



Disney

WRECK-IT RALPH

**The Junior
Novelization**



The Junior Novelization



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Prologue

Welcome to Litwak's Family Fun Center

For more than thirty years, Litwak's Family Fun Center had been entertaining children. Two generations of kids knew that if you wanted to play the best video games, Litwak's was *the* place to go.

The atmosphere in the arcade was one of ringing bells and electronic beeps. Kids raced between rows of fighting, dancing, racing, and first-person shooter game consoles, testing their skills against various video characters.

The arcade even had a few original 8-bit games from way back in the 1980s. The characters in those games were pixelated and looked more like clumps of little colored dots than the movie-like realism found in modern games, but they were *classics!*

One of those original games was called *Fix-It Felix Jr.* The game's official Good Guy was a little fellow named Fix-It Felix, outfitted with work gloves, a tool belt, and a gleaming gold magic hammer.

But Felix wasn't the most exciting character in the game. That honor belonged to the game's Bad Guy, Wreck-It Ralph.

Whenever a kid put a coin into the game console, Ralph leaped on-screen with huge fists, torn overalls, and a furious attitude, yelling, "I'M GONNA WRECK IT!"

As each game started, Ralph climbed up the side of a pixelated apartment building in a place called Niceland and smashed the structure to pieces. Bricks rained down while frightened Nicelanders peered out from the windows.

"FIX IT, FELIX!" the Nicelanders would shout.

Then Felix would show up, cheerful and calm, holding his magic hammer. If a player handled the joystick skillfully enough, Felix would follow Ralph up the side of the apartment building, fixing all the broken windows and loose bricks.

Once Felix fixed the entire building and reached the roof, the player won! On the screen, the Nicelanders cheered as they presented Felix with a shiny gold medal.

But what about Ralph, the Bad Guy? Game after game, the Nicelanders hoisted him up and tossed him off the roof. He always landed facedown in the mud at the bottom of the building.

For kids, there was something simple and fun about the story of Ralph and Felix. That's why the game was still popular after many years, despite its old-fashioned style.

In fact, every video game in Litwak's arcade had a story embedded in it. But the stories weren't exactly what Mr. Litwak and the kids thought they were. Every night, when the video arcade closed, the real action started.

CHAPTER

1

Ralph sat on a little folding chair and looked at the dozen or so other Bad Guys sitting in a circle around the room.

“My name’s Wreck-It Ralph,” he began. “I’m nine feet tall. I weigh 643 pounds. I can’t walk down the street without causing major structural damage to buildings.” He shrugged. “I guess that kind of makes me the Bad Guy.”

“Hi, Ralph,” the group answered in unison.

Ralph nodded as his gaze fell on the banner pinned up over the snack table that read BAD-ANON: ONE GAME AT A TIME. Leaving his game and traveling through the power cord to attend a support group for Bad Guys had seemed like a good idea earlier in the evening. But now Ralph wondered whether anyone could truly understand how he felt.

“Look,” Ralph said, “I’m great at what I do; I’m probably the best I know. But the problem is that fixing stuff is the object of the game. Fix-It Felix Jr.—he’s the Good Guy. You know, he’s nice enough as Good Guys go; definitely fixes stuff really well. But if you’ve got a *magic hammer*...how hard can it be?”

Ralph paused, thinking how easily Felix swung his little hammer and magically fixed whatever Ralph had wrecked. Ralph had the hard job! He had to tear apart the Nicelanders’ building and smash bricks with his *bare hands*. Felix just showed up and cried, “I CAN FIX IT!” From there, with a little help from a game player, everything practically repaired itself.

Ralph sighed. “And when Felix does a good job, *he* gets a medal. But are there medals for the sweet science of wrecking? To that I say, ‘*Ha!*’ And...no, there aren’t.”

It was true. In all the years that Ralph had been wrecking the Nicelanders’ building, they had never given him a reward of any kind. Instead, they shrieked in terror whenever they saw him coming. And, of course, there was that big mud puddle.

“Thirty years I’ve been doing this. I’ve seen a lot of other games come and go. Kind of sad,” Ralph said, reflecting. “Look, a steady arcade gig is nothing to sneeze at. I’m very lucky. But if you’ve been doing this as long as I have, it starts to feel hard to love your job when no one else seems to like you for doing it.”

Ralph paused again. If only the Nicelanders would acknowledge his value in the game. Even something simple like a pie would be nice. A medal would be even better. Felix always received a lot of pies and medals.

“Every day after work, Felix and the Nicelanders go hang out in their homes, which Felix has ju

fixed,” Ralph continued. “They go to their homes, and I go to mine, which happens to be a pile of garbage in the dump. You might call it a lonely cesspit of despair on the outskirts of humanity. I call home. That’s where I live. That’s where I go.

“I guess I can’t bellyache too much. I’ve got my bricks. I’ve got my stump. It looks uncomfortable, but it’s actually fine. I’m...I’m good.”

Ralph closed his eyes for a moment. “But if I’m really honest with myself, I see Felix up there, getting patted on the back, people giving him pie and thanking him and so happy to see him all the time. Sometimes I think, *Man, it must be nice being the Good Guy.*”

CHAPTER

2

“Nice share,” the Bad-Anon leader said as Ralph finished his story. “As fellow Bad Guys, we’ve all felt what you’re feeling. And we’ve come to terms with it.”

Ralph glanced around the room at the other video game Bad Guys. There was Zombie, whose clothes (and skin) always seemed to be falling off...Cyborg, part man and part machine...Satine, with red skin, purple cape, and horns...and all kinds of other characters, big, small, scary, and not-so-scary. Every single one of them was nodding sympathetically.

“Really?” Ralph asked.

A huge, barrel-chested Russian wrestler raised his hand. “I am Bad Guy,” he announced in a heavy accent. “I relate to you, Ralph.” He shrugged. “I say to myself, ‘You are Bad Guy. But that does not mean you are *bad guy*.’”

Everyone in the room applauded.

“Right,” Ralph mumbled uncertainly. “But, uh, you lost me there.”

Zombie tried to explain. “Labels not make you happy—‘good,’ ‘bad’—you must love *you*,” he groaned.

“Yeah, inside *here*,” Cyborg agreed as he reached into Zombie’s chest and ripped out his heart.

“Whoa!” Ralph shouted a little too loudly, cringing at the sight of a dripping heart. Zombie wasn’t hurt, of course. He just happened to be the sort of Bad Guy character whose heart could be ripped out. But Ralph found the whole display a little unsettling.

The Bad-Anon leader attempted to refocus the discussion. “Question, Ralph: we’ve been asking you to Bad-Anon for years now, and tonight you finally show up. Why is that?”

“I dunno,” Ralph said, staring at the floor. “I just felt like coming. I suppose it has something to do with the fact that, well, today is the thirtieth anniversary of my game.”

“Happy anniversary, Ralph!” Satine exclaimed.

“Thanks, Satine,” Ralph replied with a nod. “But it’s no big deal.”

“No, Ralph—thirty years?” the Bad-Anon leader said, sounding a little surprised. “Not many games can claim that.”

Zombie growled, “Zombie so jealous!”

“Jealous? Of what?” Ralph asked. “It’s not like I’ve got anything to show for it.”

The Russian wrestler disagreed. “Ralph, this not true. You, my friend, are really good Bad Guy!”

“But here’s the thing,” Ralph said. “I don’t want to be the Bad Guy anymore.”

Every Bad Guy in the room gasped. “Good heavens!” Satine exclaimed.

“You can’t mess with the program, Ralph!” Cyborg warned. “You’re not *going Turbo*, are you?”

“*Turbo*? No, I’m not *going Turbo*,” Ralph replied hastily. Even he knew that some kinds of behavior would never be acceptable. And going Turbo...well, that was one of them. Chaos and disaster were sure to follow. But was the situation really *that* serious?

“Come on, guys,” Ralph continued. “Is it *Turbo* to want something better for your life?”

“Yes!” everyone replied together.

“Ralph,” the group leader said in a soothing tone, “we can’t change who we are, and the sooner we accept that, the better off your game and your life will be. Now let’s close out with the Bad Guy Affirmation.”

Together the group stood up, shut their eyes, and held hands. “I am Bad,” they recited in unison. “And that’s good. I will never be Good. And that’s not bad. There’s no one I’d rather be than me.”

Ralph, however, stood with his eyes open and his mouth closed. He didn’t believe a word of it.

CHAPTER

3

As the Bad-Anon meeting broke up, the leader called out, “Okay, gang, see you next Thursday.”

“Hang in there,” Satine said, giving Ralph a supportive pat on the back. Ralph nodded and left.

As he headed toward the game’s exit, Ralph grabbed a few snacks. The game where Bad-Anon meetings were held always had plenty of fruit, and Ralph didn’t want to waste it.

Then Ralph hurried to join the other Bad Guys on a small train that carried them into a tunnel. The train zipped through the game’s electrical cord, finally stopping at Game Central Station. This was the power hub of the video arcade. Every game was plugged into Game Central, and it was a stopover for anyone traveling from one game to another.

Everyone hopped off the train and headed up another tunnel that led into Game Central’s soaring interior. As Ralph passed into the station, a buzzer sounded.

Surge Protector, a stiff-looking fellow in full uniform, stepped up to Ralph. “Random security check, sir,” he said.

Ralph grimaced. “You always stop me.”

“I’m just a Surge Protector doing his job, sir. Name?”

“You know my name,” Ralph grumbled.

“NAME?” Surge Protector demanded.

“Wreck-It Ralph.” Ralph rolled his eyes.

“Did you bring any fruit with you?”

Ralph quickly hid the fruit treats behind his back.

Surge Protector continued. “Where are you headed?”

Ralph sighed. “*Fix-It Felix Jr.*”

“Anything to declare?” Surge Protector asked.

“Yes,” Ralph muttered. “I hate you.”

“I get that a lot,” Surge Protector replied, with no expression. “Proceed.”

Ralph walked into the crowd, pulling out the hidden fruit once he was out of Surge Protector’s sight. Other game characters gave him a wide berth. Ralph could hear their whispers. “That’s Wreck-It Ralph. Bad Guy. Better get out of his way.”

As Ralph continued through the station, he passed several public-service signs—reminders to be careful when traveling between games. Everyone enjoyed being able to visit friends or sightsee when

off-duty, but there were dangers.

The big thing to remember was that you could only regenerate in your own game. If you had an accident or were defeated by someone else while inside another game, that was the end. There was no “bouncing back.”

Ralph sighed as he passed a group of homeless characters clustered against a wall. They had been forced to abandon their games long before. Most had fled broken game consoles on the verge of being unplugged. They’d had no choice! If they’d stayed when the games’ electrical cords were pulled, they’d have been destroyed along with the game consoles themselves.

Ralph looked down at a cute little orange character. The poor guy held a sign that read `GAME UNPLUGGED: PLEASE HELP!`

Ralph offered him the fruit and smiled warmly. “Hang in there, dude.”

Finally, Ralph reached the *Fix-It Felix Jr.* portal. Suddenly, a buzzer sounded. Ralph rolled his eyes as Surge Protector appeared...*again*.

“Name?” he said to Ralph. This guy clearly needed more memory.



From there, Ralph jumped onto a small train that carried him through the electrical cord back to *Fix-It Felix Jr.* After stepping into his own game, Ralph headed for his pile of bricks. Then he stopped short.

He heard the very loud and distinct sounds of party horns and music. Ralph gazed upward at the penthouse of the Niceland building. It was a huge party, in full swing!

“I am Bad. And that’s good,” Ralph told himself, hoping the affirmation would make him feel better. “There’s no one I’d rather be than me.”

But the affirmation didn’t seem to help. Ralph plunked down onto his stump and sighed.

A crack and a sizzle overhead forced him to look up. `WE LOVE YOU, FELIX!` blazed across the sky in colorful fireworks.

“Ah, great,” Ralph muttered.

He grabbed two empty bottles from the junk heap and held them up to his eyes as binoculars. Now he could see into the top apartment, where Felix and the Nicelanders were dancing and laughing. A huge buffet was set out for everyone to enjoy—everyone except Ralph.

“*Happy thirtieth anniversary?*” Ralph exclaimed, spotting a colorful sign. “They’re having a party without me?”

Determined, Ralph stood up and began walking toward the building. This was an event that everyone in the game deserved to celebrate—including the Bad Guy!

CHAPTER

4

As he approached the penthouse door, Ralph could hear the guests chatting happily inside.

“Great party, Felix!” Nicelander Roy was saying.

“Why, thank you, Roy,” Felix replied.

Out in the hallway, Ralph pressed his giant finger to the tiny doorbell.

“I’ll get it, Felix,” he heard Nicelander Gene say. A moment later, Gene opened the door, took one look at Ralph—and slammed the door shut.

“It’s Ralph!” Gene whimpered.

“Ralph who?” another Nicelander asked.

“Wreck-It Ralph!” Gene squealed.

“Hide the finery!” someone shouted.

Unfortunately, Ralph heard the entire conversation as he waited, still outside the door.

“Felix, fix it!” Nicelander Roy pleaded.

“Oh, of course. I’ll go talk to him. Carry on, everyone,” Felix replied. Ralph heard his footsteps approaching the door.

Then Felix slipped into the hallway, closing the door behind him. “Ralph, can I help you?” he asked politely.

Ralph shuffled his big feet and said, “Hey, Felix. I just wanted to check on you. I saw a big explosion or something over the building. Is everything okay?”

Felix smiled. “Oh, those were just fireworks.”

“Ohhhh. Fireworks,” Ralph said. “Okay, whew. You had me scared there. Is it, uh, somebody’s birthday?”

“Well...,” Felix said reluctantly, “it’s *kind of* a birthday. More of an anniversary. The thirtieth anniversary of our game, actually.”

“Is that tonight?!” Ralph said, hoping to sound surprised. “I’m such a dummy with things. Yup, we’ve had a heck of a run, haven’t we? Every one of us doing our part for this game. Anyway, congratulations.”

“Thank you,” Felix said politely. “And you, too.”

A turtle poked his head out the door. Ralph’s jaw dropped. That turtle was not even a *Fix-It Felix Jr.* character! Felix and the Nicelanders had invited someone from another game, but they had ignore

Ralph.

“Just a heads-up, Felix,” the turtle said, “they’re bringing the cake out in a few shakes.” The turtle turned and slammed the door again.

“Cake?” Ralph asked. “Never had it. No one ever seems to throw it out, so it never ends up in the dump. So I’ve never actually tasted it.”

Felix looked uncomfortable. Finally, he said, “I don’t suppose you’d like to come in and have a slice, would you?”

Ralph grinned from ear to ear and pushed past Felix.

“Don’t mind if I do,” Ralph said, striding through the door, ripping it off its hinges. As he straightened up, Ralph’s head crashed through the ceiling. A big chunk of plaster fell out...and dropped on Felix, who flickered and fell to the floor. A little flower floated just above his motionless body.

The room went silent as the Nicelanders stared in horror.

After a long moment, Felix flickered again, this time regenerating back into existence. “I’m okay! Fit as a fiddle!” he called, popping to his feet. “You know Ralph.”

Ralph forced a smile as he looked at the cringing guests. He stooped and greeted each one. “Evening, Nel. Lucy. Don. Dana.”

“*Deanna*,” said Deanna coldly.

Then Ralph turned to Nicelander Gene, a character he often tossed across the screen during official game play.

“Big Gene,” Ralph said, nodding amiably.

“Why is *he* here?” Gene snapped, clearly irritated.

“He’s just here for a slice of cake,” Felix explained.

Ralph shrugged as he looked at their hostile faces. “And...I am a big part of this game, technically speaking.” He bent down to Gene’s level. “Why are *you* here, Gene?”

“Oh, look! The cake!” Felix announced nervously as Nicelander Mary wheeled in an elaborate cake that looked just like the Niceland apartments.

CHAPTER

5

The anniversary cake was impressive. It was tall and frosted, with candy windows and sugar that had been spun on top to create a sweet version of the “We Love You, Felix!” fireworks.

“Well, I’ll be dipped, Mary,” Felix said happily. “You’ve really outdone yourself.”

The Nicelanders gathered around the cake. “Nice work with the fondant!” Roy exclaimed.

“And look! There’s all of us at the top,” Gene said, pointing.

“Oh, we’re just adorable,” someone else said. All the Nicelanders were pleased.

Mary, dressed in a prim little purple suit, smiled. “And each apartment is everyone’s favorite flavor,” she said proudly. “Norwood’s is red velvet.”

“Guilty!” Nicelander Norwood laughed.

“And lemon for Lucy. Rum cake for Gene. And for Felix—”

“Vanilla!” the Nicelanders shouted in unison.

Ralph stood behind everyone and looked at the cake. A little candy Felix stood on the roof, smiling and reaching for a medal. At the bottom of the building, in the mud, sat an ugly, pitiful candy Ralph.

“And this mud where I’m stuck—what is it made of?” Ralph asked.

“Chocolate,” Mary replied.

“Never been real fond of chocolate,” Ralph said.

“Well, I did not know that,” Mary responded.

Then he nodded at the little Ralph figurine. “One other little thing. I hate to be picky, but do you really think this looks like me?” He bent down and put his face next to the figurine for comparison.

“Yes,” Mary said simply.

“Artistic interpretation,” Felix said helpfully.

“Well, in my interpretation, this little guy would be a lot happier if you put him on top with everyone else,” Ralph replied, reaching out toward the candy Ralph. To everyone’s shock, he picked up the figurine and placed it on top of the cake, smearing Mary’s frosting.

“No, no, no!” Gene said quickly. “There’s no room for you up there.” He knocked the candy Ralph back down into the mud, messing up the cake even further.

“Well, what about this?” Ralph said, taking the miniature Felix from the top of the cake and moving him into the mud. “We can make some room. There, that’s much better.”

The Nicelanders gasped in horror. “How about we just eat the cake?” Felix said anxiously.

“Hang on,” Gene said. “Felix needs to be on the roof, because everyone is cheering for him and he’s about to get his medal.”

Ralph reached in again and took the medal off the cake, breaking the spun-sugar fireworks. “The how about we just take that medal and give it to little Ralph for a change?”

The crowd stared wide-eyed as Ralph put the medal on little Ralph.

“Now you’re just being ridiculous,” Roy said irritably. “Only Good Guys win medals, and you, sir, are no Good Guy.”

Ralph stared at them all. “Well, suppose I *could* win a medal! Then you’d let me up here, right?”

“Ralph,” Gene said with a mocking smile, “if you win a medal, we’ll let you *live* up here in the penthouse.” The Nicelanders all laughed, and Gene pulled the medal off the little candy Ralph and put it on the candy Felix. “But it will never happen, because you’re just the Bad Guy who wrecks the building.”

“No, I’m not!” Ralph said a little too loudly.

“Yes, you are!” Gene dropped the little candy Ralph in the mud, upside down.

Frustrated, Ralph raised his huge fists. Then he slammed them down on the cake, splattering it everywhere. “No, I’m NOT!” he shouted.

Everyone froze. Ralph looked around at the Nicelanders’ distraught faces, now covered in cake. He dropped his head.

“You know what?” Ralph said. “I’m going to go win a medal. The shiniest medal this place has ever seen!” Then he turned toward the door. “Good night. Thank you for the party.”

Roy turned to the other Nicelanders. “Is he being serious?”

“Please,” scoffed Gene. “Where is a Bad Guy going to get a medal?”

CHAPTER

6

Miserable, Ralph headed out through the tunnel to Game Central Station. From there he entered another game, where he knew there was a small, quiet restaurant.

He walked into the dining room and sat alone, sipping a soda. The place was filled with Good Guys. Ralph noticed they all had medals or trophies. And they all wore smiles indicating that they had come out on top again.

“Now, come on,” he told his server. “Where can a guy like me go and win a medal?”

“I don’t know what to tell you,” the server said. “Maybe someone left a medal here. You’re welcome to look through the Lost and Found.”

So Ralph pulled out the old Lost and Found box from a closet down the hall. As he dug through a large, fully armored soldier walked by and bumped into him.

“Hey!” Ralph objected.

The soldier didn’t reply. He seemed dazed and kept trying to walk into the wall, as if he should be able to go right through it. He kept muttering, “We are humanity’s last hope. Destroy all cy-bugs...”

“Uh, are you okay there?” Ralph asked, gently tapping the soldier’s shoulder.

The fellow whirled around. His eyes were wide open as he practically shrieked in Ralph’s face, “We’ve only been plugged in a week! And every day it’s ‘climb the building,’ and then ‘fight the bugs’!”

He grabbed Ralph desperately.

“Hey! Easy on the overalls, spaceman,” Ralph said, holding his palms out to keep a safe distance from the crazed soldier. “It’s tough everywhere, all right?”

Ralph turned and started to walk away.

“And all for what?” the soldier squealed. “A lousy medal!”

Ralph stopped.

“Medal?” Turning around to face the soldier, he said, “You win a medal?”

“Yeah!” the soldier replied. “The Medal of Heroes!”

Ralph considered. “Is it shiny?”

“Uh, pretty shiny,” the soldier said.

“And it says HERO on it, and you win it by climbing a building?” Ralph continued with increasing excitement.

“And fighting bugs!” the soldier screamed.

Ralph approached the soldier carefully. “Is there any way I could go with you to your game and maybe get one of those medals?”

“Negatory!”

“Does that mean maybe?”

“No!” the soldier barked. “Look, only the bravest and the best serve in our corps—”

Just then, a tiny bug hopped onto Ralph’s shoulder.

The soldier shrieked in terror. “*Ahh-hoo-hoo!*” Then he turned and ran straight into the wall, knocking himself out cold.

Ralph stared at the soldier. Then he looked at his armor. The battle gear covered the soldier’s entire body, from head to toe.

Several minutes later, the soldier exited the restaurant. But he looked different. He seemed a little too large for his outfit. His head completely filled his helmet, and there were little fringes of brown hair at the edges of his face.

The “soldier” lifted one large fist, awkwardly pushed the helmet aside, and muttered to himself, “Where am I going?”

It was Ralph! He had borrowed the armor from the unconscious soldier and put it on himself.

Now he had to enter the soldier’s game without being discovered. It was risky, but Ralph needed that medal!



Dressed in the armor, Ralph made his way through Game Central Station. He was headed for the soldier’s home game, a new game called *Hero’s Duty*.

Ralph picked up the pace, which was difficult because he had trouble seeing out of his new helmet. He stumbled, then accidentally tripped over his little homeless friend, who was walking forlornly through the station.

Ralph raised his visor and looked down.

“Oh, sorry, there,” Ralph said. The orange character looked at Ralph curiously.

Moving on, Ralph noticed that people were saluting him. Some were even waving, and nobody backed away. Ralph scratched his head and continued walking.

He strode all the way to the entrance to *Hero’s Duty* without anyone giving him a hard time.

Then he saw Surge Protector. Ralph sighed and waited for the usual grilling.

“Name?” Surge Protector asked. Then he looked at Ralph’s uniform and saluted. “Oh, sorry, soldier. Proceed.”

Ralph saluted back. Then he proudly walked into *Hero’s Duty*, thinking, *So this is what it feels like to be a Good Guy.*

CHAPTER

7

At Litwak's Family Fun Center, Mr. Litwak opened the arcade for the day. A crowd of kids rushed to get inside.

It wasn't long before quarters were dropped into *Hero's Duty*, the new, big-screen, first-person shooter game. A little gap-toothed girl with red hair picked up her game pointer, ready for action. She stared at the screen and listened anxiously as the booming voice of the game's narrator said, "On a planet with no name, a top-secret experiment has gone horribly wrong."

At the same time, the game characters were lining up, getting ready inside a troop transport ship. Ralph and a few other soldiers arrived just in time.

"Quarter alert! Quarter alert!" a voice called out. Ralph followed the soldiers as they rushed toward their starting positions.

"Hustle up!" a soldier named Corporal Kohut yelled out. "Game time." Ralph continued with the other soldiers into the hull of a dark ship. Kohut looked over to Ralph.

"Feeling better, Markowski?" he asked.

"What?" Ralph replied, startled. Then he realized—*he* was Markowski! Ralph grinned. "Oh! Yeah, I'm good," he said. "In fact, I'm so good, I'm ready to win a medal."

Just then, the soldiers stepped aside as the first-person shooter, a little robot moving on wobbly mechanical wheels, rolled in. Its flat-screen head displayed the face of the little gap-toothed girl. This little robot would be her eyes and ears during the game, and at the console, she would control its movements.

The narrator's voice blared: "Game play in three, two, one."

"We are humanity's last hope," snarled Sergeant Calhoun, leader of the platoon. She was tall, fit, and tougher than nails. She continued, explaining everything to the player. "Our mission: destroy all cy-bugs."

The doors of the ship's hull opened.

Ralph found himself looking out into a bleak, twisted, metallic landscape. Giant scorpionlike bugs swarmed around a tall, futuristic building that jutted into the sky. Ralph was pushed out of the ship with the other soldiers.

"Ahhhhh! No! What have I done?" Ralph shouted as he fell onto the terrain. Huge quivering cy-bugs seemed to be everywhere—in the air, on the ground, and heading toward the platoon. "Help me!"

As the bugs swarmed in, Calhoun didn't bat an eye. She pointed to the building in the background.

“There it is,” she said. “Ninety-nine levels of mayhem, and the Medal of Heroes for the bravest who makes it to the top.”

She looked over her shoulder. A giant black bug was flying directly at them. “Cy-bug. Twelve o’clock!” she said coolly.

Ralph looked up, saw the most grotesque insect he’d ever seen, and screamed. “Oh, this was a horrible idea!” he howled, dashing out of the bug’s way.

Ralph fled through the chaos. He realized in horror that cy-bug eggs were all around him. The eggs hatched quickly, growing into ferocious adults as he watched. And whenever they ate something they transformed into a crazy version of their meal. When one cy-bug ate a jeep, it turned into a bug with wheels. Another swallowed a gun, and one of its claws grew into a weapon.

“When did video games become so violent and scary?” Ralph shrieked.

Calhoun shot a cy-bug that was about to eat Ralph. Then she grabbed him and threw him aside. “Markowski! Get back in formation before I rip your head off!” She turned to the first-person shooter and shouted, “The entrance to the lab is right across that bridge!”

Ralph made a run for it, thinking he’d find some safety in the building. But as he did, the lab doors flew open and an even larger swarm of cy-bugs poured out.

“AH!” Ralph yelled, reversing position as the bugs came at him. “Save me! Save me! Take her!” Ralph howled as he fled, holding the first-person shooter up in front of him like a shield.

Seconds later, the booming voice called out, “Game over!” Ralph kept running, and then turned to see whether the bugs had taken the bait. They had completely covered the first-person shooter!

CHAPTER



The game's narrator called out, "Game reset. Game reset." A bright beacon of light shone up through the top of the building and into the sky.

"BEACON UP!" Kohut yelled. "Cease fire!"

Immediately, the cy-bugs stopped fighting and turned toward the light. Clouds of bugs flew toward the beacon. Each one was zapped into oblivion with a sizzle as it touched the light.

"Return to start positions," the game announcer said.

Calhoun abruptly turned her attention to Ralph. "Markowski!" she yelled.

"Sir. Yes, sir!" Ralph shouted. Calhoun hit him square on the head.

"What's the first rule of *Hero's Duty*?" she asked, her face no more than an inch from Ralph's nose.

"No cuts, no butts, no coconuts?" Ralph replied.

She hit him again and yelled, "Never interfere with the first-person shooter! We're already facing the most dangerous enemy in this arcade. We don't need you making the experience more interesting. So stick with the program, soldier! Do you hear me?"

Ralph nodded, and Calhoun walked away. "Back to start positions," she commanded.

"Yeah, right," Ralph whispered to himself. "I'm not going through *that* again." He looked up at the ninety-nine levels of the building. "The medal's up at the top," he said, thinking there must be an easier way.



Meanwhile, in the real world, the little gap-toothed girl who had been playing the game made a beeline from *Hero's Duty* to another game called *Sugar Rush*.

She stared at the game's opening screen, which featured a selection of nine colorful racers and candylike letters that read RANDOM ROSTER. NEW RACERS DAILY. She smiled. "Sweet!" She started to put her quarter on the machine to reserve the next game, but two bigger kids nudged her out of the way.

"Go away, kid," they told her. "We're playing all nine of today's racers." The little girl sighed and moved away.

She took her quarter over to *Fix-It Felix Jr.* instead. It was an older game with simple graphics,

but it was still fun. A happy musical introduction played as 8-bit video trucks built the Niceland apartment building. Then Nicelander characters moved into their apartments.

A quote bubble popped up at one side of the screen: "I'M GONNA WRECK IT!" But the balloon's pointer led to no one. Wreck-It Ralph didn't appear.

The little girl pushed a button, but nothing happened. "Huh? Where's the wrecking guy?" she asked, confused.

Inside the game, the Nicelanders were asking the same thing. "Where's Ralph? He should be wrecking the building," Roy whispered.

"Shhh. Stick with the program," Gene replied.

After a pause, the Nicelanders all shouted, "FIX IT, FELIX!"

Felix jumped onto the screen holding his magic hammer. "I CAN FIX IT!" he declared. Then he looked at the building—there was no Ralph and nothing to fix. Through a gritted smile, Felix whispered, "Ralph. Quarter alert. Game on."

Using the joystick, the little girl made Felix bounce in front of the building. The Nicelanders were completely flustered. "What do we do?" Gene asked.

"Just act naturally," Felix replied. "I can fix it." Ignoring what the little girl's joystick indicated he climbed down the building and ran to Ralph's garbage pile, out of sight of the game's screen. "Ralph! Ralph! Ralph!" he yelled. But Ralph was nowhere to be found.

In the arcade, the little girl was very confused. She'd never seen Felix behave like that before. "Mr. Litwak!" she yelled.

Old Mr. Litwak scurried right over. "What's the trouble, sweetheart?"

"The game's busted," she complained.

Mr. Litwak took a look at the *Fix-It Felix Jr.* screen.

"Whoa, boy!" he said, and gave the machine a good kick.

Inside the game, the building rumbled and the Nicelanders began screaming. Mr. Litwak shook his head and placed an OUT OF ORDER sign on the screen.

The Nicelanders could see the arcade lights dim as the sign covered their console window. They read the words backward in shock.

"Ladies and gentlemen," Gene announced, "we're out of order."

"Ralph has doomed us all!" Lucy cried.

"I don't want to be here when the plug is pulled," Roy whimpered. All the Nicelanders began to panic.

"Now, everybody calm down," Felix said. He tried to reassure them that Ralph was probably just late returning from Game Central Station, when he noticed a light coming toward them through the power cord. "See, there he is now!" he said.

But when the train arrived, it wasn't carrying Ralph.

It was Ralph's homeless friend.

"What brings you here, neighbor?" Felix asked.

The orange character blurted out a stream of information in his own language, which sounded like nonsense to most of the Nicelanders.

"What's he saying, Felix?" Gene asked anxiously.

Felix did understand the gibberish, and his jaw dropped in shock. “Ralph went to *Hero’s Duty!*”

CHAPTER

9

Inside *Hero's Duty*, Ralph was climbing up the outside of the lab building. "Ninety-seven...ninety-eight...ninety-nine," he huffed, until he finally reached the top.

Peering through a window, Ralph could see the Medal of Heroes hanging in the center of the room, at the top of a short set of stairs. Ralph smashed the window and climbed in.

On the ground below, Calhoun led her soldiers back toward their starting positions. The game's narrator intoned, "The arcade is now closed." That meant the soldiers could relax just a little. No more kids would play the game until the next day.

Suddenly, Calhoun sniffed the air and snapped, "Quiet. Someone's coming."

A transport from Game Central Station pulled up, and Calhoun saw someone step off it. Someone who definitely didn't belong in her rough-and-tumble game.

Felix, looking small and vulnerable, peered around. Calhoun immediately tackled him.

"What are you doing here?" she barked.

"I'm Fix-It Felix Jr., ma'am," he said, "from the game *Fix-It Felix Jr.*" Then he looked closer at Calhoun and gasped. "Look at that high definition in your face!"

Calhoun tried to hide a glimmer of a smile before she shouted, "Now state your business!"

Felix stood up and took off his hat respectfully. "I'm looking for my colleague, Wreck-It Ralph."

Calhoun did not believe Felix, and was telling him to return to his own game when they both heard a loud noise. Everyone turned to look at the lab building. There was Ralph's giant body silhouetted against a window on the ninety-ninth floor.



Ralph didn't know or care that he was being watched. He was focused on his task as he cautiously headed toward the medal. Thousands of cy-bug eggs were packed into the room, so he had to tiptoe around them, picking his way toward the medal.

Finally, with a sigh of relief, he walked to the center of the room. Then, like a dream, the glistening Medal of Heroes swept down out of the light and settled around his neck. Heroic music filled the room, and the images of generals saluted him. The game narrator announced, "Congratulations, soldier! You are the universe's greatest hero."

Ralph stood tall and puffed out his chest proudly. He couldn't help thinking of all the wonderful

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