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LARRY HAMA ★ PAOLO VILLANELLI



# GI JOE

*A REAL AMERICAN HERO!*



**COBRA RISING**  
PART 1





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**A REAL AMERICAN HERO**

**G.I. JOE: A REAL AMERICAN HERO #216**

**COBRA RISING, PART 1**

With Snake Eyes dead, Hawk recruits the injured Sean Collins to take over the mantle of the ninja warrior. Meanwhile, Cobra strikes against G.I. Joe when they are weak, sending a team of Night Creepers to the High Sierras to kill Scarlett and the new Snake Eyes...

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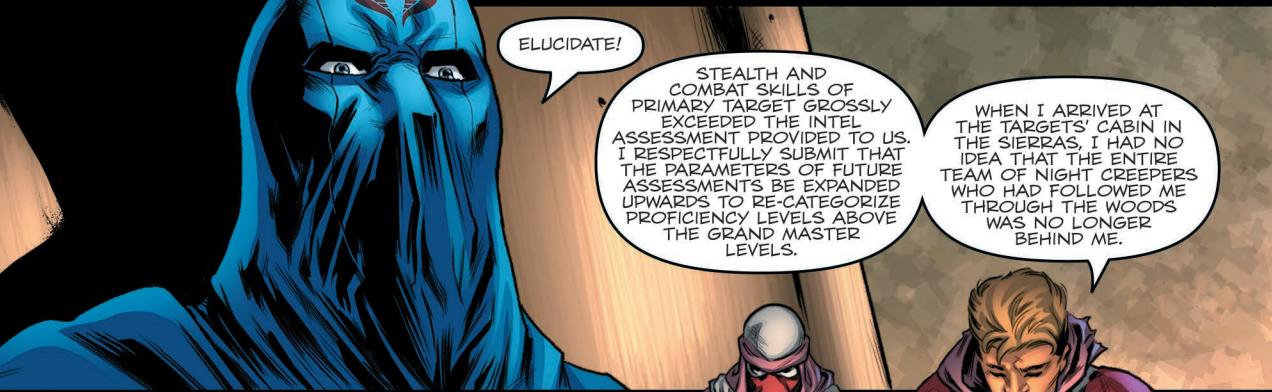




SO, YOU TWO ARE THE ONLY SURVIVORS OF THE NIGHT CREEPER DETACHMENT TASKED WITH ELIMINATING SNAKE EYES AND SCARLETT?

**NIGHT CREEPER LEADER.** YOU WERE IN CHARGE. HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THIS UTTER FAILURE ON YOUR PART? DID YOU NOT HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE AND OVERWHELMING NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY?

CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL, **COBRA COMMANDER!** WE HAD INADEQUATE INTELLIGENCE ON THE ACTUAL CAPABILITIES OF THE TARGET.



ELUCIDATE!

STEALTH AND COMBAT SKILLS OF PRIMARY TARGET GROSSLY EXCEEDED THE INTEL ASSESSMENT PROVIDED TO US. I RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT THAT THE PARAMETERS OF FUTURE ASSESSMENTS BE EXPANDED UPWARDS TO RE-CATEGORIZE PROFICIENCY LEVELS ABOVE THE GRAND MASTER LEVELS.

WHEN I ARRIVED AT THE TARGETS' CABIN IN THE SIERRAS, I HAD NO IDEA THAT THE ENTIRE TEAM OF NIGHT CREEPERS WHO HAD FOLLOWED ME THROUGH THE WOODS WAS NO LONGER BEHIND ME.



WHEN I KICKED OPEN THE DOOR, I FOUND THAT SCARLETT WAS THE ONLY ONE IN THE CABIN. SO, I TURNED AROUND AND WAS FACE-TO-FACE WITH SNAKE EYES!



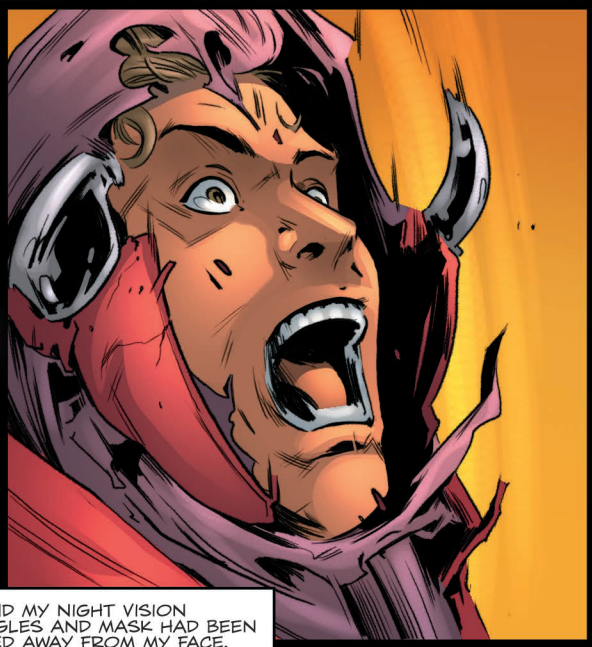


"HE SEEMED TO DISAPPEAR IN A BLUR OF INCOMPREHENSIBLE SPEED, AND I REALIZED THAT HE HAD LEAPED PAST ME INTO THE CABIN.

"HE STARTED TO DRAW HIS SWORD WITH HIS WEAK HAND—



"—AND IN THE TIME IT TOOK ME TO BLINK IN AMAZEMENT, HE WAS PAST ME...



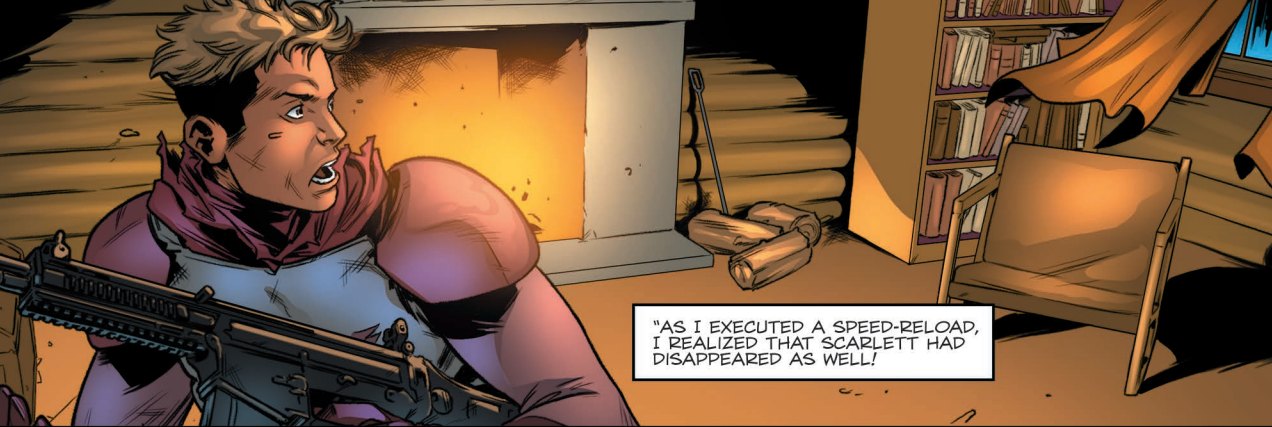
"...AND MY NIGHT VISION GOGGLES AND MASK HAD BEEN SLICED AWAY FROM MY FACE.



"I FIRED IMMEDIATELY, EMPTYING MY MAGAZINE.

"BUT SNAKE EYES HAD DISAPPEARED COMPLETELY."





"AS I EXECUTED A SPEED-RELOAD, I REALIZED THAT SCARLETT HAD DISAPPEARED AS WELL!



"I RUSHED OUTSIDE, BUT NEITHER OF THEM WAS THERE. HOW COULD THEY HAVE VANISHED SO COMPLETELY IN SO LITTLE TIME?



"MAKING MY WAY BACK TO THE WOODS, I SEARCHED FOR SIGNS OF MY TEAM, BUT TO NO AVAIL...



"...UNTIL I CAME TO A DARK BEND IN THE FOREST PATH—



"—AND UNDERSTOOD WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO MY BACK-UP."






"NONE OF MY TEAM HAD EVEN MADE IT OUT OF THE WOODS.

"CONTRARY TO ALL MY TRAINING AND CONDITIONING, A SCREAM WAS ABOUT TO ERUPT FROM MY LIPS...




"...BUT THE POINT OF A VERY SHARP SWORD MADE ME THINK BETTER OF THAT COURSE OF ACTION.

"BEHIND ME, A VOICE WITH A SOFT SOUTHERN ACCENT TOLD ME THAT WE WERE ALL GOING TO WALK BACK ALONG THE PATH, AWAY FROM THE CABIN.



"SHE ADVISED ME THAT RUNNING WAS NOT AN OPTION. SHE SAID, 'HE'S A WOLF, AND HE BITES.' I BELIEVED HER."







"OUR JOURNEY THROUGH THE WOODS WAS LIKE A STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTION MANUAL ON THE POSSIBLE VARIATIONS OF SILENT DEATH.

"GROTESQUE ILLUSTRATIONS AT EVERY BEND, LIKE FIGURES FROM A HIERONYMUS BOSCH NIGHTMARE.

"AND ALL THE WHILE, I WAS THINKING THAT THE SITUATION COULD BE REVERSED IF THE HELICOPTER CREWS THAT BROUGHT US HERE ARE ALERT AND READY.

"AS IF SHE READ MY THOUGHTS, SCARLETT TOLD ME THAT I SHOULDN'T EXPECT ANY HELP FROM THE EXTRACTION CHOPPERS AND THE AIR SUPPORT."

