

MEDAL OF HONOR

GARY GORDON &
RANDY SHUGHART



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MEDAL OF HONOR

GARY GORDON &
RANDY SHUGHART

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OCTOBER 3, 1993.

UNITED STATES ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES LAUNCHED A MISSION OVER MOGADISHU, SOMALIA TO CAPTURE THE NOTORIOUS WARLORD MOHAMED FARAH AIDED.

SUPER SIX-FOUR! WE'RE HIT! GOING IN HARD!



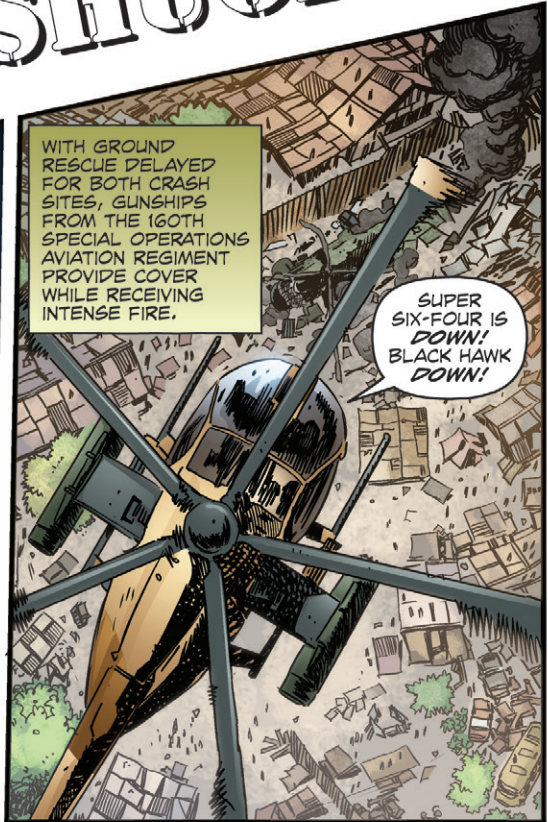
GARY GORDON & RANDY SHUGHART

BLACK HAWK HELICOPTER SUPER 64 WAS THE SECOND AIRCRAFT TO BE TAKEN DOWN BY ROCKET-PROPELLED GRENADES INSIDE OF TWENTY MINUTES.



IT WAS FORCED INTO A CRASH LANDING A MILE TO THE SOUTHWEST OF THE FIRST DOWNED HELO.

WITH GROUND RESCUE DELAYED FOR BOTH CRASH SITES, GUNSHIPS FROM THE 160TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS AVIATION REGIMENT PROVIDE COVER WHILE RECEIVING INTENSE FIRE.



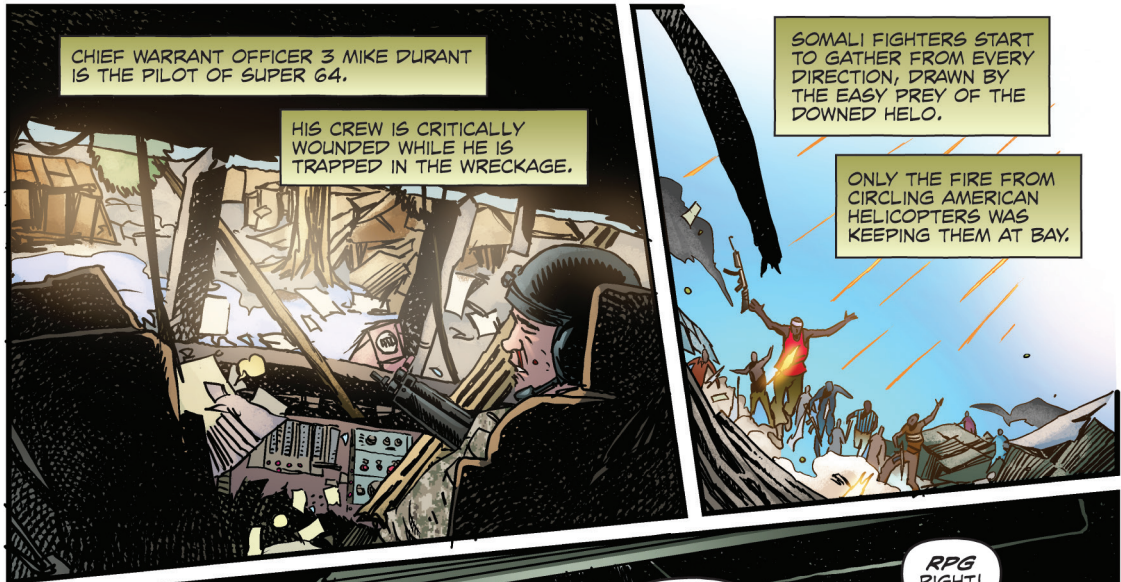
SUPER SIX-FOUR IS DOWN! BLACK HAWK DOWN!

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 MIKE DURANT IS THE PILOT OF SUPER 64.

HIS CREW IS CRITICALLY WOUNDED WHILE HE IS TRAPPED IN THE WRECKAGE.

SOMALI FIGHTERS START TO GATHER FROM EVERY DIRECTION, DRAWN BY THE EASY PREY OF THE DOWNED HELO.

ONLY THE FIRE FROM CIRCLING AMERICAN HELICOPTERS WAS KEEPING THEM AT BAY.



FIRE PROVIDED BY MEN LIKE MASTER SERGEANT GARY GORDON AND SERGEANT FIRST CLASS RANDY SHUGHART.

BOTH WERE SNIPERS WITH 1ST SPECIAL FORCES OPERATIONAL DETACHMENT-DELTA (COMMONLY KNOWN AS DELTA FORCE).

THEY'RE CATCHING IT DOWN THERE!

RPG RIGHT!



A FATHER OF TWO, GORDON WAS AN ARMY ENGINEER BEFORE BEING ACCEPTED INTO SPECIAL FORCES.



SHUGHART WAS RAISED ON A DAIRY FARM BEFORE JOINING THE ARMY OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL. HE INITIALLY SERVED IN THE 75TH RANGER REGIMENT.





THE DELTA OPERATORS' TASK THAT DAY HAD BEEN TO PROVIDE CLOSE AIR COVER FOR THE RANGERS ON THE GROUND.

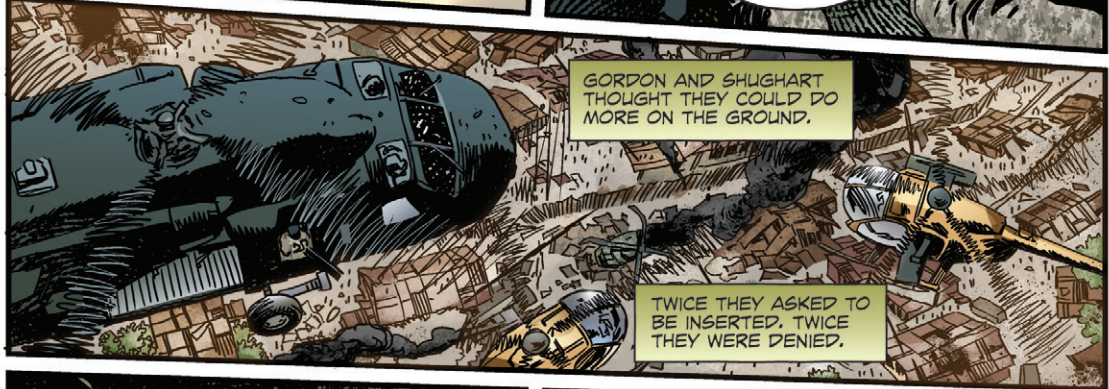
NOW THEY WOULD PROTECT THE MEN AT THE CRASH SITE.



DO WE HAVE AN ETA FOR GROUND RESCUE?

NEGATIVE! THEY HAVEN'T STARTED FOR THE FIRST CRASH SITE YET!

THOSE GUYS AREN'T GONNA LAST DOWN THERE.



GORDON AND SHUGHART THOUGHT THEY COULD DO MORE ON THE GROUND.

TWICE THEY ASKED TO BE INSERTED, TWICE THEY WERE DENIED.



YOU'VE GOT TO PUT US IN.



WE ARE CLEARED FOR INSERTION.

WE CAN'T LAND AT THE CRASH SITE. WE'LL GET YOU AS CLOSE AS WE CAN.

THE BLACK HAWK PICKED A SPOT ONE HUNDRED METERS AWAY AND DROPPED TO FIVE FEET ABOVE THE DECK.



DISORIENTED BY THE SWIFT DROP-OFF, THE SNIPERS WERE LOST IN THE LABYRINTH OF CROWDED SHACKS AND NARROW ALLEYS.



WHICH WAY?
REPEAT,
WHICH WAY?

THEY FOUND DOWNED PILOT MIKE DURANT WAS STILL TRAPPED IN THE WRECKAGE.



THE CREW OF SUPER 62 INDICATED DIRECTION TO THE CRASH SITE.



HOW BAD ARE YOU HURT?



MY LEG'S BROKEN.
AND I THINK MY BACK.



PROTECTED MOMENTARILY BY THE HELICOPTERS ABOVE, THE DELTA SOLDIERS GOT DURANT OUT OF THE DOWNED BLACK HAWK.



THE SNIPERS THEN PULLED THE REST OF THE CREW FROM THE WRECK.

ALL WERE CRITICALLY WOUNDED.



THEY POSITIONED THE CREW IN COVER AND WENT TO ESTABLISH A PROTECTIVE PERIMETER.



UNDER CONSTANT FIRE, THE SNIPERS PICKED OFF ENEMY FIGHTERS DRAWN TO THE KILLING GROUND.



THEIR DEADLY ACCURACY HELD OFF THE RISING TIDE IN HOPE THAT THE RESCUE COLUMN WAS ON ITS WAY.



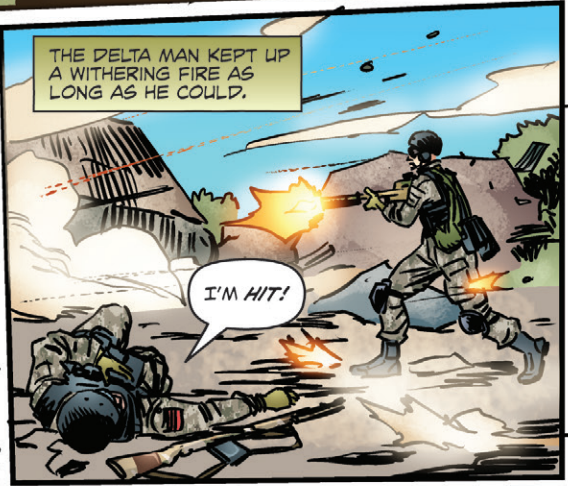
THE BLACK HAWK THAT INSERTED GORDON AND SHUGHART DID WHAT IT COULD TO HELP THE MEN.

BUT THE ODDS AGAINST THEM WERE RISING.



CRASH SITE TWO HAS ONE GUY ON THE GROUND.

ACKNOWLEDGED.



THE DELTA MAN KEPT UP A WITHERING FIRE AS LONG AS HE COULD.

I'M HIT!



THE BLACK HAWK WAS FORCED TO WITHDRAW, DEPRIVING THE MEN BELOW OF DESPERATELY NEEDED FIREPOWER.



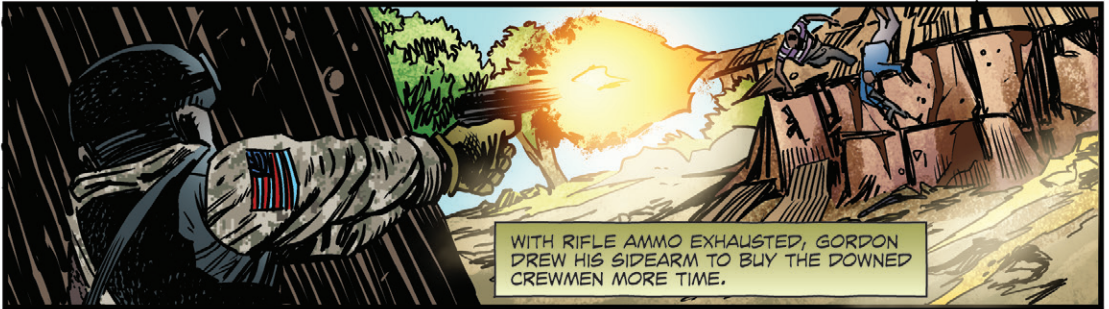
HIS OWN RIFLE AMMO DEPLETED, GARY GORDON WITHDREW TO THE COVER OF THE HELO.





THE PILOT WOULD NEVER SEE GARY GORDON AGAIN.

THE DELTA SNIPER WENT BACK TO THE PERIMETER TO CONTINUE THE FIGHT.



WITH RIFLE AMMO EXHAUSTED, GORDON DREW HIS SIDEARM TO BUY THE DOWNED CREWMEN MORE TIME.



A MASSIVE WAVE OF AUTOMATIC FIRE FINALLY SILENCED THE DELTA RESISTANCE.



WOUNDED AND WEAPON EMPTY, PILOT MIKE DURANT WAS TAKEN PRISONER FOR ELEVEN DAYS.

THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF SUPER 64 OWED HIS LIFE TO THE TWO MEN WHO LEAPT INTO DANGER TO SAVE A BROTHER SOLDIER.

RANDALL SHUGHART AND GARY GORDON BOTH POSTHUMOUSLY RECEIVED THEIR NATION'S HIGHEST HONOR. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THE AWARD HAD BEEN GIVEN SINCE THE VIETNAM WAR.



THEIR SACRIFICE AND COURAGE WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

THE END

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