

## **The Battle of the Panthers and the Pigeons**

The fame of Gyelenés' pioneers had flown as far as the fast-winged postal pigeons they raised. The members of the guard so known for working together trained their pigeons with great zeal until one day....

...a trumpet sounded. A delegation had arrived to the Pigeon Guards from the neighboring town of Ügöd. It was the members of the Black Panther Guard who smartly stepped through the gate with such serious faces.

We've brought a declaration of war! With a powerful voice the older Black Panther read aloud: - Sunday morning we'll be expecting you in Ügöd, but not for a pigeon roast - we're expecting a manly fight. We hope you won't run away from the fight.

Us, run away from the black cats? - shouted Miki Kósa as he jumped up. But Bandi Kerekes, the cool leader of the Pigeon Guard, immediately waved him down. Then he turned to the delegates: - The Pigeons accept your challenge, let's talk about the details.

And the day for the great battle between the Panthers and the Pigeons arrived. It was dawn. In Ügöd most people were still asleep. A boy snuck along the edge of the village with two postal pigeons on his shoulder. He was headed toward the school. It was Zoli Vasadi, the captain of the guards of the Pigeons.

In the schoolyard, the Black Panther's "stronghold", not a soul was stirring. Zoli swung himself to the top of the woodshed, for from here it was child's play to reach the attic, but at that moment...

Hector, the school custodian's dog, jumped out barking wildly. What would happen next? Would he wake the neighbors?

But no problem! Zoli sacrifices his food which Hector, it seems, respects more than he does himself. And the ever clever second-in-command quickly climbs through the attic window.

It's a perfect place for a spy. From here he can both see and hear the Black Panthers, and can send his spy-reports to the Pigeon Guard in no time by postal pigeon.

Most of the Pigeon Guard is in the depths of the woods conferring about strategy. Pista Kovács speaks: Boys! I've figured that the pigeons will take three minutes to fly to the big coop from the school in Ügöd. It'll take Karcsi ten minutes from there to get the message here by "bike".

The wary Pigeons, however, have forgotten to be careful this time. Look, there are the Black Panthers' scouts lying in the bushes. Now that they've heard everything they'd like to sneak away and take the news home. But at that very moment...

Béci Szabó, the best spotter in the Pigeon Guard, jumps up. Boys - he shouts - something cracked over there! - You're always imagining things - says Sanyi Kiss to him, but Béci has already rushed away.

Yikes, a snake! - comes the terrified shout. Béci was so scared by a tame racer that he fell right into a puddle.

But by the time the others arrive he has already gotten back onto his feet, and now they all run towards the bush. The two Black Panthers have their battle plans ready. The thinner of the two suddenly jumps up and runs among the trees making a great deal of noise. He wants to get the enemy to follow him, and they do!

Béci, galloping at the front of the pack, shouts out the enemy's number: - 37-63! Feri Csorba, the clever scout from the Panthers, pantingly comes to a halt.

At that moment Miki, who loves a fight, throws himself on the enemy - Stop! - shouts Bandi at Miki - I've already told you not to be a hero with your fists. - The Pigeons encircle the captured Panther who gives his word as a pioneer that he will not try to escape.

In the meanwhile the other scout hiding in the bushes has slowly slipped over logs and climbed away to tell his comrades about the spy hiding in the attic.

Attentive Zoli can easily hear the Panthers' battle plans through the attic window, and he writes a message immediately – The big news is....(innen szoveg hianyzik)

Just a few minutes later the news arrives at the Guards' pigeon coop in Gyelénes. Karcsi has the letter and takes it to his buddies waiting in the forest.

But the Panthers have something of their own to be proud of. ....(hianyzik szoveg)

The Pigeons, however, have started their maneuvers. They're moving amongst the houses at Ügöd when a shout comes from the artesian well - 37-94, 56-28. A... (hianyzik szoveg)

And in the next moment the Pigeons have surrounded the bridge in front of City hall. The Panthers who have been told to surrender come out in surprise. They can't figure out who might have betrayed their battle plans.

Around the school at the same time strange things are happening. When Zoli let the second pigeon go, two good-for-nothings noticed that a gorgeous postal pigeon was flying out of the attic. Well, there must be a pigeon's nest up there! But how can they get at it? The Panther Guard is encamped in the schoolyard. Then they have a clever idea.

The first chats with the custodian while the second steals the key to the attic. Afterwards they search for the pigeon's nest in great haste. Zoli hid behind the chimney.

In the meanwhile an unexpected event happens in the schoolyard. The Panthers' scout, who had escaped from the forest, arrives after a long, tortuous trip. He shouts when he reaches the door: - There's an enemy in the attic. The Pigeons' spy is sending messages from there!

Traitors! - shouted the Panthers when they found the good-for-nothings looking for pigeons' nests in the attic, and they threw themselves on them.

The poor good-for-nothings kicked and struggled in vain. They were tied up and shoved into the coal cellar. (They won't go hunting for pigeons' nests for some time now.)

The great battle was carried out in the schoolyard. Only three warriors are left to each Guard. The battle is not over yet. Two Panthers lie on their stomachs behind the pile of bricks, watching things with a periscope. It seems that the Pigeons don't dare to come closer.

But Miki jumps bravely from behind the fence and covers the periscope with a bunch of green leaves. The Pigeons quickly rush over and read the Panthers' numbers. They believed the battle was over...

...but at that moment a loud cry was heard: the captain of the Panthers who was hiding in the tree read two of the Pigeons' numbers, and only Miki was able to crouch down in time. Then, however, something unexpected occurred.

A sharp voice rang out from the attic: - 39-83! - Zoli read out the number of the surprised leader of the Panthers. The Pigeons had won.

At that very moment the church's alarm bell sounded. There is a fire! Feri Csorba's home is burning. People rush toward the flames, and the pioneers, who had just been fighting, ran with them.

They tried to put the fire out with buckets of water. The well was at the bottom of the garden, so the Panthers and the Pigeons made a bucket brigade to pass on the buckets of water. They really helped try to put the fire out.

Suddenly a wind arose. The flames spread to the neighbor's house. The Pioneers went where they were needed.

Oh! My little canary is going to be burned alive! - wept an old woman. Miki, paying no attention to the danger, rushed into the burning house.

The very next moment you could hear the ceiling falling in. The horrified cries drowned the sounds of crackling and burning. Feri of the Panthers jumped through the window into the house.

It was as if each second took hours to pass. Nerves were strained to the cracking point.

Then Feri appeared in the window. He was helping his 'enemy', Miki, who had collapsed. The men helped the two boys through the window.

The firemen from the neighboring village arrived as well. It seemed as if the wind had died down too. They were able to beat back the flames.

A week has passed since that Sunday full of excitement. Panthers and Pigeons line up in the little forest. We're proud of you! - said the group leader, János Szabó - because you stood you've passed the most difficult test of all, the test of Pioneer honour.

Bandi Kerekes, leader of the Pigeons, said goodbye to the Panthers after the celebration with the words: - We'll be expecting you in Gyelénes, and for another battle! - We'll be there, and we'll return the favour - shouted the Panthers. And their Guard flags waved happily in the evening breeze.

The End.