

Chapter 1

Dylan dies again

Sir Dylan of Zalimar stands in the forest near the castle of Count Orloff. He looks up at the tall, grey castle.

The princess is in there, Sir Dylan thinks. I have to find her. I have to free her. Now.

Then three men come out of the castle. They are wearing red and black – Count Orloff's colours.

Orloff's guards! Oh no! thinks Sir Dylan. Can they see me?

He hears a voice from a window high in the castle. 'Guards! Over there – in the forest. There's a knight. Kill him!' Sir Dylan looks up and sees Count Orloff at the window. And Orloff is pointing at him!

The guards run across the grass and come into the forest. They have their swords out.

Am I going to die? Sir Dylan thinks. Can I fight three guards?

He takes his sword and fights one guard. The guard dies. *Yes!*

He fights another guard. *Yes!* That guard dies too.

Sir Dylan fights the third guard, but this guard is strong. Sir Dylan's sword hits the guard's shield again and again. The guard's sword hits Sir Dylan's shield and Sir Dylan falls to the ground.

'Die, Knight of Zalimar!' the guard shouts. His sword goes under Sir Dylan's shield and into his chest.

And Sir Dylan dies.

'No!' Dylan shouts. He looks at his body – Sir Dylan's



body – on the ground. Then he reads on his computer screen: *You have 5,325 points.*

Dylan is in his room. He's playing his new computer game, *Orloff's Castle*. He plays it every night. In *Orloff's Castle*, Dylan is a knight – Sir Dylan of Zalimar. He's big and strong. He has long red hair, a silver sword and a shield.

In the game, you try to get into Count Orloff's castle and find Princess Zia. She's the prisoner of the evil count. You try to free her. You can get help from the Wizard of Zalimar. His magic spells can help you. Count Orloff's guards try to stop you and kill you. But in the game, you can die and live again. Sir Dylan of Zalimar can try again to free Princess Zia.

In the game, you start at Level 1. You try to get to Level 10 – to be the King of Zalimar. Dylan is at Level 5 now. At Level 5, you are a knight. With 10,000 points, Dylan can go up to Level 6.

On his computer screen, Dylan reads *Do you want to play again?*

Then he hears his mother's voice from the kitchen. 'Dylan, are you playing on your computer?'

Dylan doesn't answer. He's going to click on Yes and play again.

But his mother comes into his room. 'Are you playing that game again? Turn it off. Now!'

'But, Mum –'

'Stop playing *now*, Dylan. It's a school night. And it's ten o'clock!' She goes out again.

Dylan reads *Do you want to play again?* and he clicks on No.

Now, the question *Do you want to exit the game?* is on the screen. He clicks on *Yes*. But the computer does not exit the game. The question comes on the screen again: *Do you want to exit the game?*

What's happening? Dylan thinks. 'Come on,' he says to the computer. He clicks on *Yes* again and again, and says, 'I *do* want to exit the game.'

'Oh, no, you don't,' a voice says.

Now there is an old man on the screen. He has long, white hair and a long, white beard. He is wearing a black cloak and he has a wand in his hand. It's the Wizard of Zalimar – and he's looking at Dylan!

'Come here, young man,' says the wizard.

'What? Me? Are you talking to me?' asks Dylan. 'I can't come in there!'

'Oh, yes, you can!' The wizard puts a hand up to the computer screen. And then it comes through the screen!

The wizard's cold hand grabs Dylan's arm.



This is the German version of **The Game**

The Game

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