Hannibal ante portas

When I was a high school student I looked up to my philosophy teacher as he was the only one who took our craving for knowledge to yet another level. He also taught me the most important thing about life. Fear comes from your own insecurities. People are afraid of the unknown, the unforeseen, the unexpected and the hidden.

In ancient times, mothers would frighten their misbehaving children by saying "Hannibal ante portas", meaning that the most dangerous man, the greatest warrior in the world, would get them and put them in prison. Later, Hannibal was replaced by a bogeyman or a wolf, with the same purpose – to stop children from being naughty or insolent. At school, teachers would punish bad behaviour or lack of homework by giving you detention or a bad mark. And all of these punishments were to teach you that there are consequences for your actions.

Nowadays, people are afraid of many things: disease, bullies, politicians, war. But today's greatest fear is not called Hannibal, it is called terrorism. The unpredictable yet meticulously planned evil lurking

in each and every corner of the globe. And there is no Hannibal to prevent or to conquer it. Just fear. Fear of travelling to your desired destination. Fear of other people looking at you strangely. Fear of unusual sounds.

And yet, you should live your life freely, without looking over your shoulder all the time. Be your own Hannibal – conquer your fears, confront the enemy and enjoy the fruits of your labour. Make other people aware of their accomplishments, praise their work, encourage and challenge them. You'll see that this will make them work harder, respect you more and appreciate what they have achieved. And most importantly, there will be no fear, just pride and gratitude. Maybe you can become somebody's philosophy teacher, someone both children and adults can look up to!