

DDP 02: Reinstated! Pt. 2

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G.I. JOE v2 #2
Reinstated! Part 2
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Summary: High above the earth, a Cobra astronaut modifies a communications satellite to carry radio waves that will control Cobra's nano-mites. Destro explains his plans as he and Cobra's high command watch the astronaut on a monitor. The others are upset and demand to know where Cobra Commander is. Destro says that the Commander won't be returning and that he will take over the Cobra troops. Zartan angrily tells him that the troops are on his compound and are his responsibility. Destro then displays live images of Cobra Commander in a padded cell in Trans-Carpathia. He has been implanted with nano-mites that are causing him to have paranoid delusions and babble on nearly incoherently. He informs the others that they, too, have been implanted without their knowledge and intends to force them to join him. All except Zartan, to whom he offers to implant with nano-mites to reverse "this dreaded skin condition you've brought upon yourself."

In a restricted area of Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Duke introduces the returning Joes -- Flint, Snake-Eyes, Scarlett, Stalker, Lady Jaye, Gung-Ho, Roadblock, Rock & Roll, Jinx, Shipwreck, Wild Bill, Dusty, Spirit and Mainframe -- to the team's new recruits. The young soldiers are very excited to meet the legendary Joes. They all exchange small talk, while Jinx shows some of her martial arts moves on a couple of new Joes. Nine stories underground, Duke explains the Joes' mission to the team's commanders and introduces them to their new piece of equipment, the Joe-Com. Worn on the wrist, it acts as a GPS, heart monitor, video/audio comlink and can carry a terabyte of encrypted data. Mainframe appears onscreen and shows the schematics of the Dreadnok compound in the Everglades, which the Joes are about to invade to capture Cobra's leaders before their nano-mite plan can begin.

At a press conference in Washington, the U.S. defense department announces the reactivation of the G.I. Joe team and Hawk fields questions. Despite the suspicions of the press that the Joes are returning to stop Cobra, the government is officially denying any knowledge of Cobra's return.

In Scotland, a haggard young man named "William" watches the press conference from a bar room television...

Back in a bar room of the Dreadnok compound, Torch, Ripper, Buzzer, Thrasher and others see the announcement and plan to call Zartan. They are interrupted by Zanya, Zartan's teenage daughter, now the acting leader of the Dreadnoks. She intends to inform her father herself, but Destro steps in, urging her to not tell Zartan. He is interrupted by his beeping wrist communicator. Tomax and Xamot call him via videophone and Destro asks them to deposit five million dollars into his MARS swiss bank account. As he speaks, Destro's general, Mistress Armada (aka Lilian, the woman who attacked Cobra Commander in the last issue) arrives worried about the Joes' return. He reassures her, calling her "my love", surprising the twins and Dreadnoks who assume he's still involved with the Baroness. After the twins inform Torch that his "Uncle Winken's Hard Grape Soda" company is neck and neck with the competition, Zanya heads off in the Thunder Machine to contact Zartan.

Back at "Wright-Patt" AFB, the old Joes are training the new recruits. A young soldier gets the better of an arrogant Gung-Ho while they wrestle, while another impresses Dusty with her superior marksmanship.

The next night, the Baroness and Destro are arguing. She says that his "bravado and arrogance" will ruin their plans and he should "put a cap on this macho nonsense". Destro tells her that as long as he gets what he wants, half of his profits from Cobra are hers and then maybe she can get her own castle and stop squatting at his in Trans-Carpathia. Overhead, a G.I. Joe helicopter drops off an assault team. A group of new recruits are led through the swamp by Gung-Ho, Roadblock, Snake-Eyes, Scarlett and Stalker. The Baroness continues to argue with Destro, telling him that she has other reasons for being there. "I'm here to make sure you pull this off, and... and... that he..." Destro interrupts, not believing the Baroness seems to be on the verge of crying. As the Joes continue their approach, Destro assures her that his general and Zartan's men will keep the swamps well defended. The Baroness says that Mistress Armada and Destro's affection for her will jeopardize their plans. He adds that he doesn't love her, he only needs her expertise. Then, she says, "Destro is a master strategist on the battlefield... but you, 'Destro', are not." He says she may be right but at least he and Armada aren't cowards. Baroness shouts, "Enough of you", and slaps him across his face.

Three hours later, the Joes are still making their way through the swamp. Scarlett and Snake-Eyes both silently take out

Vipers and Dreadnoks one by one, not using weapons that will give their presence away to the enemy. The Joes are suddenly spotted and Stalker gives the order to open fire. They spread out into the swamp and the fighting continues. At the central Dreadnok compound, Zanya radios Destro that they're under attack. She makes sure the Dreadnoks have manned their defenses, and turns things over to Major Bludd. Destro is uncertain what to do and becomes distracted by the voice of Cobra Commander, still ranting and raving over a nearby monitor. He angrily smashes the monitor, then sends Armada out with a platoon of Iron Grenadiers. In the swamp, Zartan's brother Zandar appears and a few of the new Joes fall into a trap hidden under the grass. He uses tranquilizer darts to subdue Snake-Eyes and captures he and Scarlett, thanks to Road Pig and a swipe of his cinder block at Snake-Eyes' head. Another Joe recruit is killed saving Stalker while Destro and the Baroness take off in an AGP (Anti-Gravity Pod) with Snake-Eyes and Scarlett on board. Gung-Ho switches on his wrist radio. "Wild Bill? This is Gung-Ho. Move in fast! Looks like we're gonna need some help from above." TO BE CONTINUED

Review: After a shaky first issue, the new series begins to take off with issue #2. The summary above is quite long because there is so much information crammed into this issue. We learn of Destro's plans as the head of Cobra, the old Joes meet the new, Zanya and the Dreadnoks make their first appearances in the series, and we finally have an action-packed battle.

The most interesting developments come on the Cobra front -- as often happened before in G.I. Joe. In the last issue, Destro was far too arrogant and played a bit over the top. He's played similarly here, but we learn after a mysterious conversation with the Baroness that this most likely isn't Destro at all, but an imposter. The Baroness is willing to play along with him, just as she assisted Fred VII in the original comics. I think many readers will be speculating just who "Destro" really is. More on that later... It's apparent that there will more to this series than it first seemed in issue #1.

The Joes meeting the new recruits is played mostly for laughs, with very enthusiastic young soldiers meeting their heroes. Jinx's treatment of the new Joes may seem a bit too violent for some, but we never really saw much of her in the comic or the cartoon and her scene is played for laughs to show how much tougher the old Joes are. Though, Gung-Ho proves that the Joes aren't superhuman when he gets beaten by one of the new recruits.

The older Dreadnoks' portrayals are the most accurate feeling of the comic characters. They're violent and stupid and are easily pushed around by even Zanya. One of the funnier lines in the story comes from Thrasher when Zanya tells him she'll need his Thunder Machine: "Fer cryin' out loud... What, no 'Uncle Thrasher, can I borrow the car?" Torch's grape soda business is just as funny. Zandar, who all but disappeared from the old comic, appears here and seems meaner than before. There's also another reference to the old series when he mentions that nobody ever remembers him.

Once the action starts, it's fairly violent, especially when compared to the cartoon. Of course, none of it is bloody and the worst is "off panel". The death of one of the recruits upsets Stalker, but it's hard to feel too bad since he's just a generic, unnamed Joe. I hope these new recruits don't turn out to be nothing more than human bullseyes. And it's possible that some will appear again, since a few gave their names. One in particular, "Paige Adams" even impressed Dusty with her marksmanship, so maybe we'll see more of her.

The introduction of new characters begin in this issue. Zanya is not a spoiled teenager as some feared and may prove to be an interesting character. Her relationship with her "Aunt Zarana" may prove interesting, when Zarana finally shows up. Mistress Armada isn't really seen too much, so it's hard to judge her character. Her costume does seem to be too inspired by the superheroes from other comics, but Cobra's costumes have always been over-the-top. Though, he's not a new character, the appearance of "William" -- who is undoubtedly the Commander's son, Billy -- is a bit of a surprise, and we can only guess what role he will play. The last major character not to appear is Storm Shadow. There hasn't been even one reference to him, but I'd guess he'll make a grand entrance eventually.

It appears now that the Joes' new headquarters is located at Wright Patterson Air Force Base. Like Fort Wadsworth, Wright Patterson AFB actually exists in Dayton, Ohio. Here's a link to it's official web site: <http://www.wpafb.af.mil>.

Now, for a debate-starting prediction. I'm going to take a guess at just who is posing as Destro. Now, it may turn out that I'm wrong, but I'm willing to take that risk just in case I guess right. The fake-Destro, is actually Cobra Commander himself. His childish outburst when he smashes the monitor, his mention of HIS castle in Trans-Carpathia to the Baroness (only the real Destro and the real CC can claim ownership of that "Silent Castle"), and his mocking of Baroness and Destro's relationship. OK, now you're thinking, "Isn't that Cobra Commander in the padded cell?" Um, well, now I admit it's a stretch, but maybe that's actually Destro...? The Baroness seems to show concern for someone she only refers to as "he", and she wouldn't care about the Commander, would she? Maybe these nano-mites are actually making the real Destro think he's Cobra Commander, making him doubly insane. And finally, in the previous issue, why did the Commander's loyal Crimson Guard side with Destro? Well, at least I gave you something to think about... So, to wrap it all up, issue #2 turns out to be better than #1 and gives a little more hope that this series will turn out to be a good one... To be continued...

First appearances:

- G.I. Joe team: Agent Tony Beuke, CPO David Adcox, Paige Adams
- Cobra: Zanya (Zartan's daughter); Mistress Armada (appeared last issue as Lilian)

Reprinted in:

- G.I. Joe: M.I.A.: Issue 1-2 (February 2002). This single volume reprints issues #1 and 2 for readers who missed them the first time.
- G.I. JOE: Reinstated! (July 2002). A trade paperback collecting issues #1-4.
- G.I. JOE: Disavowed, Volume 1 (June 2010). A trade paperback from IDW Publishing collecting issues #1-4. The title "Disavowed" refers to the fact that IDW has started a series that follows Marvel's G.I. Joe #155, and ignores the Devil's Due continuity.