



My journey for the painting

By Jana Šmardová

Saturday, October 25, 2014, 8:30 a.m

We are starting! We have had breakfast, made coffee for the journey in our old thermos flask. The last baggage check is simple: two bags of clean clothes, two notebooks, a bag of music CDs and a basket of food. Ridiculously few things for such a big car. Yesterday, my husband drove to Letohrad, where he swapped our trusty little car (Citroën Grand Picasso) for his brother-in-law's van (Mercedes Benz-Vito). The Citroën would not carry the load we want to take in Lyon, France.

Off we go! We are about to leave Brno, with the first sip of coffee in front of us, the first portion of music, conversations, and lots of thoughts... We are crazy! Four days of travel lie ahead of us: two days to Lyon and two days back...

Prolog 1: 1998, Lyon

Sometime in 1998, Pierre Jurdic took his work home with him for the weekend. Pierre is a scientist, a biologist. He studies the development of bones and is therefore also interested in osteoclasts, the cells that resorb bones. As part of his research, Pierre has stained certain structures inside the osteoclasts and wants to look at them at home in peace. Even though he has family visiting at the weekend. His wife's relatives are coming, including his brother-in-law Pierre Favre, a painter. When Pierre, the scientist, immerses himself in pictures of osteoclasts at the weekend, Pierre, the artist, looks over his shoulder. And he is thrilled. These colorful pictures of cells with mysterious structures are beautiful. So Pierre, the artist, asks Pierre, the scientist, if he can borrow the pictures and paint one of them.

This sudden inspiration gives rise to several paintings. And the idea of combining science and art on a different level is born. Next autumn, the Lyon section of the French Society of Cell Biology is organizing a national conference under the direction of Pierre, the scientist. One of the paintings will become the logo of the entire conference, and it has been agreed that an opening ceremony for the exhibition of all the paintings by Pierre, the artist, on the theme of osteoclasts will take place during the conference...

Prolog 2: March 8, 1999, Brno

My day started like any other. Get up in the morning and rush to work. My two girls are still asleep. Anna is 10, Daniela is 6. They'll get up with their father, who will accompany them to school and kindergarten. At this point, I've already completed part of the working day. I am working in the lab, learning, writing and happy. My day starts early. And if I start on time and am quick enough during the day, I can finish in the early afternoon, pick up both daughters and spend the rest of the day with them. I'll shop, cook, clean. I will check Anna's homework and



help her get ready for school tomorrow. I'm going to cut Daniela's hair today, I've been planning that for a long time. The short haircut suits her very well. I wait impatiently for my husband at six o'clock. It's Monday, the day I regularly go to the gym. Today is no exception. My husband is coming over, so I grab my training shoes and a T-shirt and run all the way to the gym to be on time. I'm just catching up. On the way there, it occurs to me that a yoga exercise might make more sense than aerobics in my hectic everyday life. But I can't think that through at this pace. And then the fast music kicks in, I throw myself into the rhythm and start pumping. A severe headache sets in! Terrible! Unbearable! I can't move because of the pain!

I spent three weeks in hospital. The blood in my brain has slowly reabsorbed. After all the turmoil, three quiet, motionless weeks. I wait. Time drags on. Mostly at night. You cannot sleep here. So, I just count the days: from pain to pain, from injection to injection, from visit to visit. With hope. In the hope that it will end well. That I will return to my girls, that I will not die and that I will be healthy and fully functional again. The sleepless nights are endlessly long. But usually with a wonderful, almost dreamlike ending. Outside the hospital window, the sun rises every morning, almost always blood-red, almost every time you can feel the power and relentlessness, the inevitability of the arrival of a new day. I pray to this sun every morning. With respect for this power and greatness and inevitability. I pray and wish fervently to live and be healthy. Please let me stay alive, at least until my daughters are grown up. I pray and promise. I promise that from now on I will be much more attentive, much more careful. I promise that I will go through my life more slowly, that I will listen to myself more attentively. I will follow much gentler impulses and messages than the "knocks on the head" I was getting now. After three weeks, I was discharged from hospital. I am staying at home for the next two months before slowly returning to full-time work. Mercifully, I have been fully reintegrated into working life. Even the Grant Agency is postponing the deadline for new grant applications this year, so I can still make it after all the vicissitudes. I am getting a second chance.

Lyon, October 27- 29, 1999

I met Pierre for the first time around the turn of October / November 1999. We visited him in Lyon because my husband Jan had a joint Czech-French project with him, which involved both joint scientific projects and regular working meetings. Sometimes in Lyon, sometimes in Brno. It was my husband's first trip to Lyon and I accompanied him. We visited Pierre at the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon. He showed us around his workplace, the laboratories, introduced us to colleagues and students. Then we sat for a while in his office, which he shared with his colleague, and talked. I noticed an interesting picture behind the glass of the library (**Fig. 1**) and Pierre readily explained it to me. It was the cover of the proceedings of a conference he had recently helped organize for the French Society of Cell Biology. The logo - and this was what caught my eye - was the image of a girl figure on a background that resembled a cellular structure. It turned out that this was indeed the case. The author, Pierre's brother-in-law Pierre Favre, was inspired by Pierre's photo of a cell - an osteoclast that had a specially colored, highlighted cytoskeleton. He then painted a human figure on the background



of the colored cell. The result was a strange image, full of an eerie sadness probably that probably stems from the helplessness and lack of freedom of the human figure, but also full of color and life, whose steadfastness perhaps stems from the fact that I associate the cytoskeleton - a kind of cell scaffolding - with strength, support and unbreakability. The image has stayed in my head for a long time...



Société de Biologie Cellulaire de France

Colloque Annuel



27-29 octobre 1999

École Normale Supérieure de Lyon



Fig. 1: Title page of the proceedings of the conference of the French Society of Cell Biology, which took place in Lyon from October 27 to 29, 1999.

Back in Lyon, Pierre introduced us also to his family. To his wife Brigitte, a Swiss woman whom he met years ago in the United States and whose brother Pierre painted this interesting paintings. And also to their three sons: Benjamin, Vincent and Rémi. We also went on a two-day trip to Provence together. It enchanted us immediately and forever.

2000 - 2008

In July 2000, the Mendel Days conference was held in Brno, where our results were presented. For a long time we tried to induce the differentiation of monoblasts transformed by the *v-myb* oncogene. The differentiation was successful to a certain extent, and the monoblasts turned into giant, lobulated cells. We were standing in front of our poster, explaining how we had induced the tumor monoblasts to differentiate, when Pierre, typically jovial and smiling, came up to us, jabbed his finger into the picture of the cells and exclaimed, "These must be osteoclasts!" We discussed all the details of our protocol, and I introduced him to my student Alice, who was working on this project as part of her doctoral thesis. And we agreed that Alice - as part of Pierre and my husband's project - would go to Lyon for a few weeks with another student from my husband's lab to see if they really were osteoclasts. This trip took place very early. Alice, working under Pierre's supervision, discovered that "our" cells had all the characteristics of osteoclasts with one exception: they could not resorb bones. In 2005, our joint work summarizing these results was published (*Šmardová J., Nemajerová A., Navrátilová J., Jurdic P., Šmarda J.: CBP sensitizes v-myb-transformed monoblasts to differentiation inducers. Differentiation 73: 2005 , 222-232*).

In the years that followed, we met Pierre and his family again and again, both professionally and privately. In 2002, my husband and I went to Lyon for a great conference of the International Society for Differentiation. The very next year (2003), we were in Lyon again, this time for a conference on the tumor suppressor p53, the central topic of my work. The conference was organized by the Lyon Agency for Research on Cancer IARC, as was another memorable conference on p53 in 2007. On all these occasions we saw Pierre and his family. Pierre and Brigitte came to Brno twice to give lectures to our students (2003, 2013) (**Fig. 2**). In the meantime, we spent two summer vacations together. First in 2004 in Mala Fatra, Slovakia, and then in 2005 in the French Alps (**Fig. 3**). We will also meet briefly during our family vacation in Provence in 2008, where Pierre and Brigitte visited us for a weekend.



Fig. 2: *My husband, me and Pierre in Spilberk, Brno in 2003.*



Obr. 3: *Pierre, Brigitte, our daughters and my husband in Alps in 2005.*



Overlaps

I have been teaching the Molecular Biology of Tumors course at Masaryk University since 1998. Over the years, I have become very aware of the parallels and similarities between the behavior of cells - healthy and cancerous - and the behavior of humans. Sometimes I have offered these comparisons to the students. To lighten the atmosphere during long lectures, to keep students' attention and entertain them, and to facilitate insight into a problem. And sometimes also in the hope that it would be an opportunity for us to think together. I began to call these thoughts and ideas "**overlaps**". Gradually I came to believe that cancer is not just a disease and a matter of cells, but that perhaps it is a more general principle. And that tumors thrive not only in our bodies, but also in our lives and in the lives of society in general. On **November 3, 2008**, I wrote for the first time in my diary that my biggest dream was to write a book about cells that reflected this view. On **April 21, 2009**, I gave my first, very informal lecture to some close friends, explaining the properties that tumor cells and tumors gradually acquire during their malignant transformation, and for the first time showing the implications and overlaps of this knowledge.

And on this occasion, I remembered the girl-in-the-cell painting that I had seen years ago in Lyon. It occurred to me that this intertwining of two levels – the cell and the human being - expresses exactly, concisely and accurately what I mean by "overlaps". And, therefore, it would be great to have it and use it as a symbol for my lectures. So I immediately sat down and wrote an e-mail to Pierre in Lyon and asked if he had the picture saved somewhere, in any form. A negative answer came very quickly. Pierre knew immediately which painting I had in mind, he remembered it well himself. He searched through all his files, at home and at work, but he could not find the painting anywhere. I was very sad about that.

Prague, 2009

In the summer of 2009 (July 4-9), a major international congress of the European Society of Biochemistry, the 34th FEBS Congress, was held in Prague. The program was prepared well in advance and many Czech experts took part. My husband also helped organize the section on cell differentiation, so I knew in advance that Pierre was also one of the invited speakers who would give a lecture on osteoclasts. A few days before the congress, a nonsensical thought occurred to me. What if Pierre brought a painting of a girl in a cell to Prague? It didn't make much sense, because Pierre clearly wrote that he was looking for the painting but couldn't find it. But the thought was already there and wouldn't leave me. And so, although I didn't take a notebook with me to Prague, I packed a USB disk in my handbag "just in case" to save the painting. And it actually happened! At our very first meeting, Pierre proudly told me that the painting had been found. Brigitte couldn't accept that it was lost and searched until she found it. Pierre's eldest son Ben scanned the title page and saved it, Pierre brought it to Prague and downloaded it from his laptop onto my prepared USB disk!



I used the image for the first time as early as in 2009. It was the first time I demonstrated my "overlapping" perception of cells and tumors in my lecture as part of the professor appointment procedure on **October 14, 2009**. At the same time, I wrote the article "On cells, tumors and humans" for the Information Letters of the Gregor Mendel Society for Genetics (*IL GSGM, No. 23, November 2009, pp. 29- 43*). As part of the article, the painting entitled "Overlaps" was published for the first time (**Fig. 4**). Of course, this was done with appropriate credit to the names of both authors and with their permission. I sent them both a copy of the journal. I also got their permission to use the painting in other lectures, always mentioning their names, of course. I also hung a copy of the painting in my office, as a reminder of my innermost work project.

2011 – the 50th birthday

Sometime in spring 2011, Pierre surprised me in an email with the information that the painting "Girl-cell" was still unsold. My fiftieth birthday was just around the corner and I thought it would make a very nice present. But it seemed too daunting to negotiate this option with an author who does not speak English (neither Czech, of course), or indirectly through Pierre, and then travel to Switzerland for the painting... In short, I did not take this option immediately, although I thought about it a lot and could not get it out of my head. It was only later, when Pierre told me that he had finally decided to buy the painting himself and hang it in his office at the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon, that the depth of my disappointment showed me how much I really cared about the painting. But it was too late.

The celebrations for my fiftieth birthday were still very successful. Among other things, I received many lovely gifts. The most surprising came from my colleagues in the Department of Pathology. They had an artist make a stained glass vitrage for me. And when they were thinking about a theme that I might like, they came up with the idea of using the picture that I have had hanging on the blackboard in my office for so long... Yes. When I opened the box and saw the stained glass vitrage with the familiar figure of a girl against the background of an orange and red flower (rather than cell), I was speechless, moved, overwhelmed! Although the original painting had slipped through my fingers, it still found its way to me – albeit in a different form (**Fig. 5**)!



O buňkách, nádorech a lidech

Jana Šmardová

Biologie nádorů zajímá mnoho lidí. Nejenom studenty, biology či další přírodovědce, ale i laiky. Mohlo by to souviset s tím, že v Evropě a ve Spojených státech patří rakovina k nejčastějším příčinám úmrtí, a tak se nás každého hodně dotýká. To je jistě jedna z příčin zájmu, ale zřejmě ne jediná. Vždyť například zabiják ještě „úspěšnější“ než rakovina – onemocnění srdce a cév – zdaleka tolik pozornosti nepřitahuje.

Přednáším molekulární a buněčnou biologii nádorů a v průběhu let jsem si začala velmi intenzivně uvědomovat paralely a podobnosti mezi chováním buněk (zdravých i nádorových) a chováním lidí nebo i celých skupin lidí. Někdy tyto nápady nabízím studentům, pro uvolnění atmosféry během dlouhých přednášek, pro udržení jejich pozornosti a pobavení, pro usnadnění vzhledu do nějakého problému. Ale vždy s nadějí, že je to i příležitost pro naše společné zamyšlení. Říkám těmto myšlenkám a nápadům „přesahy“. Postupně jsem došla k poznání, že nádor není jen nemoc a záležitost buněk, ale že je to princip. A že nádory bují nejenom v našich tělech, ale v našich životech mnohem obecněji i v životě celé společnosti. Domnívám se, že právě tato skutečnost je příčinou všeobecného zájmu o rakovinu. Protože ta nás ohrožuje mnohem více a mnohem univerzálněji, než si obvykle uvědomujeme.

V jednom stručném přehledu pro akademickou obec jsme před časem s manželem popsali pohled biologů na to, jak vznikají nádory. Tímto textem chci na náš předchozí text navázat a hlavně se pokusit ho rozšířit právě o ty pohledy, které přicházejí nově, tj. o přesahy.



Obr. 1: Přesahy. Osteoklast, tj. buňka, která se podílí na odbourávání kostní hmoty, nafotil a její cytoskelet obarvil Pierre Jurdic (Francie), jako východisko pro svou kresbu použil Pierre Favre (Švýcarsko).

Zdravý mnohobuněčný organizmus

Zdravý mnohobuněčný organizmus představuje harmonické společenství velkého počtu buněk, z nichž každá má svou funkci, kterou vykonává ve vymezeném čase a vymezeném prostoru dané tkáně pro maximální užitek celé buněčné populace. Jednotlivé buňky daného organismu spolu nesoutěží, ale vzájemně se podporují a spolupracují, aby jejich existence byla pro jejich nositele užitečná a neznamerala zátěž. Uvádí se, že tělo dospělého člověka je tvořeno asi 10^{13} buňkami. To je ohromující číslo. (Jen pro srovnání, na naší planetě žije necelých 10^{10} lidí.) Stejně ohromující je, kolik nejrůznějších buněčných typů v našem těle je. Máme tak rozdílné buňky jako nejrůznější typy krvinek, neurony, svalové buňky, buňky, které tvoří povrch kůže a výstelku střev a dalších orgánů, jaterní buňky, a mnoho dalších. Nejenom, že všechny tyto rozmanité buňky v našem těle potřebujeme a žádný

Fig. 4: The title page of the article published in *Information Letters of the Gregor Mendel Society of Genetics (IL GSGM, 23, November 2009, 29-43)*, where the painting was presented for the first time.



Fig. 5: *The vitrage inspired by the painting: a gift from my colleagues from the Department of Pathology, Iniversity Hospital, Brno, to my fiftieth birthday.*

Cell Philosophy - 2013

I began to use the image motif more and more frequently incorporating new "overlaps" into my lectures and presenting them more and more openly. Not only did I always show their symbol - the picture of a girl-cell - along with the introduction and explanation of the overlaps, but I prepared my lectures in such a way that the picture emphasised them all as a soft background. All these efforts culminated in the fall semester of 2013, when I taught the course "Tumor Biology for Non-Biologists, or Cell Philosophy" (later renamed "Tumor Biology for Everyone, or Cell Philosophy") for the first time. The course was inspired and motivated by my daughters when they complained that there Masaryk University had only a weak offer of interesting "C" courses – suitable for students of different faculties and study programmes. I decided to prepare such a "C" course for them and finally bring out the overlaps in a slightly more complete form. To my delight, 70 students found the course and enroll. Although I felt



nervousness and stage fright throughout the semester, it was at the same time and above all a profound experience for me. Among other things, it was a kind of mutual attunement with the students. When I read the essays after the end of semester, in which the students returned to the topics of the course, I could not have been more satisfied. The positive evaluations of the course predominated and some of the essays were really open and profound. Amazing!

Sometime around this time I met Jana Koptíková at work again after years. Jana and I worked together on a chapter for an oncology textbook in 2002 and 2003. I wrote the texts, Jana prepared amazing pictures. When I started preparing my habilitation thesis in 2004, Jana again prepared great pictures for it, which we later used in a joint paper (*Šmardová J., Šmarda J., Koptíková J.: Functional analysis of the tumor suppressor protein p53. Differentiation 73 (2005) 261-277*). We always worked well together, we understood each other. Now, years later, I approached Jana again with the request to prepare images for further joint work. We met several times and exchanged some news from our private and working lives. Of course, I couldn't help but tell her about my plans to write the Book of overlaps, and I also told her about the painting of a girl in a cell. Jana was – just like me – fascinated by the painting and insisted that I should try to get it! And coincidentally, it was at this point when Pierre started mentioning in his emails that he was about to retire and finish his work at the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon. If he's leaving the school altogether, that means he'll also be clearing out his current office... including the painting! It occurred to me that this could be the last chance to get the painting. This time I didn't hesitate and wrote to Pierre quite openly. And Pierre replied me just as openly. He had no intention of getting rid of the painting, he'd never sell it, but in my case he would. He knows how much it means to me! And he also knows that his brother-in-law has painted other paintings inspired by osteoclasts, so Pierre would sell his existing painting to me and buy a new one himself. He just pointed out to me that the painting is quite large (125 x 185 cm) and therefore a suitable place for would be necessary. In addition, transportation from Lyon wouldn't be easy. But we agreed: the painting will be mine! I couldn't imagine when we'd go to France for it, but it was already clear that it would happen sooner or later. It's a long way, should we combine it with a vacation? With another journey? Preferably at the time when the lavender fields are in bloom in Provence, I've never seen that before and would love to! But when? In which year?

The weekend house – November 29, 2013

In August 2013, my husband and I were in California, where we spent a few days in Napa Valley, a famous wine region. This time I did not enjoy the trip as much, I had severe jet lag and a toothache, I was homesick. The result of the sleepless nights was the idea of buying a vacation home in South Moravia, a region related to both Provence and Napa Valley. And at the end of November 2013, we got it. We spent a few months getting used to it, slowly getting to know it and slowly planning its further use and design. And it quickly became clear that the house was the right place for the girl-cell painting. The largest empty room – the future living room – had just two large enough walls that would be perfect for it...



Cell Philosophy II - 2014

The meeting with Jana Koptíková led to plans for our further cooperation. Jana was impressed by the overlaps and my plans to write a Book about cells and tumors. She also listened carefully to my experiences from the first lecture series the Cell Philosophy course and checked my powerpoint presentations. It was clear that my graphics were not up to her standards. And so she very quickly made suggestions for the new graphic design of the presentations. Of course, this also included the painting motif. I used the new graphic form of the presentations for the first time in spring 2014 and converted all my presentations for the course "Tumour Biology for All or Cell Philosophy" to this new format.

This time, 187 students from all faculties of Masaryk University enrolled in the course, and some non-enrolled guests also attended it regularly. Since the beginning of the semester, I have had stage fright again, but again coupled with joy and excitement! I have actually been thinking about the course all the time since the summer. Just like about the painting. My impatience grew and grew. How I wished I already had it. Suddenly its name pepped up: "**As above, so below**". This expression has its origins in the Vedas and means that what happens on one level also happens simultaneously on all other levels. It is also often used for the macrocosmos and the microcosmos: The two levels overlap, and when we understand one, we understand the other. That is exactly what the painting expresses for me. This is what it symbolises for me!

In 2014, the course "Tumor Biology for Everyone or Cell Philosophy" was moved to the largest lecture hall so that all students could sit comfortably. In 2013, they also regularly sat on the floor. It was cozy, but still a bit uncomfortable. In 2014, classes were held every Monday in the early evening. This meant that one Monday would definitely be missed: November 17 is a public holiday. A colleague who taught in the hall before me also pointed out to me that Monday, October 27, was also a risky regarding the student attendance because this day was also followed by another public vacation: October 28. Although I didn't actually want to cancel the lecture on October 27, I finally thought it was reasonable to do so. This way, students can take 4 days off without jeopardizing the possibility of receiving credits for a course in which attendance at the lectures was compulsory.

I immediately got an idea. I could also take four days off. And it would be sufficient for me to take just one day of my precious vacation. And four days, that's enough for the trip to Lyon and back! And so, on October 14, 2014, I write Pierre an email with a preliminary inquiry if we could meet briefly in Lyon at that time and finalize the business - the purchase of the painting. Pierre replies immediately and amused. Yes, this weekend is fine. In fact, it's the only weekend that fits for a long time... Then I cautiously approach my husband with this crazy idea. He immediately agrees. So, we quickly confirmed the date of the meeting Lyon. All that remains is to check whether the picture will actually fit in our car, Pierre reminds us once again that this could be a problem. Well! He's right, it really is a problem. We thought our car was big enough, but it's not that big. I'm slowly giving up on the idea of buying a painting fast... I speak to my



colleague about my disappointment and she "kicks" me to find another solution. And so, on the evening of Monday, October 20, 2014, I call my sister Iva, and within 10 minutes she arranges with her husband Josef, that my husband will drive to Letohrad (where they live) on Thursday, October 23, 2014, and borrow their van... Everything is ready for the trip!

Saturday, October 25, 2014, 8.30 am.

We are starting! We have had breakfast, made coffee for the journey in our old thermos flask. The last baggage check is simple: two bags of clean clothes, two notebooks, a bag of CDs and a basket of food. Ridiculously few things for such a big car. Off we go! We are about to leave Brno, with the first sip of coffee in front of us, the first portion of music, conversations, and lots of thoughts... We are crazy! Four days of travel lie ahead of us: two days to Lyon and two days back...

We end the first day on the road in the German town of Sinsheim, where my husband has booked an overnight stay at the Hotel Leo. We don't feel like reading or working. We sleep for hours. We're tired and a little nervous about what tomorrow will bring. I'm a little worried. What if I don't like the painting?

Sunday, October 26, 2014

On Sunday, we are among the first guests to have breakfast at the hotel and set off straight after breakfast. We arrive at the house of our friends Pierre and Brigitte at 3.15 pm. After a brief and warm welcome, we are immediately taken upstairs to see - for the first time - the original painting! Phew! It's really impressive! I feel strong emotions! And then coffee, conversation, meeting their son Vincent. We provide each other with information related to the painting that some of us did not know before. For example, we learn that Pierre, the painter, had painted several paintings inspired by osteoclasts, but had not organised an exhibition. He had personal difficulties at the time and put painting aside for many years. We go upstairs and look at another painting from this series that Pierre bought instead of the one he left me. It is beautiful! And we learn that Vincent has another painting in his house.

Over dinner, we reminisce about shared experiences and talk about many other things from our lives. For some reason, I also remember the time when I was painfully determined to go back to work after maternity leave. It took me years to find the determination and courage to work full-time on the one hand, and the courage and patience not to rush into anything, not to force anything, but simply to listen carefully to all the opportunities that life offers.

We go to bed soon. We sleep in a room where the painting hangs on the wall. I fall asleep immediately, but around two of the clock in the morning I am awake and can no longer sleep. I lie in the bed, look into the darkness and have to smile. In this darkness, an image is projected before my eyes and I suddenly find other levels in it. I see the chained figure



crouching inside the cell nucleus. And I think: Yes, as long as we believe that we are only determined by our genes, we really are chained. As long as we believe that our life is only material, we are chained.

Monday, October 27, 2014

We get up early, but Pierre is already in the kitchen preparing breakfast. When he sees us, he drops everything and hands me the printed and laminated title page of the proceedings of the 1999 conference and asks me to check the date. Indeed! The conference began on **October 27, 1999**, exactly 15 years ago today!

We make tea, talk and eat croissants. Brigitte joins us and we continue our conversation. Brigitte tells me that she doesn't like "my" picture so much, it's too sad. Vincent also says that he doesn't like it very much, sometimes he feels like a tied-up figure... I reply that everyone probably feels that way, just some more and some less. I still have a lot to think about. But we don't have much time yet. The painting has to be carefully carried down from the second floor, carefully stowed in the car and secured against damage (**Fig. 6** and **Fig. 7**). And soon we set off on the long journey home. Pierre also gives us confirmation that the painting now belongs to us (**Fig. 8**).

We're on our way before nine o'clock. Coffee again, songs. Perhaps even less talking than on the way there. We're lost in thought, and I've to keep looking back at my new painting. I still can't believe we actually made the journey! I look at the painting and project the experiences of the last few hours into my head. And suddenly it dawns on me that perhaps not everyone feels as chained up as the figure in the painting. Perhaps only those who have recognized and felt that they "have wings" and the desire to fly. So I've another name for the painting: "Ikaros"! Or "Longing", that is a synonym...

Tuesday, October 28, 2014

We slept in the same hotel as on Saturday night. We are tired again, but calmer, less tense. It seems that our mission will be successfully completed. We sleep long and peacefully. And early in the morning we set off on the last leg of our journey home. Instead of Brno, we head south to our weekend house. We arrive at 3.15 pm again. We carefully place the painting in the still empty future living room. And we try to imagine how he will like it here. It will! That's for sure (**Fig. 9**). I use the few minutes my husband needs to check the house and sit in front of the painting for a while. I cannot stand it and although I am not a fan of such spicy drinks, I pour myself a thimbleful of strong, homemade plum brandy and drink to us: to me and the painting! After 15 years, the first part of our journey together is coming to an end. I feel that nothing will be the same from now on, something has changed. The next stage begins. And I am very excited to see what it will bring.



Fig. 6: *We are loading the painting to the car: my husband and Pierre, October 27, 2014, Lyon.*



Fig. 7: *We are loading the painting to the car: Brigitte and Pierre, October 27, 2014, Lyon.*



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27 Octobre, 2014

A qui de droit,

Je soussigné Pierre JURDIC, autorise mes amis Jan et Jana SMARDA, demeurant à Brno (République Tchèque), à transporter de Lyon à Brno un tableau que je leur donne pour leur usage personnel. Il s'agit d'une peinture d'un grand format représentant un personnage défaisant ses chaînes. Ils détiennent donc cette marchandise légalement.

Fig. 8: *The certificate that the painting belongs to us.*



Fig. 9: *The painting just arrived to the new home in Moravská Nová Ves: October 28, 2014, 3.15 pm.*

Brno, November 2014



Epilogue 1: June 29, 2021, Brno

I saw my dream come true for the first time. The printed books "What Tumors Teach Us, Parallels in Behavior of Cells and Humans" were just delivered. To my great delight, half of the shipment ended up in our house (**Fig. 10**).



Fig. 10: *It is June 29, 2021. Freshly printed books are at home!*



Epilogue 2: September 10, 2021

I received an e-mail from Pierre Favre expressing his delight that the book with the motif of his painting was born. And sent a nice photo as proof (**Fig. 11**).

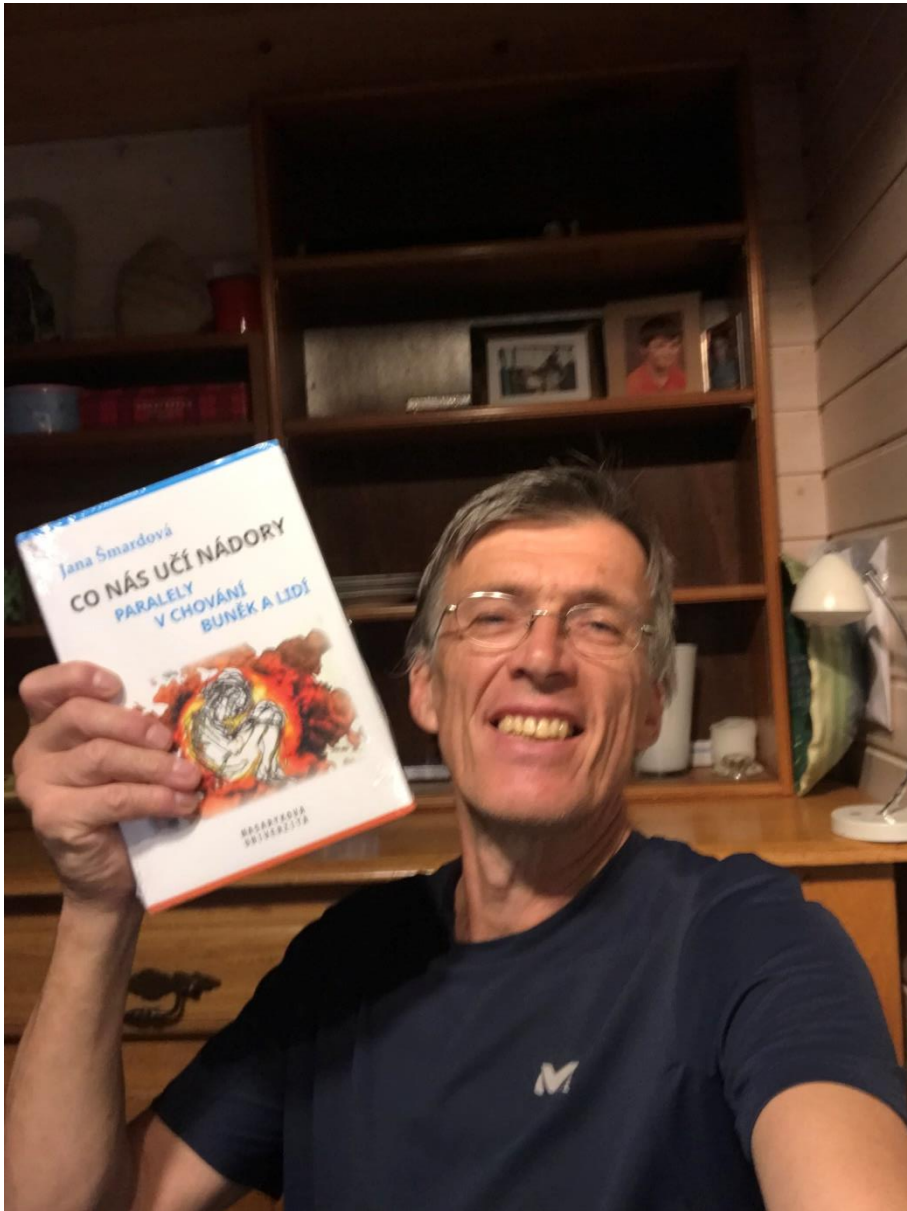


Fig. 11: *Photo of Pierre Favre with a copy of my book showing his painting on the cover. He sent me the photo by e-mail on September 10, 2021.*