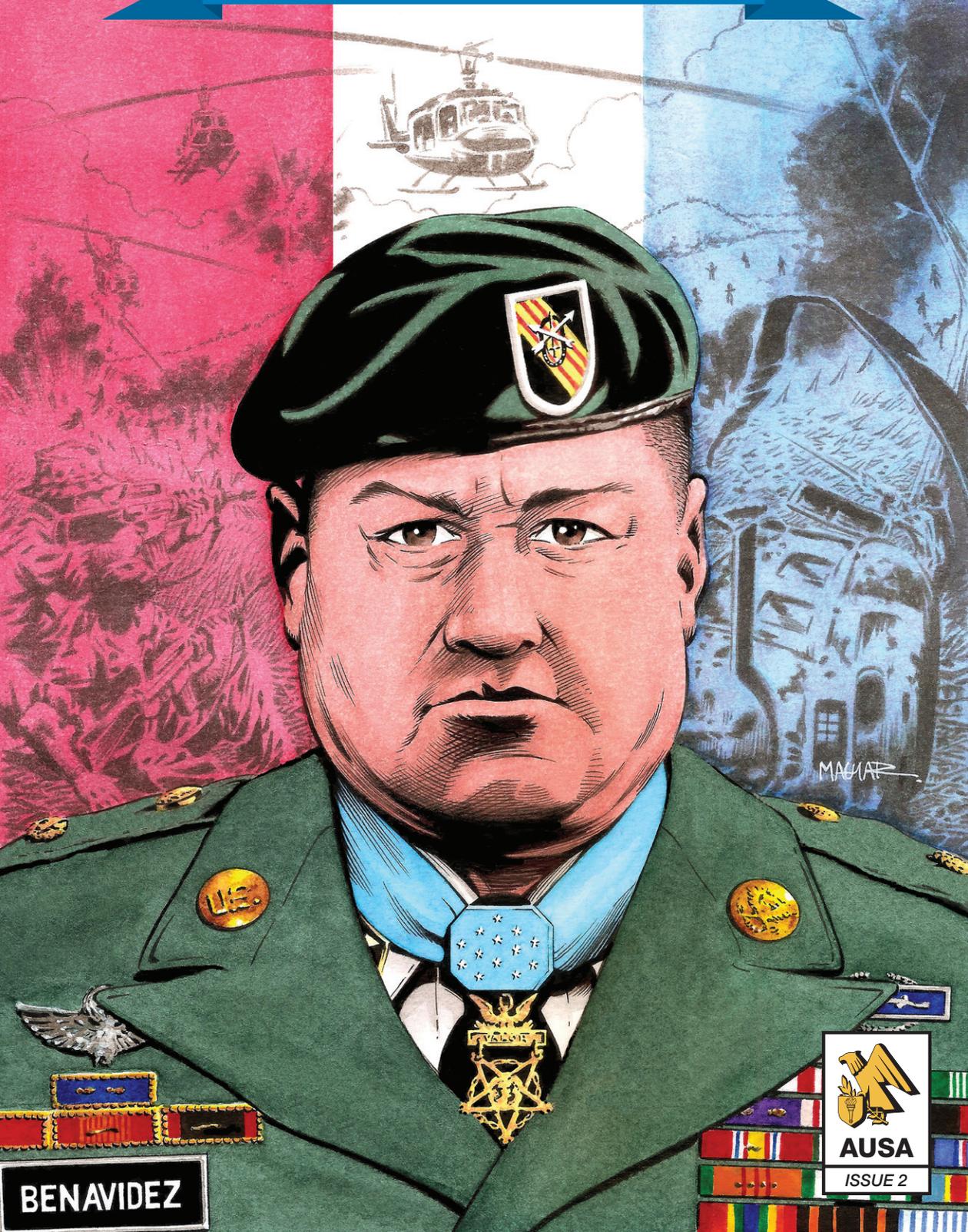


# MEDAL OF HONOR

ROY BENAVIDEZ



BENAVIDEZ



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# ROY BENAVIDEZ

MAY 2, 1968.

AN AIRSTRIP AT LOC NINH.

HUEYS RETURN AFTER THREE ATTEMPTS TO EXTRACT A SPECIAL FORCES TEAM, MACHINES CRIPPLED AND CREWMEN WOUNDED BY INTENSE GROUND FIRE AT THE LANDING ZONE.



STAFF SGT. ROY PEREZ BENAVIDEZ WAS MONITORING THE ACTION OVER THE RADIO.

HE'D HEARD ENOUGH.



I'M GOING BACK WITH YOU.

IT'S BAD, SERGEANT. REAL BAD. YOU SURE?

I'M SURE.





IT'S A REAL HORNET'S NEST, BUT THEY WON'T DRIVE US OUT THIS TIME, NO MATTER WHAT.

LET'S GO. MY BUDDIES ARE DOWN THERE.



ON HIS FIRST TOUR IN 'NAM, 1965, BENEVIDEZ WAS WOUNDED BY A LAND MINE.



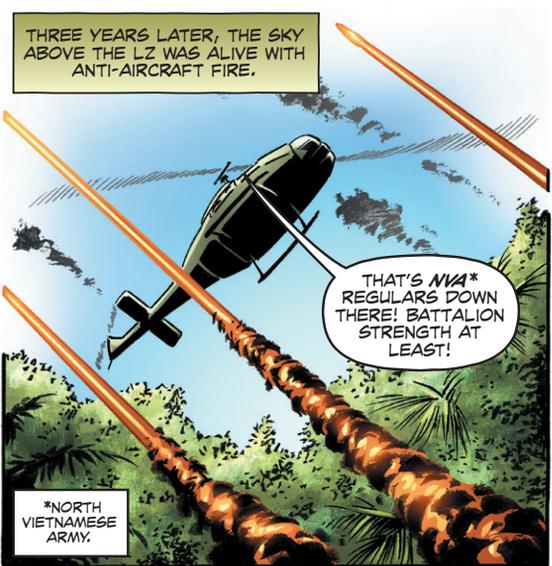
HE WAS TOLD HE WOULD NEVER WALK AGAIN.



HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT THIS PROGNOSIS AND, AGAINST DOCTOR'S ORDERS, WORKED TO RESTORE HIS LEGS.



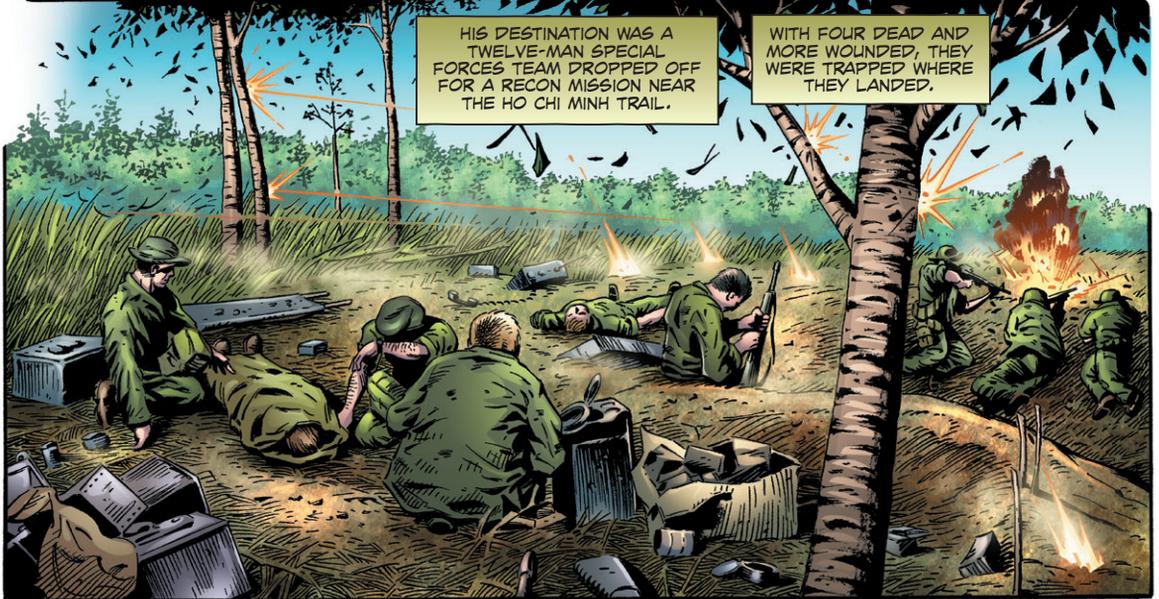
WITHIN MONTHS HE COULD WALK AGAIN. HE REQUALIFIED FOR AIRBORNE AND EVENTUALLY EARNED THE RIGHT TO WEAR THE GREEN BERET.



THREE YEARS LATER, THE SKY ABOVE THE LZ WAS ALIVE WITH ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE.

THAT'S NVA\* REGULARS DOWN THERE! BATTALION STRENGTH AT LEAST!

\*NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY.





BENAVIDEZ?

SGT. WRIGHT IS DEAD.



BENAVIDEZ ASSUMED COMMAND.

KEEP WORKING THAT TREE LINE! LAY RIFLE FIRE ALONG THE LEFT!



THEY'RE WORKING AROUND TO FLANK US! WE NEED TO SUPPRESS THEIR FIRE SO THE *AVIEYS* CAN COME IN.



YOU'RE GONNA COVER ME WHILE I MOVE YOUR CASUALTIES! MOVING NOW!



ONE AFTER THE OTHER, BENAVIDEZ CARRIED THE WOUNDED TO THE CHOPPER.

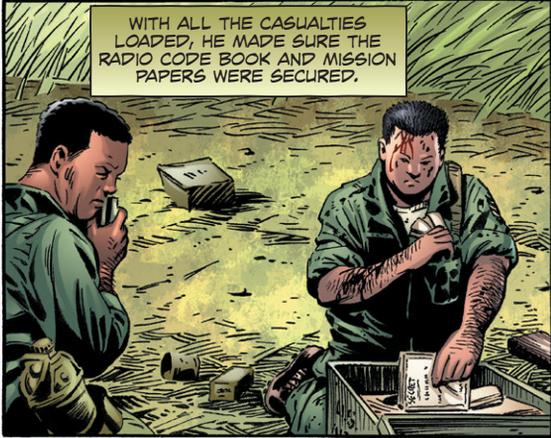


THOUGH PAINFULLY WOUNDED HIMSELF, HE WOULDN'T STOP UNTIL THE LAST MAN HAD BEEN TAKEN ABOARD.

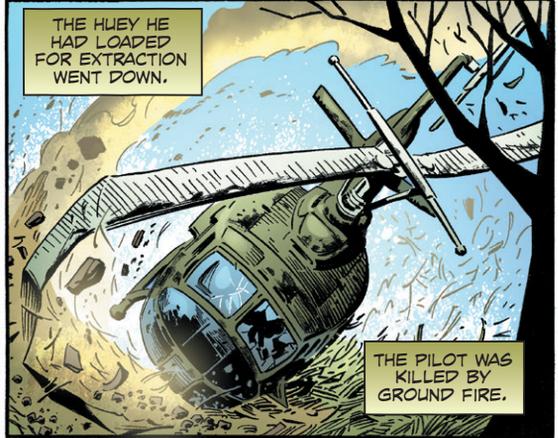
I NEED YOU TO MOVE CLOSER!



HE PROVIDED COVER FIRE, TROTTER ALONGSIDE A HELO TO ALLOW IT TO APPROACH THE ENFILADED UNIT.

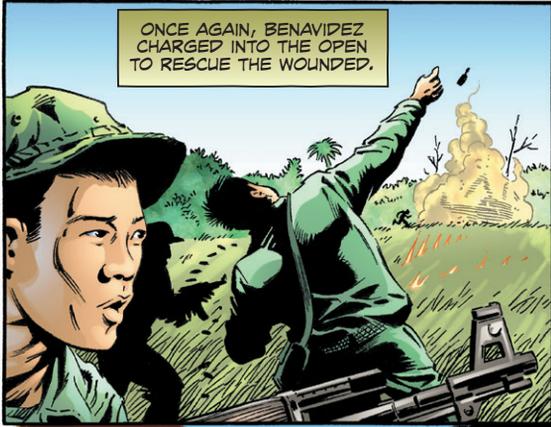


WITH ALL THE CASUALTIES LOADED, HE MADE SURE THE RADIO CODE BOOK AND MISSION PAPERS WERE SECURED.



THE HUEY HE HAD LOADED FOR EXTRACTION WENT DOWN.

THE PILOT WAS KILLED BY GROUND FIRE.



ONCE AGAIN, BENAVIDEZ CHARGED INTO THE OPEN TO RESCUE THE WOUNDED.



SINGLE-HANDED, BENAVIDEZ REMOVED THE MEN FROM THE WRECK.

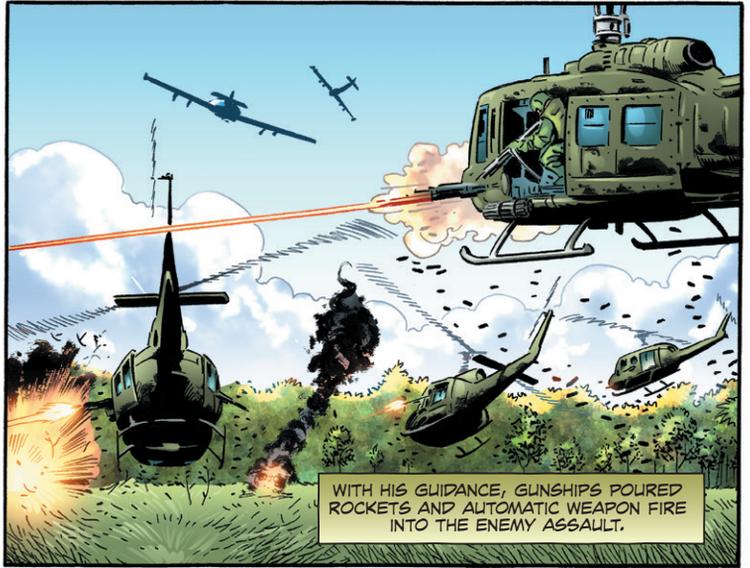
GONNA GET YOU ANOTHER RIDE.



HE MOVED THEM TO A BETTER POSITION UNTIL THEY COULD TRY ANOTHER EXTRACTION.



WE NEED AIR SUPPORT!



WITH HIS GUIDANCE, GUNSHIPS POURED ROCKETS AND AUTOMATIC WEAPON FIRE INTO THE ENEMY ASSAULT.



THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ABSORBED THE PUNISHMENT AND PUSHED FORWARD INTO THE EX-FIL ZONE.



BENAVIDEZ CARRIED A WOUNDED MAN AS THE REST OF THE SPECIAL FORCES UNIT MOVED TO EVAC.



SENSING THEIR PREY WAS ESCAPING, THE NVA ATTACKED THE LANDING ZONE WITH RENEWED FURY.



THE SERGEANT WAS BROUGHT DOWN BY A BLOW TO THE HEAD.



HE RECEIVED A BAYONET WOUND IN EACH ARM BUT FOUGHT ON--



--KILLING HIS ATTACKER WITH HIS KNIFE, THE ONLY WEAPON HE BROUGHT WITH HIM FROM LOC NINH.



BARELY ABLE TO STAND, HE FIRED HIS WEAPON AS HE MOVED.

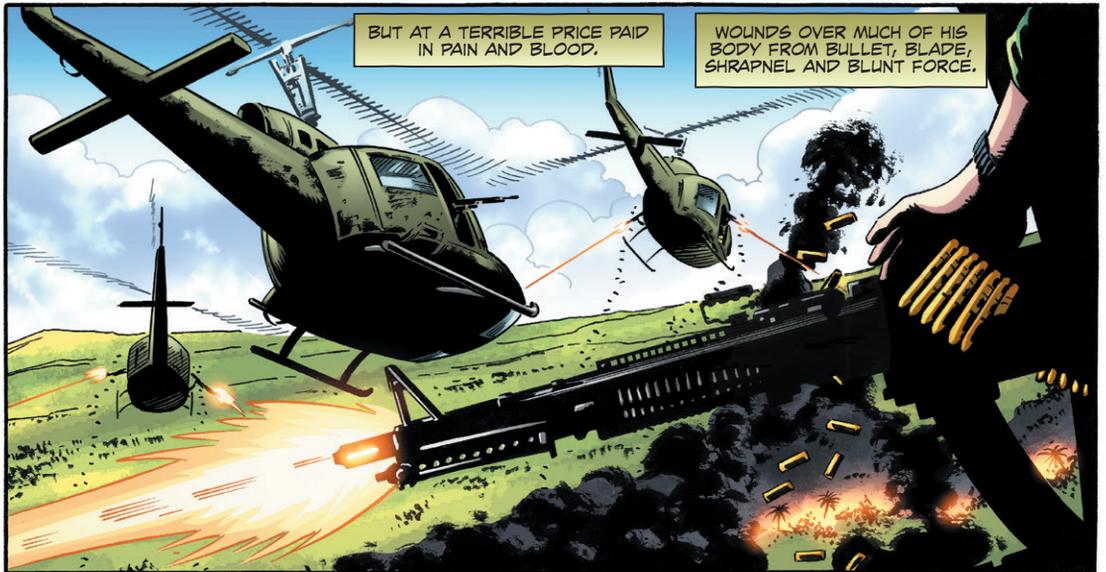
HOLD ON--JUST ONE MORE.



HE FINALLY ACCEPTED A RIDE BACK TO BASE.

IN THE END HE HAD PERSONALLY GOTTEN EIGHT WOUNDED SOLDIERS TO SAFETY.

EIGHT OF HIS BROTHERS SPARED BY HIS ACTIONS.



BUT AT A TERRIBLE PRICE PAID IN PAIN AND BLOOD.

WOUNDS OVER MUCH OF HIS BODY FROM BULLET, BLADE, SHRAPNEL AND BLUNT FORCE.



HIS BODY FROZEN IN SHOCK AND COVERED IN BLOOD, BENAVIDEZ IS PLACED WITH THE DEAD.



SORRY, BROTHER.

WAIT, THAT'S BENAVIDEZ! GET A DOCTOR!



ROY USED THE LAST OF HIS STRENGTH TO SHOW SIGNS OF LIFE.



UH?

PEFT



THIS MAN IS ALIVE! GET HIM TO SURGERY!

IN FEBRUARY 1981, ROY P. BENAVIDEZ RECEIVED OUR NATION'S HIGHEST MILITARY HONOR.

THE SERGEANT PASSED AWAY IN 1998 WITH TWO PIECES OF SHRAPNEL STILL LODGED NEAR HIS HEART FROM THAT DAY IN MAY.

A US NAVY SEALIFT SHIP, THE USNS BENAVIDEZ, IS NAMED FOR HIM.

HIS MEDAL OF HONOR IS ON DISPLAY AT THE RONALD REAGAN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY.



THE END

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