

Soldier Without a Name – Draft Two (Edited)

Two hundred warships, each one manned by about 50 men. Quick calculation says that's... I don't really know. Not like I got an education. Anyway, we're an army of not even five thousand. It's about to be a massacre, and I know it.

Truth be told, I'm scared—very scared. I'm still so young. I should be somewhere strolling at night with friends, sneaking into bars, being courted. Anything but fighting a war for people and a land I wouldn't even ask my enemies to piss on. Absolute trash, in my honest opinion.

Yet most of the senior veterans are excited. Excited to die, I mean. I also believe in an everlasting reward, but this is not it. I'm not ready to die a statistic. I've achieved nothing in this life—what good

am I in the next?

Sweat ran down my forehead. Sure, the armor was heavy, but my thoughts weighed much more. Panic began to set in. My chest was tight with anxiety; I could barely breathe. All I could think was: *I have to run. I can't die. I'm too young. I have so much to live for.*

Then I got slapped across the face by my commander.

How dare he raise his shit-stained hands on me?

He barked, "What are you doing, coward? The others have advanced—did you go deaf?"

And then it hit me—the battle had already begun. I had no choice but to fight.

Alright, I thought. *How bad could it possibly be?*

Two hours later, I was lying in the sand in a pool of blood—not even mine. I was just

pretending to be dead so they wouldn't notice me. To my left was a dead horse, its skin burnt, mouth open. It had been doused in oil and set on fire, charged into our lines, and exploded. The blast tore through our defenses.

But I was more focused on how disgusting it all was. The stench of burnt flesh and oil. I turned to my other side and saw a boy my age. In fact, I think I knew him. His mother—well, she worked to *please* the men. He got teased for that during training. But he was kind to me.

Now, he lay there with his face smashed in. One eye hung by a thread, the other darting around in panic. His nose was gone, just exposed bone. His mouth foamed with blood. An arrow was lodged in his neck, making him bleed out.

I only knew it was him by the armor.

He looked at me in pure horror. The sight

was... horrific, to say the least. For all the meals we shared together, I did what I had to do. I drew my sword—for the first time, using it to kill—and dropped to my knees, taking him into my arms.

I stabbed him in the chest.

He didn't even look angry—just relieved—as his eyes closed.

Wow, I thought. I actually had the balls to kill now.

But the moment was ruined. A soldier dragged me away. The fight hadn't stopped. I kept walking—dead bodies to the left and right. I looked to the horizon.

Wouldn't you know it? The enemy was marching toward what was left of us.

I had two choices: run and never look back—or stay and die.

After making eye contact with my commander, he shouted, "Boy, take a stance! No planning. No strategy. We will

simply die with courage!”

I looked around. So many men against so few of us. I closed my eyes—and I ran.

They yelled after me, but I was done being scared. I ran past the corpses, thinking, *It's not going to be me. I'm too good to die tonight. I refuse.*

You might think I was a coward. No—I was *angry*.

How dare these filthy lowlives come into our land, thinking we'd bow down?

I found some explosives. We weren't supposed to use such tactics, but we were out of options. I had to buy time. I took a black powder bomb and spotted one of those oil-soaked horses nearby. I strapped the bomb to it and let it run.

The result? Flames engulfed a portion of their army.

In the chaos, our reinforcements arrived.

The battle raged on. I was proud—just for a

moment—until I felt a sharp pain in my stomach.

I looked down. A sword.

Stuck in me.

I stood in shock. Then I laughed—because, for a second there, I thought I might be a hero. That I might earn honor. Glory.

I collapsed into the sand again. By now, the sun was setting. I just stared up at the sky. I didn't want to die. Not like this.

But if this is how it ends, who am I to fight fate?

No legacy. No name. No one left to remember me.

The tears flowed.

And then—nothing.

