

I crawled along the sandy, rock-strewn terrain, clambering over boulders and the bodies of the men we'd lost. The clouds closed in above us, and from their roaring jaws, sheets of water and electric bolts raced towards our base. The booming growls of the sky were only silenced by our signals; sirens, bells, orders. My uniform no longer resembled an action man outfit, the khaki green darkened by the sweat and rain, stained by the blood. But I was a man in action, and no synopsis could not have prepared me for this. No guide, no instruction manual can train you for the despair, the pain, the devastation. I had aspired to personify my childhood toys and save lives, yet defeat wasn't part of my childhood imagination. In reality, its role was imperative. Defeat had captured my comrades, their plastic bodies were shattered but they had felt the real anguish, something my action men knew nothing about.

We were told to advance, push forward, into unknown territory and fear turned my body cold and rigid. But we were trained to fight, and cowardice was an unknown phenomenon. The landscape was a blur of uncertainty, a confusion of golden explosions, mixed with the crimson of hurt, war and death. I chose my gun, although the decision was hard, and my t72 turret lay in my hands, holstered and loaded, ready. I saw men in front of me attempt, and fail, they dropped like toy soldiers, but the simplicity of the expression cannot begin to describe the descent of a fallen warrior. My radar showed the extent to our loss, the flashing dots were scarce. In the corner of my view, an enemy. I raised my weapon, finger poised on the button.

Rustling behind me caught my attention, and that whisper of movement sent a new wave of fear through my body, extinguishing what little hope remained within me. The split second between fire of and contact with the bullet seemed to last longer than my health, which slipped away as I lay motionless on the cold ground. I was simply another broken toy, no longer needed and left to decay. Unfixable.

The health bar reached zero, and I see my own body from a birds eye view. 'GAME OVER' flashes over me, and I am crushed, can't I try again?

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