

THE PAUL STREET BOYS PLAYING WITH MARBLES EINSTAND



S3 T2
L2



This is the second part of a story.
Read it and then... recreate it!



Take notes of the most important informations from the text!

Your notes might be Mindmap, Table Drawing, etc.

Einstand

“Yesterday in the museum, they did EINSTAND again!”

„Who did it?”

„Why, those Pásztor boys.”

The silence that followed was ominous. It may be well to explain here the meaning of an einstand. It is a peculiarly typical term used by the children of Budapest. Whenever a brazenly fearless youngster discovers boys more timid than himself playing marbles or similar outdoor games, and desires to disrupt such games, he thunders: EINSTAND. This ugly Teutonic word indicates that the physically stronger boy regards the marbles of the other to be his rightful loot, and he is ready to employ force against all resistance. EINSTAND, therefore, means a declaration of war. It is likewise a terse and unmistakable way of proclaiming a state of siege; the right of force, of the fist, of brigandage.

Csele was first to speak up. A shudder ran through the sensitive Csele as he said: „An einstand, did you say”?

„Yes,” corroborated Nemeček, his courage mounting at the realization of the deep effect produced by his information.

Then Geréb burst forth. „We can’t put up with this any longer! I have long been in favor

of doing something about it, but Boka pulls a face at every suggestion. If we do nothing, they are apt to give us a drubbing, too.”

Csónakos placed two fingers in his mouth to indicate that he was about to whistle with joy. He was ready to join every revolution. But Boka grabbed his hand.

„Don’t deafen me,” he remonstrated. Then, in all seriousness, he asked the little blond: „How did it all happen?”

„The einstand, you mean?”

„Yes. When and where?”

„Yesterday afternoon in the museum.”

By „museum” was meant the lawn surrounding that public institution.

„Well then, suppose you tell us the whole story, exactly how everything happened. We must know the truth, if we are to do anything about it.”

Nemeček became excited at the thought of being the central character in an incident of great importance. Such distinction was rarely his lot. To most people, little Nemeček was thin air. Like the figure one in arith-metics, he neither multiplied nor divided things. No one ever paid much attention to him. He was an insignificant, lean and weak-kneed youngster. It was probably this very inferiority which made him an ideal victim. Now he began to tell his tale, and the rest of the boys put their heads together.

„It was like this” he said. „After luncheon we went out to the museum. I mean Weisz, Richter, Kolnay, Barabás and myself. First we thought of playing baseball in Eszterházy Street, but the ball belongs to the boys of the real-school and they wouldn’t give it to us. Then Barabás suggested that we go to the museum to roll marbles by the wall. And all of us did play marbles against the wall.

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Everyone had a chance to roll a marble and the fellow whose ball struck one already rolled took the whole pot.

The game had gone around several times. There must have been at least fifteen marbles at the wall. I think two of them were glassies. Suddenly we heard Richter yell: 'That finishes it, here come the Pásztor boys!' The Pásztor boys were just coming around the corner, with hands stuck in their pockets and their heads down low. They came so slowly that all of us got scared. What difference did it make that we were five against the two of them? They are strong enough to lick ten of us. And, anyway, there's no use counting us as five because, in a pinch, Kolnay always runs away. So does Barabás. There are only three of us, at best. I myself may decide to run away, too. That leaves only two. But what good would it do if all five of us tried to run away? Those Pásztor boys are the best runners at the museum. They'd catch us in no time.

So, as I say, they kept coming nearer and nearer and had their eyes on the marbles all the time. Said I to Kolnay: 'They seem to have taken a liking to our marbles.' Weisz was the smartest of us because he had said right away: 'They're coming, all right. There, einstand in the air!' Honestly, I didn't think they would hurt us, because we had never bothered them.

And at first they really didn't do anything to us. They only watched the game. Then Kolnay whispered to me: 'Let's stop now.' And I said: 'I should say not, not right after you've rolled a blank! It's my turn. If I win, we'll stop.' Meanwhile, Richter had to roll, but I saw his hand tremble with fear. He kept one eye on the Pásztors and, of course, he missed. But the Pásztors did not budge. They only stood there with hands stuck into their pockets.

Then I rolled. It was a strike. That made me the winner of all the marbles. I was about to go over to gather them up. There must have been about thirty in all. Just then one of the Pásztor boys jumped in front of me. It was the younger one, and he cried 'EINSTAND!' I turned my head and saw Kolnay and Barabás beating it away. Weisz stood near the wall. He was very pale.

Richter was deliberating what to do. I tried to reason with them. I remember saying: 'Excuse me, but you have no right to this.' By this time, the older Pásztor had nearly finished picking up the marbles and putting them in his pocket. The younger one grabbed the front of my jacket and shouted: 'Didn't you hear me say EINSTAND?' After that, of course, I didn't say another word. Weisz began to bawl. Kolnay and Kende peeped back from around the corner of the museum to see what was happening. And the Pásztor boys picked up all the marbles. Then, without another murmur, they went away. That's all."

„It's unheard of!" said Geréb in indignation.

„It's highway robbery!" This was Csele's opinion.

Csónakos blew another shrill blast to indicate that the air was full of gunpowder.

Boka stood still, thinking hard. Everyone was watching him. All of them were anxious to know what Boka would have to say about these grievances; they had been in the air for months, and Boka had consistently refused to take them seriously. But on this occasion, the glaring injustice of it, as related by Nemeček, moved Boka too.