

The Bullet

By Marcin Wojdyna

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The Bullet

I was not like the others.

I was born for greatness. Cast in fire, cooled in steel, polished until I gleamed. I got stacked in a box with the others, but I knew I was different. They sat in the box, dull and anonymous, rattling like loose change. I gleamed. I had purpose. They would end up in training ranges, wasted on tin cans and scarecrows. I was meant for something greater. They were just ammunition. I was destiny.

One day, I would fly into the skull of a tyrant. I would silence dictators, end wars, free nations. History would hinge on the moment I struck and they would write of me in history books. The shot that ended the war. The bullet that toppled the throne.

They would call me necessary. They would call me just. They would call me the one that mattered.

The others rattled nervously as we were shipped, but I was calm. I had purpose. I was meant for the man with the medals, the one who gave orders and watched soldiers die from behind maps. Perhaps even the president himself. A single shot, and the world would be remade.

I was loaded into a rifle. I felt the sweat of the soldier's palms, the stutter of his breath. I told myself he was chosen for me, a vessel to deliver history. He aimed; I waited; my moment was close.

The order barked. The finger squeezed. I was free. This was it. My flight into immortality.

I tore through the air with all the speed of prophecy. Wind screamed past me. Time slowed. This was it. Statues would be built. Books would be written. They would speak my name without knowing it, for centuries.

And then I struck.

Not a tyrant. Not a general. Not a man in medals.

A girl. Eight years old. Wide eyes. Running.

The back of her skull opened like fruit. She fell without a sound.

The soldier lowered his rifle, muttering, “Only following orders.”

I lay buried in bone and blood, cooling fast.

There were no cheers. Only the silence of a street emptied by fear, and the body of a child who would never know my name.

I had dreamed of changing the world; instead, I have only proved what it already was.

The only legacy I left was a hole in the back of a child’s head.

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