

Zombie...

The house was still. For once he had the place to himself. Mum had finally given in to his pleading that he could be left at home while his sister was dropped off at badminton. Today, mum had said she needed to the supermarket as well.

‘I’m sorry, but with working all day I’ve not got anything done. Maybe I’ll pick up pizza or something. Sure you wouldn’t like to come with me. It’ll be an hour and a half.’

Tommy shook his head and did his best to look like he’d be a little bit lonely, but not too bad. There was no point laying it on too thick or he might be forced to go along. The main thing was to hide that he was really pleased because the moment mum closed the door he would be walking towards the games console, skipping in fact. An hour and a half of Zombie Battle Droid multiplayer level Andromeda. If he was lucky his friend Sparkie would be on-line for a tower block siege Armageddon battle.

The house was still, he couldn’t risk having the TV on high volume just in case Mrs Tyndale next door complained about the noise, so he wore headphones. It wasn’t long before his weapon of choice (a crossbow) was getting plenty of action. The game was fast and violent, but somewhere between level three and four an unusual noise began to distract him. He checked his undead monitor for close contacts and the character stack for newly released monsters, but there was

nothing, just a low groan. It repeated itself and grew louder. Tommy rechecked the settings and messaged Sparkie to see if there was anything on his scope. There was no reply. Often friends flaked out around tea time.

Tommy continued playing, succeeding in clearing the difficult close combat elevator levels...but the groaning continued. It distracted him from play.

He checked the clock on the mantelpiece then turned around to the living room door. Suddenly, he was aware of feeling that someone else was in the house. There was nobody there. On the screen there were zombies in the distance. Tommy played on, but the groan was getting louder now, covering up the sounds of his weapons and the squelch of limbs being thrown about. He needed the toilet too. Should've gone before mum left. After leaving the carpark level he pressed pause with his thumb, took off his headphones and went to the bathroom.

He was sitting on the toilet idly flicking the roll holder when he heard a noise. A long low groan, very close. Close enough to be just outside the door. Tommy swallowed hard and for the first time in his life felt the bite of real rather than simulated fear.

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