

THE PAUL STREET BOYS HECTOR GIVES SIGNAL



S3 T4
L2



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

Hector gives signal



Take notes of the most important informations from the text!

Your notes might be Mindmap, Table Drawing, etc.

At half past two that afternoon there was not yet a soul on the grund. On a horse blanket in front of the shack lay the Slovakian watchman, sound asleep. He always slept by day, for at night he had to prowl about among the stacks of lumber; often he would also sit up in one of the fortresses, blinking at the moon. Just now the saw was buzzing and the small black chimney belched forth its snow-white cloudlets of steam, while kindling wood was dribbling into the big van.

Shortly after half past two, the Paul Street gate creaked on its hinges, admitting Nemeček. Out of his pocket he drew a large slice of bread, gazed about and, after convincing himself that there was no one present, fell to munching the crust of his bread. But before doing so, he carefully bolted the gate; one of the most stringent regulations of the grund made it an imperative duty for all those who entered to shut the door. Violation of this rule was punished by solitary confinement within the fortress dungeon. Military discipline in general was very strict.

Nemeček seated himself on a rock, munched his bread and waited for the others to arrive. It was a day fraught with great expectations for those of the grund. It was in the air, so to speak, that big things were in store, and there was no denying the moment Nemeček felt very proud of being a member of the grund, of the famous association of Paul Street Boys. For a while he continued to nibble at his bread then, feeling somewhat bored, went roaming among the woodpiles. Meandering about in this fashion, he suddenly came upon the watchman's dog.

„Here, Hector!” he called; but Hector manifested no inclination to return this amiable greeting. All that he deigned was a fleeting wag of the tail, which in canine circles has somewhat the same significance as the tilting by human beings of their hats while hurrying by. With that he sprinted away, barking viciously. Nemeček dashed after him.

Hector stopped at one of the wood stacks and continued to bark vehemently. The stack

was one of those on which were perched the boys' fortresses. On top of this stack was a citadel built of logs; on it was a slender stick, from the tip of which fluttered a tiny red-green bunting. Hector leapt about the fortress and barked incessantly.

„What's the trouble?” said the sandy lad to the dog, for there was a great friendship between them – perhaps because Hector was the only other private in their army.

Nemeček peered at the fortress above. He saw no one, but felt certain that someone was stumbling about up there. And so he began to clamber up, his legs braced against protruding logs. He was about midway when he clearly heard someone shifting pieces of wood directly overhead. His heart began to thump and suddenly he felt an urge to turn back. But looking down, he saw Hector below, and that gave him fresh courage.

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Don't be afraid, Nemeček", he said to himself and continued cautiously to climb upward. At every landing he thought it necessary to encourage himself. Over and over again he said: „Don't be scared Nemeček." And he reached the top of the woodpile. There he murmured a final „Don't be afraid, Nemeček". He was about to step across the narrow fortress wall, but the foot he raised suddenly remained suspended in the air. So frightened was he that he merely exclaimed: „Jesus!" Pell-mell he clambered back down along the parapets. Upon reaching the ground, his heart palpitated furiously. He looked up to the fortress. There he saw, standing beside the flag, his right foot resting on a rampart, Feri Áts – terrible Feri Áts – arch-foe of the Paul Street Boys and leader of their rival gang. His scarlet, baggy blouse fluttered in the wind. There was a smirk on his face as he quietly said: „Don't be afraid, Nemeček." But Nemeček really was afraid, so much so that he ran away. The black dog dashed after him and together they wound their way among the woodpiles, back toward, the ground. On wings of wind followed Feri Áts' taunt: „Don't be afraid, Nemeček!" By the time Nemeček ventured to look back, Feri Áts' crimson blouse was no longer in sight. Moreover, the banner atop the fortress had likewise vanished. Feri Áts carried off that bit of red-green bunting, which Csele's sister had sewn. He himself disappeared among the stacks of wood. Perhaps he made his exit through Maria Street near the steam-saw, or he may have been hiding somewhere with his cronies, the Pásztor boys. The thought that these dreaded brothers might be nearby sent a chill down the back of Nemeček. He, above all others, knew full well the meaning of an encounter with those brothers. As for Feri Áts, it was their first real meeting. It frightened him considerably, yet, in all honesty, he felt strongly attracted to the lad, who was a handsome, sturdy youth, broad-shouldered, tanned: the loose crimson blouse splendidly matched the colour of his complexion. It lent him an appearance of combativeness. There was something Garibaldi-esque in that crimson blouse. As a matter of fact, all members of Feri Áts's group, who were based in the Botanical Garden, wore crimson blouses, aping their leader.

Chapter two (page 25–26)