

"August 1, 1976, is a date forever etched into my memory. The Nürburgring, known as 'The Green Hell,' lived up to its fearsome reputation that day. As I navigated the treacherous track, I felt the car twitch beneath me. Suddenly, I was no longer in control. The Ferrari veered off course, smashing into the barriers. Flames engulfed the car almost instantly.

The searing heat and toxic smoke made every breath a battle. My helmet visor melted, and I could feel my skin burning. Trapped in the inferno, I wrestled with the safety belts, desperate to escape. I knew that every second counted. Miraculously, several brave drivers, including Arturo Merzario, stopped and risked their lives to pull me from the wreckage.

In the hospital, the pain was excruciating, but it was the fear of the unknown that haunted me the most. The burns covered a significant part of my body, and my lungs were damaged from inhaling the fiery fumes. As I lay there, I faced the terrifying possibility that my racing career—and even my life—could be over.

But giving up was never an option. I was determined to return to the track, to prove to myself and the world that I could overcome this. Six weeks later, against all odds and medical advice, I was back in the cockpit at Monza. The physical pain was immense, but the psychological battle was even greater. The sight of the track, the smell of the fuel, everything brought back memories of the crash.

Despite finishing fourth, it felt like a victory. I had conquered my fears and shown that resilience and determination could overcome even the most devastating setbacks. That race marked the beginning of my journey back to the top of Formula 1, and I was more determined than ever to succeed."