

FLUORESCENCE

UNIVERSITY OF BIHAĆ - PEDAGOGICAL FACULTY - DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS' MAGAZINE

Featuring short stories, essays and poems by:

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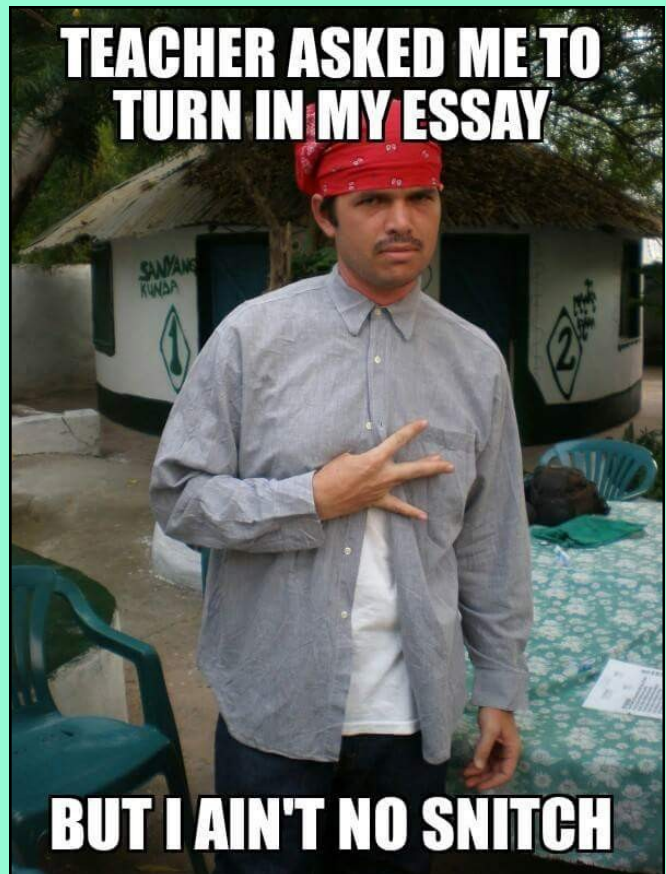
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UNIVERSITY OF BIHAĆ

HOW TO WIN ARGUMENTS

The backfire effect is a phenomenon which occurs in an argument in which one side tries to argue against the other side's beliefs using contradicting evidence, but ends up reinforcing their belief instead of convincing them otherwise. The reason for this is, when people see evidence which denies their world view, the parts of the brain responsible for reasoning and logic shut down, and parts that handle the fight portion of "fight or flight" decisions light up. Once a discussion turns into a fracas, the only thing the brain wants to do is win, which in turn results in unreasonable behavior. To avoid these futile disputes, the recommended way to productively end any reasonable, or "win" any unreasonable argument, is to ask the other side to explain their view in depth. Usually, people confuse their familiarity with things for understanding of the inner workings of those things, and realize this when asked to explain them in detail which, will hopefully result in disillusionment. This form of discussion is also called the Socratic method, after Socrates, one of the founders of Western philosophy and it is a dialectic which stimulates critical thinking and open mindedness rather than conflict.

Edin Veladžić



A Guidebook to My Country

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country located on the Balkan Peninsula. Sarajevo is the capital and largest city. In the central and eastern interior of the country the geography is mountainous, suitable for winter sports. B&H has its sea as well but it's only 20 kilometres of coastline on the Adriatic Sea surrounding the beautiful city of Neum.

Although climate is suitable for both winter and summer activities, those are not the reasons why somebody should come here. The true beauty lies in the cultural heritage and historical sites located all over the country. Some of the places you should visit are: obviously Sarajevo, the "Olympic City" or "European

Jerusalem", the cultural, tourist and commercial center of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mostar and it's "Stari most"(Old Bridge), which is a reconstruction of a 16th century Ottoman bridge that crosses the river Neretva, Visegrad, location of UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Mehmed Paša Sokolovic Bridge, Bihać and the waterfalls of the river Una within Una National Park, Jajce's Pliva lakes and waterfalls and many more.

I would advise anybody to come here, as it's very cheap and easily affordable, and at the same time it has many wonderful things to offer.

Mensur Veladžić

A LIFE HISTORY OF MY GRANDMOTHER



I'm sure she never wanted to be alone. But we all end up like that in the course of life. Nevertheless, she showed me the great spark of life and what it may bring. Through her stories, of course. I remember the weekends, so sunny and alluring, she'd sit on her usual spot, her favourite chair, tell me to sit on her right while tapping the vintage couch and smiled before she unwrapped yet another dance of words and imagination. I've lost count of how many times she had told me the same story, but it never fails to amaze me. From the very few photos she had shown me, I've noticed how much I look like her, the lips, the eyes, the hair... I even started to call her my doppelganger. She would always start the story by saying, "Oh, what a beautiful life it was!", sigh, stop for a moment to think about it and admire it even more.

"I did it all, I lived, I lived, what else can I ask for?", she would say. There are many aspects of the story and different ways of telling them, but from the way she is talking about it and from the great spark in her eye while talking about it, I've noticed that she likes to talk about the great love she felt for my grandpa the most. He died a couple of years ago, but she wasn't sad as it was expected. She would say, "I am glad that I am still alive, so I can spread the word and share with people the stories about him and make sure that he will not be forgotten and tell

them what a great, amazing man he was."

When I say that I am her doppelganger, I hope we don't just look alike. I hope that someday I will experience that kind of love that she felt for him and he felt for her. I thought that love fades away after a long time of being together, but they've always looked so madly in love with each other, as she would say, a lifetime wouldn't be enough. They met so spontaneously. It was a spring day, she was wearing a floaty white dress with a flower crown on top of her head. He noticed her across the street and ran to her to ask for her name. It was so simple back then. Today, there are no men who would approach a girl without fear of rejection, but there is still hope that I will find my Prince Charming.

It was, indeed, love at first sight. They were young, free and unquestionably and unconditionally in love with each other and I fell in love with their love. Today, the highlight of her life are the weekends, when her little balls of joy come, her grandchildren and her children, to see my father's eyes, that same deep brown eyes my grandpa had. And today, my grandma lives alone, waiting for sun to rise and to set in her little rocking chair.

Jasmina Demirović

FATES WORSE THAN DEATH

When you first think about death you think it is the worst thing that will ever happen to you. You think this because when you die, you suddenly stop existing. Your heart stops beating, you stop breathing and you lose consciousness. You are basically no more. All that is left of you are the memories you left behind. When you think about all this, you have to admit that death is



would come as relief from your pain and suffering.

Another fate worse than death is living in slavery. Being a slave means you have to listen and do everything you are told by your master. If you resist you will be severely punished. Living like that is horrible because you have no choices, no opportunities and no rights. You are not

pretty scary but is it the worst thing that can happen to you?

I believe there are more worse fates than death, like being completely paralyzed. A person in that state cannot move at all and in some cases they can't speak either. They spend their days lying down, unable to do anything. They are completely dependent on the people around them. Living life in that state to me is worse than death because when you think about it, you are just living to die. Life in that state really has no meaning and death

looked at as a human being but as an object whose life means nothing. You are forced to do what you are told even if you don't want to and you constantly live in fear, agony and humiliation. Living like this is worse than death because you are not living your life, you are not living the way you want to but the way you are told to. You do not have your own freedom and without that your life has no meaning.

Dalila Medić

Remembering my last birthday



My last birthday was in December. It was the best one of my life. All day was so special. In the morning my wife woke me up with her sweet voice: "Happy birthday!". I didn't expect anything but there was a surprise. On the kitchen table there was a heart shaped cake which she made especially for me. That was enough to make me happy but after that she told me that we have to go somewhere. I told her „You are so mysterious“. We got dressed and went out. During the trip I asked „Where are we going?“ but she didn't tell me. Finally, the trip ended.

I saw a small helicopter in front of us. The pilot was waiting for us. I couldn't believe that this was happening. We sat in the helicopter. I've never been more excited. We flew

over our city. We talked: „I lived in that building long time ago, that was my primary school, my friend lives there, I proposed you there“. It is the city of my memories. At that moment I thought there is no better gift than flying over it but after a few minutes I looked at my wife and realized that the best gift is from God and that gift is she.

After that we came home and some friends visited us. We talked to them about our flying and cake. So, they helped us to eat the cake .

It was a day that I will always remember, not just because of flying but because I realized how rich I am.

Emir Dizdarić

Midnight and I'm not famous yet

There will be moonlight and the piano will be singing to me my last lullaby when everything ends. A fine prelude, the touch of all notes so gentle and innocent will remind me one last time I actually was what I've always wanted to be whether the world saw it or not. I glare upon the greatest gifts God has given to this world, the great hearts that are and were weighing one pound more because of the story they had to tell to the world. I look and I swoon, my soul opens its petals, they flourish, but what of that? I am left with a feeling, I am left with a longing and nothing in the world can fill that hole until something great comes along.

Why are dreams demanded to be dreamt but made so hard to reach? Too many thorns in the garden only to reach the single rose at the very middle of it. What of so much desire, so many wishes, and too much soaring in the clouds when most of us bleed for having set their eyes on stars that are far too high? My journey had begun long ago, I am but a pebble on the pavement and some have already conquered and have their own little universe. What of this life with its sudden pianos and fortes? It is terrifying, how a thousand things can make us sad, but nothing can make us truly happy.

The shining knight is slowly falling to his slumber, my shadow awaits me. It questions, it taps my shoulder, it says good times will come. I now glare at the night's shimmering companion – it's midnight and I still cannot hear the pleasant intro of a fine prelude.

Vanja Čelan



PEOPLE ARE FOCUSED ON MONEY



Nowadays it is often said that we live in a materialistic world, that money plays an important role in our lives, and that it is valued too highly. My personal view is that some people are unbelievably money-oriented, but many of us know that there are more important things in our lives than money.

Firstly, money gives great opportunities; it can make our daily life comfortable. Everyone can get advanced technology tools which make life easier. But it seems to me that, because of this modern lifestyle, people lose contact with their relatives and become anti-social. For instance, modern generations use social network sites such as Facebook to share their feelings with others, but it is not enough to give your feelings to partner as well as you wish. As a result people get away from real life.

Secondly, some people believe that assets are the main factor in a modern society. However, I would argue that properties do not have great significance in common life. It could be beneficial to live well but property cannot buy people's love. Because of that in human life intense feelings are more worthwhile rather than possessions. Also, being loved is one of the main factors which make

life admirable. It is doubtless that there is nothing that could beat this feeling.

But unfortunately, the number of people who care just about materialistic things increases day by day. I think that there is nothing what people wouldn't do just in order to get some money. They accept all conditions and consequences. It is not rare to meet people who will betray their friends and family, even their own pride just to get some cash in return. People care only for their own interests and usually forget to help someone else. The sad side of the story is that people are losing those characteristics that make them human beings. Everything is just about money. People try to buy happiness, health, love, carier, intelligence, power, control, but they don't know that there is no money that could buy these things.

In conclusion, I am of the view that people must not pay much attention to money. It is not necessary to have more materialistic things in life to feel happiness to give or get love from others.

Amela Hamzić

READING THE MINDS OF YOUR FRIENDS

This topic for me is particularly interesting because, friends in my opinion are the brothers and sisters we choose on our own. We might not be related by blood with them, but there comes a time in life when we share more with them than we do with our actual family. There comes a time when you share everything with friends. Especially in the teenage period of life.

The difference between a family relationship and a friendship is that family is always there no matter what you say or do. You can't change who your family is. Your family members are always going to be what they are: mum, dad, brother, sister, aunt, uncle.....After all you are blood related.

With friendship it is a different story. If the friendship is over, the „brotherhood“ and „sisterhood“ with your friends is over. Friendships can be broken with or without a reason. If the friendship ends all of a sudden, you are going to want answers that you can't answer yourself. When did it actually happen? Why did it happen? How did you come into that situation, without being aware of it? In that situation, it would be easier to just get into your friends mind and read

it, wouldn't it?

If you haven't seen your friend for years because you had a fight, or he/she moved away, you are going to question yourself. Was the fight even necessary? Can things between be fixed? Will they ever be the same?

In case he/she moved away, there are also questions. Does he/she even remember me? Has he/she changed after all of the years? Is my friend still inside that a few years older person?

Wouldn't it be easier to just get inside of your friends head and get all of the answers, just to be sure?

Even if all of this questions were too much, and you had an opportunity to ask only one question and get only one answer directly out of your friends mind, wouldn't you want it? Just for that one question; When, and why did we become strangers with memories?

Merdžana Kekić



Report on environment



Not much is done to protect the environment in my country, but there is a progress. There were a few organizations that took actions like planting trees, cleaning rivers and protecting endangered species. But still, human consciousness about environment problems is not widespread and people don't seem to be specially interested in it. They don't understand the consequences of their actions and think that the planet can tolerate everything they do. It is a shame that our clean rivers and forests are starting to look like waste management. In my personal opinion, we should change laws if we can't change people's approach to environmental issues. We have to implement laws that will punish those who dispose garbage wherever they want. Most importantly, we have to try to reach the untouchable big companies that are polluting our land for greater cash flow. Our bad economy for our environment is a blessing in disguise, and not many things should be done to have a decent relationship with nature. Unfortunately, it seems that the punishment is the only way to get people to understand that the environmental issues are just as important as

social issues.

Pollution and climate change are our silent murderers, we may not notice them now, but in a few years or decades the planet will face horrible consequences, possibly some of them are going to be unfixable. Animals dying out, black holes in the ozone, melting of polar ice caps, high temperatures leading to bad crops which, again, leads to world hunger and starvation. These are only few problems that global warming will represent in the near future. Because of money and greed, people are shortsighted, they can't or don't want to see the later outcome. They don't understand that the only way to stop environmental problems is to stop exploiting natural resources... or at least ease their use and turn to alternative energy.

Luckily there are people who think this way and they fight for what's right. Meanwhile, we just have to hope that it won't be too late, and that people will finally realize that the Earth is the only planet they have.

Emir Ružnić

Internet

People say: "Internet makes everything better and faster." But I say Internet kills our creativity. These days kids don't think much with day our head because they know everything can be found on websites. We can't see many kids playing in the park because they are „too busy“ with playing games, posting and sharing on the Internet. But we can't blame them because our society functions that way, and if some kid would want to play they would be different from other children.

It is not only about children - adults do the same thing. Today when you go to grab some coffee with someone you just can't talk all the time without checking your Facebook even you know nothing has changed from the last time you check it and that was five minutes ago. We all are addicted and that's not healthy. We think that nothing has changed in our lives but when we look back we see that everything is different. Children don't play with each other, people don't interact and we do nothing to change even though we certainly should.

Selma Alešević



CHANGE

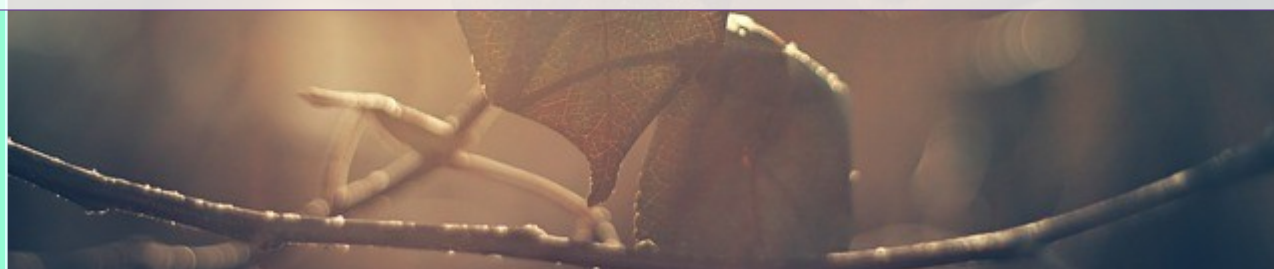
Sometimes I wonder why are people always doing the same thing everyday, and always the same routine, school, job, survive the day and go to bed, and than I realized that we have to change something. Everyday is another chance for a new beginning, maybe we can just run somewhere else, just go, forget about our past, and go away.

Everything around us is changing with the passage of time. Each individual gets a change to bring a change in his life. On the contrary, those who are not in favour of changing their lives, feel satisfied in their current circumstances. We need to think about our life, first of all it all starts with us, and everything else will be different. Life is full of surprises, and we need to accept that. I think that is really important. In my personal opinion change is the law of nature. The group of people who deny change are afraid of the after effects and

not ready to accept the challenges of life. Maybe on the end of this road, something better is waiting for us, I want to be sure about that, and fight for that. My life is full of change. Each year brings a new beginning.

They further argue that. in order to swiftly excel in your career and gain a respectable financial status, change is inevitable. "Some people spend their lives doing the same things and avoiding change. Other, however, think that change is always a good thing. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion." Some quotes can tell us about life, change, we need to be enough strong to accept that.

Ena Hošić



tsbtiibhwhii

Today is Saturday.
 Saturday should be an interesting day.
 But it is not. Because of rain.
 That inspires me. My thinking is on level 10000.
 I am thinking about everything.
 i am thinking about that famous Bosnian poet, Skender Kulenovic.
 because he lived in the house across mine.
 He died in 1978.
 Well, that was long time ago.
 He wrote amazing works such as "Vases", "Stećak", "Lost River"..
 I am wondering if he knew that he will become that important.
 I am wondering would everything be easier if we knew how the future will look like...or would it be even worse.

Edina Kartal

The Missed Chance

When I finished high school, I talked to my parents about college. They told me to go to Sarajevo or Vienna to study. I thought long about it, but I was so scared to be alone there. I know that in life, sooner or later we need to become independent, but I was afraid of that. I needed someone mine to be with me until I get used to some things, then would be easier, but no one was able to come with me. I enrolled in my city, college which I didn't want. I'm so sorry that I missed the opportunity to go somewhere else. I hope that next year, I'll enroll in something that I want in Vienna and I'll try not to be afraid.

Šejla Smlatić

A Letter from Provence

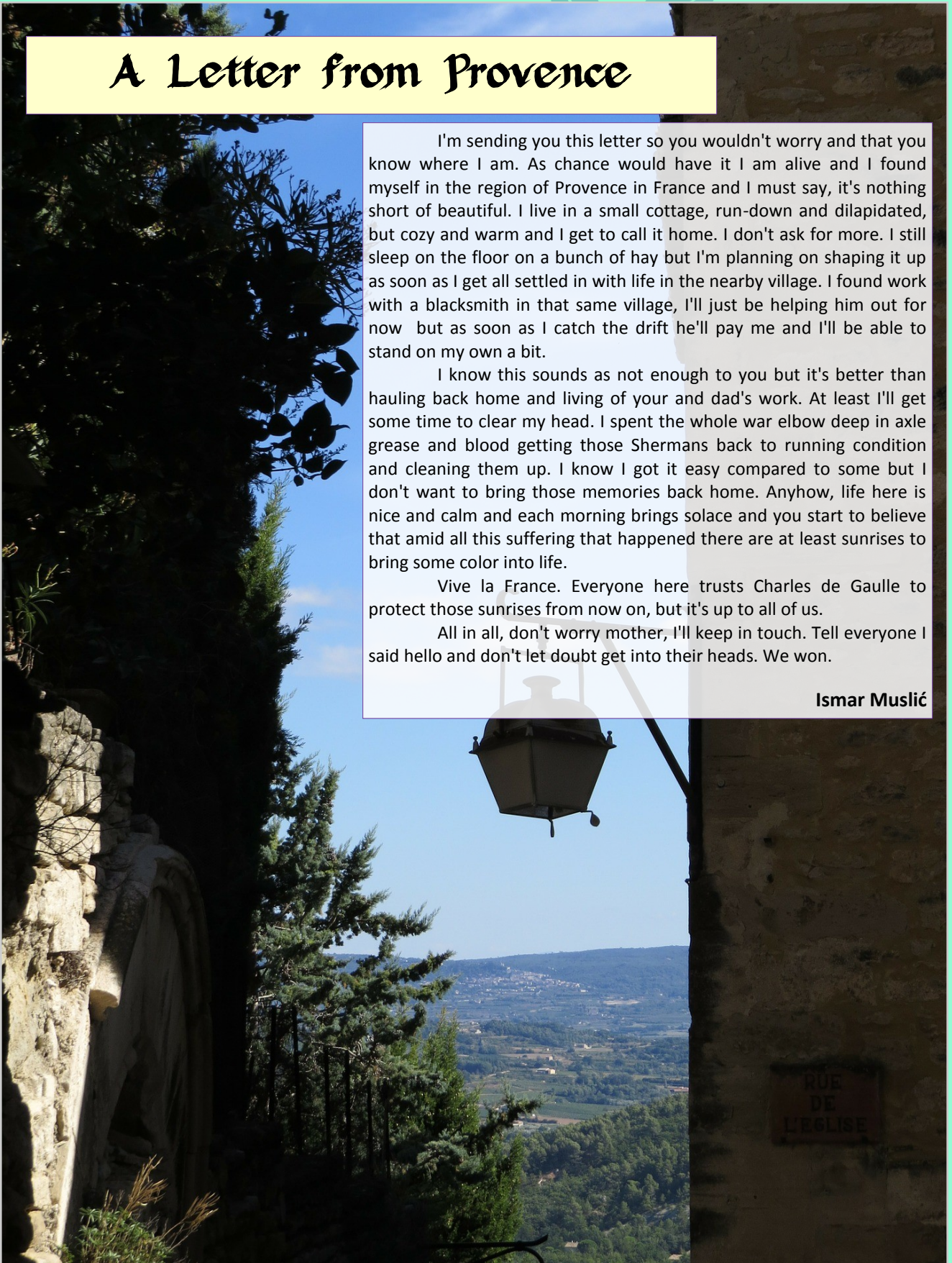
I'm sending you this letter so you wouldn't worry and that you know where I am. As chance would have it I am alive and I found myself in the region of Provence in France and I must say, it's nothing short of beautiful. I live in a small cottage, run-down and dilapidated, but cozy and warm and I get to call it home. I don't ask for more. I still sleep on the floor on a bunch of hay but I'm planning on shaping it up as soon as I get all settled in with life in the nearby village. I found work with a blacksmith in that same village, I'll just be helping him out for now but as soon as I catch the drift he'll pay me and I'll be able to stand on my own a bit.

I know this sounds as not enough to you but it's better than hauling back home and living of your and dad's work. At least I'll get some time to clear my head. I spent the whole war elbow deep in axle grease and blood getting those Shermans back to running condition and cleaning them up. I know I got it easy compared to some but I don't want to bring those memories back home. Anyhow, life here is nice and calm and each morning brings solace and you start to believe that amid all this suffering that happened there are at least sunrises to bring some color into life.

Vive la France. Everyone here trusts Charles de Gaulle to protect those sunrises from now on, but it's up to all of us.

All in all, don't worry mother, I'll keep in touch. Tell everyone I said hello and don't let doubt get into their heads. We won.

Ismar Muslić



EDITORS' NOTE

Dear readers,

For the first time in its three-year history, the magazine format of student essays has welcomed in its embrace the thoughts and dreams of the first-year students of the Pedagogical Faculty in Bihać, Department of English Language and Literature.

Approaching the end of their teenage years, these young souls are full of questions and hopes (from the ever important notions of friendships, to views that touch upon the material vs. the spiritual) that slowly but surely start to foray into the real, often illogical world of adulthood.

As with many a young spirit, theirs hold much more within - discover, therefore, a wonderful story of one's love towards her grandmother, a smart guide to win arguments, a long-lost letter of a soldier to his mother, sent with a lavender breeze from Provence, and a longing for those promising twenties set to an evanescent piano melody. Discover them all, and remember your own youth, that neverending fluorescent horizon that one can only see in full if the cards have been played wrong sometimes, just for the fun of it. The playfulness of memories might get a spark under them—rekindle without fear.



IMPRESSUM

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