

## War Games

The final day had arrived—the end of a twelve-year struggle with depredation, control, restriction, and hard mental labor. It was freedom; freedom at last. The final stroke of the payback was to begin, and the events of this day would determine the winner. The moment was building and guns, bombs, and artillery were being deployed for the final battle.

As soon as night fell, David Lew's tank moved out from the shadows. They let loose with a barrage of fire on one of three armored trucks, and destroyed it. Lew moved his tank into position to take out a second vehicle, but before he knew it, another armored vehicle moved in behind him for the kill. He made a run for it and managed to escape.

“Where is our backup?” yelled Lew into his phone.

“Where are you?” replied Henry.

“On Essex, by the graveyard. Damn! I told you I was approaching the Catholic Church parking lot from the back alley. We almost got killed, but we got one of them. We're on the run. We need help!”

“We're coming! Stay there. We'll find you.”

“Shit, here they come! I'm out of here!”

“Hey! Which direction you going?”

There was no answer.

“I see 'em,” said Sarah, who was driving the vehicle.

Scotty followed in his armored truck. “Ralph, can you hear me?”

“Got ya, Scotty.”

“There, in front of us. Make the first left, go like hell and if you feel you have enough distance, turn and head them off.”

“You’re on, Scotty.”

“Floor it, Sarah, I’m right behind you!” yelled Scotty.

That was a big mistake.

“They’re gaining on us. Stop! Get the bazookas out, Henry. You and Mary Lee will blast the first vehicle when it approaches, then run back and jump in and we’ll take off.”

“Oh! Oh!” screamed Sarah.

*Boom-boom!*

“Hurry! Let’s go,” said Lew. “We did enough damage. Let’s not press our luck.”

“We blew the hell out of them,” said Henry.

“Good job, but we’ve got to get out of here—fast!”

“Hey, they’re coming right at us!” said Ralph. “Fire!”

Lew was watching his rear and didn’t see Ralph coming.

As the night went on, the war continued.

Three large men were running at the edge of the park. They had a lot of confidence, being that they were ex-football offensive linemen.

“Let’s get those sons-a-bitches!” one of them yelled.

“I saw them down there. I’m going to blast their asses off,” said another, laughing.

Before the three big guys knew it, 120-pound George Young came rushing out of the bushes behind them and blasted two of them in the back of their heads. The other turned around to fire. George knelt down and blasted the third member in the neck at point-blank range. George

started running and came across a group of others, and shot some of them on the run. He was untouched, and disappeared into the park, shooting while he ran.

No one was safe in the town. Houses were being invaded, and people were getting shot and were dropping like flies. The battle went from house to house. Near the end of the village, the two sides met. There were fifty or more on each side, all dodging and firing between buildings in hand-to-hand combat. Then, at 1:00 a.m., all went silent.

At 2:00 a.m. a few of the troops made their final move after the fight. Eight athletic men prepared to secretly invade the president's private residence. Scotty was the leader and led the others into the bushes. As they approached the residence, the automatic lights went on outside.

"Get back," whispered Scotty, "before someone sees us."

"We need to knock out those lights," said Ralph.

"Got to find a way to disconnect them," said Scotty.

"I can do it," whispered Eddy, who was six foot seven. "I can reach the lights and twist them off."

"Go for it, but you will have to go way around and hug the wall to keep away from the sensors."

"No problem, I got it."

The men waited and hid as Eddy made his way through the trees and brush. All of a sudden, the house's outside lights flashed. Eddy stumbled and fell, then came running back panting, bruised, and wet.

"Shit," said one of the men. "We could be found out."

“There’s a side security light. It caught my movement,” said Eddy. “We need to knock it out. I can’t approach it within twenty-five feet without it going on and lighting up the rest of the house. Did any of you see movement inside?”

“No,” a few whispers replied in unison.

“We need something quiet enough to knock that light out,” said Scotty.

“How about a rock?” whispered John.

“Too noisy. Will wake everyone up,” mumbled Scotty.

The other men snickered.

“Yeah, that would suck,” someone said quietly.

“I’ve got an idea. I’ll be back,” said Scotty.

It began to rain. No one had a jacket on, and their shirts began soaking up water.

“This sucks,” said one of the men. “How long we gonna have to wait?”

Just then Scotty appeared.

Ralph saw that Scotty was holding a gun. “What you got, a .22?”

“Hell no! A BB gun.”

“A BB gun? Oh...I get it.”

“No shit, dude,” said Scotty. “I’m goin’ to sneak around and take a shot at that light. Stay down.”

Eddy followed as Scotty crouched down and moved forward.

“Shit, what else can we do?” complained Ralph, who was dripping wet.

*Ding, ding, ding!*

The BBs hit the side of the house, followed by a minute or so of silence.

*Ding, ding, ding, ding!*

The lights went on again. Ralph, impatient, hustled around to where the men knelt in the wet bushes, looking for signs of life in the house, or for the police.

“What the hell?” said Ralph. “You guys can’t hit shit.”

“I know we hit it,” whispered Scotty, “but it won’t break.”

“Let me try,” said Ralph.

He ran up closer and fired six rounds, shattering the glass and putting the light out, but the other lights remained on.

“Damn!” said Scotty. “We need to be careful or we’ll get caught.”

Just then the front door opened. A head poked out and everyone pushed their bodies deep into the wet soil. They waited nervously. The door slammed shut and the lights went out.

“Stay here and wait until things calm down. I need to coordinate with the rest of the men,” Scotty said, and moved out.

“We need to get out of here. We’re all cold and wet,” said Matt.

“Hey, we gotta finish this. The war hasn’t ended,” said Scotty, panting.

“They may be onto us,” said one of the men.

“If we wait awhile and all is calm, then Ed can twist the lights off and we’ll get the car.”

“Shit, I need a stiff shot or something. It’s getting cold,” someone whispered.

“Yeah! How about some vodka?”

“Coming right up,” someone said.

Everyone laughed.

Ed’s shadow moved tight against the building as he unscrewed the lights. He crouched over and made a beeline for the vehicle in the driveway, while at the same time the others cautiously approached behind him. The car cover was removed. Ralph took a lock release bar

and sprung the lock. Eddy jumped in and steered with his legs while the other men quietly pushed the vehicle down the driveway and halfway down the street. On the way, they met Cindy, who was bringing in supplies. They hooked the car to Ralph's truck and hauled it down the road.

After jumping into the back of the truck, they silently cheered, slapping one another on the back, exuberant over their success. Forgetting about the cold and the rain, they broke out a quart of vodka, and the bags of chips that Cindy had brought.

In no time, on the roof of the entrance to the high school building sat a beautifully restored Volkswagen. The two girls' bathrooms were bolted shut, forcing them to use the boys'. Rats were turned loose in the high school offices and the teachers' bathrooms. Somebody lit a stink bomb in the corridor. In the hallways, honey was spread in different places, and thousands of ants were turned loose, especially in the math department, where Mr. Zockoff told jokes and laughed at himself instead of teaching. A human skeleton hung on the door of the biology department in a bright dress with a pink furry hat. Hanging from it was a sign that read "Mr. Edgar's mistress."

The war between the seniors and juniors was over. The question now was who had won. All the vehicles, and students wearing clothing splattered with paintballs, were on display in the front school parking lot—yellow, juniors; red, seniors. The students were not allowed to bathe or remove their clothes, or clean up their vehicles until the judging was completed. The three athletic coaches, along with Principal Short and Mr. Ramsey, were the judges and would make the final decision.

Everyone was tense. George Young, without a mark of paint on him, looked across at the seniors they had "killed," all splattered in yellow paint—especially the three big ex-football

players, each well over twice his size. He smiled at their yellow, paint-stained faces. They were not amused. He had “killed” sixteen, including them.

Windy Baylor, the junior class president, approached, as well as a few others. Three students assisted George and Windy to the back of a pickup truck and cheered. The seniors remained quiet, but they had a trick up their sleeves. Windy was holding a blue ribbon with a silver star in the middle.

“Mr. Young, I award this Medal of Honor to you for your bravery beyond the call of duty. You contributed significantly in the defeat of the enemy.”

All the juniors cheered and paraded Mr. Young around the parking lot. The seniors booed and made wisecracks. This was the first Medal of Honor ever given to a high school student in a junior-senior war. Years later, Mr. Young would become a commanding general in the United States Army, and would win many more awards.

This was the final moment of school domination, which was then followed by a massive celebration. The principal’s Volkswagen was still on the roof. The senior football coach’s golf cart, which he drove around to move his heavy body, had disappeared, and a skateboard was left in its place with a sign pasted to it that read “Get in shape, Coach!”

One of the assistant coaches had to fly a thousand miles to attend his cousin’s last day of life. Another coach was notified that his mother’s gravestone was stolen, had been recovered, and he was needed to pick it up and return it to its place immediately, or it would be disposed of. Mr. Short, the disliked assistant school principal, had a \$2,000 racing bike that he competed with and rode to school every day. It was now dangling 140 feet up in a giant redwood tree. He was in tears, and spent all morning trying to figure out how to climb up and somehow lower his bike, only to get stuck halfway up. A resident, seeing this, alerted the fire department, which rescued

him. Once everyone was back down on the ground, the fire truck was called to another emergency. Unbeknownst to them, a senior had made the perfectly timed call.

Mr. Short screamed, "Hey, my bike, I need my bike!" as they prepared to leave.

"We've got to go!" yelled a fireman as he jumped into the fire truck.

Mr. Short sat under the tree and cried. During the next month, Mr. Short made many attempts to remove his bike from the tree. When he finally contacted a crane company to remove it, the estimated price was more than the bike was worth. The bike still hangs there to this day. Mr. Short later started saving his money for another bike, but he continuously received fines for littering. He has now taken up running.

On the day of the judgment, the principal, Dr. Phelps, was also calling the local crane company to remove his Volkswagen from the roof. No one would answer. The owner was the father of one of the seniors. The only judge to show up was Mr. Ramsey, called "Mr. Condom" because he taught sex education. His car was banded with condoms, and a huge bra was stretched out on the hood stuffed with grapefruits, and a G-string hung from the trunk. His car was covered with red and yellow paintball paint. Upon approaching, he was pelted with condoms filled up with water. Some were filled with helium and released to sail high into the sky for all to see...with his name on them. He fled the scene, leaving no judgment.

With no judges around, the seniors started filing away, and at someone's suggestion began running for the school pool, shedding their clothes and streaking through the campus, followed by the juniors. The pool turned red and yellow as everyone jumped into the water.

With jubilant screams, the school year was over, and all the students were free to go. The seniors, who were outnumbered, had lost the war, but there was no recorded winner. The real war started that afternoon at the park, where the beer and other liquor broke out. The war



continued, and the last man or woman standing would claim the win for their class. The seniors lost that battle, too. After all, they had something to celebrate.