

DDP 09: Reckonings Pt. 4

Friday, 28 May 2010

G.I. JOE v2 #9
Reckonings, Part 4
Cover Date: August, 2002

Writer: Josh Blaylock
Pencils: Steven Kurth, Jamal Igle
Inks: John Larter, Barb Schulz, Ray Snyder

Colors: Hi-Fi Colour Designs

Editor: Scott Wherle

Summary: Deep inside the Joes' secret base in the Philadelphia Naval Base, the fight between Storm Shadow and Snake-Eyes begins. The Joes rush to help Snake-Eyes, but a door to the room seals shut. The Joes injured by Storm Shadow are helped to their feet, as Kamakura is surprised that Storm Shadow only injured him when he could have killed him. The Joes get inside to find a gaping hole in the ceiling, where up above the two ninjas have taken their fight. While Mainframe tries to track Snake-Eyes' comlink, the fight continues. Storm Shadow tells his sword brother that he shouldn't try to stop him. "I was a fool to betray Cobra Commander years ago."

The Joes track down Snake-Eyes' signal and head for his location. Storm Shadow runs from Snake-Eyes, on his way to find and kill Hawk. Storm Shadow blows up a blast door with a grenade just as the Joes arrive. Storm Shadow runs right toward them and ignores their orders to stop by leaping over the heads. Snake-Eyes does the same and the Joes are forced to run after them. Snake-Eyes tackles Storm Shadow, but the Cobra ninja sets off a flash bomb, momentarily blinding Snake-Eyes. The Joes catch up just as Storm Shadow escapes through another set of blast doors. Mainframe gets the doors open via computer, and Flint, Beach Head and the others get inside, fanning out to find where Storm Shadow's hiding. Just as Beach Head says, "This Kung-Fu crap is highly overrated," Storm Shadow jumps down from the rafters, landing between Beach Head and a Joe "greenshirt". The ninja positions each of his swords at the throat of the two men, ordering the Joes to allow his access to the nearby elevator. The door slides open, revealing Kamakura who jump-kicks Storm Shadow, giving the two hostages a chance to try and overpower Storm Shadow. The Cobra ninja knocks out the greenshirt and Beach Head, pushing them into the elevator. As Snake-Eyes arrives, Storm Shadow kicks Kamakura to the floor. Just before the door slides shut, Storm Shadow slashes at Snake-Eyes with his sword, cutting his face. Bleeding from the wound to his once-healed face, Snake-Eyes freezes before angrily firing his machine gun into the ceiling at the elevator. The other Joes stop him, reminding him he could hit the captured Joes.

The Joes hurry up the stairs to find where the elevator leads. Mainframe sends the elevator to them, but when the doors open, the Joes find Beach Head and the greenshirt unconscious. The greenshirt is no longer wearing his uniform, prompting the Joes to assume Storm Shadow's in disguise. After most of the Joes run off, Snake-Eyes and Shipwreck discover the greenshirt's uniform up in the elevator shaft. They've been tricked. Meanwhile, Storm Shadow escapes on one of the Joes' motorcycles.

Back at the Joes' headquarters, Duke and Hawk meet and discuss Storm Shadow's escape. "At least we stopped the assassination attempt," Duke says. "It's a good thing you contacted Snake-Eyes." But Hawk says that he didn't contact him. He had even given orders to keep Snake-Eyes out of the mission, and most people didn't know Storm Shadow was at the base. He says that G.I. Joe is a team, and not anyone person can be there for every mission. "If all someone does is fight... there's never any time to heal. And that man's got a lot of healing to do." As Hawk speaks, we see Snake-Eyes return to Scarlett's family home, half of his face bandaged. Scarlett hugs him and Scarlett's brother -- who wasn't very fond of Snake-Eyes -- shakes his hand. As Hawk and Duke wonder who called Snake-Eyes, we see Storm Shadow practicing with his sword at a Cobra base.

At the Dreadnok branch in Chicago, Zartan calls to see if everything is being prepared. It is, according to his sister, Zarana, who isn't too interested in Cobra Commander's concerns. Zartan tells her good-bye and that he and Zanya will see her soon. TO BE CONTINUED

Review: "Reckonings, Part 4", is basically a fast paced action and chase story. The plot doesn't really progress past that, though it's not really supposed to. Like the previous issue, we again see the Joes made to look foolish trying to keep up with Storm Shadow, especially when both Storm Shadow and Snake-Eyes vault over a large group of them. For the most part, though, the story focuses on the fight between Snake-Eyes and Storm Shadow. It only touches upon the facts of Storm Shadow's return to Cobra, but it's obvious his mind has been warped. He believes he never should have betrayed Cobra Commander years before. The dialogue does hint that Storm Shadow may have not gone completely "bad". Kamakura marvels at the fact that Storm Shadow had a perfect shot to kill him, but only grazed him, suggesting that it was done on purpose. On the other hand, Storm Shadow's slashing of Snake-Eyes' face is a terribly nasty thing for him to do, especially for someone close enough to know how traumatic that could be. It's a nice touch to see Snake-Eyes lose his temper after he's wounded. The story of Storm Shadow is still unresolved, allowing the writers to keep him

on the side of Cobra, at least for now. In the end, Storm Shadow gets away by outsmarting the Joes, but not in a way that makes the Joes look inept.

The other characters aren't really used in much depth, though both Flint and Beach Head seem to be in charge. Beach Head still seems like his cartoon self, acting angry and tough, but usually for the sake of comedy. As in the last issue, Stalker isn't used as much as he could be, but that's mostly a matter of the writers' decision.

As the story ends, Hawk explains that not every Joe can be expected to take on too much, telling Duke why he purposely left Snake-Eyes out of the mission. This may also be Josh Blaylock's way of telling the reader that Snake-Eyes may not be focused on as constantly as he was in the Marvel series. We also learn that someone tipped off Snake-Eyes to Storm Shadow's presence, and no one knows who. This will hopefully come up again, but one possibility may be that Storm Shadow himself did so, only adding to the suspicion that the "good" ninja is in there somewhere. Reckonings ends with little to move the series along besides the reappearance of Storm Shadow, but the issue is still a fairly good, fast paced action story.

Reprinted in:

- G.I. JOE: Reckonings (December 2002). A trade paperback collecting issues #6-9.