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Toy Soldiers Don't Bleed

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“BOOM boom BOom!” my squad was hit by a sweeping hand missile. “Return fire! I barked and my men unleashed a volley of flicking fingers. “Pow! Gakakakakakakaka!” Two little green bodies whizzed by my best friend’s ear. He retorted with a fist bomb, shaking the linoleum battlefield upon which we fought. I watched my men rigidly tremble then fall. He was a cunning opponent.

“Hey! No fair! No fist bombs!” I had to call him out on his war crimes.

“You can’t complain cuz you’re all dead!” he exclaimed triumphantly. We both laughed, picked up our guys and began standing them up for another round.

“Guys?” my brother said softly. He lay on my bed behind us, studying our strategies no doubt.

“Yeah?” I asked.

“Didja see the news today?”

“Nah.”

“Oh, me neither.” There was a long silence.

“Do you think we’ll get some letters today?”

“I don’t know, man.”

“Oh, okay,” he said. The sound of clicking fingernails nervously scraping against one another echoed in our room.

“Mom come out of her room yet?”

“Nope.” There was another long silence, but in the distance we could hear a soft sniffing.

“Ready to get whooped again?” my friend challenged me.

“Hell yeah!” I replied. I couldn’t let him keep beating me.

“Oh you think so? Cuz my sniper just took you out!” he said, flicking one of my men away. I picked him up.

“Ah shit…you…you urk got me.”

“Aw just die already!”

“I’m b-bleeding bad…but I think I can make it.”

“No,” my friend said matter-of-factly, “toy soldiers don’t bleed.”