FLOWERS OF EVIL
LOVE - LIFE - REBELLION
Summer 2015, a suburb in eastern Helsinki, mostly inhabited by immigrants. A riot breaks out, as a Finnish father is hospitalized after experiencing police brutality. Our narrative in the movie is in reverse; the actual riot ends our story. As our movie begins, the suburban unrest hasn’t broken out yet but the restlessness is there; under the surface. Our story focuses on SIPE; JUNO’s half-brother. It is hard for him to accept the recent development. Sipe’s wish is a better future for his brother; end of alienation; new opportunities in life. Juno is totally passive in his lack of hope for a better tomorrow. Father Arttu, mother Laura and Sipe are trying to encourage Juno to study, to work, to move out of the suburbs. But Juno is alienated; totally given up hope. The mistakes and overreactions, often unintentional, of the authorities end up in an explosive outburst of violence and frustration in the suburbs. The story is inspired by the riots in Stockholm in 2012.
The idea for the film came to me from the Stockholm riots in 2012. I began writing in 2013 the day I read about a 18-year-old boy being shot by his best friend over a 125€ drug deal gone bad in Laajasalo Helsinki. This event inspired me to do research on the multicultural and vivid life in the suburbs of Helsinki. While writing, I interviewed and met over a hundred teenagers and several social workers to dig out the truth of the life in Helsinki. The script evolved even during the filming with new incidents and things happening around us. Not because of the new wave of immigration but because of the lack of social support for years in Finland - Helsinki now has two generations of delacted youth looking for a way out of crime, violence and poverty. I also found out that the people living in the suburbs have much less racist opinions than rest of Finland. Majority of the native Finns felt that immigration had actually helped the environment to become more colorful and positive. This was later also mentioned in several academic studies I read while researching the topic.

The majority of the filming was done in the Eastern Helsinki suburbs Kontula, Jakomäki and Pihlajisto. Everything was shot on locations and no sets were used.

None of young actors were professionals. I aimed for a documentary feel and felt it was vital to only cast people who have actually lived in suburbs and experienced the life in there. The casting process took 6 months and I auditioned over 490 teenagers that all had a background in the living environment of Eastern Helsinki.

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