

## MC 067: Cold Snap

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### G.I. JOE #67

Cold Snap

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Summary (by Foster H. Coker, III): "Somewhere in Utah", a C-130 transport plane circles in for a landing at the Pit III. Far below, Dial Tone identifies it as "the Freedom Bird" bringing our boys home from Borovia. Hawk calls for the Joes to show Quick Kick, Snow Job and Stalker a big welcome home, and plenty of them turn out to do just that, including Flint, Lady Jaye, Roadblock, Cross Country, Rock-N-Roll, Doc, Shipwreck, Gung Ho, Psyche-Out, Leatherneck, Hawk, Dial Tone, Chuckles, Outback, Law, Bazooka, Dusty, Tunnel Rat, Lifeline, Recondo, Backstop and Crankcase. As the convoy of Joe vehicles rolls out to meet the plane, Flint comments that Outback should be worried about what to say to the three returning Joes, since it was Outback who escaped Borovia and left the others to their fate.

During the happy reunion, Stalker seeks out Outback, who is obviously feeling down about abandoning his teammates. Stalker tells him that he doesn't have anything to be sorry about, though. Quick Kick says "the only thing that kept us going in that gulag was knowing you got out with the real word on what went down over there!" And Snow Job reassures him "No, man, you did right."

"You think your buddies would hold it against you," Stalker asks, "for obeying my orders and bringing back the truth?"

Several Joes, most noticeably Leatherneck, had indeed come down on Outback over the Borovian mission, but he absolves them with his emphatic reply. "Not in a million years, Stalker! The Joes are made of better stuff than that!"

While the rest of the Joes treat their three pals to a hero's welcome, Hawk, Flint, Lady Jaye and Psyche-Out greet Snake Eyes and Scarlett as they de-plane. Hawk and Psyche-Out have concocted a theory that Snake Eyes and Scarlett were temporarily deranged by the land mine blast in Grenada; therefore they were technically not guilty of violating Hawk's orders and breaking international law. Psyche-Out, the Joes' "distinguished resident shrink", declares them fully recovered.

After Hawk and Psyche-Out leave, Flint and Lady Jaye are left facing Snake Eyes and Scarlett. Without a word, the four of them begin walking back to base. Still angry at being kept in the dark about the Borovian rescue plans, Flint finally snaps at his friends. "You could have let us in on it! You didn't have to make fools of us by pretending to get blown up by a land mine!" Flabbergasted by her boyfriend's outburst, Lady Jaye socks Flint with a roundhouse right. She explains to Flint that Snake Eyes and Scarlett didn't bring them in on the rescue plan so as not to implicate them in the highly illegal activities. They did it, she says, because "they care about you as much as..."

"You do?" Flint finishes. Lady Jaye and Flint share an embrace and Scarlett leads Snake Eyes away to give them a moment alone.

Meanwhile, aboard a Cobra helicopter flying "along the coast of Frusenland, not far from the capital, Frusenhausen", Cobra Commander, Dr. Mindbender and the Baroness try to interest Prime Minister Volff in the purchase of more Terrordromes and other Cobra defense packages. Volff is adamant in his opposition to their proposals, though, especially in light of a pact Frusenland recently signed with the United States, allowing the US to establish arctic bases and weapons testing sites there. Further, Volff says his country has no external enemies. The Baroness points out that there may be internal threats from disaffected minorities such as the hunters and reindeer herders, but Volff is equally dismissive of that idea, too. After the chopper lands, Volff protests about Cobra weapons being unloaded from a freighter, but the Baroness counters that there is no law against them warehousing equipment there so long as Cobra has the proper paperwork. Volff excuses himself to return to his official duties, specifically overseeing the opening of Frusenland's Reindeer Festival. Later, aboard the ship, Cobra Commander, the Baroness and Dr. Mindbender

activate "Operation Terrordrome";. Electronic signals begin beeping from the Terrordromes scattered across Frusenland's countryside. The people attending the Reindeer Festival are bombarded by these inaudible waves and in a matter of minutes a full scale riot erupts pitting the "city slickers" against the "hooligan herders";.

On the Cobra weapons ship, the three Cobra leaders share a champagne toast to the success of their plan, which had been set into motion six years before when the Eskimo mercenary Kwinn sold Cobra the plans to the ultra low frequency wave transmitter the Russians had been testing at the North Pole. "It was a brilliant plan," Mindbender expounds, "to secretly install this "paranoia ray" in all the Terrordromes that we built for export to third world countries . . ." thus fomenting riot and revolution, and creating demand for Cobra weaponry.

The riots continue a day later, and Billy, Storm Shadow, Jinx and the Blind Master catch the news on an appliance store window television in San Francisco. As they watch, Prime Minister Volff declares martial law. Distracted by the news story, Jinx lets her concentration wander and falls victim to a young purse snatcher. The Blind Master quickly apprehends the boy by throwing his cane but the whole thing has been seen by a police officer who moves in to arrest the boy. The ninjas talk the cop out of the arrest though, and the Blind Master gives the boy a job as his guide around town. After the Blind Master and his guide depart, Billy and Storm Shadow engage in a philosophical discussion involving punishment, revenge, violence and war. They pass another department store window television and see Volff signing a new weapons pact with Cobra. Warriors, Storm Shadow says, will always be in the wrong so far as politicians and lawyers are concerned, because "We are guilty of believing in something as obsolete, forgotten and despised as . . . honor."

Review: The heavy-handed philosophizing at the end notwithstanding this was not a bad little between-crises issue. After six (!) years, readers finally learn why Cobra wanted that Russian ULF transmitter in Issue #2.

Continuity is the order of the day for this issue, and the creative team really did a fantastic job of incorporating recent history into the story. On Page 1, for example, the Joes are loading the Defiant back onto the Crawler after the space mission in Issue #65. Many of the Joes on Pages 2 through 5 are shown in their undershirts, as if they had been engaged in heavy labor, like in Issue #64. And the Baroness is shown with a bandage on her forehead, having struck herself there during the space shuttle dogfight in Issue #65.

The scene between Lady Jay and Flint was a good one, but even better was the exchange between Outback and the three Joes he left behind in Borovia. Unlike Leatherneck and certain other Joes, Stalker, Quick Kick, and Snow Job obviously bore Outback no ill will. I loved the looks on the other Joes' faces when Stalker reiterated that Outback did the right thing. And Outback showed a lot of character by keeping the abuse he had taken from the other Joes to himself.

First Appearances:

- Supporting Cast: Tyrone (purse snatcher; unnamed)

Reprinted in:

- The Transformers (UK) #274-277 (June 16th - July 7th, 1990). A Marvel UK series that began reprinting Action Force stories after the end of that series. These issues reprint this story in four parts, alongside original stories. All references to "G.I. Joe" were changed to "Action Force".

- Classic G.I. JOE: Volume 7 (February 2010). A trade paperback collection from IDW Publishing. Includes issues #61-70.