

In the meadow

By: Janosz Korczak

If I can learn of an adult's character – so to speak – by watching them play cards, it is possible to decipher the character of a child by watching them play football.

See young Gancher's high kick! – swift, nimble - there is life in him for ten! – light hand movement – Neither effort nor exceptional swing is noticed, and the ball is raised up to the clouds. And when he needs to catch: he follows the ball with a steady gaze, fully concentrating, vigilant to leap, He runs - and the ball falls by itself into his hands. - This is how he is in everything: when he plays, he plays with all his heart; When he listens, he is all attention. - Once he came to the table all scratched: two fingernail marks on his forehead and another on his cheek.

- And what happened to you?

- I fell down.

- Did you get beaten up?

- I fell down.

- Listen, my boy: I will not ask you who scratched you, but tell the truth: were you fighting?

- Yes

Whenever differences of opinion arise during a game, he lets go immediately.

- "skinning"? - Ok, let it be so: next time I will smash the ball in the face and there will be no "skinning".

- And you, Gancher, what grade do you deserve in behavior? - "Good". - and why not "very good"? Because I was in a fight. - And why were you in a fight? - because he called me a gypsy. - And why did he call you a gypsy? - Because I'm black. - So, why are you angry? – If once than I'm not angry; But he shouted all the time!

There is some kind of royal pride in this Jewish boy, one that cannot be defined...

I sit by and watch.

A young man sat down beside me - a second - a third - and a conversation on various topics develops.

- Sir, why do you write and smoke on the Sabbath?



- The explanation is quite simple, children. I went to a school where you had to write on the Sabbath. I was actually considering the question of whether to write in your presence or not. And I thought to myself that it would be better not to lie to you. I want you to tell me the truth: if you do something wrong, come and tell; I will not be angry. And how will it look if you tell me the truth and I myself lie?

- But because of this your sin is greater.

- Why is my sin greater?

- because a sin done when no one not sees it is only half a sin, and this way – it is already considered two sins.

- But now you already know that I write on Shabbat?

- Whatever have been done, there is nothing to do anymore.

- Well, I'll rethink about it. But it seems to me that I would prefer two sins and not lie to you.

Poor children! Asking to reduce my responsibility before God...

