Fish had always wanted to play video games. So when his friend told him there was a secret game room that the captains used when they weren't flying the spaceship, he had to go see it. They call it the "Weapons Control Room". Fish didn't know what "weapons" were, but he assumed they were a code word for games.

In the dead quiet of the night, Fish walked toward the big door at the end of the hall and pushed it open. The first thing he noticed is the screen. It cast a soft blue light which bathed the room with an eerie, gentle glow. Fish's head fell back as he gazed up at it while it towered over his small, blue alien body. All three of his eyes scanned the room and settled on the black chair that sat in front of the large control panel. Fish, with his short stubby legs, dashed towards the chair and jumped on it eagerly.

The chair squeaks as Fish scoots closer and grasps the control stick. As he presses the On button, the screen springs to life and a small spherical object pops up. Its color is a mix of green and blue and is covered in white swirly things.

A little diagram pops up with what Fish assumes to be information on the game. It writes:

**Planet:** Earth

**Distance From Sun:** 0.00001581 light years

**Population:** 7.7 billion

**Status:** possible home, once inhabitants have deceased naturally.

**Description:** Earth is the third planet from the Sun and the only astronomical object known to harbor life in this solar system. The "oblate spheroid" shaped planet formed over 4.5 billion years ago. The surface of this planet is 70% water (97% is salted, 3% is fresh) and the surface temp. ranges from -126.4° to 136.4° F. Over 1.3 billion species of inhabitants have been identified.

"Hmm...never heard of this game before," Fish frowns. "How am I supposed to play this? Maybe...I'm supposed to speed up the 'deceasing' of inhabitants on the planet so I can live there? Yeah...that must be it."

Fish pushes the control stick forward and the screen zooms in. He accidentally leans on a button and a huge fiery blast shoots out and slams into Earth, causing an explosion of dust and dirt that is visible even from his position on the ship.

"Cooooooool!" Fish gapes in awe.
A video pops up onto the screen, showing the explosions and statistics of the damage. In the corner a little number went up every time Fish sent another fireball towards the planet.

The video broadcasts images of the "creatures" running out of their weird pentagon shaped homes. Hundreds of them, all frantically running around in panicked dazes.

"These creatures-" Fish pushes the button again-" are very dumb. They're just running in circles!" Fish furrows his brow in determination and squeezes a green handle. It sends out huge bullets that make craters on the planet's surface.

"Take that enemy!"

The number at the corner of the screen gets larger. When Fish glances at it, its at 786. Another fiery blast and it shoots up to 900.

"Those must be my points!" Fish giggles excitedly and starts pressing more buttons. "I'm so good at this!"

More destruction. The number grows.

2,000.
3,000.
4,000.
Larger and larger.

Fish is practically jumping in his chair. 4,000 points! That's sooo many! He must be really good at playing this game.

Fish watches as the planet burns. He stares as the green trees erupt in flames and as the fire scorches the ground black. The pentagon-shaped homes collapse in on each other and pieces of wood flies everywhere.

"That's what you get bad guys, it's my planet now," Fish giggles. "Mommy and Daddy will be so proud!"

With another control stick Fish moves the camera that's broadcasting the video onto the screen around so he can survey the damage. It seems like the entire planet is on the verge of crumbling.

"Poor virtual world," Fish says solemnly as he peers closer. "Wow, it looks very real. They even made the dumb creatures look sad."
Zooming in closer, Fish notices a creature, a small one about the size of him, curled up on the ground. She continuously shakes and sobs and appears to be calling for her mom. It looks very real. Hauntingly real.

A sinking feeling knotts up in Fish's stomach. Why did the small sad one make him feel uncomfortable? He shouldn't be sad, he should be happy! He was winning and he had soooo many points! He was the best gamer ever! Forget the girl! He was going to conquer this world!

More fiery blasts. More destruction. The number went up. And up and up.

The door burst open behind him and Fish spins around.

"Oh," Fish waves. "Hi dad!"

"Fish!" His dad snaps. "Why aren't you in bed? What do you think you are Doing?!"

"I'm playing video games dad."

"Video games? What do you mean vid-" His dad goes very quiet and rushes to Fish's side and frantically scans the screen with his three eyes.

"What's wrong dad?" Fish points at the number. "Do you see my points dad? Do ya, do ya? Look at how many I have!"

Fish's dad looks over, but he just sinks to the floor and shakes his head. "Oh Fish," His dad sighs. "Those...those aren't points. It's...the number of people who are..." His dad looks away. "And this is not...it isn't a game."

"It's not?" Fish asks. "But what else would it be?"

"All of that, it's all real," His dad whispers. "Earth, that's a real planet.

And those creatures, they're real too. Earth's their home. And now their home is destroyed because... because..."

Fish understood now.

"Because...of me," Fish starts crying and his dad pulls him onto his lap. Fish watches, whimpering, as Earth continues burning.