

Worst Day on the Job

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Worst Day on the Job

by [PuzzleRaven](#)

Summary

Swapping worst day on the job stories to see who buys drinks is an old tradition. Unfortunately there are some people even elite military units shouldn't try this with...

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

The Captain left his drink and stood up as he saw a group of his men, black-clad, uniformed, and looking far too proud of themselves, cornering a couple of people in orange uniforms at the end of the bar. He could see this gearing up for a shake-down as the military too-casually spread out to surround the pair in high-vis suits. Seemed some of his soldiers hadn't learned yet that if a rescue team was in the bar, you bought them drinks not the other way round. Time for an education, particularly with the older guy in the same orange uniform demolishing a hamburger at the end of the bar and keeping a wary eye on the same confrontation.

The 'friendly' discussion had not got beyond war stories yet, although he was not pleased to see the Corporal in with the group. NCOs should keep a lid on this behaviour, not join in.

"...are an elite team. You couldn't even imagine a day in our job." The soldier was finishing as the Captain arrived. It seemed even the Corporal hadn't learned not to try to one-up war stories with helicopter rescue. That was the thing about the rescue crews: your worst day was their job. No matter how bad things got, these were the guys who would walk straight into it and pull you out, which mean getting them drunk got some great stories and a chance to hear about the crews that messed up worse than yours. Right now, he needed that.

"Your worst day's better than ours," the younger guy in orange replied, not particularly worried about being surrounded or outnumbered – or the fact the soldiers were all taller than him.

"Oh yeah? We started the morning chasing mutants across the city that can tear tanks apart, used

gas weapons against something that webbed part of downtown in human flesh, and then we rounded it off with giant snakes erupting from the sewers..." The rookie soldier stopped dead as he saw the Captain's expression, or lack of it, and the glare facing in his direction. Oddly, the two rescue team members were now smiling really widely.

"That's your worst day, huh? Hey, Boss, come over here a minute." The guy at the bar finished his burger, sighed and stood up, walking across reluctantly. He had obviously been listening, and knew what was coming. The Captain rested an arm on the bar and relaxed, waiting to see what the senior SAR crew member would do. He would step in if things escalated, but otherwise, the senior SAR guys were good entertainment.

"What is it?" the SAR officer asked, in the patient tone of someone who already knows the answer.

"Boss, worst day on the job?" The older man ran a hand through spiky black hair, a resigned expression on his face.

"This again?"

"Oh, come on," the younger one wheedled, while the soldiers looked on grinning.

"Okay." The man took a breath. "So it started with the earthquake, the tsunami, and the volcano-

"In one day?" The Corporal sounded sceptical, but the rest of the rescue team nodded. Now they were grinning, as their chief continued.

"-and then the landslide. The terrorists, - did I mention the terrorists? - and then there was the volcanic ash, the lahar, the bear attack..." He stopped to take a breath.

"And the plane crash," the younger guy cut in, and the black-haired one shook his head exasperated.

"It didn't crash. It suffered engine failure in the hail storm so I had to bail out while the pilots found somewhere safe to land." He wasn't boasting, just reciting events he'd been asked to relay far too many times. A shame because this was a story the Captain now wanted to hear in full. He'd got enough backpay saved to get the guy plastered.

"We had a nuclear bomb stolen and detonated that evening." The Captain made a note of which soldier piped up with that bit of classified data, and just how defensive the trooper sounded, but the SAR man seemed quite unphased.

"The terrorists stole three. I took the detonator for one and disarmed another. The last one went down when the ship sunk. And then there was the dam bursting, the flash flood, and the fuel fires. Did I miss anything?" The younger guy looked at him incredulously.

"The hurricane!"

"Oh yes." He thought for a moment. "I think that was it."

"And the giant...mecha...?" The younger SAR guy's enthusiasm trailed off as his chief looked at him with the same expression the Captain knew he'd worn himself when the soldier mentioned the nuke. Looked like his troops weren't the only ones who didn't know when to shut up. The silence stretched uncomfortably, and the Captain relaxed. Any chance of a fight had vanished into the remote distance of 'five minutes ago and let's all pretend it never happened'.

"We've been fighting an invincible shapeshifting monster that could have killed all life on earth." It

wasn't one-upmanship now as much as the Corporal idly defending his unit's right to be in the same bar. "Took the last month to get it under control."

"If we're going for a month, four weeks later I had to shoot down a planet-killing asteroid with a Gatling gun." The knowing grins on the faces of the SAR team told the Captain that their leader wasn't joking - besides, he'd read the file. As his soldiers gaped, he knew it was time to step in, not bothering to hide his own grin.

"I'm buying." He matched actions to words, as the SAR leader nodded and escaped back to his seat at the bar. As the Captain's order arrived, the younger SAR crewman's voice carried from the group.

"Yeah, he ran out of bullets and had to finish it with an assault rifle. And he bandaged up the terrorists after he shot them..." Now that last comment was SAR all over. Satisfied there wasn't going to be any more trouble, he tuned out the chatter and put the drinks tray down by the guy at the other end of the bar.

"They're new," he said. "No offence caused?"

"None. Sorry about mine. Rookies, you know?" The Captain grimaced knowingly, picking his drink up as he introduced himself.

"Robert Cross." The man sighed and raised his own drink.

"Raymond Bryce."

End Notes

Came up when someone commented that Raymond Bryce of 'Disaster: Day of Crisis' (a Wii game) can pretty much one-up everyone on Worst Day ever stories. Ray had the kind of day where even Alec Mercer would start backing off and saying, "Ok, he's had enough."

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