

## WE LUCKY FEW

### Chapter 1

#### The Gangs All Here:

“1mintue!!!!”

The huge Wolf that was guiding the landing craft barked, the foam spraying from his mussel as he did so, all over the back of my helmet.

“Oh my god Marks been sick again DAVID, DAVID! Can you hear me Racky? Can you help him?”

Daniel Jepson the Red squirrel shouted, he was only two furs in front of me but he voice trailed off into the wind and with all the commotion of the invasion (Guns and engines etc) he seemed miles away, he was the squads radio operator, he used his tail as a rest for the back pack radio we had been issued, it was a link from the Commander to the HQ platoons all over the invasion, made him quite a joke around the barracks as it looked quite odd, but we all new he was the best there was.

The whole landing craft was rocking to and fro in the bad weather and the resulting chop of the waves that we had encountered. The sky was a murky grey colour and visibility was a minimum. I was quite surprised that he was the only Fur in the team that was sick, he was hard a nails but hated the ocean. None of us expected the invasion would mean running head long onto a beach in France.

As we slowly moved into our doom I noticed the sea was very foamy, this seemed to me a statement of how bad the weather had been in the area.

“It’s all over my bloody shoe, AGAIN”

I looked for the hunched up Terrier making the most noise, as that would be the familiar sight of my buddy making the whole craft smell.

“Well I can’t do anything at the moment I am at the back and we will be hitting the beach soon”

“Shut up all of you I am trying to remember were the hell we have to get to after we clear the mined area, if the boys haven’t cleared them, I am the one that has to lead you Furs up that damn strip of sand!” that was our Captain a rather regale looking Bengal Tiger named Mahen.

“30 seconds, clear the ramp” the Wolf barked at full volume this time.

“Umm hello... have you seen my.....” was all the floppy eared rabbit got out of his mouth before,

“NO!” cried all of us in unison.

That was the familiar question of the rather forgetful Danny; he was the groups Bren gunner a Corporal with the most combat experience.

Me, it was the first taste I would have of combat, a large lump developed in my throat I knew I was with the best Furs around, but it was my job to help them if they ever got “IT”, 11 Furs lives resting on me if the worse happened. I shook my head to rid myself of my doubts, and kept my head ducked down as the bullets were still zinging around us.

“Don’t worry Danny, I have the ammo, I always have the ammo” answered Corporal Richard Mott a very softly spoken, and rather put upon Ginger Tom.

“The Captain said SHUT IT! And if you don’t I will personally lead you up the nearest Nazi taxidermist and let him sort you out. Do I make my self clear ladies”

This was the very snarled voice of Joe Barry he was what you can only describe as the tough one of the group, he is a grey Alsatian and a loner, The only reason he was a loner was because he didn’t like anyone, only interested on following orders, with as little personal danger as possible, he wasn’t a coward just very good at surviving, for this I suppose was a good thing to be able to do.

“YES SIR” everyone hurriedly said with out thinking, rather sheepishly.

For this is June 6th 1944 and its H hour. The men of the allied expeditionary force are about to land all around the Normandy coast, we are following the Furs of X corps of the British Army (A special group of Furs selected from all walks of life within the Army and trained to become hard fighters for special high risk missions) we were attached to the Scottish 1st Commandoes.

But as you can see the people were all a little strange, and not really wanting to be here, including me, David Raccoon Esq., I was the group’s medic, The guys were very good at the tasks they were given (if not at

anything else), presumably because we were mad, but in war how can you tell?

ZIP! SPLOSH, a shell missed our craft and hit the water behind us throwing up spray over the side of the landing craft, we were close, all the soldiers around me were hunched down and some were praying, I knew no god could save you now just keep alive by your own means and your comrades around you.

Suddenly the Tiger blew his whistle, this meant this was it, our destiny, someone, I don't know who started to sing Danny Boy, it was a song we sing as the forgetful rabbit got rather annoyed when we sung it, but even he was mouthing the words this time. It was our song no one else could sing it in our army base, this was our time, and this was our D-Day.

“Good luck Furs and you Alex” Mahen laughed.

Alex was the Combat Engineer a huge Brown Bear with a golden heart, one of my best friends in the platoon, I felt sad that they gave him the flame thrower and trained him to assault duties I knew if he got a bullet in it I couldn't do a thing to help him, but I never voiced my fears he was proud that he was one of the team.

There was an explosion and the sound of MG-42 fire ripped the air. We were glad the tanks were going in first, in our sector there was a compliment of Sherman flail Tanks to help clear paths through the mine fields, Churchill Flame Tanks and the special DD Shermans, these wondrous contraptions float on water! All of the above were highly secret, just like us. I bet the Nazis were surprised when the LCT opened up and a bloody Sherman rolled out.

Another thud and it was our turn to land, the ramp fell and we ran...

### **16th August 1943. HQ London.**

“Hello James”, General Harvey the Black Panther said to the Lieutenant next to me.

“This is the person you requested to see” he responded almost as soon as the words left the Panthers lips.

He turned to me and I jumped.

“Me?”

“You” I swung me head to the panther that said it with a chuckle, this made me very nervous indeed.

“Why?” I said, I knew I should have nether have asked that question, to this day I curse my inquisitive nature.

“WHY, WHY!” he panther leapt from his desk ran around it and pressed his wet nose to mine. “Because they say you’re the best” he said, softer now almost as if we had known each other for all our lives. “This report shows me that.” He said waving a beige folder up and down, his voice was like a fathers, friendly but with the air of authority.

At least he stopped shouting I thought. “You see dear boy, you have been under surveillance,” he added with a wink, and a lick of his incisor.

“Surveillance ... What, when?” I stopped I was talking gibberish. The general was looking very pleased with himself.

“So our boys did the job properly, you didn’t realise?” he chuckled again, it was very unnerving.

“No I didn’t, I...I ... umm, why did you do this?” that’s the only thing I could get out of my throat it was dry and very sore.

The General started to talk to the Lieutenant as if I wasn’t there anymore, I don’t think he wanted to expose WHY I have been chosen for what ever it was, and in any case what ever it was I didn’t think I wanted to know. As they were specking under their breath I took the time to examine the environment I was in.

It was a pristine MoD office, row upon rows of books not necessarily to do with the war, not really to do with anything. A fire place that I hadn’t even realised was burning, not that far from my tail, only now did I smell the burning wood, (and fur), I pulled it away very sharply but quite nimbly, I don’t think they noticed I was damping my tail down with my fingers brushing the charred bits off the reddish area. Above the fireplace was a huge painting of Sir Douglas Haig a very tall fattish Gerbil, I didn’t like the man, and I had lost too many family members in the First World War due to his actions, I looked on.

The desk was hard mahogany wood, very over sized for the task it is being used for, a few more beige files lay on it, with the same markings

as mine, I guessed they are in for a similar fate as me, what ever THAT was.

“Sergeant, SERGEANT!” I jumped out of my fur. “Good-god man what’s wrong” I didn’t get time to answer. “Lieutenant you are excused.”

“Yes sir” The small Wolf saluted and left quite hastily.

“Look here Raccoon, what I am going to tell you is strictly top secret, and the information is not to leave this office” he gave me a long form to sign, I just thought it was a realise form or a transfer list, the words that left the panthers mussel next changed my life.

“Now that you have signed the OFFICAL SECRETS ACT”

“What, I signed WHAT?” I exclaimed quite loudly, my head felt blank and like the biggest wolf and I had 10 rounds in a boxing ring.

“Now that you have signed the official secrets act” He said a second time, he was really enjoying seeing me suffer in such a way. “Now I can tell you your new detail.”

3 days later.

I was in a Jeep with a very pretty brown feline officer driver with white ears named Elizabeth. The summer air was blowing though my new brushed fur, it was such a smooth feeling I could sit back and forget that the war was raging only a few miles away and breathing down Britain’s neck.

I looked at my watch it felt like I had been up for a whole day already

**9:00**

That’s because I HAD been up for a day (well I had left my hotel at 5:00) I wasn’t even aware that there where two of them in a day.

“So your another one, that’s six I’ve brought down in the past few weeks”

“So there are others?” I answered rather lazily.

“Oh yes I don’t know why they want you all, but I know it has to be

important for all this secrecy”

“That makes sense”. Sense! Bah I didn’t know what I was here for either, all the General told me was it was important that I trained here for “something big” those words didn’t fill me with any confidence at ALL.

“Well this is the place, just follow the path down to a tent marked HQ and wait for someone to come for you, good luck sergeant”.

I heaved my bag of personal belongings and training equipment out of the rear passenger seat, opened it and did a quick itinerary and resealed it.

“Thank you, goodbye, thank you again for the ride” I said as I strolled down the grassy path.

The sky was a piercing blue, with little fluffy clouds, and oh the breeze it rustled my fur and all directions, for the first time in days I felt a warm feeling inside.

“Sigh” I turned back just to see the jeep go over the horizon and away.

I continued down the path past Aid tents and ammo stations all completely stocked, the bullets and medical tins, they were all shining in the sunlight, as I was walking I noticed how quiet it was, not just quite but silent, not a person or a truck just the birds singing and the sound of my combat boots on the dewy grass.

Finally I came to a very large tent with “HQ” messily painted on the top in yellow paint, the flap was open and I saw a little brown Terrier sleeping on one of the desks.

“Err hello, are you ok there?” I said with a rather deliberate raised tone, and just to help my point along I realist my heavy nap sack onto the ground but only a soft thud emanated from the ground.

One of the Dog’s ears twitched but no response.

“Err hello are you the person I have to wait for” I said laughing, as by the looks of it he was there for quite a few hours waiting my arrival, not visa versa.

This time the Highland Terrier awoke quite slowly, rubbed his eyes with one paw and scratched his brow with the other.

“Hello there, are you the person I have to wait for” he said. I sighed and rubbed my glasses, with a small piece of cloth that I kept in my top pocket, I wish he hadn’t said that because now I knew we had another wait.

“No, I am sorry I thought you were the person I had to wait for!” He looked rather glum when I said that. He got out of his chair and came over to me eyed me up from my shoes to my eye line, it made quite a spectacle as he was only 5ft 4in and me standing little under 5ft 10in my eye line was quite a way up for the little Dog.

After a while he took a step back. “Well you’re a bit of a strange one aren’t you; I have never seen a Raccoon with a red colourization and a tail as smooth as yours it reminds me of a squirrels but yours falls to the ground and it has strips...”?

He raised one of his eye brow at me, expecting some sort of an explanation, I didn’t want to but I thought I may need some allies while I am in the situation that I have found myself in.

“Well my Grandfather was a Red Squirrel and the rest of the family are Raccoons, seems that I picked up something from him most being the ones you included in your rather detailed examination of me.”

After giving my explanation, he nodded; he thrust his rather big paw out ward towards me giving me a huge paw shake.

“Well I like the look of you”.

I looked at him, and suddenly realised he meant it, the little dog was beaming at me, all I could do was shake it back.

“Umm so what do you do here?” he asked looking at my arms, trying to find a patch or ranking stripes.

“Well I am a staff sergeant” I started

“Good god man so am I” he beamed even more. “Oh dear where are my manners? My names Mark Simons what’s yours old fellow” another huge shake of my in comparison small paw, I was wondering if I would ever see it again.

“My names David Shoulder Esq.” I said, quite proud of the esquire bit.

He seemed to be amused by my name.

After some deliberation; “So I will call you Racky then ok” he said with a point of his paw at my chest and a wink.

“No, I don’t think you will...”

“Ok, perfect, Racky”

I sighed and thought I would give up (to be honest I quite liked the fact that he gave me a nickname, made me feel like we were becoming friends), after another short pause he continued to say what he was chosen for.

“I am a translator, I know most European languages, and I suppose in war time a guy that can speak the lingo is a help” he paused for me to follow then he continued

“Before the war I was a student in France studying languages, just after I finished my exams I signed up and got back to England, before all the Dunkirk fiasco, I haven’t yet seen combat, not that that’s a bad thing, My brother was killed by the Japanese in Singapore, so the telegram says, we didn’t know HOW he was killed, I don’t care, I just want to get me my a bloody revenge on the Japs” as he was talking I realized that he hadn’t exhaled breath, he speaks with out pausing and I had to really think about what he was saying.

He pulled out a crumpled old photograph of a 6 ft 6 ish terrier. “You can see the one who ate his greens, as the saying goes” he laughed at his comment but I could see he was quite sad at getting the picture out. Before he said all this to me the war seemed so far away, I never knew anyone that had lost someone that close in this war, it was a harsh realisation for me.

“But what if we aren’t going to Asia we could be sent to fight the Germans” I said in a way of steering the conversation away from his brother.

“Its all the same to me, they started the whole bloody thing”

I didn’t like to say that we were the ones that actually declared war, he seemed quite angry at the whole world for this act of taking his sibling.

“Tisk. So what do you actually do? I mean, I do something, what about you?”

“Well... I am a qualified surgeon, but not that I tell many people, ok, but as I showed a ‘natural aptitude’ for the post of battle field medic... guess who has to look after you if you get ill, or a bullet in the bum.”

I tried to inject a slice of humour into my retort but I don’t think it helped.

“But just between you and me, don’t ask me to do any actual fighting, I dislike guns I’ve seen what they can do to someone... well I’ve only had basic training, you see but when we did battlefield medic training I passed with a high recommendation”

“THE HIGHEST ACTUALLY, DAVID” I shuddered - I knew that voice.

I turned, I was correct; it was the Panther that made me very nervous. “That’s why we added you to this squad, I overheard you furs talking and have been there for about 5 minutes now, its good to see that Racky has made a friend” (Racky, damn he heard that, I then knew that I would never be rid of that name.) Both of us were quite flabbergasted then we remembered to finally salute the General. He laughed and again licked his left incisor.

Then he found a bench and sat.