

No.4765
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COMPLETE 63-PAGE ACTION STORY

Commando

FOR ACTION AND ADVENTURE



DESERT DECEPTION



WAR BIKES

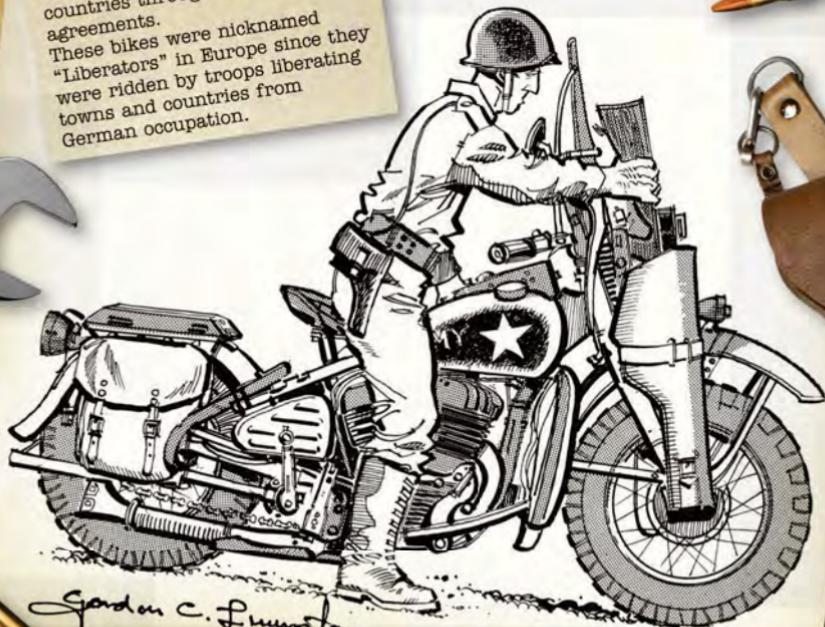
HARLEY DAVIDSON WLA USA 1941-1945

Harley-Davidson produced about 70,000 WLA and WLC military motorcycles for US Forces and Allies during WW2. Spare parts for an additional 30,000 bikes were also produced.

WLAs were used extensively by US Troops for messenger and Military Police duties and thousands were supplied to other countries through Lend Lease agreements.

These bikes were nicknamed "Liberators" in Europe since they were ridden by troops liberating towns and countries from German occupation.

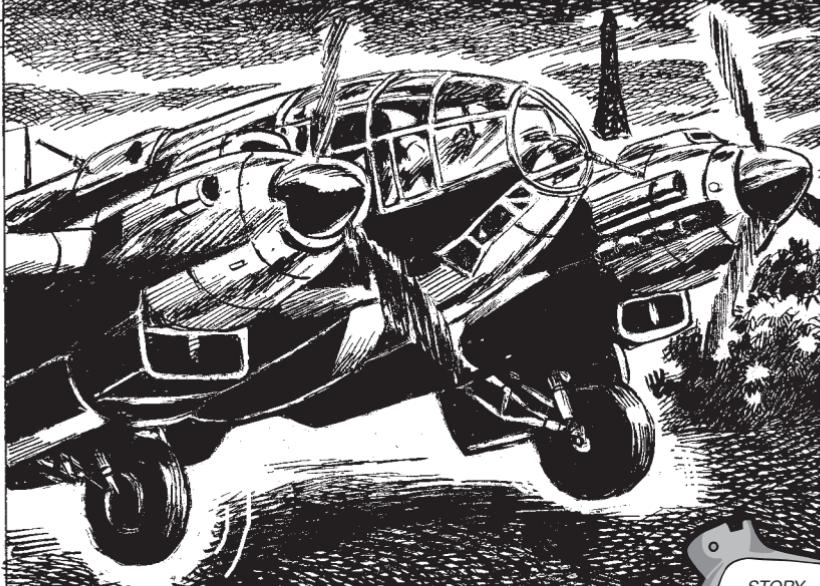
Engine	45% V-twin-cylinder, side valve, 4 stroke
Capacity	740cc
Power output	23bhp
Transmission	3 forward gears, chain final drive
Weight	261.5kg (576lb)
Top speed	65mph



Gordon C. Livingston



DESERT DECEPTION



EARLY IN WORLD WAR TWO THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN KNEW THAT ENEMY BOMBERS WOULD BE COMING THEIR WAY, OFTEN NIGHT AFTER NIGHT. THAT, THOUGH, JUST MADE THEM MORE DETERMINED TO STAND TOGETHER AND FACE UP TO THE MIGHT OF NAZI GERMANY.

STORY
GEORGE
LOW
ART
MORAHIN
COVER
JANEK
MATYSIAK

IT WAS NOT SO SIMPLE FOR TONY BORELLI, BORN IN ENGLAND OF ITALIAN PARENTS WHO RAN A SMALL CAFE. HIS TWO FRIENDS, ALAN AND WALTER, HAD JUST RECEIVED THEIR CALL-UP DOCUMENTS AND WERE SET TO SIGN ON THE NEXT DAY.



TONY WASN'T CONVINCED. AS WELL AS OFFICIAL TALK OF DETAINING ITALIANS AND OTHER FOREIGN NATIONALS IN CAMPS FOR THE DURATION OF THE WAR, SOMEBODY HAD THROWN A BRICK THROUGH THE FAMILY CAFE WINDOW.



IT WAS LATER THAN TONY EXPECTED BY THE TIME HE SAID GOODBYE TO HIS FRIENDS AND HEADED HOME. THE LOCAL AIR RAID WARDEN HASTENED HIM ON HIS WAY.



BUT A STICK OF ENEMY BOMBS PLAYED THEIR PART BEFORE HE COULD DO THAT. THE SIDE OF THE STREET WHERE THE BORELLIS' CAFE AND HOME WAS TOOK THE FULL BRUNT OF THE EXPLOSION.



BADLY INJURED, UNCONSCIOUS, HE WAS RUSHED TO HOSPITAL.



HIS VARIOUS CUTS AND BRUISES AND BROKEN BONES WERE DEALT WITH, BUT HE LAY UNCONSCIOUS FOR MANY DAYS WITHOUT MOVING.

WHEN HE COULD COMPREHEND WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND HAD BEEN TOLD THAT BOTH HIS PARENTS HAD BEEN KILLED, HE LAY WITH HIS MIND IN A TURMOIL FOR WEEKS BEFORE HE WAS VISITED BY AN ARMY OFFICER.



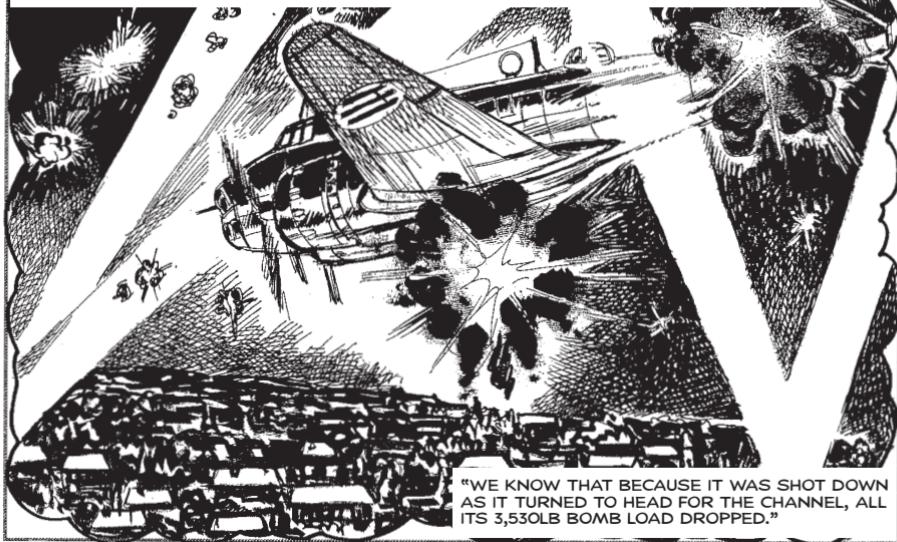
THE MAJOR WINCED AT TONY'S REPLY, AND QUIETLY EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD COME ON A VERY DIFFERENT MATTER INDEED, POINTING OUT THAT HE REPRESENTED A HIGHLY SECRETIVE INTELLIGENCE UNIT.



LET'S JUST
SAY THAT DESPERATE TIMES
CALL FOR DESPERATE MEASURES.
WE HAVE HAD OUR EYE ON YOU FOR A
WHILE, AND CO-OPERATING WITH US
WOULD HAVE MADE LIFE EASIER
FOR YOUR PARENTS.

UNTIL
THE NAZIS MESSED
EVERYTHING UP?

"NO, IT WASN'T THE GERMANS. THE BOMBS FELL FROM AN ITALIAN FIAT BR20 BOMBER, ITS SQUADRON BASED IN FRANCE ALONGSIDE THEIR LUFTWAFFE COLLEAGUES."



BRABHAM EVEN HAD A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE DOWNGED BOMBER WHICH HE PASSED TO TONY AS PROOF.

THIS
MEANS THAT THEIR
OWN COUNTRYMEN,
ITALIANS, KILLED MY
MUM AND DAD?

I'M
AFRAID SO. THINK
THINGS OVER...I DON'T
NEED AN ANSWER RIGHT
AWAY. WE WANT YOU TO
GET BETTER FIRST.

BUT JUST LOOKING AT THE PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE
SPURRED TONY TO MAKE HIS MIND UP THERE AND THEN.



COUNT ME
IN, SIR. DAD TALKED OF
AIRCRAFT LIKE THIS BOMBING
CIVILIAN TARGETS DURING THE
SPANISH CIVIL WAR...HE HATED
THE THOUGHT OF THAT.

WHEN TONY WAS
FINALLY CONSIDERED
TO HAVE RECOVERED
ENOUGH TO REPORT
TO A REMOTE ARMY
CAMP IN WALES FOR
TRAINING, IT SOON
BECAME CLEAR THAT
HE WAS FAR FROM
BEING FULLY FIT.



YOU'LL
NEED TO DO BETTER
THAN THAT, TONY.
DON'T GIVE UP!

MY LEFT ANKLE IS
PLAYING UP AGAIN AND
MY LUNGS ARE BURNING
LIKE FIRE.

ONLY MAJOR BRABHAM KEPT HIS FAITH IN TONY,
UNLIKE THE OTHER OFFICERS RUNNING THE COURSE.



HE'S
ALWAYS LAGGING BEHIND
AND WAS LAID UP IN BED FOR
TWO DAYS LAST WEEK WITH
A CHEST INFECTION.

GIVE
HIM TIME. HE'S GOT
A GOOD REASON FOR
TACKLING THIS AND THESE
ARE THE BLOKES I'M
INTERESTED IN.

IT WAS TOUGH FOR TONY WHO KNEW
MANY THOUGHT HE WOULD FAIL.



I HEARD THE
SERGEANTS SAY EARLIER
THAT I HAD NO HOPE, BUT
I'M NOT GIVING IN.

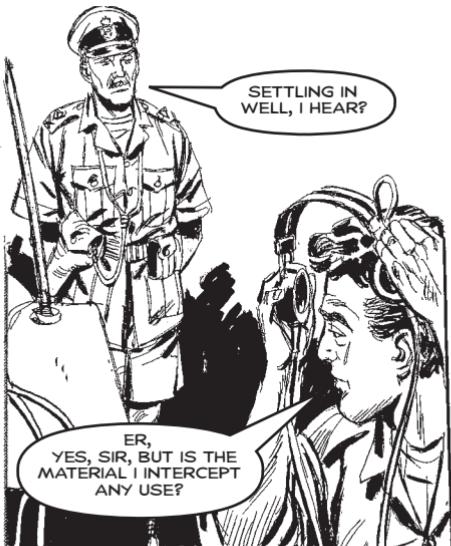


HE DIDN'T AND SLOWLY HIS
FITNESS IMPROVED WITH EVERY
DAY, UNTIL HE WAS PASSED AS
READY FOR DUTY AND PROMOTED
TO LANCE-CORPORAL.

HE WAS FLOWN TO EGYPT AND COOPED UP IN A RADIO LISTENING STATION IN CAIRO WHERE HE SPENT DAYS TUNING INTO ITALIAN MILITARY CHATTER AND TAKING NOTES.



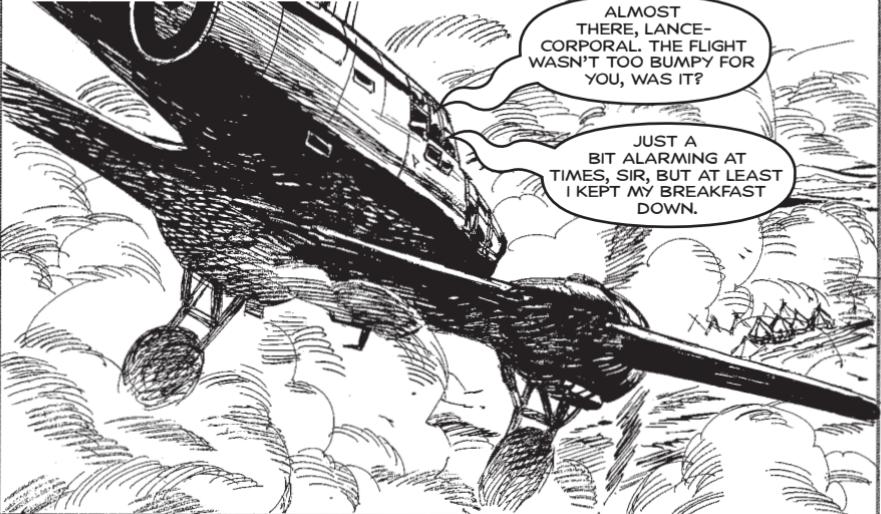
ALL THAT CHANGED WHEN
BRABHAM TURNED UP.



THE MAJOR CHUCKLED AND LED TONY OFF TO MEET SOME "INTERESTING CHAPS" HE WAS TO LIAISE WITH.



A BRISTOL BLENHEIM WAS ON HAND TO FERRY THE PAIR OF THEM FAR OUT INTO THE DESERT WASTES UNTIL THE MOST BASIC OF AIRFIELDS LOOMED INTO VIEW.



ALMOST THERE, LANCE-CORPORAL. THE FLIGHT WASN'T TOO BUMPY FOR YOU, WAS IT?

JUST A BIT ALARMING AT TIMES, SIR, BUT AT LEAST I KEPT MY BREAKFAST DOWN.

AS THEY CLIMBED DOWN FROM THE BLENHEIM, AN ARMED JEEP APPEARED AS IF OUT OF NOWHERE AT WHAT SEEMED LIKE A RECKLESS SPEED.



AH, HERE'S CAPTAIN BAILEY. I KNEW HE WOULDN'T BE FAR AWAY.

WAIT A SEC, AM I GOING TO BE WORKING WITH THEM?

THIS DESERT RAIDING GROUP WITH THEIR HEAVILY ARMED VEHICLES WAS LED BY CAPTAIN DAN BAILEY WHO HAD A BONE-CRUNCHING HAND SHAKE.

WELCOME ALONG, LANCE-CORPORAL.

THANK YOU, SIR.

I'LL LEAVE HIM WITH YOU THEN, CAPTAIN, AND YOU CAN BRIEF HIM AS YOU GO.

TONY BARELY HAD TIME TO CATCH HIS BREATH BEFORE THREE OTHER JEEPS FORMED UP ON DAN'S COMMAND AND SPED OFF INTO THE EMPTY WASTES.

THE MAJOR WANTS SOME CODE-BOOKS AND ANY OTHER USEFUL DOCUMENTS STOLEN FROM THE ITALIANS. WE NEED YOU ALONG TO PICK OUT WHAT IS USEFUL.

RIGHT, I SEE, SIR.

PERHAPS HE WAS NOW DOING SOMETHING MEANINGFUL, BUT IT HAD ALL HAPPENED SO FAST.

THE SQUAD WERE TOUGH AS NAILS. BEARDED SERGEANT FRED DEWAR, THE ROUGHEST OF THEM, WAS NOT BEST PLEASED.



FRED HAD SEEN TOUGH FIGHTING IN FRANCE WITH THE CONVENTIONAL INFANTRY REGIMENT HE HAD SERVED IN THEN. THEIR DEFENSIVE POSITION HAD BEEN COMPROMISED WHEN A FRENCH UNIT ON ONE FLANK HAD PULLED BACK WITHOUT ANY WARNING.



ONLY FRED HAD NOT BEEN KILLED OR CAPTURED.
HE HAD SWORN THAT DAY NEVER TO TRUST
ANY OTHER SOLDIER UNLESS HE WAS BRITISH.



THE DISGRUNTLED SERGEANT HAD STILL NOT MUTTERED ONE WORD TO TONY
WHEN THE UNIT PULLED INTO COVER TO REST UP WHEN THE LIGHT FADED.



THEY WERE HEADED INTO ENEMY TERRITORY ONCE DAWN BROKE WITH THE EMPHASIS ON GETTING AS CLOSE AS THEY COULD TO THEIR TARGET BEFORE NIGHT FELL ON THE NEXT DAY.



BUT TONY NEVER EVEN SAW THE FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE IN THE SHAPE OF A PATROLLING FIAT CR42 FIGHTER WHICH ONE OF THE OTHER RAIDERS SPOTTED FAST.

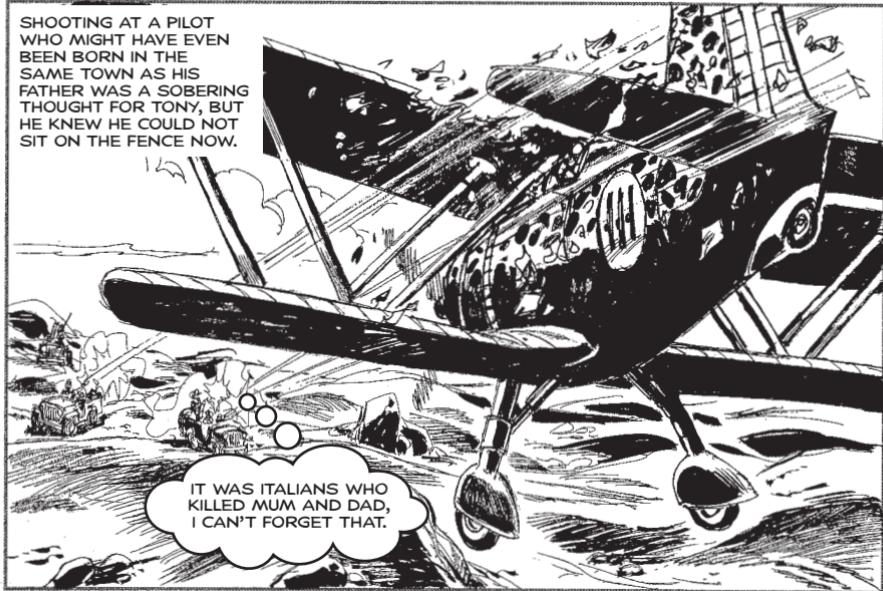




TWIN VICKERS MACHINE GUNS
RIPPED THE AIR WITH A SOUND
LIKE THICK CANVAS TEARING.
TONY, HANGING ON FOR DEAR
LIFE, RECEIVED HIS ORDERS.



SHOOTING AT A PILOT WHO MIGHT HAVE EVEN BEEN BORN IN THE SAME TOWN AS HIS FATHER WAS A SOBERING THOUGHT FOR TONY, BUT HE KNEW HE COULD NOT SIT ON THE FENCE NOW.



THE ENEMY AIRMAN, AWARE THAT HIS FIAT WAS NOT TOO WELL ARMoured AND THAT HOT LEAD FROM THE RAIDERS HAD ALREADY LANCED THROUGH IT, TURNED AWAY.



NO OTHER AIRCRAFT CAME SNOOPING AROUND, SO THE MEN TOOK THE CHANCE TO CHECK OVER THEIR EQUIPMENT FOR THE INTENDED RAID WHILE DAN AND FRED THRASHED OUT THE DETAILS.



FRED'S WORDS RILED TONY BUT HE KNEW HE HAD TO STICK TO HIS CHOSEN PATH.



ALTHOUGH TONY HAD SPOKEN WITH CONVICTION, FRED RECKONED THE CAPTAIN WAS WASTING HIS TIME NURSING A "PASSENGER" ALONG.



THE EMPHASIS WAS SOON ENTIRELY ON THE JOB IN HAND WHEN THE ITALIAN FORWARD AIRSTRIP THEY SOUGHT CAME INTO VIEW.



DAN JUST GRINNED AND FLOORED THE ACCELERATOR AS HE YELLED ABOVE THE ROAR OF THE 60HP ENGINE.

WE JUST MAKE IT UP AS WE GO ALONG. HANG ON TIGHT AND ENJOY YOURSELF!

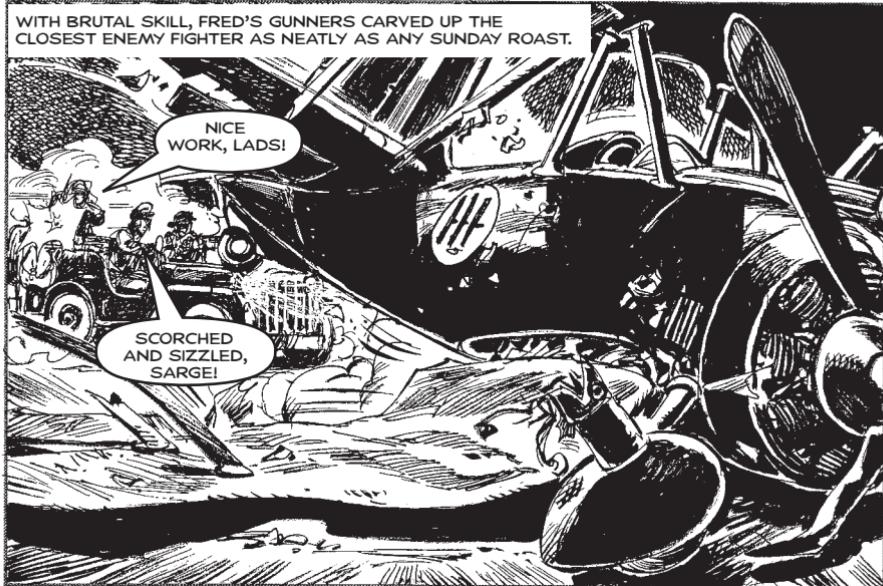
WHAT HAVE I LET MYSELF IN FOR?

THE SUDDEN REVING WAS THE SIGNAL FOR THE OTHER JEEPS TO ATTACK FROM DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. FRED WAS THE FIRST TO DRAW BLOOD WITH HIS TEAM.

AAGH!

SWITCH TO THE NEAREST PLANE NOW!

WITH BRUTAL SKILL, FRED'S GUNNERS CARVED UP THE CLOSEST ENEMY FIGHTER AS NEATLY AS ANY SUNDAY ROAST.



A MILLS 36 GRENADE ADDED TO THE MIX
CRIPPLED ANOTHER FALCON. IT WOULD
NEVER SPREAD ITS WINGS AGAIN.





THERE WAS NOTHING FANCY ABOUT
DAN'S DOORSTEP TECHNIQUE. A RATTLE
OF TOMMY GUN FIRE AND A SIZE TEN
BOOT ANNOUNCED HIS PRESENCE.

THAT'S
THE WAY CLEARED!

BUT THEN HIS SUB-MACHINE GUN JAMMED AND AS DAN TRIED TO CLEAR IT, AN ITALIAN SOLDIER APPEARED FROM COVER TO GET THE DROP ON HIM. TONY SAW THE DANGER IN A SPLIT SECOND.



THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME SINCE HE HAD BEEN ON THE FIRING RANGE THAT TONY HAD DISCHARGED HIS .303 LEE-ENFIELD RIFLE. HIS AIM WAS TRUE.



THERE WAS NOBODY ON DUTY IN THE HUT. DAN URGED TONY TO SCOOP UP EVERY BOOK AND DOCUMENT HE COULD INTO AN EMPTY SANDBAG.



THE OTHER JEEPS HAD ALREADY PEELLED AWAY TO PATROL THE PERIMETER WHEN DAN ROARED AWAY FROM THE DAMAGE HIS SQUAD HAD DONE.



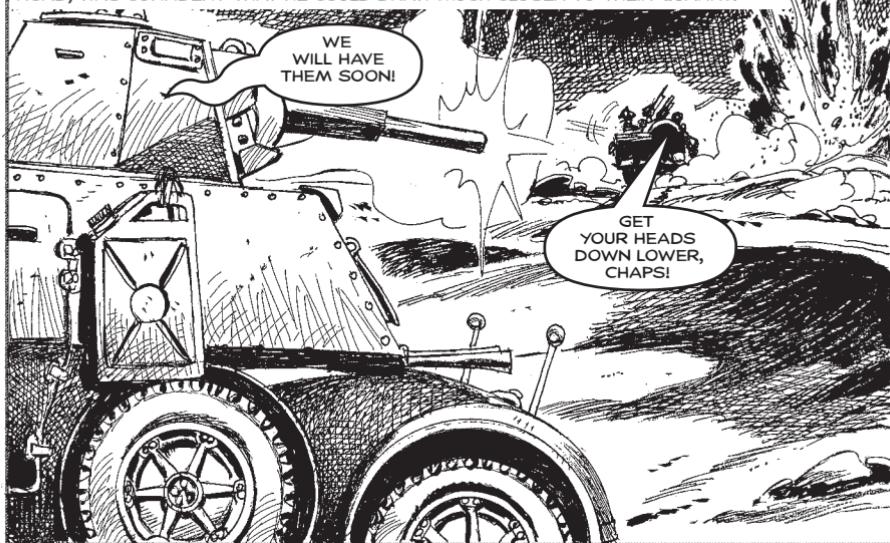
WHILE THE OTHERS HAD A HEAD START AND WERE MAKING THEIR WAY TO A PRE-ARRANGED RENDEZVOUS, THE CAPTAIN'S CREW WAS SPOTTED BY TWO ITALIAN AB41 ARMoured CARS ATTRACTED BY THE NOISE.



THE SINGLE 20MM BREDA CANNON IN THE LEADING ARMoured CAR PUNCHED OUT SHELLS, COUPLED WITH 8MM BULLETS FROM THE TWO BREDA MACHINE GUNS. TONY FELT DEEP FEAR BUT DAN SEEMED AS CALM AS EVER.



THE DRIVER OF THE SPEEDY AB4I, WHICH COULD CLOCK UP OVER 40MPH ON A GOOD ROAD, WAS CONFIDENT THAT HE COULD DRAW MUCH CLOSER TO THEIR QUARRY.



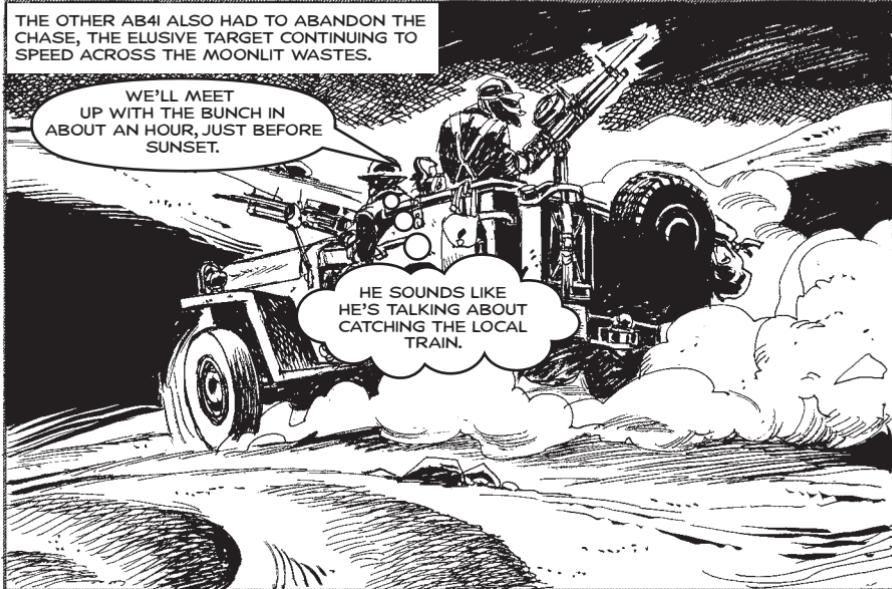
DAN HAD CLEVERLY LED THE PURSUITERS ONTO WHAT HE RECOGNISED AS AN UNSTABLE SURFACE. MUCH HEAVIER THAN ITS PREY, ONE ARMoured CAR, WEIGHING IN AT OVER SEVEN TONNES, PAID THE PRICE.



THE OTHER AB41 ALSO HAD TO ABANDON THE CHASE, THE ELUSIVE TARGET CONTINUING TO SPEED ACROSS THE MOONLIT WASTES.

WE'LL MEET UP WITH THE BUNCH IN ABOUT AN HOUR, JUST BEFORE SUNSET.

HE SOUNDS LIKE HE'S TALKING ABOUT CATCHING THE LOCAL TRAIN.



THE OTHER RAIDERS WERE ALREADY AT THEIR REMOTE AND SECURE MEETING PLACE WHEN DAN'S JEEP ROLLED IN.

NO PROBLEMS, SERGEANT?

ALL WENT WELL BUT WE HEARD THE EYETIES HARASSING YOU.





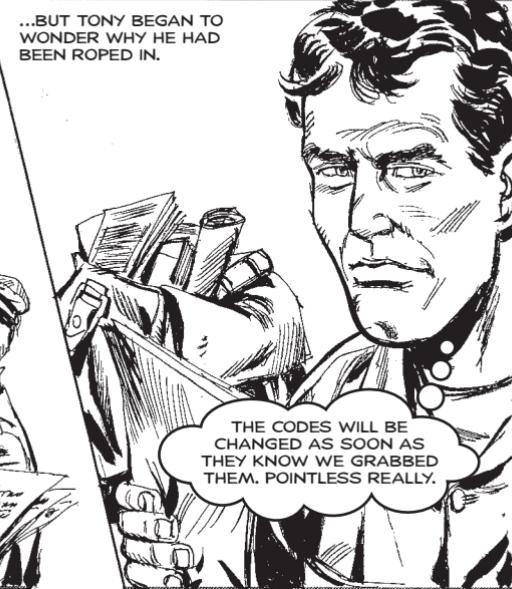
BUT WHEN THE CAPTAIN PASSED AND MOCK SALUTED HIM, TONY BEGAN TO WONDER.

HE KNOWS A LOT MORE THAN HE'S LETTING ON. IT'S ALL A BIT ODD.



...BUT TONY BEGAN TO WONDER WHY HE HAD BEEN ROPED IN.

THE CODES WILL BE CHANGED AS SOON AS THEY KNOW WE GRABBED THEM. POINTLESS REALLY.



ONCE BEHIND ALLIED LINES, TONY, STILL PUZZLING THINGS OVER, PARTED COMPANY WITH DAN AND HIS SQUAD. SOME DAYS LATER, BACK IN CAIRO, HE WAS SURPRISED TO SEE DAN HEADING FOR THE H.Q.



...AND SAW HIM MEET UP WITH MAJOR BRABHAM AND LEAVE THE H.Q.



I DON'T REALLY KNOW
WHAT, BUT THERE'S
SOMETHING STRANGE
GOING ON HERE.



A HOTEL FREQUENTED BY SERVICE PERSONNEL WAS THEIR DESTINATION.
THEY SETTLED DOWN WITH TONY
THEIR MAIN SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION.

HOW DID
HE DO THEN? HANDLE
HIMSELF ALL RIGHT FOR A
GREENHORN?



YES, HE
DID, AND HE'S QUITE A BRIGHT
SPARK. BUT BEST ASK HIM YOURSELF
...HE'S TRACKED ME HERE FOR SOME
REASON OR OTHER.

TONY'S COVER WAS BLOWN, BUT THE MAJOR THOUGHT IT WAS ALL A GRAND JOKE.



AFTER WINNING HIS SPURS ON THAT DESERT RAID, TONY WAS SET TO WORK IN ALL MANNERS OF WAYS. HE WAS CALLED IN WHEN AN ITALIAN UNIT FOUGHT ON WHEN HOPELESSLY SURROUNDED BY A LARGE ALLIED ADVANCE.



WITH ALL LINKS TO AXIS H.Q. SEVERED, THE CAPTAIN IN CHARGE WAS SURPRISED WHEN THE FIELD TELEPHONE TRILLED.



BUT THE BRITISH HAD TAPPED INTO THE LINE. IT WAS TONY ON THE PHONE, TALKING FAST AND FLUENT ITALIAN.



THE ENEMY OFFICER ANSWERED SCORNFULLY, POSITIVE IT WAS A TRICK AND DETERMINED TO HOLD OUT.



TONY BACKED UP THE CLAIM WITH ENOUGH FACTS TO MAKE THE ITALIAN C.O. WAVER AND FINALLY THROW IN THE TOWEL.



THAT AND OTHER SCHEMES, LIKE EDITING THE WORDING OF LEAFLETS TO BE DROPPED INTO ITALIAN POSITIONS ALERTING THEM TO THE FACT THAT THE GERMAN PLANS TO EVACUATE FROM NORTH AFRICA DID NOT INCLUDE MANY ITALIAN UNITS, WORKED WELL.



ALREADY RESENTFUL OF THEIR NAZI ALLIES AND THEIR HIGH-HANDED WAYS, MANY ITALIANS VOTED WITH THEIR FEET WHEN THEY READ THE LEAFLETS AND SURRENDERED EN MASSE TO THE NEAREST BRITISH POSITIONS.



WITH ENEMY FORCES DRIVEN OUT OF NORTH AFRICA, THE NEXT ALLIED MOVE WAS THE INVASION OF SICILY. THE ROUGH NATURE OF THE TERRAIN MADE IT EASY GROUND TO HOLD BUT DIFFICULT TO SEIZE.



BUT TONY, NOW A SERGEANT, WAS OPERATING ON THE ISLAND AND WORKING WITH THE LOCALS, A SHEPHERD IN THIS CASE, WHO HAD NEVER BEEN HAPPY UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION.



THE ADVANCING AMERICANS BENEFITTED FROM TONY'S INFORMATION. THE TROUBLESOME GERMAN POSITION WAS ATTACKED FIERCELY FROM THE REAR.



BUT WELL-HIDDEN ENEMY DIE-HARDS
COULD STILL CAUSE CARNAGE.

KILL THE
SCHWEIN!

THE LESSONS LEARNED
WITH DAN'S DESERT
RAIDERS HAD NEVER BEEN
FORGOTTEN, ESPECIALLY
THE NEED TO RETALIATE
FAST.

A MILLS THIRTY-SIX
SHOULD SHAKE THEM
UP A BIT.

THERE WAS ALSO A NEW TOUGHNESS ABOUT TONY, BROUGHT
ABOUT PARTLY BY SEEING THE DAMAGE AND DESTRUCTION
CAUSED BY THE NAZIS AS THEY WAGED TOTAL WAR.

THAT'S THEM DEALT
WITH, NO QUARTER
ASKED OR GIVEN.

MORE FIERCE FIGHTING FOLLOWED BEFORE THE ITALIAN ISLAND WAS UNDER ALLIED CONTROL. IT WAS THEN THAT TONY BUMPED INTO DAN AGAIN.



TONY HAD HEARD ON THE GRAPEVINE THAT DAN AND HIS RAIDERS HAD BEEN RANGING ALL OVER SICILY IN THEIR USUAL SWASHBUCKLING WAY, BUT BOTH KNEW THAT A TOUGHER TASK LAY AHEAD.



THE ARRIVAL OF FRED IN A JEEP TO COLLECT DAN BROUGHT THE CONVERSATION TO A CLOSE.

MUST GO
THEN BUT GOOD LUCK. YOU
NEVER KNOW, WE MIGHT MEET
UP AGAIN.

I HOPE SO, SIR.
TAKE CARE.

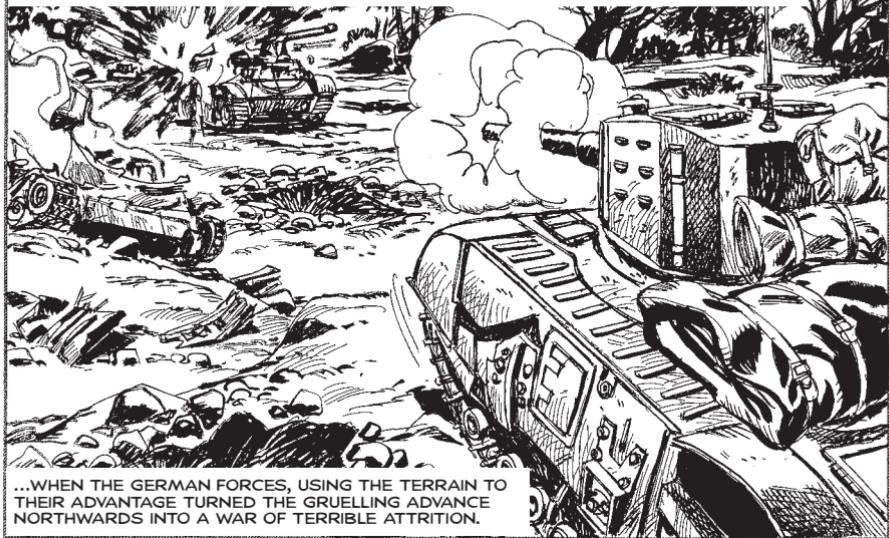


THE SURLY SERGEANT HAD NOT EVEN LOOKED AT TONY. HIS SHARP ACCELERATION AWAY THREW UP CLOUDS OF CHOKING DUST, SOME OF WHICH CAUGHT TONY.

WELL, HE HASN'T
CHANGED HIS SPOTS
AT ALL. HIS OPINION OF
ME IS JUST AS POOR.



NOT LONG AFTER, TONY WAS RIGHT IN THE THICK OF IT WHEN THE ALLIED INVASION OF ITALY GOT UNDERWAY IN SEPTEMBER, 1943, BUT PROGRESS WAS SOON SLOWED ...



IT WAS TOUGH FOR TONY TO SEE THE DEVASTATION DEALT OUT TO COMMUNITIES BY THE FIERCE FIGHTING WHICH MARKED EVERY HARD WON MILE.



IT SOON BECAME CLEAR THAT MANY ITALIANS HAD SUFFERED A LOT AND WERE GLAD TO SEE THE BACK OF THE GERMANS. THEIR WELCOME FOR THE ALLIES MADE TONY FEEL BETTER ABOUT THE SITUATION.



TONY'S JOB WAS MUCH THE SAME AS BEFORE BUT THE DANGER INCREASED THE FURTHER NORTH THE ALLIES PUSHED AND THE HARDER THE RETREATING GERMANS FOUGHT.



DRIVING BACK THE DIE-HARD ENEMY WAS PROVING TO BE A COSTLY TASK.



THE PORTABLE MODEL 1936 5CM MORTAR COULD DO DREADFUL DAMAGE. TONY MADE SURE THAT THE CREW OF THIS ONE WOULD NOT CAUSE ANY MORE.



BUT NOT ALL THE FANATICS WERE GERMAN. SOME ITALIANS HAD ELECTED TO CONTINUE THE FIGHT ALONGSIDE THE NAZIS, AND HAD BEEN DRAFTED INTO AN S.S. UNIT OF THEIR OWN.



WITH RUTHLESS BRUTALITY, THE ROGUE ITALIAN S.S. TROOPERS EXECUTED ANY OF THE AMBUSHED PARTISANS WHO HAD BEEN WOUNDED AND STILL BREATHED.



CALLED IN TO ROOT OUT THESE DIE-HARDS WERE DAN AND HIS RAIDERS. FOLLOWING UP ON AN INTELLIGENCE LEAD, THEY STRUCK HIGH INTO A MOUNTAINOUS REGION.



BUT THEN A CRACK LIKE THUNDER RENT THE AIR AS EXPLOSIVE CHARGES SPLIT A LAYER OF THE ROCKY SLOPE ABOVE, LETTING LOOSE A LETHAL LANDSLIDE.



THE CARDS FELL BADLY FOR DAN AND HIS CREW, HIS JEEP MAROONED FROM THE OTHERS, A MASSIVE PILE OF ROCKS AND EARTH IN BETWEEN.



THE TRAPPED JEEP PROVIDED THE THREE MEN WITH SOME SHELTER, BUT A CONSTANT HAIL OF LEAD FROM ABOVE MADE WITHDRAWAL ON FOOT ALL BUT IMPOSSIBLE.



BUT IT WAS A FUTILE MOVE. THE MARKSMEN ABOVE TOOK FULL ADVANTAGE OF THEIR POSITION AND BOTH RAIDERS FELL.



DAN KNEW HE HAD TO TRY TO GET CLEAR TOO, BUT A BULLET NICKED HIM.



FRED, FURIOUS AT NOT BEING CLOSER, PREPARED TO GO AFTER HIS OFFICER.



BUT ONE OF THE MEN HAD SPOTTED ANOTHER
DETONATION CABLE STRUNG ABOVE THEIR POSITION.



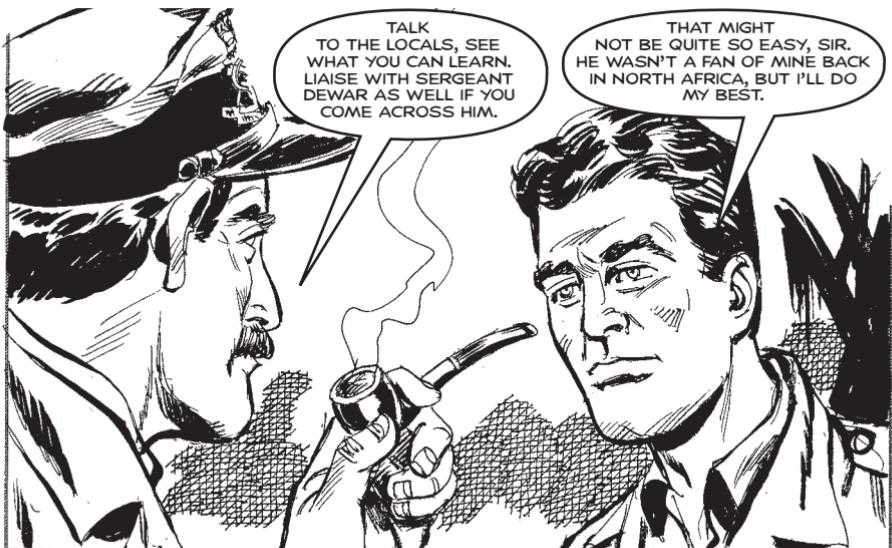
EVEN FRED SAW THE SENSE IN THIS AND KNEW DAN WOULD NOT WANT THE MEN ENDANGERED IN A FUTILE COUNTER-ATTACK. RETREAT WAS HARD TO TAKE BUT THE ONLY OPTION.



TONY WAS WORKING ON INFORMATION GLEANED FROM ITALIAN VILLAGERS TO HELP AVOID TROUBLE SPOTS WHEN BRABHAM CAME TO THEIR PRESENT H.Q.



THE MAJOR, RECOUNTING ALL HE HAD LEARNED FROM FRED, HAD ALREADY DECIDED THAT TONY COULD BE PUT TO GOOD USE.



FRED, FOR HIS PART, HAD RETURNED TO REFUEL AND RE-ARM AND COME UP WITH A SCHEME TO RESCUE THEIR OFFICER, WHATEVER IT TOOK.

I KNOW
THE CAPTAIN IS STILL
ON THE LOOSE, WOUNDED
AND HUNTED, AND IN
NEED OF HELP...OUR
HELP.

WHAT'S
THE PLAN THEN,
SARGE?



TO GO IN AND GET OUT FAST, ALL GUNS BLAZING
WHERE NECESSARY, WAS WHAT THE VETERAN
SERGEANT HAD IN MIND, BUT THEN TONY TURNED UP.

YOU!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE?

TRYING TO
HELP AND SAVE YOU
SOME GRIEF.





FRED WAS HAVING NONE OF THAT. HE JABBED AT HIS THREE STRIPES TO EMPHASISE HIS POINT.



MUCH TO TONY'S SURPRISE, TWO OF THE SQUAD TALKED IN FAVOUR OF HIS PROPOSAL AND THE OTHERS NODDED THEIR AGREEMENT.



THE TOUGH N.C.O. GAVE IN, BARELY CONTAINING HIS RAGE. THE MEN MOUNTED UP AND MOVED OUT AFTER TONY HAD HIDDEN AWAY HIS OWN JEEP AND HITCHED A LIFT IN ANOTHER VEHICLE.



THEY PUSHED ON BUT NOTHING STIRRED UNTIL THE LIGHT
BEGAN TO FADE AND THEY ENEXPECTEDLY CAME UNDER FIRE.



THE MEN REACTED FAST, BULLETS FROM VICKERS MACHINE GUNS
SHREDDING ALL BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR UNSEEN TARGET.



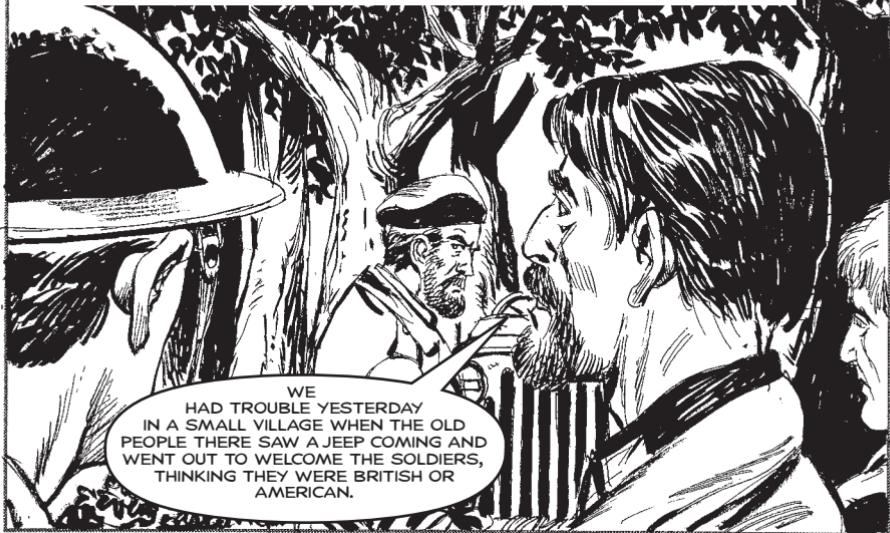
BUT TONY HAD HEARD VOICES IN BETWEEN THE GUNFIRE AND REALISED WHAT WAS BEING SAID.



TONY YELLED IN ITALIAN AND THE AMBUSH GROUP, A BUNCH OF STUDENTS WHO HAD BEEN TRYING TO PROTECT THIS AREA, REALISED THEIR MISTAKE.



AFTER MORE SHOUTED EXCHANGES, THE WOULD-BE PARTISANS CAME FROM COVER AND TONY QUIZZED MARCO VISCONTI, THEIR LEADER, UNDER FRED'S BALEFUL GLARE.



BUT THE JEEP HAD BEEN THE ONE ABANDONED BY DAN, AND WHAT HAD HAPPENED NEXT TOOK A NASTY TWIST.





TONY RELAYED ALL THIS
TO THE SULLEN FRED.



FIND
MORE
FREE
MAGAZINES

FREEMAGS.CC

THE PARTISANS LED THE WAY, THE BRITISH FOLLOWING, NONE OF THEM SAYING A WORD, BUT FRED THINKING PLENTY.

NEVER THOUGHT I'D EVER TRUST MYSELF AND THE LADS TO A BUNCH OF EYESIES, BUT I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT BORELLI HAS BEEN AN ASSET. WILL HE DELIVER IN THE END, THOUGH?



AS THE UPWARD TREK TURNED INTO A TEST OF FITNESS AND ENDURANCE, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT TONY COULD COPE AS WELL AS THE RAIDING SQUAD.

ON YOU GO THEN.

BARELY OUT OF BREATH. HE'S TOUGHENED UP A LOT.



NO MORE FIRING WAS HEARD AS THE NIGHT WORE ON AND DAWN BROKE. TWO OF THE ITALIAN S.S. UNIT REPLENISHING THEIR WATER BOTTLES WERE UNAWARE THAT THEY WERE NOT THE ONLY HUNTERS.



TONY HAD HEARD AND UNDERSTOOD EVERY WORD. HE HAD GONE TO GROUND WITH FRED AND THEY BOTH KNEW NOW WAS THE TIME TO ACT.



BEFORE FRED COULD MOTION ONE OF HIS SQUAD TO FOLLOW HIM, TONY HAD MOVED IN FIRST AND HIS FELLOW SERGEANT HAD NO OPTION BUT TO FOLLOW.



NOT SO SILENT WAS THE GUNFIRE WHICH RANG OUT THEN AS DAN, STILL ON THE RUN BUT TIRED AND WEAK FROM LOSS OF BLOOD, TOOK OUT TWO OF THE FANATICS GETTING TOO CLOSE TO HIS POSITION.



THE YOUNG PARTISANS HAD BEEN LEFT BEHIND TO GUARD THE PRISONERS WHILE TONY AND FRED BROKE COVER WITH OTHERS TO TAKE THE FIGHT TO THE ENEMY.



THE UNEXPECTED ATTACK RATTLED THE RENEGADE ITALIANS. THE TWO NEAREST DAN BROKE COVER TO FINISH HIM OFF BEFORE THEY AIDED THEIR COMRADES FURTHER BACK. IT WAS A MISTAKE.





ALREADY A SQUAD OF WELL-ARMED AND RUTHLESS DIE-HARD LED BY THEIR BRUTAL LIEUTENANT CLOSED IN MENACINGLY.

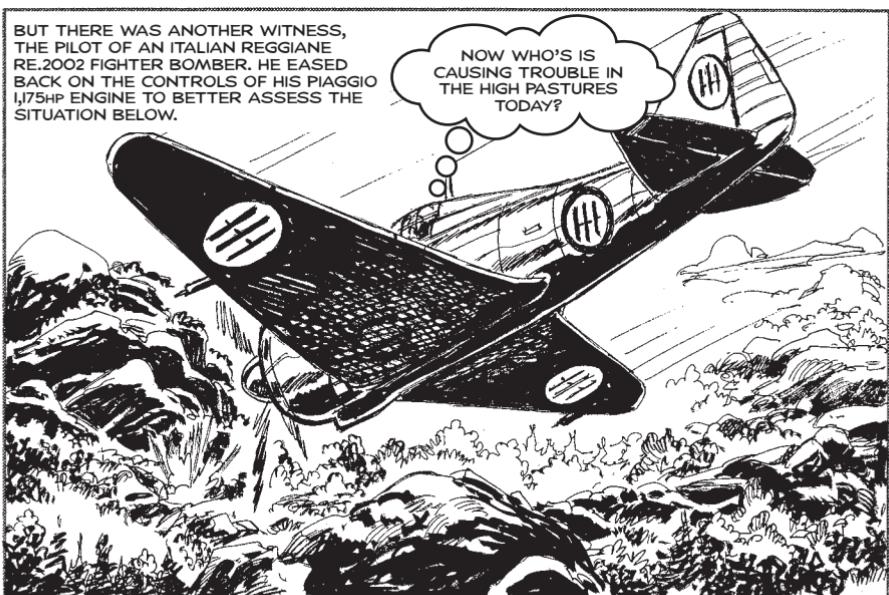
WE TRACK MORE THAN ONE MAN NOW BUT THAT IS A BONUS!

NONE OF THEM WILL SURVIVE!



BUT THERE WAS ANOTHER WITNESS, THE PILOT OF AN ITALIAN REGGIANE RE.2002 FIGHTER BOMBER. HE EASED BACK ON THE CONTROLS OF HIS PIAGGIO I,175HP ENGINE TO BETTER ASSESS THE SITUATION BELOW.

NOW WHO'S IS CAUSING TROUBLE IN THE HIGH PASTURES TODAY?



FAR BELOW, DAN WAS FIRST TO SPOT THE PLANE AND RECOGNISE IT.



WE'D BETTER KEEP
OUR HEADS DOWN!

BREDA MACHINE GUNS THUNDERED INTO LIFE,
SPOUTING A BARRAGE OF BULLETS DOWN BELOW.

THERE'S NO DOUBT
WHOSE SIDE I AM ON!



AN S.S. UNIFORM, WHETHER WORN BY A GERMAN OR AN ITALIAN, WAS A LEGITIMATE TARGET FOR THIS PILOT OF THE CO-BELLIGERENT AIR FORCE, WHICH WAS MADE UP OF ITALIANS WHO HAD CHOSEN TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE THE ALLIES.

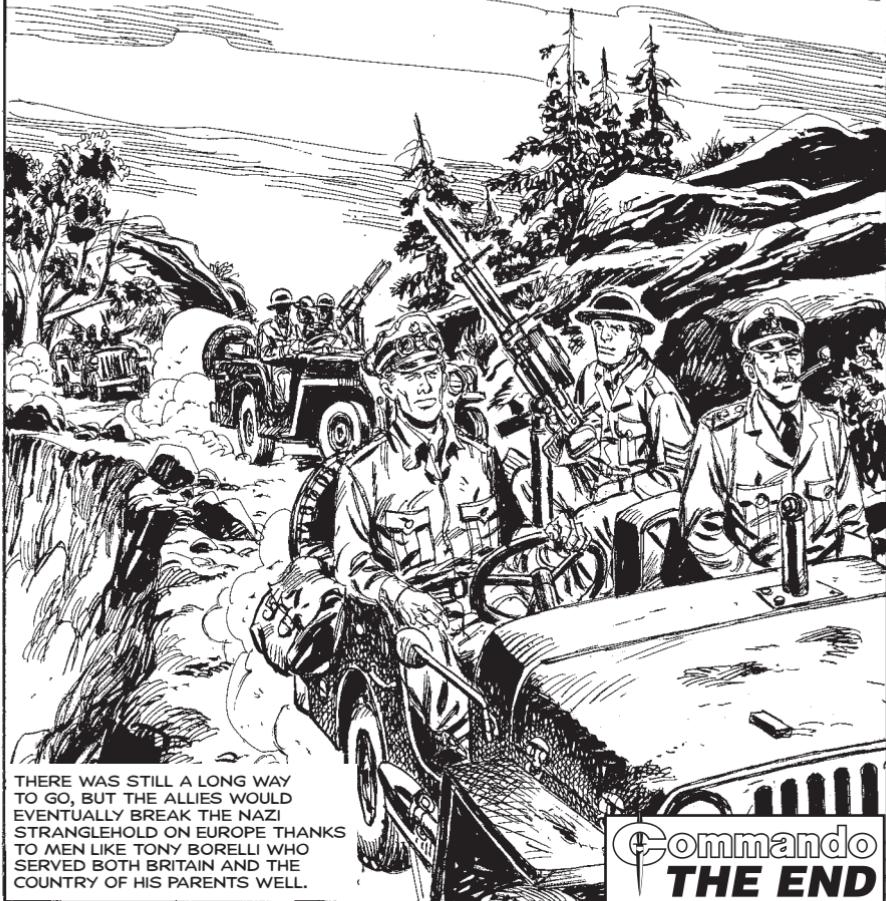


TO AVOID CLASHES WITH ITALIAN AIRMEN WHO HAD ELECTED TO FLY WITH THE LUFTWAFFE, THE CO-BELLIGERENT AIR FORCE CREWS WERE NOT MEANT TO OPERATE OVER THEIR HOMELAND, BUT NONE OF DAN'S MEN WERE GOING TO OBJECT.





IT WAS A JOKE ,OF COURSE, BUT WHAT HAD STARTED OFF SO TRAGICALLY FOR TONY HAD TURNED OUT FAR BETTER THAN HE HAD EXPECTED.



THERE WAS STILL A LONG WAY TO GO, BUT THE ALLIES WOULD EVENTUALLY BREAK THE NAZI STRANGLEHOLD ON EUROPE THANKS TO MEN LIKE TONY BORELLI WHO SERVED BOTH BRITAIN AND THE COUNTRY OF HIS PARENTS WELL.

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THE END

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