whole film had to be ready in one year. The animatic I made then was not perfect, but it worked and was kind of funny thanks to the

imperfect way it was drawn – with a computer mouse, actually.

***MP: With a mouse?! That's great! It will be in all your interviews!***

*JS:* :) Even greater was the surprise I experienced while transforming the animatic into the final film. I thought I would just take the whole thing and colour it, improve some details, while the animation and timing would remain unchanged. But I found that when drawn in more detail, with a background in the shot that increases the volume of visual information, the viewer would need more time to orientate himself. And so I had to animate it all over again with different timing, more accuracy, etc.

***MP: If you didn't have to think about making money, what would you like to do***

**in your life? Apart from thinking about nothing, drinking beer, watching films, drawing, reading books and going to New Zealand?**

*JS:* I like what I am doing a lot. I am very fortunate, and here I have to mention that it is thanks to my parents that I can do what I do. But I am a bit sorry that, although I'm moving in that direction, too, animation is in fact becoming an office job. In a sense you sit at the computer and create something through it. That's why I like comics so much, because paper is still involved a lot, and you can take the whole thing and go to the garden with it, or somewhere. Moreover, I find it very similar to film, animated film in particular. I think the experience and knowledge gained is really valuable, for example regarding editing, framing etc.

But drinking beer and watching films is great, of course! And New Zealand, at least for a couple of weeks, will happen one day, too.

***MP:* I have one more question about animation – its usefulness or uselessness. Apart from liking to do it, why are we doing it?**

*JS:* I start from the other end. I was always interested in animation, and fortunately already during my childhood it was possible to somehow practise it at home. I mean the technology was already available, so I just jumped in without thinking. Many people liked film and often tried to shoot something. But I find a huge advantage of animation that it is created as a film, but a creator can in fact be an asocial person, without needing anybody else, at least at the beginning. Later you have to work in a team as well. (I didn't mean to

make animation a discipline for weirdos, though.)

***MP:* But animation IS for weirdos, mostly. Although not all of us are asocial, we are always holed up somewhere, we are selfish about our surroundings, family and friends, because we need a lot of time alone.**

*JS:* It's true that sometimes you are more or less driven to be asocial, although you are not like that by nature. But some people are naturally asocial, and it's great that even these people can make a film, which is otherwise a collective work involving dozens of professions. For example, I would never be able to lead actors, make others believe in my idea, which is just formulated in my head. The core of it all is that animation enables us to play, without immediately having to carry the whole weight of responsibility for the crew

and money invested. You can take the project quite far in sketches and ideas as part of a tentative search, and mostly with much greater control.

***MP:* Simply said, the feeling of being God, the creator. Without you, there will be nothing. Is that what you mean?**

*JS:* Yes, that too. The feeling that something comes to life under your hands is great.

***MP:* The final question: Can you remember at least one thing I taught you as your teacher?**

*JS:* Yes. For me it was the playfulness. You just do something you enjoy and...

***MP:* ...and then you go to Cannes!**

*JS:* Yes! Exactly.

# CREDITS

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DIRECTED, WRITTEN, ANIMATED AND EDITED BY

**JAN SASKA**

SOUND DESIGNER

**JIŘÍ GRÁF**

PRODUCED BY

**KAMILA DOHNALOVÁ**

3D SUPERVISOR AND 3D ARTIST

**STANISLAV SEKELA**

ART ASSISTANTS

**MAREK POKORNÝ, VOJTĚCH KISS**

UTB TUTORS

**MARTIN KUBLÁK, JAN ŽIVOCKÝ, IVO HEJCMAN**

FAMU TUTORS

**LIBOR PIXA, VIKTOR EKRT, JAROMÍR KALLISTA**

STUDIO FAMU EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

**TOMÁŠ ŠIMON**

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

**BARBORA ULRYCHOVÁ**

SOUND POST-PRODUCTION

**STUDIO BEEP a.s.**

TYPOGRAPHY

**MATĚJ RŮŽIČKA**

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FAMU

## MUSIC

### “VABI NAJU SNEG”

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY  
FRANC MIHELIČ  
PERFORMED BY  
ANSAMBEL FRANCA MIHELIČA  
© 2010 FRANC MIHELIČ

### “PIJEME S LÁSKOU”

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY  
PETR BUNEŠ AND OTAKAR HEREŠ  
PERFORMED BY  
ALKEHOL  
© 2005 SOKOL'S POWER VOICE

### “DICKO”

MUSIC AND PERFORMED BY  
JIŘÍ SASKA  
© 2003 JIŘÍ SASKA

### “HAPPY END”

MUSIC BY  
MARTIN KLUSÁK,  
PERFORMED BY  
MARTIN KLUSÁK AND TEREZIE ŠVARCOVÁ  
© 2015 MARTIN KLUSÁK

### “ZUBATÁ”

MUSIC BY  
MICHAL PAVLÍČEK AND MICHAEL KOCÁB  
LYRICS BY  
FRANTIŠEK RINGO ČECH  
PERFORMED BY  
PRAŽSKÝ VÝBĚR  
© 1988 SUPRAPHON a.s.  
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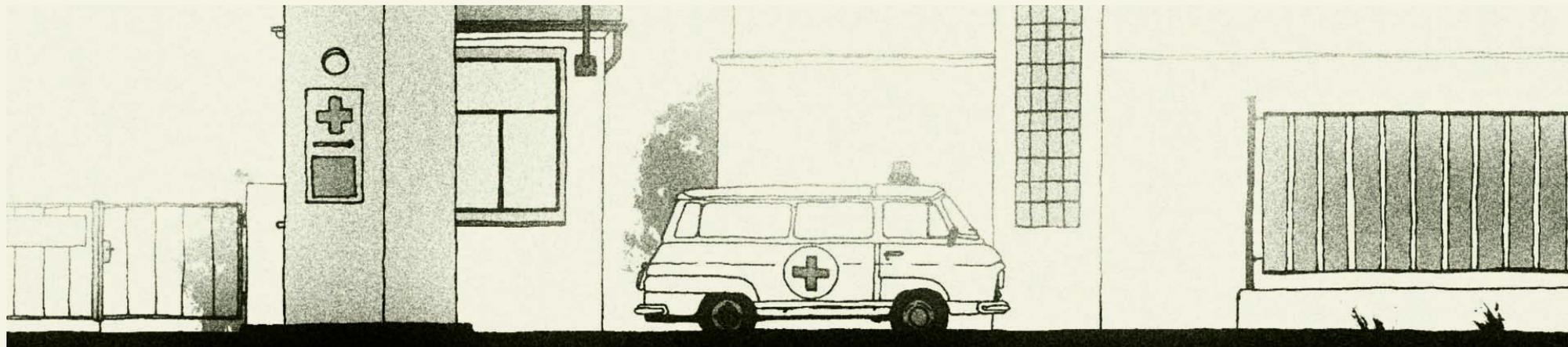
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**HAPPY  
END**