



CZECHIA MURIEL AWARD 2024

★ Best Comic Book of the Year ★ Best Script ★ Best Artwork



Not Only Winton

Tereza Verecká (script), Mikuláš Podprocký (art)



"Inventive and innovative graphic novel."

— Paul Gravett

Tereza Verecká (*1985, Prague) is an author, dramaturge, and playwright. She studied songwriting and scriptwriting at the Jaroslav Ježek Conservatory and theatrical dramaturgy at DAMU in Prague. She has created several radio plays, texts, and fairy tales for both children and adults.

Mikuláš Podprocký hails from Slovakia and lives and works in Prague. Born in 1978, he studied Free Creativity 3D at the Technical University of. Since 2002, he has worked as an illustrator creating computer games for various software companies, including serving as Art Director for the globally successful game *Kingdom Come: Deliverance* by Warhorse. He has also published two volumes of his own comic series and is involved in book illustration.

Fresh and dynamic take on the legendary story of the so-called Winton children

How did a young, childless broker come to rescue 669 "Winton's children"? The story of Sir Nicholas Winton, who, with his collaborators, saved Czechoslovak and Sudeten children from World War II, is well-known, but...

Prague, 1938. The Munich Agreement drove tens of thousands from their homes as refugees. Fear of war looms in the air, and hopelessness swirls in their minds. There appears to be no solution, but some have not lost hope. Just like Sir Nicholas Winton, they believed that if something is not absolutely impossible, there must be a way to achieve it.

Based on Winton's memoirs, his story is then compared with the perspective of Doreen Warriner, which reveals that behind every great man is a woman (though not nearly as famous despite being hugely influential). Podprocký's drawing style is sophisticated, dynamic, and makes great use of strong visual metaphors as well as subtle expressions and symbols. Although the graphic novel takes a serious look at a profound and difficult subject, humorous moments and ironic hyperbole also organically blend in.

The story of this comic strip is a story of active goodness. And a demonstration that you don't need an extraordinary life to be heroic. Names like Doreen Warriner, Trevor Chadwick, Beatrice Wellington, Marie Schmolka mean nothing to anyone today. And yet they should. Because there really was not only Winton.

Also in 2023, the film *One Life*, starring Anthony Hopkins as Nicholas Winton, premiered.



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Not Only Winton

plot summary

The story begins in London on February 27, 1988, during a BBC *That's Life* broadcast. Nicholas Winton is invited as a guest, unaware that the audience consists of now-adult children he once saved from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia. This moment transports him back in time to where it all began.

In late 1938, Nicholas travels to Czechoslovakia to visit his friend Martin Blake, with whom he would typically go skiing. He finds a country overwhelmed by refugees fleeing the Sudetenland, particularly Jews and politically persecuted Germans. A small but telling incident underscores the crisis: a child is hit by a car, but the parents refuse to seek help for fear of deportation. Doreen Warriner, head of the British Committee for Refugees (BCRC) in Prague, intervenes. Through Martin, Nicholas meets other committee members, including Marie Schmolka and Bill Barazetti. After visiting refugee camps, he commits to helping, particularly the children.

One major obstacle to effective aid is British bureaucracy. Nicholas thus enlists his mother in London to advocate at governmental offices while he meets families in Prague, desperate to get their children to safety. On January 12, 1939, the Committee arranges a flight for thirty Jewish children to Britain – under the condition that they agree to be baptized.

At the airport, Nicholas meets the beautiful Kerstin Cruikshank, a Swedish Red Cross worker suspected of being a spy. Later, he encounters a group of Czechs shouting anti-Jewish slogans. Restless, he visits a pub and meets Trevor Chadwick, a teacher arranging safe passage for two boys. Nicholas invites Trevor to a British embassy event to network for support. There, he sees Kerstin again and, despite Doreen's warnings, asks for her help in securing Swedish visas for children. Trevor decides to stay and assist.

Kerstin arranges a plane for thirty children to Sweden. On January 21, Nicholas returns to London, leaving Trevor in charge. Fear among refugees grows, unsure of what may transpire in the next month, the next day, or even the next hour. Some, overcome by despair, decide to take their own lives. Pressure on the Jewish population intensifies. Canadian aid worker Bea Willington joins the effort. With printer Baumann's help, they forge travel documents for the children. On January 29, another group departs from Wilson Station, but British authorities attempt to curb the Committee's activities.

Rumors of a German invasion spread. Bea, Doreen, and others work tirelessly. In London, Nicholas and his mother search for foster families, while Doreen arranges mass exit permits. However, escape routes through Poland become increasingly complicated.

On March 15, German troops occupy Czechoslovakia, drastically changing the situation. The Refugee Committee packs up all the documents to protect applicants. Doreen seeks refuge at the British embassy. In London, the first children are placed with foster families, while in Prague, Committee members face persecution. Another group gathers at the train station, but Doreen must hide them. The Gestapo takes control of migration, and, under pressure, Bill Barazetti falters. Doreen attempts to calm him. Meanwhile, the Gestapo pursues Doreen, but mistakes her for Bea. Though the refugee trains are under the Gestapo's control, Doreen eventually manages to escape to England.

Trevor Chadwick maintains relations with the Germans, securing more permits and continuing evacuations. However, he too must eventually flee to London. The Committee dissolves, replaced by the more compliant Czech Refugee Trust Fund. Bea is forced to leave as well.

The last train departs on September 1, 1939 – the day war breaks out. Nicholas never learns what happened to the children aboard.

Back in the year 1988, on the BBC *That's Life* broadcast, hundreds of adults whom Nicholas Winton, along with his colleagues, once saved express gratitude and pay tribute to him before all of Great Britain.

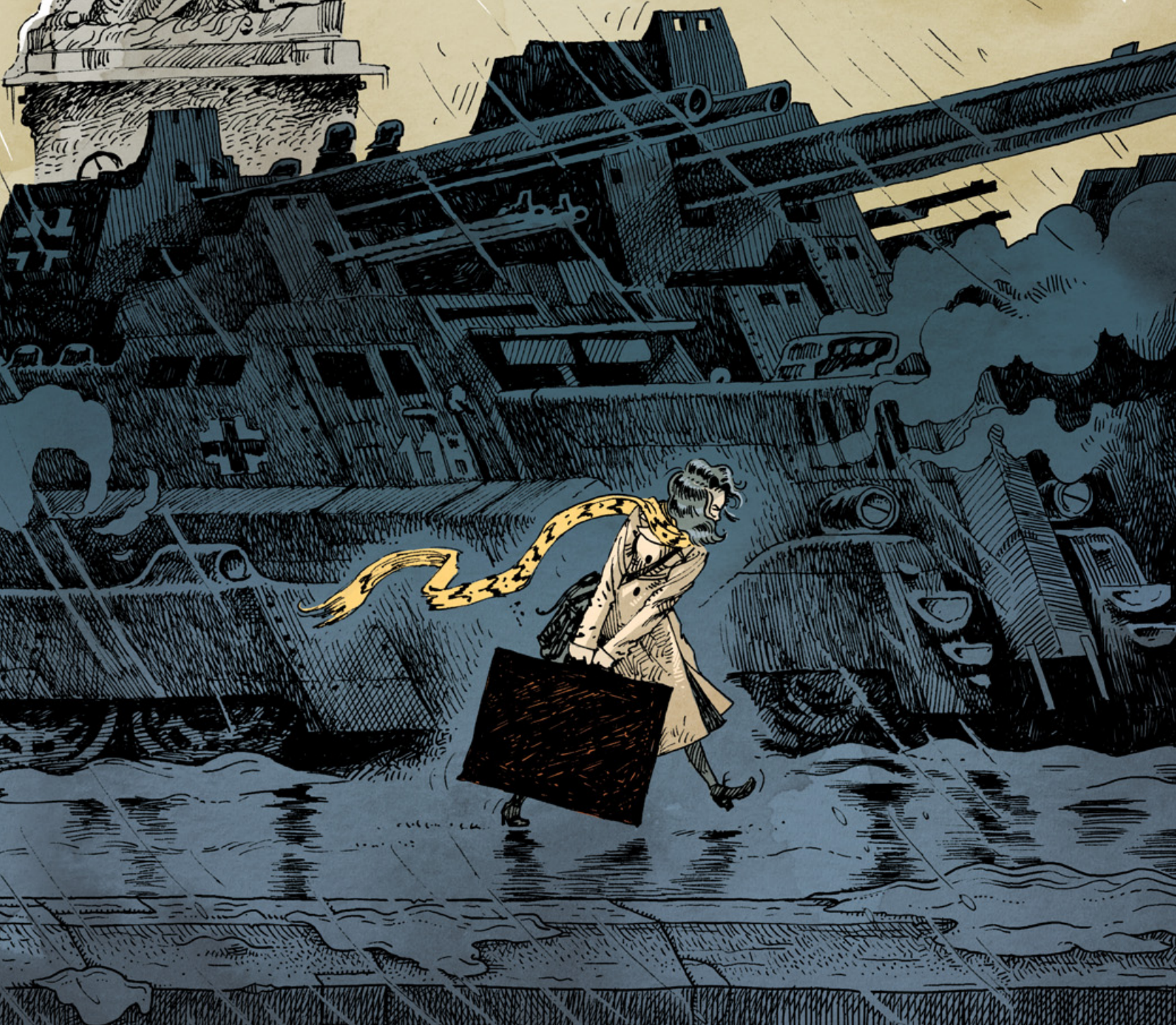
– text by Jan Schneider, translated by Bruce Bybee



TEREZA VERECKÁ

MIKULÁŠ PODPROCKÝ

WINTON NEBYL SÁM



WINTON NEBYL SÁM

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Byl jsem tehdy ještě docela naivní a mladý kluk.
Bylo mi teprve osmasedmdesát! A tak není divu,
že mě vůbec nenapadlo, že by za tím pozváním do studia
na natáčení pořadu *That's Life!* mohlo být něco víc.

Londýn, 27. únor 1988

KDO S NÍM TEĎ JE?

STARÁ SE O NĚJ GEORGE.
DOHLÉDNE, ABY SE POSADIL,
KAM POTŘEBUJEME.

HLAVNĚ
JESTLI NĚCO NETUŠÍ...

TOHO BYCH SE NEBÁL!

NEVÍM, JESTLI VÁM
TU K NĚČEMU BUDU!

MY JSME RÁDI,
ŽE VÁS TU MÁME!

A tohle bylo mnohem víc,
než jsem si kdy dokázal představit.

STEJNĚ NEMŮŽU POCHOPIT, ŽE JSTE
NĚCO TAKOVÉHO TAKOVOU DOBU TAJIL.

ALE JÁ NIC NETAJIL! SPÍŠ NA TO
TAK NĚJAK NEPŘIŠLA ŘEČ.

TO JAKO OPRAVDU?

A POKUD ANO, NIKOHO
TO NEZAJÍMALO.

TO SI DĚLÁTE LEGRACI!

VÍTE, JÁ VŽDYCKY ŽIL SPÍŠ PRO TO,
CO BUDE, NEŽ PRO TO, CO BYLO.

KAM TEĎ?

TADY DOPRAVA.

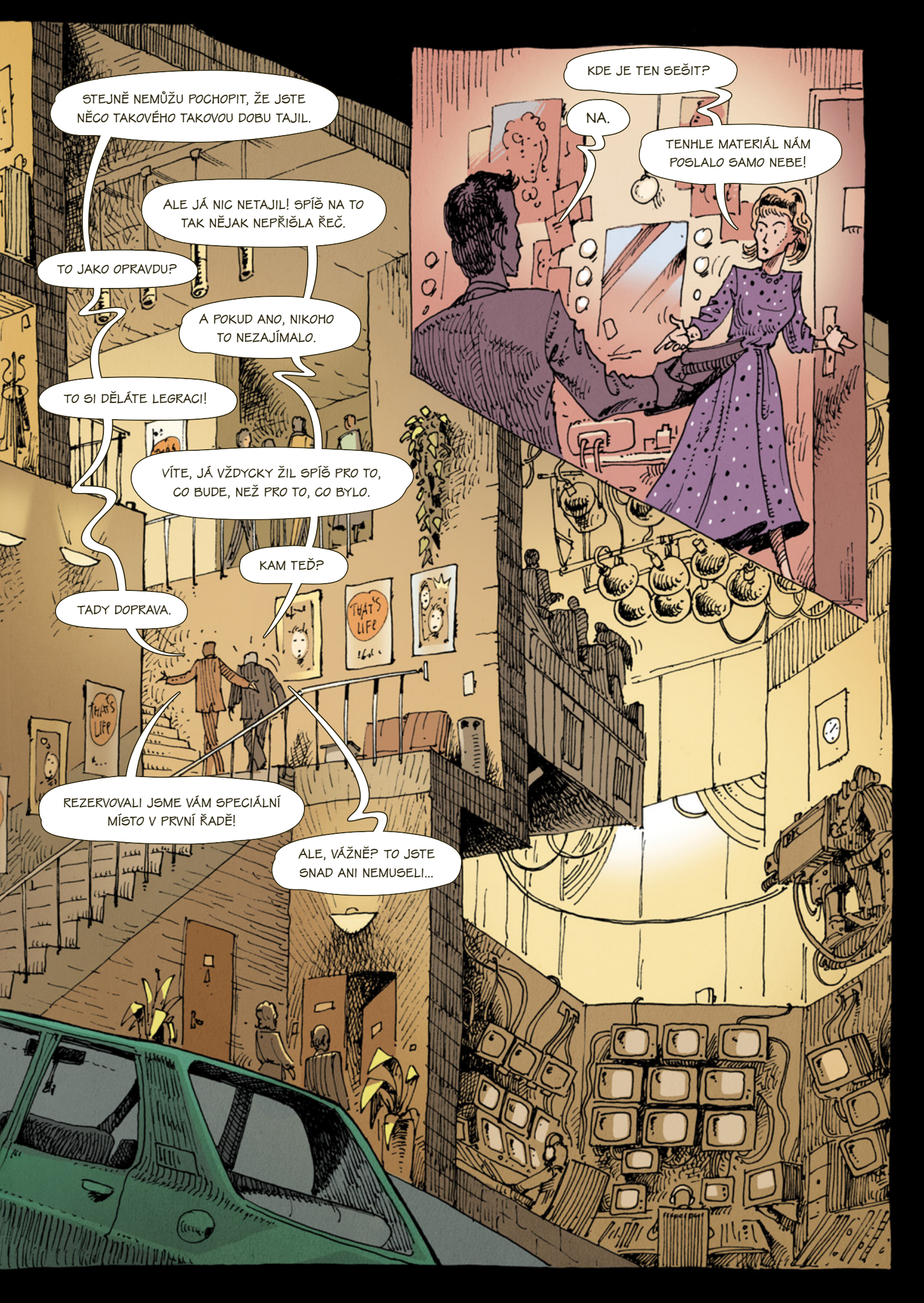
REZERVOVALI JSME VÁM SPECIÁLNÍ
MÍSTO V PRVNÍ ŘADĚ!


ALE, VÁŽNĚ? TO JSTE
SNAD ANI NEMUSELI...

KDE JE TEN SEŠIT?

NA.

TENHLE MATERIÁL NÁM
POSLALO SAMO NEBE!

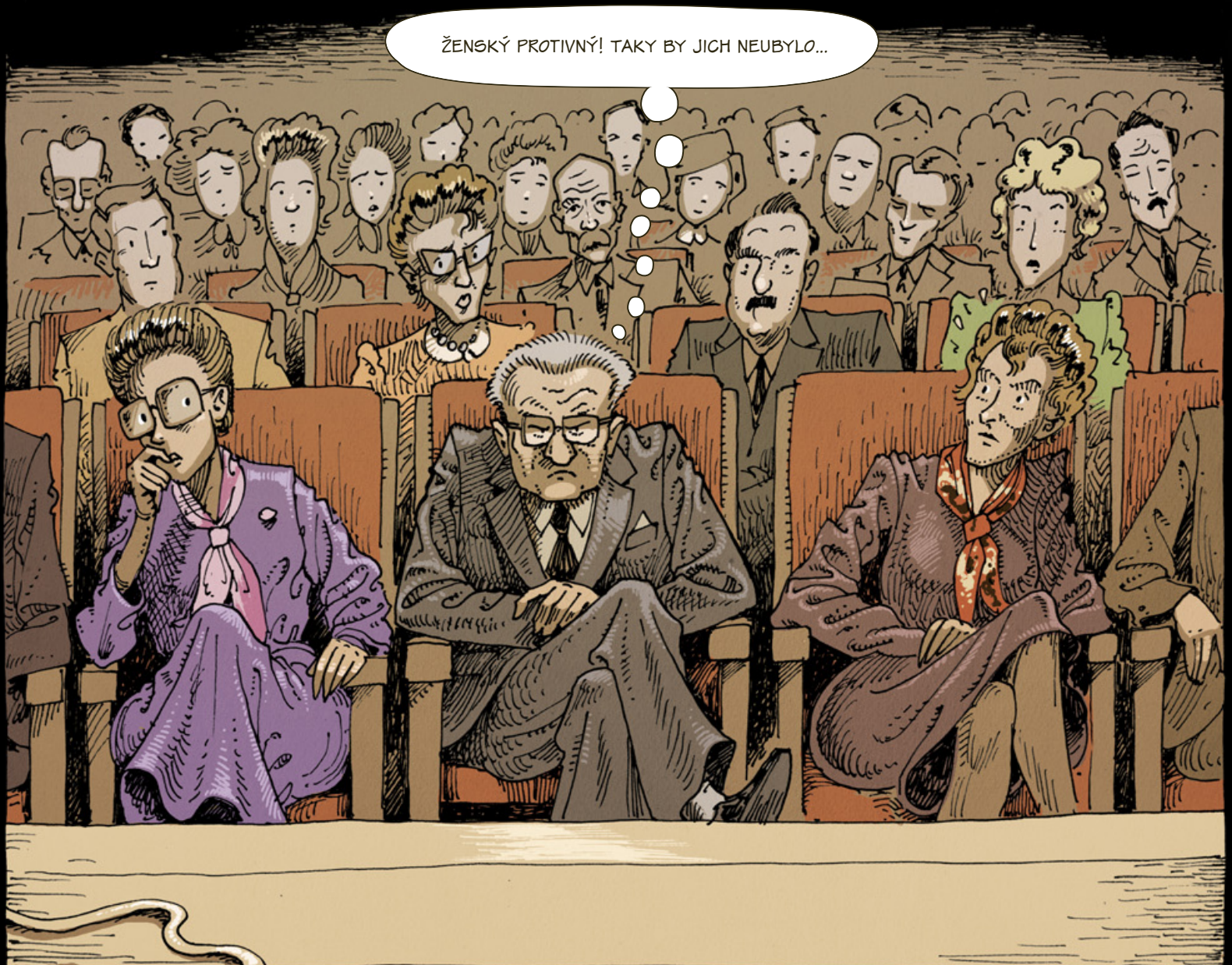




NICKY! NICKY!!
TADY! AHOJ!

RUDI! AHOJ! RUDI!
CO TU DĚLÁŠ? NECHCEŠ SI
SEDNOUT KE MNĚ? POČKEJ...

ZA TŘI MINUTY JEDEME!



DOBŘÍ VEČER. CHTĚLI BYCHOM VÁM
PODĚKOVAT ZA VŠECHNY TY DOPIŠY,
KTERÉ JSTE NÁM POSLALI.

ALE KROMĚ DOPIŠŮ SE K NÁM
TENTOKRÁT DOSTALO I NĚCO
OPRAVDU VÝJIMEČNÉHO -


TOTIŽ TENTO ZDÁNĹVĚ
OBYČEJNÝ SEŠIT.

DONESLA NÁM JEJ DOKTORKA
ELISABETH MAXWELLOVÁ.

A ZABÝVÁ SE OSUDY
669 DĚTÍ.




... TYTO DĚTI BYLY PŘIVEZENY DO ANGLIE
V ROCE 1939 Z PRAHY V ČESKOSLOVENSKU. KDYBY JE
NIKDO NEZACHRÁNIL A NEPŘIVEZL DO ANGLIE...




Měl jsem si jít sám sednout
dozadu! K Rudimu...

... PATRNĚ BY JE
ZABILI NACISTÉ.




K TOMU NEDOŠLO JEN DÍKY JEDNOMU
OBYČEJNÉMU ČLOVĚKU, O NĚMŽ VĚTŠINA
Z NICH NEMĚLA ANI PONĚTÍ.

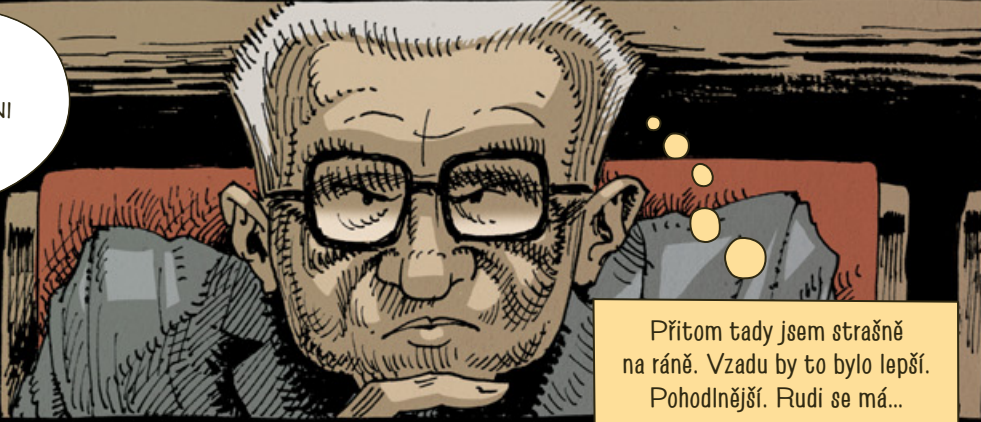


Ale jak na tom ten člověk, co mě sem vedl, trval!
Prej: „Rezervovali jsme vám speciální místo...!“

KDYŽ LISTUJETE
SEŠÍTEM, NAJDETE
V NĚM TOLIK, TOLIK
DOJEMNÝCH FOTOGRAFIÍ
A DOPISŮ!



NAPŘÍKLAD TOHLE, TOHLE JE
VĚRA DIAMANTOVÁ, KDYŽ JÍ BYLO DEŠET.
DNES SE JMENUJE VĚRA GISSINGOVÁ. A ANI
ONA NEMĚLA DO DNEŠKA PONĚTÍ,
KOMU VDĚČÍ ZA ŽIVOT.



Přitom tady jsem strašně
na ráně. Vzadu by to bylo lepší.
Pohodlnější. Rudi se má...



A JÁ BYCH VÁM RÁDA ŘEKLA,
ŽE TEN MUŽ SE JMENUJE NICHOLAS WINTON
A, VĚRO, SEDÍ VEDLE VÁS!

Cože?!