

ebook

SN ~~THE~~ HAPPY FAMILY

Dušan
Kastelic



Modesty
COMICS







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SN
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FAMILY



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COMICS

Dušan Kastelic The Snappy Family

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In Front of the Computer

You are presented here with a strange title. It refers to this, so-called, 'gag comic strip', but a totally extraordinary one because of the way the writer develops the story. Conventionally, the possible storyline of these types of comic strips are 'limited' to a single page (other famous examples include Hågar the Horrible, Peanuts, Garfield, Titeuf and Mafalda). If we observe any of the comic strips singularly, we can tell that the limited space does not allow for a dynamic plot, thus the scenario is usually centred around humours dialogue and ends with a remark that rounds off relatively static situations (it is also not rare to find comic strips with no text). While Hågar the Horrible 'travels' across the world, and Peanuts' adventures happen inside the home and out, we learn about the lives and personalities of the main characters in this 'gag comic strip' exclusively during their time spent in front of their computer. This was a very brave choice for the author, because with this he limited himself even more than the physical limitation already constraining him by using the comic strip form.



This family adores their computer!

This comic strip is the work of Slovenian author Dusan Kastelic, noted illustrator and graphic designer. For every episode there was a page reserved, in a 3x3 frame format, and Kastelic filled them in the latter-half of the 1990s. However much plot can be not dynamic in some comic strips, it's almost hard to believe when you meet the members of the Snappy Family (the title clearly being a play on the cliché phrase 'happy family'). Kastelic created Snappy Family for a computer magazine called 'PC and Media' and the comic strip was collated and published in 1999 in album form. It all begins with the moment when a PC 486 becomes the newest 'member' of a family, and becomes the centre of all the action in

the house, even taking the dog's role as family.... 'pet'. Father and son begin a battle over who should get to use the computer, and what should be on it; the father is authoritarian over the son, but the mother, the powerful matriarch, always has the final word.



What to do when your computer gets 'bugs'?

The author parodies situations that could be seen everyday, for years, in many homes, because most homes have at least one computer; and if it is 'just' one, war can break out. At the time the comic strip was written, it must be taken into consideration, the price of a PC was far more than it is today, and its capabilities were in the realm of science fiction.

Reading Snappy Family, imbued with irreverent humour, you're reminded of the first time you heard the term 'bug', when you found out your computer could have some sort of virus, which is a phrase the author has taken very literally. You'll recall the huge telephone bills due to hours spent on the dial-up Internet connection... how shocked your friends and neighbours were when you explained that on the Internet you could find everyone and everything.... Or when you thought Judgement Day might come in the year 2000.... You'll remember how, over time, people began referring to their computers as living being, or how, while on the computer, it is so easy to not pay attention to anything else around you, because Kastelic evokes precisely these situations, but not just that...

The author, aside from everything else, explores the notion that people, with the help of a computer and Internet, easy forget everything else, and, even easier, fall into fantasy realms or virtual realities. Such fantasy narratives Kastelic uses to breakdown, and enrich, his comedic situations and deviate from standard comic strip conventions. Kastelic plays with the 3x3 frames in new and inventive ways that are very literally 'out-of-the-box' in a couple of

episodes. Other than the central family of three, there are a number of colourful characters, such as the anthropomorphic computer itself; who thinks, perceives and often 'trips up' its owners. The repair man who, generally, does NOT fix the computer, the priest who does an exorcism of the computer, the boy-genius who has stared at a screen so long he grew a third eye, but the best is the loveable dog, who does everything he can to avoid being told off.

All of this the author and artist depict, and often, the drawing speaks for itself. The drawing is caricature-esque, totally wacky and stylistically reminiscent of the pioneering web comics and caricatures, and that should not be surprising given that this comic strip was created over that same time. So, the conclusion is that, given all Kastelic offers, the titular restriction on this comic strip was a challenge that he confronted more than successfully.

Beograd, March 2014
Andrija Mihajlović, comics critic



Foreword from the original 1999 edition

The comic book that you hold in your hands was actually created quite spontaneously. When Dušan started to draw this comic in the autumn of 1995 for the computer magazine “PC & Media” (which had just started and was a new, never before seen non-technical concept of a computer magazine) he didn’t expect that he would create almost 50 episodes! He expected that he would have to make five or six episodes tops, before the magazine would come to a sad end. Or the readers or editors would get bored of comics and he would be fired...

Because he didn’t expect that he would have to draw so many episodes, he decided that he would play a little “experiment in style”. Each episode was eight frames long, and every frame was drawn from the same point of view. He decided that his characters would be ugly, obnoxious and extremely unlikable. So with all those constraints and limitations he tried to come up with five or six good gags. But, unexpectedly, the magazine was a big success... so he persisted for a year, two, three, four...

Just as the success of the magazine surprised the creator of the comics, the success of comics surprised the creators of the magazine! Not even Miha Mazzini, the first editor of the magazine who came up with the idea to fill the last page of the magazine with comics, expected that this comic page will be the winner of every poll of popularity among the readers.

Anyway, the crazy adventures of an ugly, dysfunctional family and their computer found an avid readership. And, all of a sudden, there were enough episodes to fill a whole comics album! So we have no other choice than to publish the darn album. Enjoy!

Nikolaj Pečenko, editor of PC&Media magazine

Dušan
Kastelic

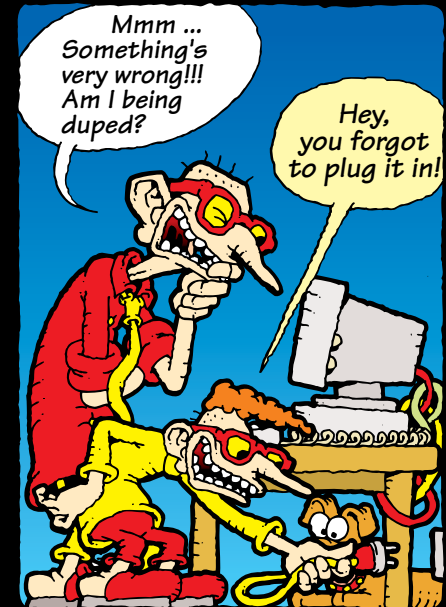
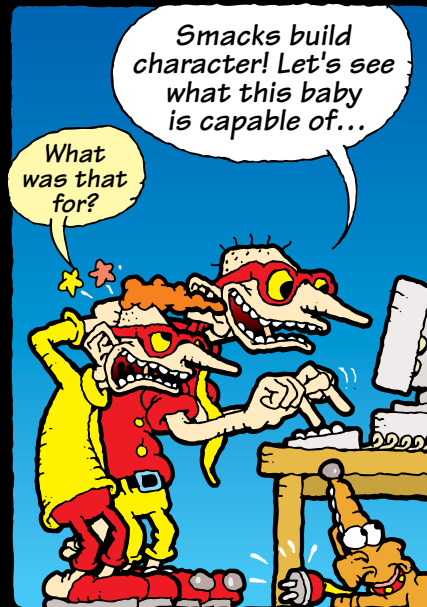
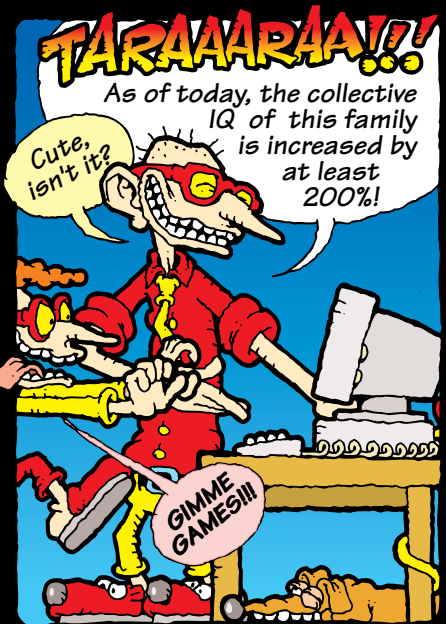
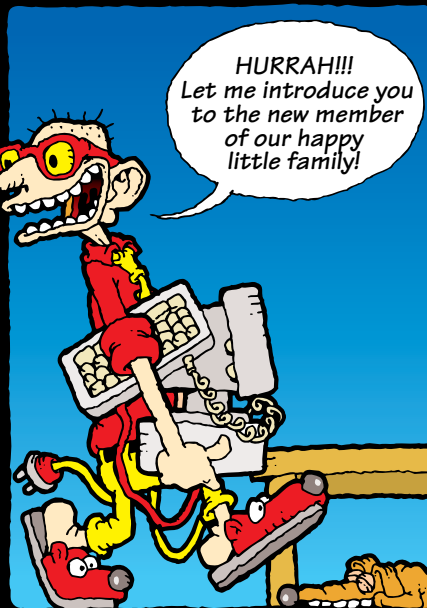
SN
~~THE HAPPY
FAMILY~~



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Today's episode:
The Slappy Family

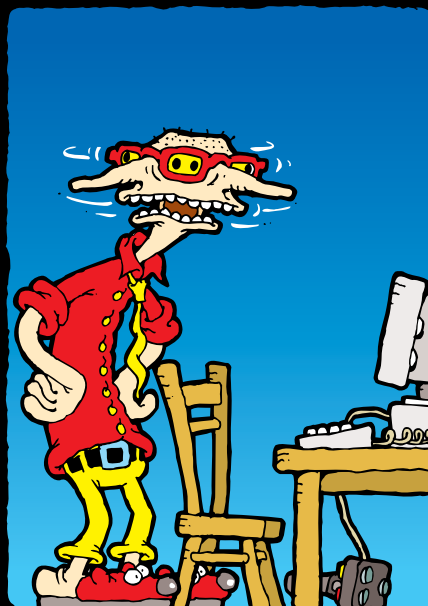
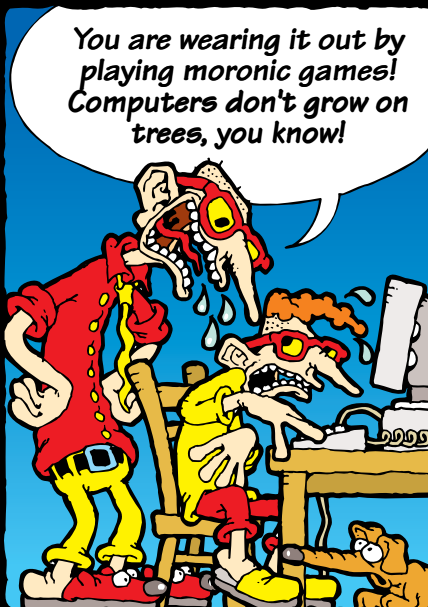


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Today's episode:
Smack !!!



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Today's episode:
Euthanasia

Out of the blue, it started to wheeze and the screen filled with really strange ciphers...



See? And brand new at that! As an intellectual, I can't do without a computer!



You play games?

GAMES!?!



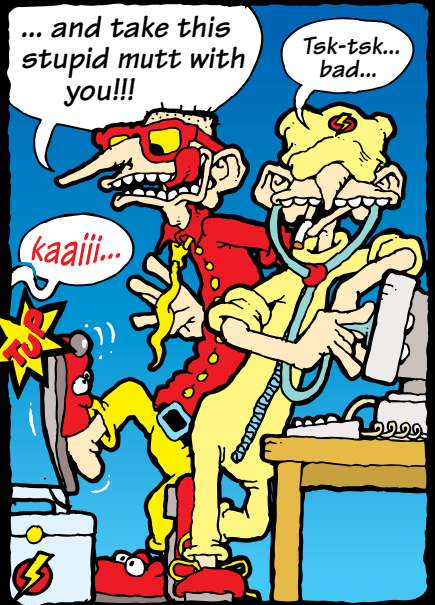
Did you hear, you brat? It's the GAMES!!! Scram! I'll deal with you later!

Hush!... Quiet!!!



... and take this stupid mutt with you!!!

Tsk-tsk... bad...



Smrc... Master, be straight with me... Is there any thing you can do?

Well...



AAAAA...

BUM



Euthanasia... To put it out of its misery...

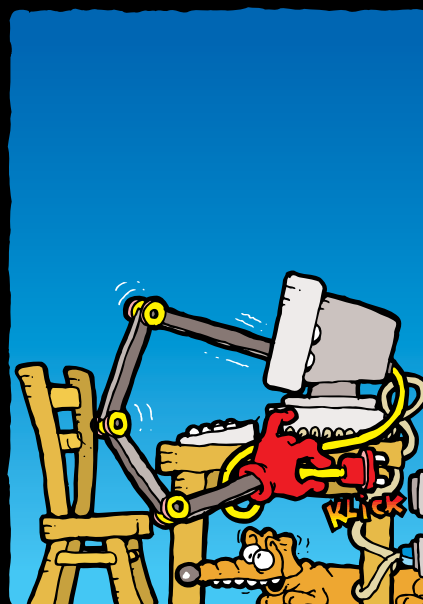
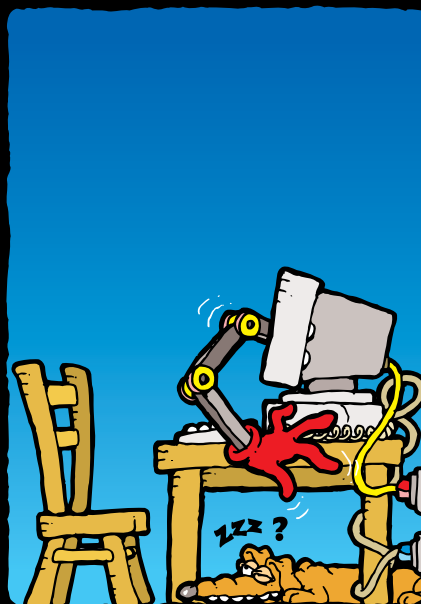
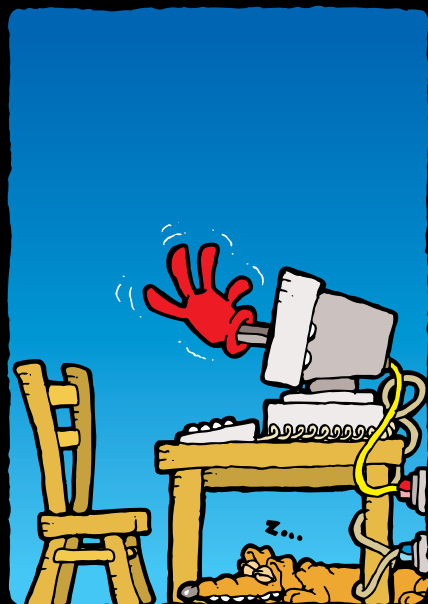
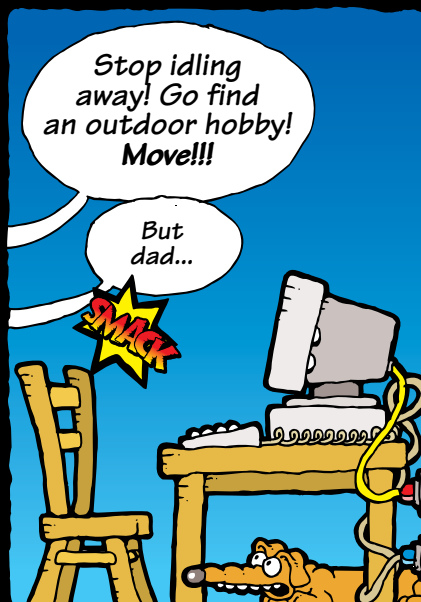
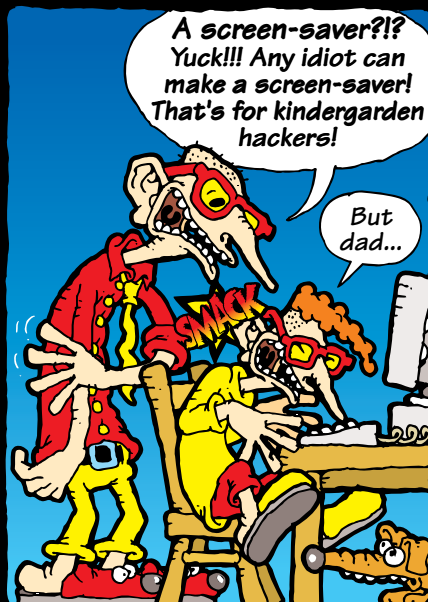
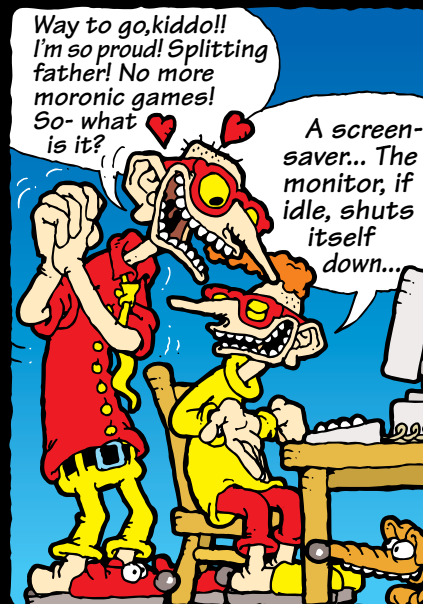
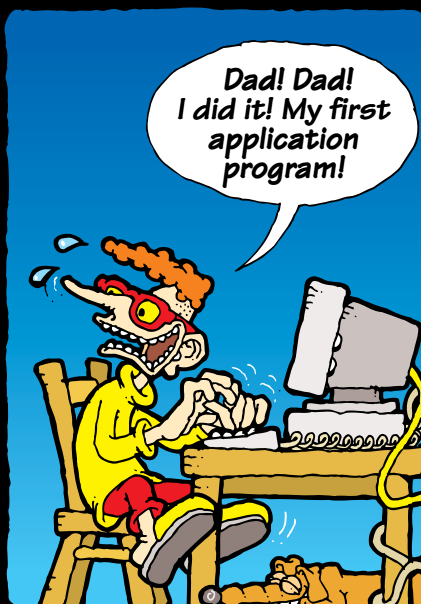


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Today's episode:
The Genius

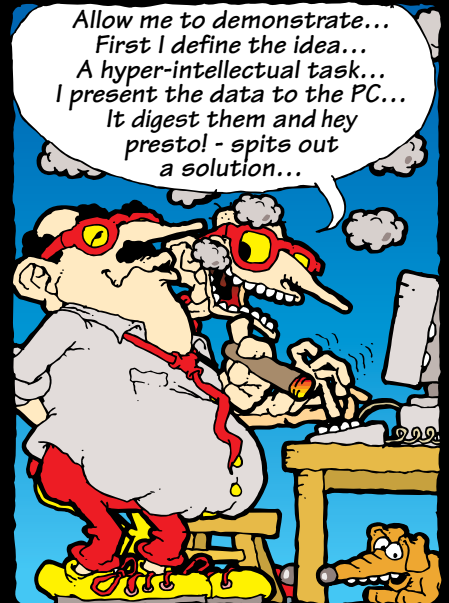
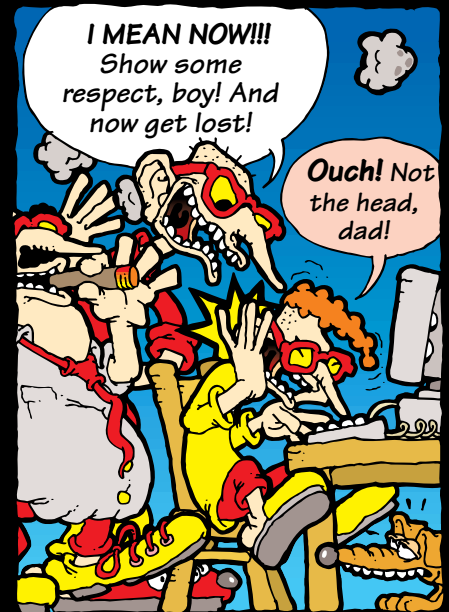


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Idea: M. Mazzini

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Today's episode:
Something Green...

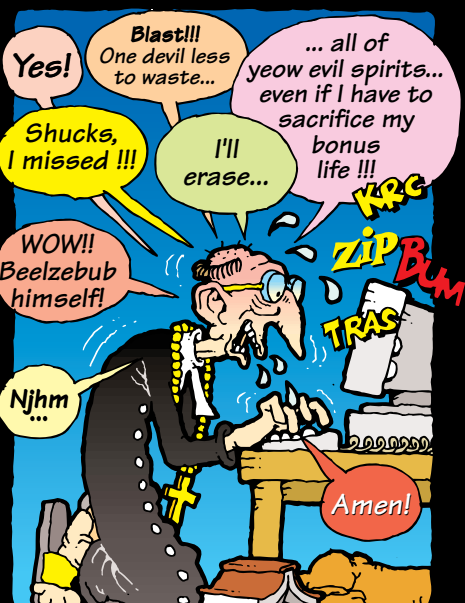
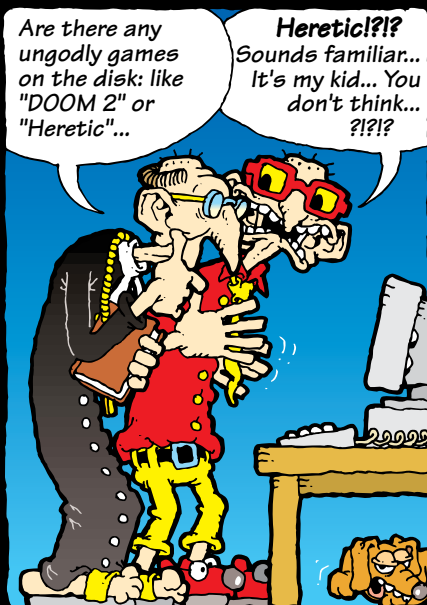
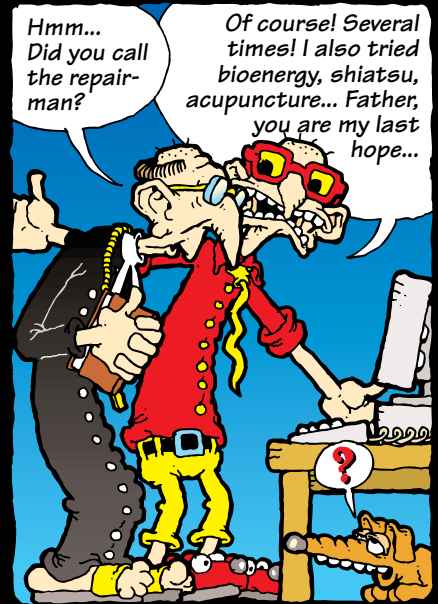
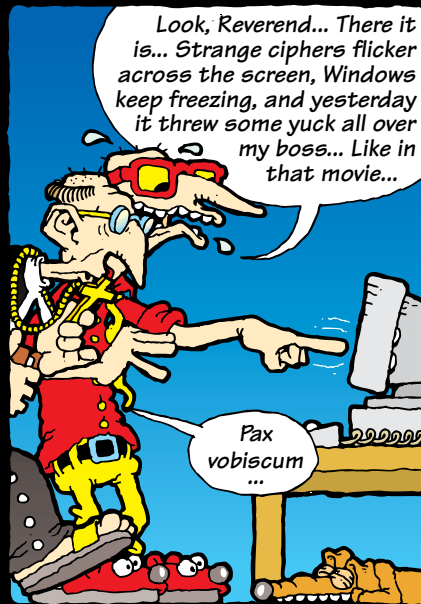


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Today's episode:
The Exorcist I

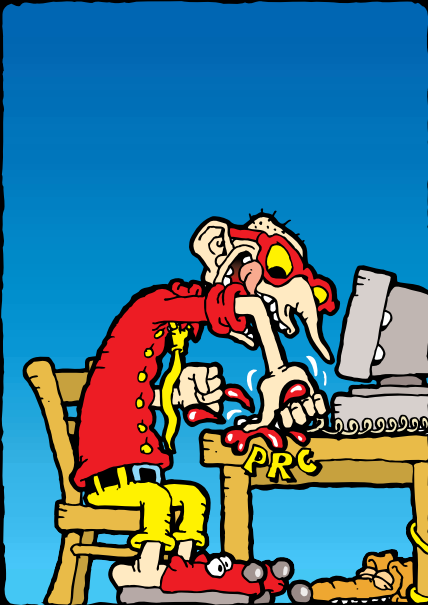
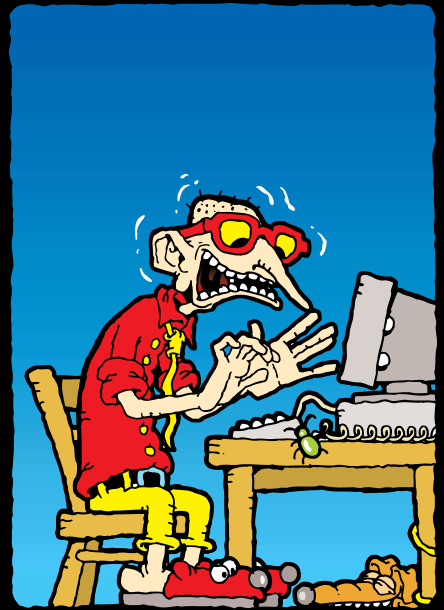


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Expert consulting from Black Magic: B. Gradišnik

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Today's episode:
The Bugs



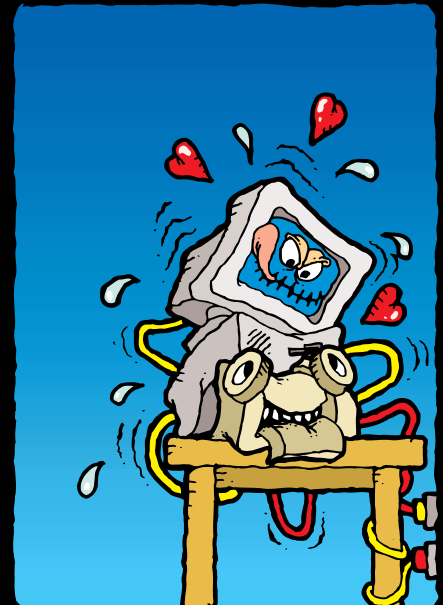
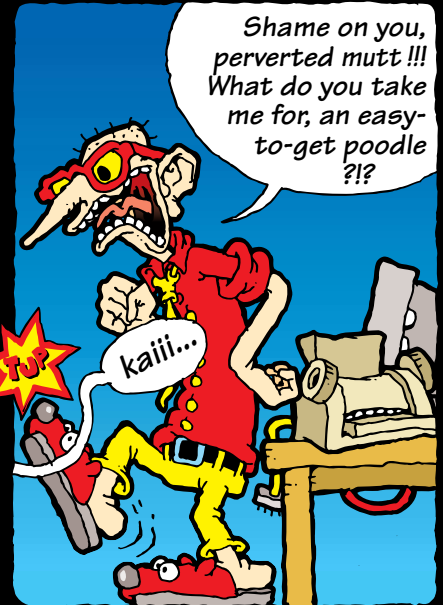
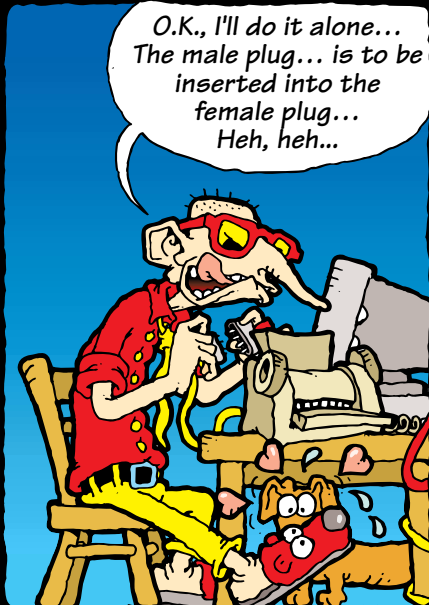
Phew...
there's so many
bugs in the new
Windows!

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Today's episode:
Springtime



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Today's episode:
Sweet Dreams

It's a real joy, working on the gizmo today! Everything is running smoothly... I haven't lost a single file all evening and it hasn't crashed even once! Unbelievable!



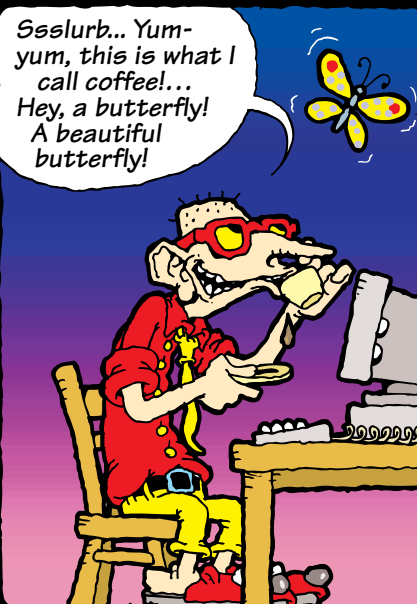
Done! And not much slower than in the almost forgotten yester-years when we used to do the accounts by hand! Mmm, I could use some coffee after a job well done ...



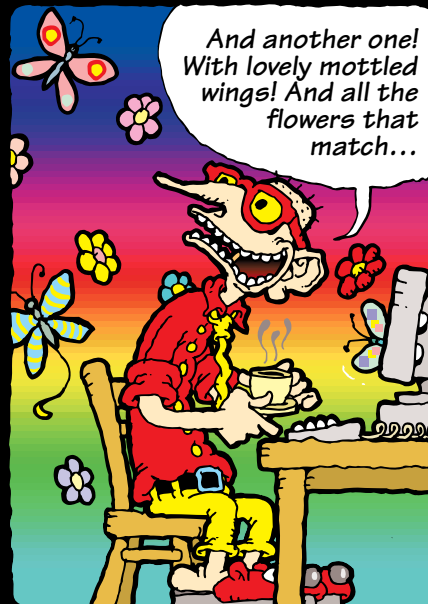
Huh? Coffee? For me?! How nice of you!



Sssslurb... Yum-yum, this is what I call coffee!... Hey, a butterfly! A beautiful butterfly!



And another one! With lovely mottled wings! And all the flowers that match...



Wait a minute... Something's wrong here ...



Eh... I should have know...



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Today's episode:
The Eraser

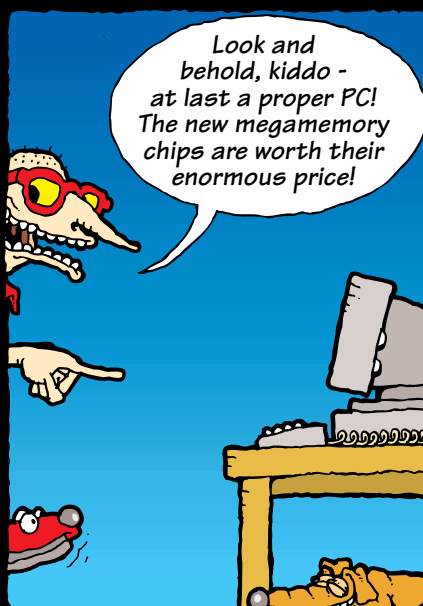
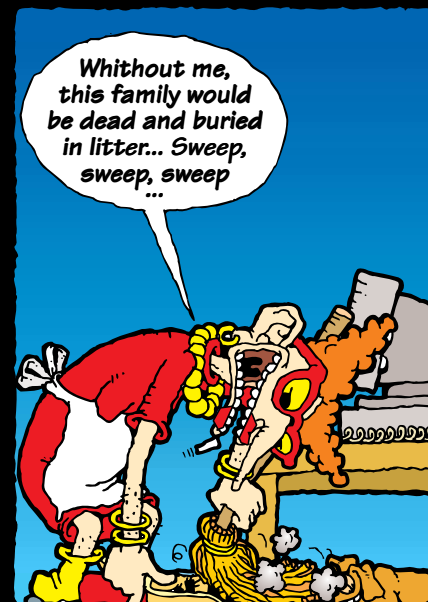
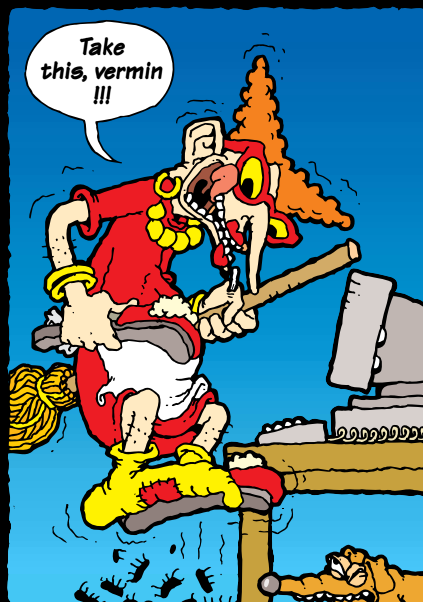
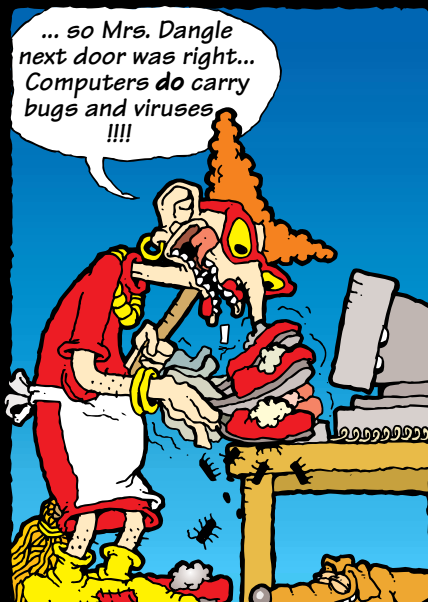
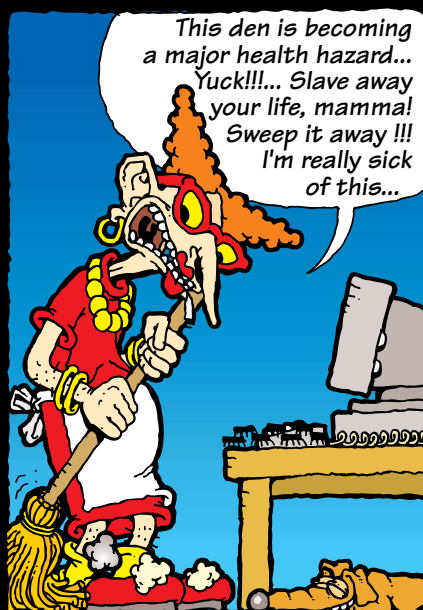


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Today's episode:
Megabug



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