

Toman Brod With His Brother Hanus



This is me and my brother Hanus as small children. The photo was taken in the Langhans photo studio in Prague in 1931. My brother is four and I'm two.

I think that my brother and I were this normal pair. Sometimes we fought like cats and dogs, like all siblings sometimes fight or egg each other on.

But we of course also played ping-pong together, soccer, went swimming in the summer, skated, I really do think that we were a normal pair.

We neither loved each other a lot, nor did we hate each other. Well, of course in childhood it's a different relationship than in adulthood, so maybe that relationship would have changed.

Back then I was jealous of Hanus, he was older, stronger, so I tried to keep up with him. We had mutual friends, lived together in one bedroom, fought over books and competed who would read it first...

We were passionate sports nuts, we were soccer fans, I a Sparta fan and Hanus a Slavia fan.

For sure Hanus had a better disposition, for I was a terrible, annoying child. I was a poor loser, even today, when I lose at chess, it bothers me, but if in those days I for example lost in some children's sport competition, I was really a very unpleasant child.

While he was prudent, would try to calm me down in various possible ways, that it's only a game, and so after a time the anger would leave me. Hanus, I think, was that contemplative, scientific type.

Here I have one of his books of composition exercises that he wrote when he was 15 years old.

They're these philosophical, essay-like ponderings. Even back then one could see that he was a contemplative person, that he was interested in the future.

Already as a boy, he was interested in politics and political-historical things; I think that in this respect he was quite serious for his age, and also in this respect stood quite above other boys with his interests and his knowledge.

Then, during the war, when he was 16, 17, he was perhaps part of some Communist cell in Terezin.