

Property of
Pvt. Johnny Rivas
101st Airborne

June 6th, 1944 D-1

I'm Private Johnny Rivas, just like it says on the cover. I'll be falling out of a plane with these men tomorrow, on account of the fact that Adolph Hitler wants Europe and maybe the whole world all to himself. He might find that the 101st Airborne has something to say about that.

That's Sgt. Baker there in the middle. The fellas have taken to calling us Baker's Dozen, and I'll be damned if it doesn't have a ring to it.

Instead of more ammo, I'll be jumping with a few pencils to fill up this journal with. That's some real good thinking there, Rivas. When Jerry comes over that hill, maybe he'll ask you to draw him a picture.

Baker

Obi

Leggett

Zanovich



D+1

You learn a lot in Airborne School, but they never shoot down your damn plane. They hit our C-47 on the way in, and now we're spread to hell and gone. I learned how everything is supposed to go, and then the War decides it's got another idea.

Don't know how I got so lucky, but I found Dale McCreary, from the Dozen - almost came down on top of him. I asked him if he'd started swearing yet, with our current predicament and all, and he says no. I guess he's saving it up for the right time.

Half the pencils broke, but that's the last thing on my mind.



D+2

Met up with Obi and Zanovich from Baker's Dozen. No sign of the other guys, but we've taken up with the 82nd Airborne in the meantime — seems like they don't much care for us. We've got the four of us, that's for sure. And when the fighting starts, I know we can count on the 82nd, down to the last man. It's just uneasy any other time.

Somebody should tell these guys. Last I heard, we were here to fight the Germans.



82nd

D+3

We get out of one scrap just to get into another one. What the hell was I doing before I was here, fighting for my life every day? I don't remember. When Santana — my brother, Santana Rivas — died fighting the war in the Pacific, you could say I got crazy for a while. Next thing I knew, I was doing my graduation jump in front of General Eisenhower. I know I did right. And I know Santana can see it.

When this thing's over, people won't even recognize me. They'll say "Is that Johnny Rivas?" And I'll say No, sir. It's Private Johnny Rivas, 101st Airborne.





D+4

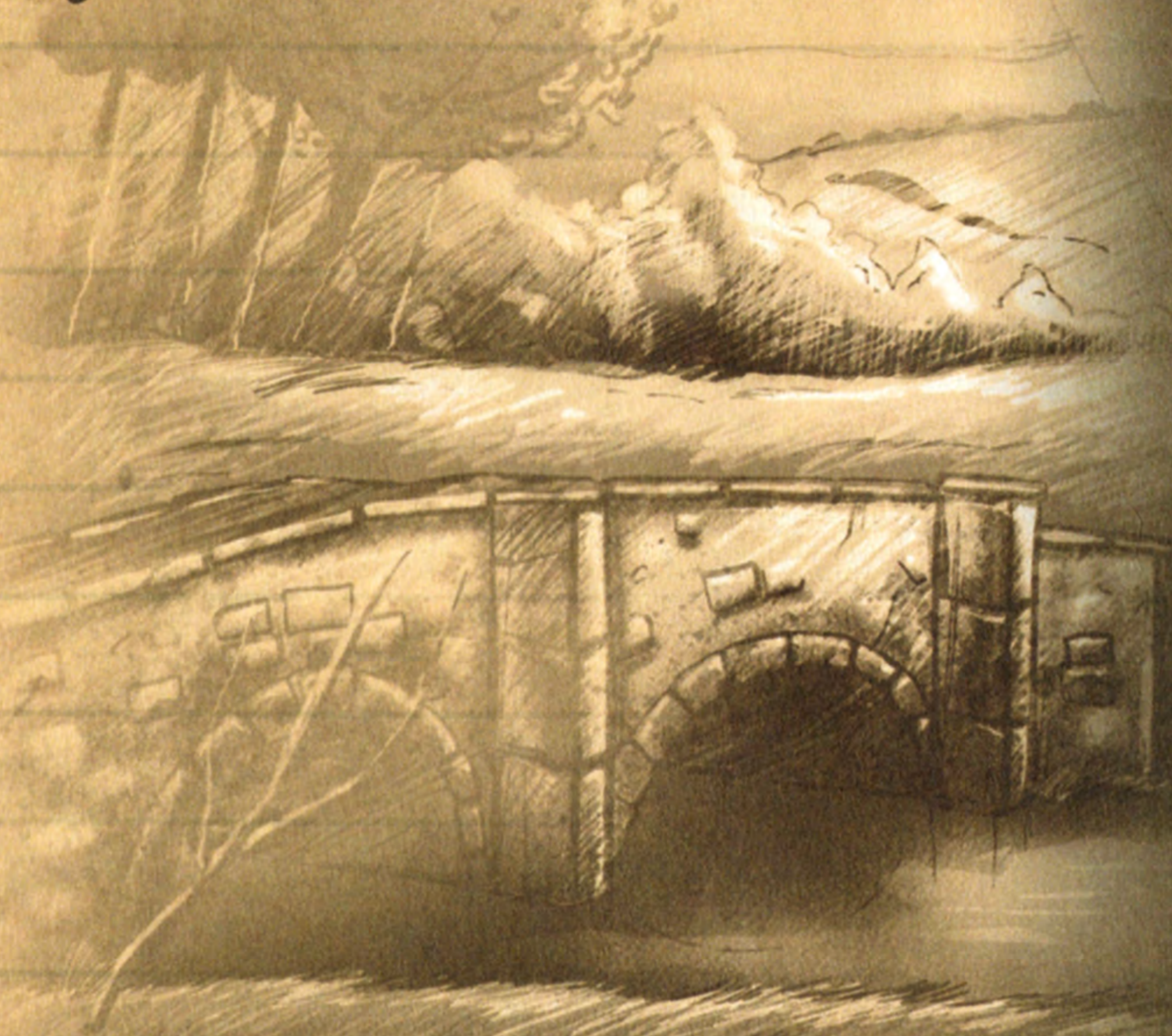
When we get done fighting, we try to get some sleep. But these medics, these poor sons of bitches — they're never done. They never have enough of what they need to do their job, They're bringing in guys at all hours, maybe even ones they know — guys younger than me, and I'm no old man. At this rate, God knows if I'll live to be one.

If I do, though — if I do, I'll have one of these guys to thank.



D+5

The boys and I have decided to strike out on our own, finally got word of the 101st on the move in Normandy. Old man Zanovich says he could go for a little sightseeing, and he's joking, but I know what he means. There's times out here where you'd swear there was no war at all.



It'll be good to get back in with the rest of the Dozen. Baker most of all — he always did right by me, and that's before he ever lead the squad.



D+6

German mortar team caught us en route,
I killed them, I killed them all

Mortar hit and knocked us down, I
thought Dale was gone

Ran up to them and I killed them

I fired until the gun was empty and
put the bayonet through the last man

I don't know if I can do
this anymore. I don't know if I
can fight all day, and then come
back to this book and hash it all out
again.

I don't know if I can do it.



D+7

Will wonders never cease — our little band met back up with Cpt. Baker and the rest. I didn't know how much I liked having these guys around, there's a camaraderie with these beautiful bastards that brings an ease along with it.



Maybe this book does have something in it for me after all. If it does nothing more than remember these good men, these Screaming Eagles, that's a good work already — and it deserves doing.



Looks like we're on the move again, they're calling me over. Guess things are finally looking up.





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