

To whom it may concern, and I am positive it concerns us all,

To say that these past months or even this past year has been difficult is certainly an understatement. To think that what tomorrow holds might be scarier than yesterday is frightening, to say the least. To hope for a better tomorrow or that there will even be a tomorrow is a reality we are living in today.

This past year has been a year of pure survival. Every day has been a fight. Against what? Against who? No one knows. We are fighting an absurd that we can neither see nor feel, but whose traces are non-erasable. This past year has made it clear that time waits for no one, and life cuts you no slack. With the economy collapsing and the Beirut Port exploding, all the hope that was in our hearts slowly faded away.

For a while, we felt guilty for mourning, for crying, for being sad. We were always told that Lebanon is a Phoenix; that it rose from the ashes 7 times and will certainly rise once more. But blow after blow we found it hard to get back up. It was a nightmare. A true struggle and honestly, why keep on fighting? What is there to fight for, right?

Or maybe not? Amidst all those feelings, amidst all the voices that were always telling me to give up, to let go; when getting back on track and winning felt impossible, there was always a voice in the back of my head whispering to me: "You are too determined to give up".

When we play a game that we like, odds are we are going to reach a level where we will end up being stuck. We will fail at it over and over again, yet we will never give up. We will keep trying even if it means spending the entire day on it. But that level is stubborn, hell-bent on making us fail. So what do we do? We stop for a second. We take a break. Then, we restart. And that fresh start is enough to get us the win we were searching for.

I am by no means comparing life to a game. But is our determination to win a game not applicable to our desire for a better tomorrow?

Cry, but do not let yourself drown. Feel but do not let those feelings overwhelm you. Break a plate if it will make you feel better, but do not let yourself become broken. Take a breath and make sure that your come back will be exceptional. If we want Change, we're going to have to get our hands dirty. Everything is going to come at a price. But I am determined to make this country, make this world a better place. If not for me, for my children and the ones to follow.

And you... what will you do?

Sami-Joe Issa

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