

Dear Ms Braun,

You went to the trouble of coming to our school to share your father's story with us. When you started to speak a profound silence fell upon the room – even though it is very hard for us to keep quite at our age, even for the most serious subjects. For those two hours, us students all seemed united, listening to you in a spiritual silence. Never has a talk been so fascinating for me.

As you recounted the ordeal your father endured I felt more and more that what you told us, and the amazing lessons we learned, will stay with us forever. As you spoke, those thoughts permeated the room and made us think.

For years our generation has been warned about human cruelty, often using the Second World War and the Holocaust as examples. We have been told about it in history classes. Our grandparents tell us of the horrors committed by human beings. But instead of becoming warning signs, I believe these stories have made us want to ignore what happened in the past and believe that it is time to move on.

We thought we knew all about the atrocities of the war and the devastation it caused in the heart of a people, like the heart of a family. Nothing could have prepared us for the harsh reality you described in your presentation – the 'human monster', as you so aptly described it, does not just belong in the past, it could reappear at any moment. We have now learned to never again question human cruelty. It would be a mistake to think the same thing can never happen again.

I am so incredibly grateful to you for having reminded us of what we must never forget.

Please accept my most sincere thanks.

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