

Shell Shock

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And, of course, supernatural elements just make a story more interesting - John Foster

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## Shell Shock

Iâ€™m completely alone right now. I donâ€™t know where anyone is. I remembering entering the abandoned school with my team (Bravo 2) and then I remember this huge white flash and someone shouting ambush. I donâ€™t know how much time had passed but surely I wasnâ€™t stunned long enough for everyone to vanish.

Looking around there are no bodies, no blood, no guns or shell casings. Where did everything go? Maybe when I got flashed I stumbled into another room. I canâ€™t hear anything though, this type of silence is unnatural. There should be some kind of noise. Even if its just the old torn curtains moving in the breeze... actually, now that I think about it... there isnâ€™t a breeze. The air is frighteningly quiet and still. Something is terribly wrong.

Patting myself down I find nothing is missing. I still have my flashlight, gun and not even a single bullet is missing from my spare shells or the magazine. Did I fire when I got flashed? Iâ€™m not sure. I donâ€™t remember. I have to search this building, I have to find my team.

Leaving the room I see stairs leading down to lower floors on either end of the corridor. How did I get up here? We entered through the front door... I donâ€™t remember clearing the other floors. No way would I allow my team and myself to go straight to the top of the building. Thats just asking for something to go wrong.

My only option is to head down to the next floor. I checked all rooms on this floor and they are all clear. The only thing in them is desks, chairs and a whiteboard. The last room I cleared had something peculiar about it. There were maps on the wall but not maps of the world, not even maps of this country. I couldnâ€™t read them, they seemed to just be in numbers and squares with certain co-ordinates marked. On the whiteboard there were a few symbols and words in a foreign language. I couldnâ€™t understand them or make sense of them all. Iâ€™ve never seen the symbols used by any enemy forces, unless this is a new breed of terrorists.

Dammit Iâ€™m in a primary school, surely these symbols are just something the kids have made up. Iâ€™m overthinking. As I make my way down the west set of stairs to clear the next floor, I hear a gun cock behind me. I spin round, crouching and aiming in the process, I am ready to fire... there is nothing there. I am sure I heard a gun being cocked, 100% sure, so why is there nothing behind me? I cleared the top floor so nobody could have just appeared.... could they?

Clearing the second floor was easy but I am getting more creeped out the further into this building I go. This school was only recently abandoned according to our intel but it seems like no-one has been in here for years. I was also told it was abandoned in a hurry. So howcome there are no school books, or pages lying around? Even seeing a pencil on the ground at this stage would make me feel more comfortable.

As I entered the final room of the second floor I notice a stain on the ground. My first thoughts were spilt juice or paint. This was a primary school after all, kids are messy as hell, damn my two nephews wreck my house 30 seconds after they walk through the door and theyâ€™re in P5. As I went closer to the stain all sense of growing comfort left me; blood... a puddle of blood.... fresh blood. There is something drastically wrong here. I need to get out of this building now.

I head for the east stairs and something at the top catches my eye. A soldier, I take aim and fire but the second I pulled the trigger I realised I was shooting at absolutely nothing. This cannot be happening. This isnâ€™t real. Hearing noises, puddles of fresh blood in an abandoned building, my entire team missing and now seeing things? That flash must have affected me more than I thought.

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I hear a glass smash somewhere below me. Fuck this Iâ€™m getting out of here, Iâ€™ll get other troops and start a rescue mission for my men. I hear a crash above me, Iâ€™m running now, I refuse to clear the last floor, Iâ€™m sprinting for the door. A file cabinet falls behind me... I see the front door. Iâ€™m so close... in the reflection of door I see my men staring at me. I turn to tell them weâ€™re getting out of here now. Again thereâ€™s no-one there, I donâ€™t care, Iâ€™m not falling for this. I hear chains, I turn to unlock the front door and run to safety. Oh my.... its been chained and padlocked.... but thereâ€™s no-one here....

I checked the building....

Thereâ€™s no-one here....

â€™ Youâ€™re never leaving this place sergeantâ€™

I wake up... completely alone....

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