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## Toilet Paper Terror

*Phil Hesselring*

What a night! Chad and I had been out for most of the evening. We had just returned to my dad's house after a grandiose time toilet papering Nikki's, along with many other unsuspecting saps' homes. We had waged toiletry war on trees, cars, yard ornaments, and houses that night. I think we would have mummified the family cat that night if we had been lucky enough to find the furry enemy scout. Our only weapons of war that we brandished were el-cheapo rolls of toilet paper and soap. We both carried a duffle bag on our backs to transport our ordnance as we rode my two, three-wheeled assault machines. I recall that we carried close to one hundred rolls of substandard Charmin, and it was not for anyone's roaring diarrhea! Additionally, I carried my new contact cleaning case and saline solution in my bag for my brand new set of invisible war goggles. I had been having problems with them clouding up and needed to be sure that I could clear any jammed weaponry in the field of battle if the need should arise. I must mention here that it was the contact cleaning case that would prove that I had had a part in holding the smoking gun. Somehow, I had managed to drop it in Nikki's driveway while reloading my artillery cannons. She later told me at our fifth-year class reunion that I was the primary suspect in the home-i-cide. I confessed, via sarcastic denial and several facial shades of red. I managed to implicate my platoon sergeant, Chad, in our war crime. Needless to say, we are on the lam to this day.

Anyway, we both dismounted our war stallions and retired them to my dad's over-sized shed. Sometimes I think that we could have housed the entire brigade in there and still had room for a platoon of furry, four-legged ninja scouts camouflaged in toilet paper. I could never test that theory because those sneaky felines always eluded me. I guess they were highly trained in the art of escape and evasion.

I think we were approaching 0300 hours, or 3:00 a.m. for all you civilians out there. The adrenaline that still surged through our war-torn bodies had us aching for more excitement. However, our ammunition cache was exhausted, and the enemy lay in ruins throughout the countryside. There was no need for apprehension because no one would dare confront our forces ever again! We knew it was finally time to retire to our well-deserved R & R.

As we strolled around to the front of the house, a new conquest began to emerge. The street light which towered over our front yard was laughing at our quickly-fatiguing bodies. See, the walk from the back yard to the front yard was only a mere sixty or seventy feet, but each step grounded out our hardwired circuits and each exhale diluted the wild blend of a thirteen-year-old's hormones and the now dwindling supply of adrenaline. How dare its halogen brilliance taunt us from its twenty-foot-high sniper's nest! Chad and I took immediate action to avoid being picked off like a couple of fish in a barrel. We knew that our defensive position was inferior to our enemy's, and we had no time to dig a fighting hole. We evasively ran across the street to our newest neighbor's yard, which had been strategically landscaped by bulldozers into mountainous dirt hills and fortified battle trenches. My neighbors had just moved into the comforts of their luxurious new home, and we assumed they were sound asleep. Meanwhile, Chad and I were about to fight valiantly to defend their precious homeland from the tyrannical rule of the Street Light Sniper Warlord. We knew that we could find a limitless supply of dirt cannons and clod bazookas right in their front yard. The challenge had been made, and the line had been drawn in the sand. We were the few good men who would rise to the occasion.

Our battle strategy was simple. We were to fire only warning shots at our enemy to try and

deter him. In other words, dirt only and do not shoot to kill! We were locked and loaded. The Street Light Sniper engaged us first. He tried to use his secret weapon from the start. Its electromagnetic ray hit us both hard. We were blinded for an instant and knew that the end was near. But I knew that if it was my time, I would die standing – not without a fight. I shot my rifle first, and then Chad put his on full automatic. Of course, these were warning shots. Nothing hit the obstinate sniper. We both agreed to increase the rules of engagement when we were hit again by his lethal light. Could we just stun him with a glancing blow, or maybe a slight wound that would allow him to retreat in utter disgrace? That was now the mission.

We began to fire our next volley. It was a suppressive fire that kept his head down. I was running low on ammo as Chad emptied his magazine. I knew that the sniper would take his best shot at us as we retreated back to the supply lines for replenishment. I took aim with my last round in the chamber. There! He was making his move. I held my breath and began to ease the trigger back, all the while waiting for the surprising recoil. I did not even feel my rifle move. I heard his death cry as glass shattered and fell to the ground. Some imbecile had loaded a rock into my dirt clod at the factory where it was made. Now my enemy lies dead when all I wanted to do was warn him with a harmless dirt clod. No, this could not be true! I was sure to stand before a court martial now.

I was right! The new neighbor whom we were trying to defend had called in the brass while Chad and I were doing battle. The lone town police officer was about ready to turn down the road leading into our subdivision. We had to make a break for it immediately. Chad and I ran back to the massive, Quonset-hut sized shed. We both dove onto our stomachs behind the large propane tank as the officer's searchlight panned the battlefield for us. My heart was beating hard enough to cause the ground to shake. It would surely give us away. I had to control it immediately. Just as I thought we would not be spotted, I spotted my arch nemesis – the four-legged feline ninja scout. Had this warrior followed us all the way back from the toilet paper battlefield at Nikki's house? Of course, it was here to give away our location! The officer and his floodlight had a clear view of the cat, but not us. However, the sneaky scout was looking right at us. It might as well have raised a flag that said, "Here they are, tough guy! Come and get 'em!" The cruiser had stopped momentarily. My heart began to stampede again. Over my bodily sounds I thought I could hear Chad's teeth chattering. Great! He should just strike up seventy-five trombones and dance around like a drum major! I thought we were had.

Then, as if time began to move again, the officer turned his death ray off and slowly drove down the road. He was going to go to the end of the cul-de-sac to turn around for a better look. I knew that this was our chance. I shot a look at the now-cowering cat. I am sure my look said, "If I had the time, I would shove you in the shed to begin testing my hypothesis, but once again, you have lucked out." I grabbed Chad's leg and told him to follow me. We ran around the back of the shed, which was connected to the wooden privacy fence around our pool. Chad quickly boosted me to the top of the fence. The boost was inadequate. Only one of my legs made it over the pointed top of the fence. The Private's privates heard the fading sound of Taps. I could not see straight, but I could not leave my friend behind, for it would be the end of us both. I stood up with all my might and pulled him over the fence. However, I spared his soldiers. He bolted for my back door into the house as I stammered behind him in a most peculiar fashion. We made it into our living room as the x-ray power of the floodlight passed by our windows. We had made it home from our covert war as highly-decorated idiots—and I had my own battle wound to worry about.