

more people than if it had blown up inside the Humvee. He had his crew to worry about, as well as three other wounded soldiers who were being loaded on to the Black Hawk.

At the same time it was obvious that Doc couldn't do any more to help Channing, who needed urgent, life-saving surgery in a properly equipped emergency hospital. Under the circumstances the pilot felt the only fair thing to do was to ask his crew how they felt about taking this incredibly dangerous risk. Their helicopter and everyone in it could be blown out of the sky if they took the wounded soldier on board. But if they didn't get him to hospital soon, Channing Moss would almost certainly die from loss of blood.

The four-man crew unanimously agreed that they should try and save their wounded comrade, and so Channing was carefully loaded on board with the RPG in place. As the helicopter lifted off from the battlefield, it was a deadly race against time. Channing needed to be operated on quickly, but it was vital that he was kept as still as possible.

The Black Hawk headed for an American base called Orgun-E, where an old goat shed had been converted into a small emergency hospital. The medical team there had been told to expect multiple casualties and had been warned that at least one of them was losing a lot of blood. Once again no one said anything about a soldier with a live bomb inside him.

Indeed, when the officer in charge of the hospital first saw Channing's injuries, he wasn't sure whether he needed to call for a surgical team or the bomb-disposal squad.

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