

Collins, Wade

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WADE COLLINS. Wade Collins was a typical soldier serving in the Vietnam War. He was assigned to the long range recon patrol (LRRP) and sent into the jungles to find the enemy. The rest of Collins' patrol consisted of Stalker, Snake-Eyes, Storm Shadow, Ramon Escobedo, and Dickie Saperstein. During a routine patrol, the group came out of the jungle and right into a clearing where a group of North Vietnamese soldiers had camped. Collins would later curse himself for not noticing any signs of the soldiers, due to the fact that he was scolding the soldiers behind him about noise discipline. A frantic firefight suddenly erupted. During the brief fight, Saperstein and Escobedo were killed, and Collins sustained heavy gunshot wounds to the chest. Stalker and the others thought all three men were killed and unwittingly left Collins behind to be captured by the North Vietnamese. His wounds were treated and he spent three years as a prisoner of war. Collins was finally freed when the United States pulled their forces out of Vietnam. When he made it home, he did not get the welcome he had expected. Protestors spit on him and called him "baby killer". Instead of being met by his wife at the airport, he was met by her lawyer, who handed him divorce papers. The next several years were difficult for Wade. He was unable to get a job, later observing that employers didn't want to hire a Vietnam veteran because he reminded them of defeat. With nowhere to go and no place he belonged Collins discovered Cobra. Bitter and disillusioned, he was easily swayed by Cobra's propaganda that big government was out to squash the "little guy". He soon joined the organization and later became one of the first members of the elite, secretive Crimson Guard. He underwent plastic surgery so that his face would be identical to the other members of the "Fred series" of the Crimson Guard and took the name Fred Broca aka Fred II.

After the death of the original Fred Broca, Collins replaced him as the head of his family. His wife and children -- Heather and Sean -- knew he was not the first Fred, but accepted him as any good Cobra family would have. He continued Fred's surveillance of Fort Wadsworth, which Cobra expected was a center for G.I. Joe activity. Soon afterward, Collins tracked down the G.I. Joe member Scarlett on the Staten Island ferry. At the time, he didn't realize that her companion was Snake-Eyes, wearing a mask to cover his scarred face. After a brief fight, Collins and Snake-Eyes grappled with each other, hanging over the river. Collins noticed that Snake-Eyes was wearing a mask and pulled it off, revealing the horribly scarred face underneath. Shocked, Collins lost his grip and fell into the water below. He survived, but became ill. He had a high fever and was nearly delirious. He became angry at his adoptive family and obsessed with his surveillance. It eventually paid off when he spotted Hawk leaving the base in a jeep, with two other soldiers. Collins placed a homing device on the jeep and followed them to Washington. As the device was transmitting, he overheard the names of the other two soldiers: Stalker and Snake-Eyes. The Joes dropped Hawk off at a meeting and visited the Vietnam War Memorial. Just as they noticed his name was not on the list of those killed in action, Collins confronted them at gunpoint and revealed his true identity. He hated them for leaving him behind so many years before. As Collins forced Stalker to drive them all to Springfield, Stalker began to try and convince him that was just being used by Cobra. But it wasn't too late to reclaim his life. Wade returned to Springfield, where he apologized to his adoptive family. His wife and children had come to love them as much as the real Fred, and they agreed to leave Cobra with him. They all headed off to live somewhere in suburban America. Stalker promised not to reveal where Wade had gone. Many years later, Stalker and Storm Shadow called on Wade to help them rescue Snake-Eyes, who was being held in the Cobra Consulate in New York. Donning his old Crimson Guard uniform, he strode into the building and learned where Snake-Eyes was being held. He even helped his old friends storm the Consulate. A short time later, Snake-Eyes went on a commando raid into the chaotic nation of Borovia. He returned home with a little girl named Marina, whose family had been lost to civil war. The Collins' agreed to take care of the girl and Marina became just another adopted member of the family.

Three years after Marina's arrival, Wade was arguing with his son Sean, who wanted to join the Army. Collins still had nightmares about his experiences in Southeast Asia, and was worried that Sean was simply joining the Army to get away from home. He suggested Sean write a letter to Snake-Eyes to get the opinion of a long time soldier. The letter that Snake-Eyes wrote back explained what the commando thought about life as a soldier, and told the stories of the rest of the people from the long range recon patrol unit that Wade and Snake-Eyes were a part of. Moved by the letter, Sean promised his father that he would think about all that Snake-Eyes said before making his final decision. Sean eventually decided to enlist in the Army, not long before the Joe team was shut down. A short time later, Wade's wife died, devastating him. He moved to Seattle and got a job working at a local marina, but became depressed and reclusive. He continued to dwell on trying to atone for his past and make his children proud of him. After Sean served on a covert ops unit for a time, he became Snake-Eyes' ninja apprentice. As he, Sean and other former Joes were tracking down Cobra agent Firefly and mercenary Mikhail Derenko, a former teammate of Sean who was recruiting former Cobra agents. When Wade was contacted by Derenko, he decided to agree to his offer and worked covertly with the CIA, hoping to infiltrate Derenko's group and stop them. Sean had no idea his father had done this until they met in the midst of a battle between the former Joes and the mercenaries. Derenko redirected Sean's attack toward Wade who was stabbed and mortally wounded. As he lay dying in his son's arms, he said that he loved him and admitted that he did it all to make him proud. Sean answered that he had always been proud of him. After his father's death, Sean completed his ninja training under the name Kamakura. He currently serves on the reinstated G.I. Joe team, alongside Wade Collins' old friends, Stalker and Snake-Eyes.

(GI 32, 36, 42, 43, 96, 106, 155; MA 1, 3, 4)