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1 July 2013

The Time in Iraq

It was the 19th of March, 2008 and we were driving from a forward operating base (F.O.B) to a small town in Mosul, Iraq. It was a quiet day: nothing was being broadcasted on the radio about the routs getting hit by small groups of terrorists or improvised explosive devices (IEDs). *“Well it looks like it’s going to be an easy ride today gentlemen!”* said Sergeant First Class Moerman.

Boom! The ground beneath our vehicle exploded, sending us rolling sideways. The earth seemed to form around our vehicle. Sergeant Reigh was in the gunners turret. *“Pull in Reigh,”* I yelled, but it was too late. He was crushed by the weight of the vehicle during the first roll. There was nothing we could do.

When the vehicle finally stopped my ears were ringing, my body ached, and I was disoriented. The vehicle was upside down and we were getting fired upon by a small group of insurgents. We had to pull ourselves together or we were all going to die. *“Let’s go! Get hot! This is no time to take a nap ladies!”* said Moerman.

We managed to pull ourselves together. We got out of the vehicle, returned fire, and suppressed the situation, but there was no victory that day. We had lost a great soldier, friend, and brother.

I will never forget that moment. I often re-live it when I sleep at night, like it had just suddenly happened again, waking me up abruptly. I live with the images of that haunting experience every day.