

The Legend of the Hamsa

Boutaina Akka
Dina Lachhem

Advanced 4

A long time ago, there was a very beautiful sixteen-year-old girl named Fatima. She was living with her parents on a very big farm in the middle of the woods.

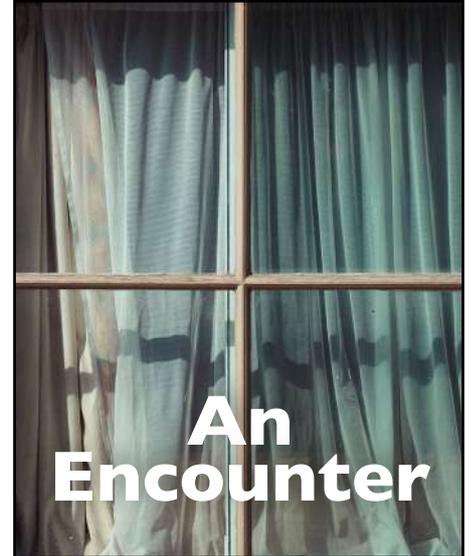
One day, her father heard about the illness of an old neighbor lady next door. The family decided to check in on her. As they greeted her, Fatima held onto the old woman's hand and prayed for her to recover soon. The next day, the woman was in perfectly good health and visited Fatima's family's farm. She explained that she believed that it was Fatima's contact that was the origin of her quick recovery. She claimed that she had felt a strong energy the minute the young girl's hand touched her own.

A few days after that, Fatima's father, Hamid, came home looking very sad. He

revealed that his favorite horse was in a very critical state, and he estimated that the horse was going to pass away shortly. Fatima, who was also very attached to the horse, wanted to see it for the last time. She went to the stable and pet the dying animal. The next morning, Hamid woke Fatima, exclaiming that his favorite horse was miraculously back in good health, stunning everyone. Once the neighbors heard the news, they reported that they had seen Fatima petting the horse. They claimed that Fatima was the reason for its swift recovery.

The news of Fatima's power spread through the whole forest. Soon, people from far-away villages came to Fatima's family farm to benefit from her magical hands. Even after her death, "the hand of Fatima" is still considered by many to bring good luck. It is said that anyone who wears jewelry in the shape of Fatima's hand will avoid bad luck.

photo by Jennifer Rogers via Creative Commons Flickr



Zineb Bouziane
Advanced 5

Carefreely enjoying the sound of Ornella Vernoni's hypnotizing "L'Appuntamento," looking through the rear window of this small apartment in the middle of our likely infinite universe, I saw a woman. The little veil covering half her head let me have a glimpse of her white hair. She was looking at the street from the window of her dwelling. Elbows on the ledge, it seemed to me as if the world had stopped to rearrange itself for the few minutes she laid her eyes upon it, as if not a soul wished to disappoint her.

Lying on the couch, enjoying the fresh breeze of this coastal ahead-of-its-time city, I watched her. She reminded me of someone — a stranger — a stranger I had not yet met but who would change my life forever. The gentle symphony playing in my ears accentuated the depth of that moment, that epiphany; for after all, the thought of that stranger made my mind and body realize they were afraid. I started shivering and babbling gibberish. As she went back inside and closed the curtains behind her, I wondered if she knew what she had done to me. Her face will forever be drawn in the tears I shed.

photo by Craig Whitehead via Unsplash

An Interview with Malika Seddiki

Student Voice: *Where are you from? Are you originally from Fez?*

Malika Seddiki: My parents are originally from Oujda, but I was born and grew up in El-Hajeb.

SV: *Tell us about your life as a student. Where did you study? What did you study?*

MS: My primary and middle school education was in El-Hajeb, then I moved to Lalla Amina High School in Meknes as there were no high schools in El-Hajeb in those days. Because I was more into literature and arts, I went to the Faculty of Arts at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University in Fes, where I earned a B.A. in English Language and Literature.

SV: *Have you ever lived outside Morocco?*

MS: No, but I had the opportunity to take part in the Fulbright teacher exchange program in Boston, Massachusetts. I stayed there for a couple of months, during which I met wonderful people from the educational sphere.

SV: *How long have you been teaching at the ALC?*

MS: I went on early retirement from my job as a high school English teacher in 2011, and I joined the ALC in 2012.

SV: *How long have you been a teacher in life?*

MS: For almost thirty-nine years.

SV: *When did you decide to become a teacher? Why did you choose teaching?*

MS: At the time, I had to make a career move; I had the choice between translation/interpreting and teaching. The first option was moving to another country like France or Belgium, but I wasn't enthusiastic about the idea of moving abroad. On the other hand, teaching was an attractive opportunity as I admired many of my previous teachers and professors. It was all about a pursuit of fulfillment. Somehow, this is why I chose to teach at the ALC after my retirement.

SV: *What do you enjoy most about teaching?*

MS: I enjoy working with young people, exploring their ambitions and dreams, helping them learn and improve. Teaching is a

constant exchange of knowledge and opinions between teachers and students. So far, I have learned from my students as much as I have taught them. It's a win-win situation. It can be stressful at times, but the genuine satisfaction is when your students are happy and grateful.

SV: *Describe your teaching style in three words.*

MS: Patient. Flexible. Supportive.

SV: *How is teaching at the ALC different from teaching at other schools?*

MS: Teaching at the ALC is different in many ways. Classrooms are very well-equipped, and the number of students per class is limited, which makes the process of both learning and teaching easier. Most ALC students are motivated, eager to learn, and well-behaved. They also come from different academic and professional perspectives; in the same class, we have high school and college students, engineers and doctors, and so on. This makes the class more exciting and gives place to competition, knowledge transfer, and experience-sharing. Personally speaking, teaching at the ALC has offered me new meaningful perspectives and skill development. Getting to know new people, interacting with my fellow teachers and students have broadened my horizons and made me deliver my very best. These factors, among many others, make of the ALC a place so distinct, so admirable.

SV: *What is the role of a teacher in the classroom?*

MS: Besides teaching, the teacher plays many other roles in the classroom. She is the counselor, adviser, friend, and above all, a model. Sometimes she can even play the role of a parent, particularly for Juniors students.

SV: *What qualities do good teachers have?*

MS: A good teacher is well-organized, knowledgeable, and very patient. She is the one who is able to define the needs of her students, their strengths and weaknesses, and ensures that every single student gets her or his share of learning and attention. She's also

able to create a friendly learning environment that helps students build self-confidence, feel comfortable, and thus be ready to learn and improve.

SV: *What qualities do good students have?*

MS: They are self-disciplined, hardworking, and curious.

SV: *If you weren't teaching English, what would you be doing?*

MS: I'd probably be teaching philosophy or working in the field of journalism if I weren't an English teacher.

SV: *What's your favorite word in the English language?*

MS: Determination.

SV: *What's your least favorite word in the English language?*

MS: Negativism.

SV: *What word or phrase do you overuse?*

MS: I think my students should answer this question.

SV: *What is your motto?*

MS: "Honesty is the best policy."

THE ALC STUDENT VOICE

WANTS YOU



**TO SUBMIT YOUR
STORIES, ESSAYS,
POETRY & PHOTOS !!!**

A Vampire Love Story

Meryem Benlemlih
Rime Bouamar
Juniors 7 Advanced

A long time ago, Daymen was born into a vampire family. When he was 162 years old, he was still very handsome and looked like a high school student. His eyes were green, but when he drank blood, they became red. He always killed a lot of humans when he was thirsty, and people thought that savage animals had attacked the citizens.

He joined a school where people didn't know who or what he was. There he met a beautiful girl named Eleyna and when they first saw each other, they both felt a beautiful feeling together.

They were in love. When they were together, Daymen always wanted to drink her blood, but his love for her white heart was big. He decided to tell her the truth.

Eleyna was shocked, and she wanted to be far away from him, but her love was so big. She went to tell Daymen that she liked him as



he was, and she discovered a new world full of vampires, witches, and ghosts. She made new friends — abnormal friends — and she was so in love with Daymen every day that she decided to become a vampire, too. In the end, Daymen accepted and turned her into one.

Daymen and Eleyna stayed together and loved each other for a thousand more years, and they had three cute little baby vampires.

photo by Stuart Miles via stockvault

Death

Douae
ALC Graduate

On the road of fate,
There was a mate
That I did underestimate
He was so straight
And incredibly great
That for him to create and operate
He had to rate
People on a specific date
But since he had been out of sight
He left my mind
And I could feel the hate
Lurking in his guts
One day there was a random fight
In the middle of the night
It was a knight in shining armor looking for
a fight
It was him, my mate
That I had left on the road to fate
Right at the gate

Hey, Mr. Loneliness

Ére Lirad
Intermediate 5

Hey, Mr. Loneliness,
Would you like to take us
from this awful dark place
to another cheery face
I just see no end to my isolation
Can I rely on you to take me out of this
escaping somewhere and feeling injured less
admiring stars in silence
accepting, announcing sordidness
that's how the world keeps in illness
that's how the world keeps in sickness

The Betrayal of Time

Maryem Loukriat
Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Fés

An orphan, I have lived in pain
Without my mother,
it's hard to be brave
Life left me sobbing
All the world is ending
My heart is full of fire
and my path is really dire
Oh my God!
You are my only support
Give me hope to keep on

Cause I have no one to rely on
Give me power
In this savage globe
The betrayal by time hurt me
What is my fault?
Little broken-hearted child
exhausted and sad
In her smile hides tears
Oh! Time, leave me alone
Your betrayal destroyed my days
Let me go
Enough wounds
Enough pain



left photo by Clem Onajeghuo via Unsplash
right photo by Martyn and Debz via Creative Commons Flickr

A Postcard from Paradise

Hala Alouza

Juniors 7 Advanced

Dear Lina,

I passed these two months on an island called Hala, which is funny because, as you know, it's also my name! I know that I was supposed to send you a picture of this paradise, and this is what I call real nature.

There were a lot of fruit trees, so my

sister and I decided to get some food, like in the movies when they have to survive alone on an island, but it didn't turn out very well. In fact, it was a disaster! Dina fell from the tree, and she broke her leg. Mom and Dad were very worried, but the problem was that we were on an island, and we weren't able to get her to a doctor. So we just sat her down, made her safe, and told her not to move. It was awkward because I was the one who had to bring her all the things she wanted.

But I did escape for a short time and I discovered a secret waterfall. In front of it, there was a lot of vegetation. It was a perfect balance of flora and fauna. It was so beautiful, and I kept walking and walking until I found the most beautiful creature in the world: A UNICORN. It was the biggest thing I've ever seen! It was taller than a building. And, it was MAGICAL!

Your lovely cousin,
Hala

A Letter from the Editor

Spring has arrived! Days are longer, warmth is replacing the cold, and the scent of orange blossoms is in the air. With the coming of a new season, we find opportunities for additional growth and positive change.

This term, I am honored to join the *Student Voice* as Editor. I believe in the power of the written word, and I know the students of the American Language Center-Fes (of all ages and levels!) have a lot to say. Studying English is not simply about passing to the next level or getting a good score on a big exam. It's about communication — expressing oneself and understanding others. Student writers, old and new, are encouraged to share their thoughts, imagination, and hard work with our readers.

In this issue, please join us in celebrating the creative writing of some impressive student authors. We look forward to being inspired by YOUR future submissions.

Keep reading and writing!

HCH

Heather Lee Harris
English Teacher, ALC-Fes