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Sommario/riassunto	<p>Illustrated with 18 maps and 24 IllustrationsEARLY IN SEPTEMBER 1943, British and American armies invaded southern Italy, striking at the heart of a major Axis nation and breaching Hitler's "Fortress Europe." Behind the invasion lay long months of hard-won Allied victories. The Axis was cleared out of Africa in May, when British and American armies annihilated the German and Italian forces cornered in Tunisia. Sicily, the stepping stone from Africa to Europe, was next conquered in a 38-day battle, and on 17 August the last of its German garrison fled across the Strait of Messina to the Italian mainland. On 3 September the British Eighth Army crossed the Strait in pursuit and drove up the Calabrian Peninsula. Coordinated with the Eighth Army's attack, Allied landings at Salerno by the United States Fifth Army and at Taranto by the British 1 Airborne Division were made on 9 September. In the Salerno landings, strong American forces were fighting on the continent of Europe for the first time since 1918. Even before the beginnings of the Sicilian operations, the staffs of Allied land, naval, and air forces had been planning an invasion of Italy. Once established on the Italian mainland, we might hope to secure complete naval and aerial domination of the Mediterranean and to obtain strategic ports and airfields for future operations against continental Europe. If we could knock Italy out of the war, we would force the Germans to retreat</p>

north of the Alps or to use in Italy armies which might be fighting on the Russian front. Under the command of Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark, the Fifth Army, a great Allied force composed of the British 10 Corps and the United States VI Corps, carried out the first large scale invasion of the European mainland and secured a firm base for future operations in Italy. Salerno: The American Operations from the Beaches to the Volturno is an account of the American forces who landed on the beaches in the Gulf of Salerno.
