

The Paul Street Boys

List of Scenes

Two groups of young boys, the Paul Street boys and the Redshirts, are struggling for an empty lot, the “Grund.”

Act 1

Scene 1

On a gleaming spring day, when it is better not to be in school, Mr Rácz is carrying out an experiment in Chemistry class, while the children are sending spitballs with messages to each other. The first musical number can be heard, a song that talks about spring and that the boys believe that the world is theirs.

Little Nemecek tells that “einstand” has happened: that is, the Pásztor Brothers took his marbles, which is recalled in the next song “Einstand, brother!”

Scene 2

In the street the boys are sneezing from taking snuff.

Scene 3

Feri Áts, leader of the Redshirts, steals the flag from a pile of wood in the Grund, which was observed by the shocked private, Nemecek. When Feri spots him, he just says: “Don’t be afraid, Nemecek!”

The others arrive and talk about the stolen flag. The “Song of Stupor” is sung. Considering the situation, Boka, the leader of the Paul Street boys announces martial law. They vote for the new leader, and then start planning how they should retrieve their flag. Together they sing “Long live the Grund!”

Scene 4

In the classroom Mr Rácz confiscates items from the naughty group of students, the Putty Club, such as their marbles, the seal of their secret club and of course their putty.

Meanwhile little Nemeček scratches fresh putty from the newly glazed window frame, which saves the club. They sing the “Song of the Putty”.

Nemeček follows a suspicious fellow, Geréb.

Scene 5

In the botanic garden little Nemeček, Boka, the leader and Csónakos, the strongest boy, sneak onto the island of the Redshirts. We see how the latter ones exercise in a disciplined manner like soldiers. The Paul Street boys are shocked to see that their mate, Geréb appears among them, and betrays the Paul Street boys.

Boka and his fellows hide in a palmhouse nearby, and Nemeček has to hide in a bath full of cold water so that the Redshirts would not find them. Finally they manage to escape from the island.

Scene 6

On the Grund Geréb tries to bribe the guard, Janó to give the plot to the Redshirts. The Putty Club members arrive, but Nemeček – disobeying the Club rules – rushes away to let Boka know about Geréb’s betrayal. The Club judges the private to be a disobeying coward, and writes his name in lowercase in their Club Booklet.

Hearing the news, Boka for the first time has given way to despair. He is crying incapably.

On the island of the Redshirts it turns out that the red-green flag of the Paul Street boys has disappeared. The foot prints suggest a person with small feet. Little Nemeček is watching the Redshirts from top of a tree, and at one point he boldly climbs down among the enemies. He looks into their eyes and states that he has got the flag.

At the end of Act 1 Nemeček’s song “It was great” is sung.

Act 2

Scene 1

The Paul Street boys are preparing to defend the Grund. Two important characters of the Putty Club, the always arguing Barabás and Kolnay sing an argument song “Mortus Gittus”, and talk about the tasks in connection with the putty.

Boka musters his army, and they sing together the most popular votive song of the show: "We are the Grund".

Geréb is apologizing by bringing back the flag to the Grund, and he would like to be readmitted among the Paul Street boys. Boka forgives, but will not admit him. In the duet "You get lost" they sing about their attitude to honour, faith and betrayal.

Scene 2

In the street Boka and Nemeček in a feverish vision sing "Trees are whispering", from which we learn how ill Nemeček is: he has almost lost consciousness, he is visioning the Pásztor bros' einstand and his grief that his name has been written in lowercase.

Scene 3

In the classroom everybody is preparing for the battle. Realizing their mistake, the Putty Club wants to change Nemeček's name to capital letters. Mr Rác arrives and asks what is going on, for which one of the guys replies: "state of emergency".

Scene 4

The battle starts on the Grund between the defending Paul Street boys and the offending Redshirts. Feri Áts is about to gain the flag of the Paul Street boys from the pile of wood, when the high fevered Nemeček (having escaped from his sickbed) falls on him, thus saving both the flag and the Paul Street boys and the Grund.

Scene 5

The Putty Club decides to apologize to Nemeček – of course arguing.

Boka is on his own, on the Grund, and meets Janó, the guard, who lets him know that they won in vain: in the near future a new block of flats will be built on the plot. Therefore, their playground will be taken away for ever.

Boka meets Feri Áts, who is also intending to visit Nemeček in his sickbed to give his marbles back. Nemeček dies in Boka's arms, and the delegation of the Putty Club is late. Boka sends the boys home, but they will not go. They sing "We are the Grund" instead, which closes the show and honours Nemeček.