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# Imaginations

## The Battle

"So, how long have you been here," asked a man in a military green helmet and jacket. He was peering intently over the ridge and the valley beyond for any signs of movement on the hill. He was rough-looking with a week's growth of beard. Dirt and grass stains covered his clothes and skin. A rifle lay beside him at the ready.

The younger soldier beside him thought for a moment. Funny, I don't remember ever being anywhere else. War does that to you I guess.

"I'm not sure. I've lost track of the time."

"Happens sometimes. Keep your eyes peeled, they'll be coming any minute now." He shifted a bit to reach for his belt pack. He withdrew a bar of the high-energy garbage the army insisted they eat. It tasted like card board, but it would keep them alive when on long patrols. One was offered to the young soldier who accepted a piece.

He wondered for a moment how this man could know they were about to be attacked. It could be \*\*\*\*\* , but he seemed so certain.

"What's your name, soldier," the older man inquired gruffly with a hint of a smile.

"Reggie Allen," he replied. He started to continue speaking when shots began ringing out. Reggie grabbed his gun and moved to a better spot as his partner began squeezing off shots at the people now moving through the trees on the other hill.

People all around him were shooting and running around. Reggie stopped as a woman in a white head band on the other hill stopped with a red spot forming in the head band on her forehead.

It was then that he realized, as he looked from her falling form to the gun in his hand, that he had never killed anyone in his life. It all seemed so unreal. He couldn't believe this was happening to him.

The sight of a man beside him falling dead brought him out of his trance and made him realize that he was standing in full view of the enemy. He marvelled that none of the shots fired had hit him.

"I don't belong here," he spoke to himself as he dropped his rifle and started running across the hill top, through the \*\*\*\*\* of trees and \*\*\*\*\* , shooting men and women who seemed to ignore him.

He reached the edge of the hill and ran down onto the flat area that was the continuation of the valley floor. He followed a stream that wound from between the two hills. He glanced back and saw a man in a dark uniform running after them.

Reggie leapt over the stream as it \*\*\*\*\* over his path again and again. His pursuer caught up to him and tackled him to the ground. They rolled into the stream with Reggie on the bottom. They struggled for several minutes before Reggie finally fought to the top. He held the man in the water until he stopped struggling. It didn't feel like he was dead, just not moving.

Reggie leapt up and continued running, his heart flying as he felt, he knew, that he would be free. Others were chasing him, but he could outrun them. He had defeated one of them, so he had earned his freedom.

He stopped suddenly as he hit a great wall. He looked up and about a hundred feet above him he saw a row of windows behind the wire mesh that covered every inch of the wall for as far as he could see.

He turned slowly and realized that he was in an enormous building. A ring of windows circled the building, and behind the windows were dozens of people.

Why weren't they doing anything, why don't they help me. It was then that he realized that this was all an experiment, that he was no more than a subject to be studied.

"No!" he screamed, his voice echoing through the huge room.

