THE GRAVE MASTER ARRIVED FROM THE EAST WITH A HUNGRY SWORD AND A CHALLENGE FOR THE GODS.

THOSE WHO CALLED THE NORTH HOME NEVER QUESTIONED WHICH OF THE ÆSIR WOULD TAKE UP THE GAUNTLET.

THE THUNDER TOLD THEM ALL THEY NEEDED TO KNOW.

I HAVE SLAIN DRAGONS, THRASHED BLACK-HEARTED CONQUERORS, RESISTED ALL MANNER OF CRUEL WIZARDS AND MAGIC... BUT NEVER HAVE I ENCOUNTERED ONE SUCH AS YOU.

TELL ME, ARE YOUR PEOPLE UNFAMILIAR WITH DEATH?

I KNOW DEATH WELL, IMMORTAL.

DO YOU?

AYE! INDEED, I DO. PERMIT ME TO DEMONSTRATE MY COMMAND OF THE SUBJECT!

BEHOLD THE UNBRIDLED POWER OF MY LIVING HAMMER—MUSLINNER!

HOW FITTING! "LIVING" HAMMER—

AGAINST DEAD SWORD, THE GAME BEGINS.

CENTURIES AGO, TITANS CLASHED...

AND THE FALLOUT OF THEIR GRIM ENCOUNTER...
SVALBARD ISLANDS.
PRESENT DAY.
0900 HOURS

...IS YET TO BE SORTED.

HE IS CALLED SNAKE EYES. A MEMBER OF THE ELITE GI JOE TEAM, HE'S DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO STOPPING THE CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION KNOWN AS COBRA.

HIS BIRTH NAME IS CLASSIFIED—KNOWN ONLY TO A SELECT FEW WITH SECURITY CLEARANCE HIGHER THAN GOD OR THE PRESIDENT.

WHO HE WAS ISN'T IMPORTANT. A NAME DOESN'T MEAN A LOT IF YOU DON'T USE IT OR SHARE IT WITH ANOTHER. AND HE GAVE UP ON BOTH A LONG TIME AGO.

THE MISSION IS ALL THAT MATTERS.
Duty and honor are what keep him from vanishing completely, now.

He's reminded that today is *not* that day.

Neither was yesterday.

"The cipher's old. Nobody's used it in years.

Some kind of *SOS* hidden in a text sent to a phone we were monitoring in Japan.

And he could. He's half-ghost, already.

But he fights on, taking comfort in knowing someday--hopefully, sooner than later--he won't be necessary.

As the frigid wind finds its way into his suit...

"But it's definitely one of ours--it's a Joe.

"This morning, at 0600 hours, codebreakers intercepted another string with two *new* messages embedded.

"First was coordinates for someplace in Norway."
“Second one said ‘bring Snake Eyes.’”

The exterior’s old, but everything inside has that “new secret base” smell.

Air purifiers pump out the cleanest O₂ money can buy.

Thermal LEDs inside the walls keep things nice and warm...

The perfect temperature for snakes.

Hold it there...

Show us your hands!

THOSE SWORDS. IS HE ONE OF THEM?

Who cares? He’s the only thing between us and getting out--

No, not Cobra--
Cobra would know better.

Waste him.

Too fast...

Despite appearances...

There is no cruelty in his actions.

Nothing hurts more than it has to.

No movement is unnecessary.