

Budo

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BUDO. The code name used by G.I. Joe team member Sergeant Kyle A. Jesso. Born in Sacramento, California, Budo learned that his great-great-grandfather had been a fencing master one of the last great samurai warrior families in Japan. At age eighteen, he was given the family swords and learned various martial arts, including laido, "the art of the live blade". He has a fifth-degree black belt in laido, and is ranked high in other fighting arts. Despite his respect for ancient traditions, Budo spent much of his youth more interested in a heavy metal rock and roll lifestyle and riding his motorcycle.

Though his military career caught the eye of Duke and Hawk, to enter the G.I. Joe team, Budo had to participate in an intense training program. Out of dozens of applicants, only three remained: Budo, Repeater and Lightfoot. Their first mission for the team soon followed, and it was the Joe team's "final exam": a true-life combat situation. The Piccatinny weapons arsenal was being raided by Cobra forces. After their team leader, Grand Slam, was injured in a fire fight, the three new Joes performed well and repelled the attackers, learning in the process that it was actually Destro's Iron Grenadier army disguised as Cobra who had attacked the arsenal. Budo continued on with the team, participating in many missions until the team was shut down. In the years following the break up of the team, Budo became a bounty hunter in Tokyo along with Jinx, and the two have become romantically involved. Budo and Jinx worked again with their former teammates when Snake-Eyes headed to Tokyo to track down Firefly. Taking down Firefly would be the final test for Snake-Eyes' apprentice, Kamakura, and both men wanted revenge on Firefly personally. Budo and Jinx assisted in the mission, but the mission went awry after the sudden appearance of Storm Shadow. Firefly and the ninja both escaped, and the team was surprised when Duke and Chuckles showed up and informed them that Firefly was part of a bigger terrorist plot, led by a former black ops teammate of Kamakura who had also worked for Duke, Mikhail Derenko. While part of the plot was foiled by the former Joes, Firefly and Derenko escaped.

A short time later, the G.I. Joe team was reinstated and Jinx was asked to join the team, though Budo remained in Japan. He later joined with Jinx and Billy to help Storm Shadow rescue his love and ninja apprentice Junko Akita from rogue Red Ninjas. After the Joe team was again disbanded by the military, Jinx returned to Japan but she and Budo soon broke up, as he began to claim that a ninja like Jinx could never understand the honor of a samurai. In reality, this was all a ruse by Budo to protect Jinx from his mission to infiltrate the organization of Hayatu Toba, a Japanese weapons manufacturer and head of a secret group called the Tatenokai that was dedicated to overthrow the current Japanese government. A year later, Jinx received word that Budo needed her help to stop Toba. She contacted the recently reestablished Joe team, who quickly put together a team of the nearest available reserve team members. Jinx and the others infiltrated the group's headquarters while Budo continued to pretend to work for Toba, and allowed the other Joes to be captured. They all learned that Destro sent Mistress Armada to join forces with Toba. When Toba refused to follow her orders, she killed him and started the coup without him. As the Tatenokai forces rolled through the streets of Tokyo, many of the soldiers turned on each other. Budo had worked to subvert many of them away from Toba's control, and they and the Joes put a stop to the attempted rebellion. Jinx continues to serve as a reserve member of the G.I. Joe team, while Budo has chosen to continue fighting against the criminal element in Tokyo. During the conflict known as World War III, Budo returned to work with the Joes, fighting Cobra in China alongside Jinx.

(GI 82; MA 2-4; SM:T; AE 32, 36; Figures: 1, 2)