

ADVENTURES  
IN THE LAND

404

ISSUE №74  
APRIL 2026



# LIFE ON THE FRONT LINES

THE MOMENT THAT DIVIDES  
INTO "BEFORE" AND "AFTER"

@RYBAR



## CERTIFICATE № 74

*September 2023. A cold night near Kreminna. In a dugout, three soldiers — Matros, Zavr, and Pauk — receive a brief order over the radio: a storm group is engaged in fierce combat, there are seriously wounded — move out to support.*

*Under withering fire, sprinting across open ground, they rush to help, breaking through to a recently recaptured enemy trench, where wounded men lie in mud and blood. Help is urgently needed — and at that very moment, a cluster munition bursts open in the air. Shrapnel tears into the earth and bodies. Matros is wounded. So is Pauk. Leaving the trench to organize evacuation is impossible. The decision is made to wait for darkness. But the long-awaited darkness brings a deadly threat. The soldiers are spotted by an enemy drone equipped with a thermal imager. The enemy's artillery begins to strike with precision. Every minute feels like a death sentence. Their only chance of survival is to abandon the position.*

*Night. Withdrawal through a tree line. Zavr and Pauk carry the wounded. The commander is concussed. Matros takes command of the other group. He can barely stay on his feet. And when it seems the worst is over, a mine detonates under his foot. But Matros's life is saved by the fighter Ghusar, who, risking his own life, pulls him out of the deadly trap.*

*Some will say this is just another ordinary day for a soldier on the front. Perhaps. But it was on this very day that Matros — having lost his leg — gained something greater: something that sustains, inspires, and supports those who are only now finding within themselves the courage to endure their own losses.*

NEAR KREMINNA, RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES DUGOUT,  
SEPTEMBER 2023



**Matros, do you copy... the storm troopers need support.**



**Our guys pushed the enemy off their first line of defense. There are wounded. Move out.**

**\*SHHHHH\***

**Commander, copy that. We're gearing up.**

**\*SHHHHH\***



**\*RUSTLE\***

*Roger. Prepping extra ammo, grenade launchers.*

*The enemy has seriously fortified those positions.*

*I'll be the medic. I'll pack everything medical.*



**\*RUSTLE\***

NEAR KREMENNA,  
EARLY MORNING



**Move it,  
guys!**



**Running with  
a grenade launcher  
is no fun.**

**By the time we  
get there, we'll  
have nothing left  
in the tank.**

**\*RATATATA\***



**Gunfire  
everywhere.  
Non-stop shooting.**

**Looks like we're  
heading straight into  
the thick of it!**

**\*RATATATA\***





THE COMMANDER GAVE THE ORDER. THREE FIGHTERS — MATROS, ZAVR, AND PAUK — HAD TO BREAK THROUGH TO THE STORM GROUP, PINNED DOWN IN FIERCE COMBAT. THEY HAD ALREADY MANAGED TO PUSH THE ENEMY OFF THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE, BUT HAD TAKEN CASUALTIES.

UNDER WITHERING FIRE, THE THREE SOLDIERS MOVED TOWARD THE TREE LINE, WHERE THE RECAPTURED TRENCHES NOW LAY. IN THEIR HANDS — EXTRA AMMUNITION AND A HEAVY PACK LOADED WITH MEDICAL SUPPLIES.



**Wounded here!**

**Pauk, Zavr – help the fighters. I'll see what's what.**





**Hang in there, brother, we'll help you now.**

**We'll bandage your leg, give you painkillers. We've got everything in the kit.**

**\*AHHH\***

**How long ago were you hit?**



**Not long... I don't remember exactly.**



**\*RUSTLE\***



**Zavr, how are the wounded? It's dangerous to stay here.**

**The guys are in bad shape – they need to be moved to evacuation immediately.**



**Zavr, we won't make it under this fire.**

HAVING REACHED THE TRENCH, MATROS, ZAVR, AND PAUK IMMEDIATELY TENDED TO THE WOUNDED. BUT JUST AS THEY BEGAN BANDAGING THE FIGHTERS — BEFORE THEY COULD EVEN PROPERLY SECURE THE DRESSINGS — THE AIR ABOVE THE TRENCH SEEMED TO SPLIT OPEN.

MATROS IS SLAMMED AGAINST THE WALL, HIS ARM FEELS PIERCED CLEAN THROUGH, HIS LEG BUCKLES. PAUK INSTINCTIVELY DOUBLES OVER — HIS BACK BURNS LIKE RED-HOT IRON. THE REST HITS ALL AT ONCE — THE BLAST, THE EARTH, AND SCREAMS BLENDED INTO A SINGLE BLOW.





**Ahhh, cluster round went off!  
I'm hit!**

**Got me  
in the back.**

**Pauk, you're  
lucky! It's just  
a scratch!**

**Hit the plate carrier.  
Everything's intact.**

**\*RUSTLE\***



**\*RUSTLE\***

**Matros, do you copy, over. Organize evacuation.**

**\*SHHHHH\***

**This is Matros, reading you.**

**Copy, Matros. A group is coming for you — fall back to them for regrouping.**

**We're taking fire. Will wait for darkness.**

**\*SHHHHH\***

**\*SHHHHH\***

**Commander, copy that.**

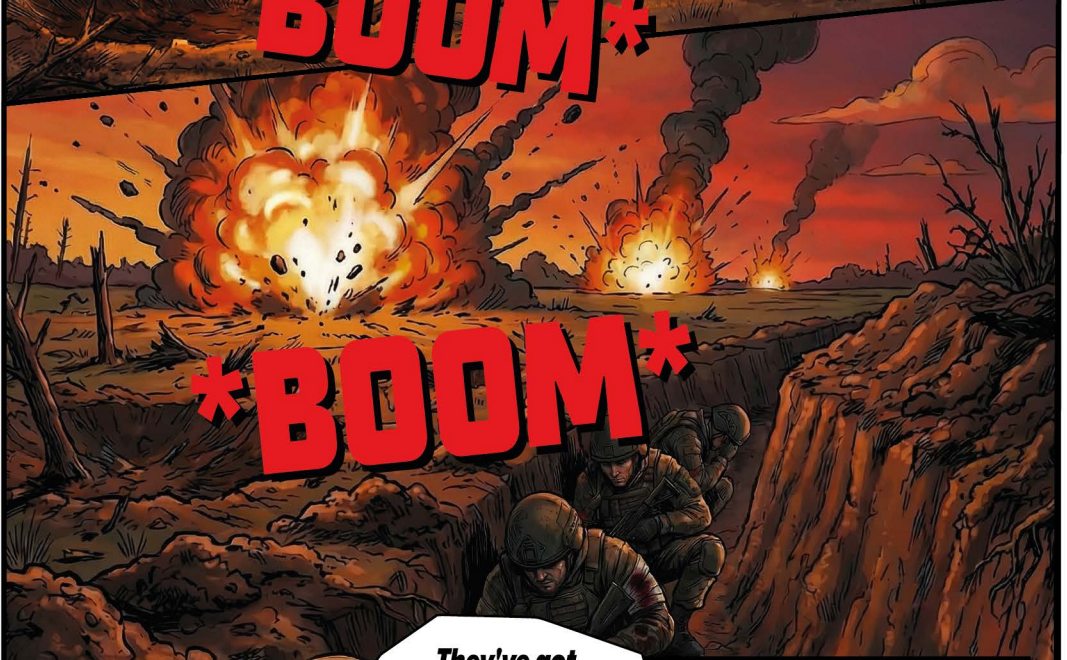
THAT SAME EVENING

NOW CRAMMED INTO THE TIGHT TRENCH — ALONG WITH THE WOUNDED — WERE TWO MORE FIGHTERS. THEY WAITED FOR DARKNESS TO BEGIN THEIR WITHDRAWAL TO EVACUATION. BUT AS DUSK FELL, AN ENEMY DRONE EQUIPPED WITH A THERMAL IMAGER FOUND THEM. ARTILLERY FIRE SOON BEGAN TO POUND THEIR POSITION. STAYING HERE HAD BECOME MORTALLY DANGEROUS. THE GROUP WAS FORCED TO ABANDON COVER.





**\*BOOM\***



**\*BOOM\***

***They've got us zeroed in. Now it's really time to get the hell out!***





**Matros,  
can you move?**

**Yes, I can. We go fast  
right after the next  
shell. Move quick.**

**Fast might  
not be an option!**

**We'll have  
to pull the wounded  
with us.**



**Wait. There's a window!**



**GO! MOVE!**



**\*BOOM\***



**\*BOOM\***

Reading you clearly.  
Concussed? Commander?  
Copy — we're pulling  
back.



**\*SHHHH\***



**Gosh!  
The commander  
got concussed?**

**What now?**

**We need to move  
faster. The wounded  
can't wait – and you're  
hit too, Matros.**

**You take the wounded  
to evacuation. I'll go  
to our group and lead  
the withdrawal.**


**Agreed –  
but don't be a hero!  
Take care of yourself.**



ONE HOUR LATER




**We've been waiting  
a while. I hear  
footsteps. Probably  
Matros coming.**



**Guys, commander  
is concussed. I'm in charge.  
We're withdrawing.**





**What's up ahead?  
Did the storm troopers  
push the enemy off  
the positions?**

**How many  
wounded?**

**How did you  
get through?  
The enemy's got  
non-stop fire going.**

**We made it to the first  
line. Hauled the wounded  
to evacuation.**

SOME TIME LATER

A GROUP OF FOUR FIGHTERS BEGAN TO WITHDRAW. THEY MOVED IN A LINE, KEEPING DISTANCE, WITH MATROS LAST. HE LAGGED SLIGHTLY, LIMPING, BUT TRIED TO KEEP PACE. UNDERFOOT, ALMOST NOTHING WAS VISIBLE. THEY MOVED CAREFULLY, TESTING EACH STEP. NO ONE SAID ANYTHING UNNECESSARY — JUST SHORT COMMANDS AND BREATHING.





**\*АННН\***

**\*АННН\***

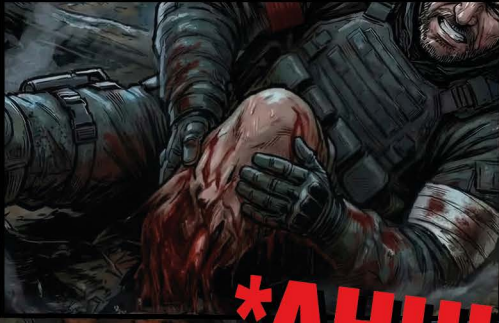


**I'll pull you out!**

**Ghusar, no — don't  
come here! Mines!  
It's dangerous!**



**You go.  
I'm getting Matros  
out.**



**\*AHHH\***



**Hang on,  
Matros – the main  
thing is you're  
alive!**





**Ghusar, you haven't seen my leg anywhere, have you?**

**Dark, can't see the leg.**



**You didn't see the leg. But you saw the mine?**



**You're the one who didn't see the mine. Just stay quiet.**



MILITARY HOSPITAL,  
SUMMER 2024

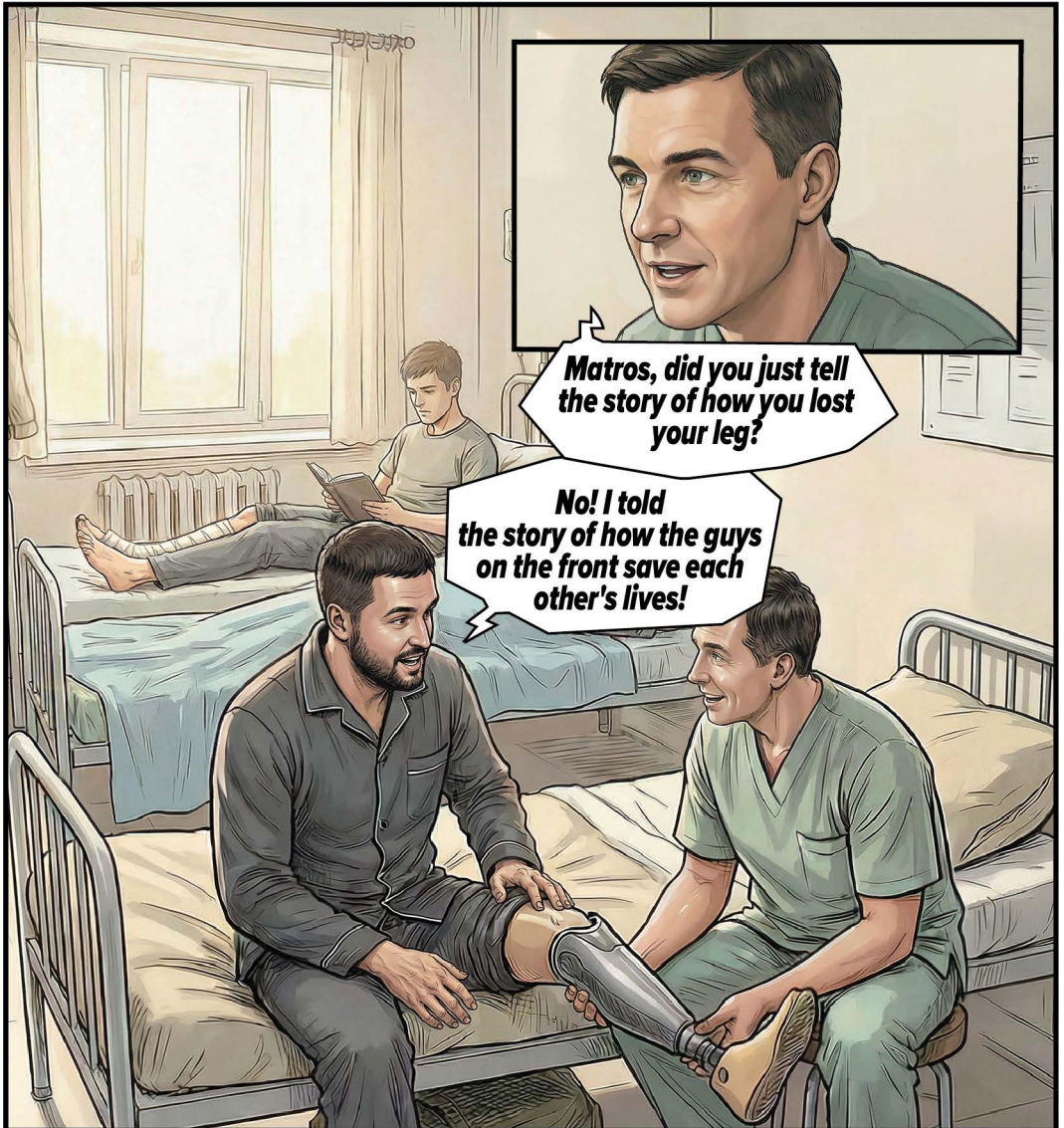
**Brave guys  
in your unit!**

**So Ghusar  
literally saved  
your life!**

**Yes — he had  
to risk his own life  
for mine. Thank you,  
Ghusar, for that!**

**Zavr and Pauk  
got the wounded  
out!**





**Matros, did you just tell the story of how you lost your leg?**

**No! I told the story of how the guys on the front save each other's lives!**

*THIS IS A STORY ABOUT BROTHERHOOD, COURAGE, AND STRENGTH OF SPIRIT. ABOUT THE KIND OF STRENGTH THAT LETS YOU KEEP MOVING FORWARD — NOT ONLY IN BATTLE, BUT IN CIVILIAN LIFE TOO. IN CIVILIAN LIFE, SO OFTEN DIFFICULT, HEAVY, FILLED WITH HARDSHIP AND GRIEF.*

*MATROS, WHO LOST HIS LEG, DOES NOT TALK ABOUT HIMSELF, DOES NOT COMPLAIN, DOES NOT SEEK PITY. HE UNDERSTANDS THAT HE HAS BECOME PART OF SOMETHING GREATER THAN HIS OWN SUFFERING. HE SPEAKS OF THOSE WHO SAVED OTHERS, OF THOSE WHO RISKED THEMSELVES FOR THE LIVES OF THEIR COMRADES. A PERSON STRONG IN SPIRIT CAN NOT ONLY SURVIVE A LOSS, BUT ACCEPT IT AND FIND MEANING IN IT — TO SEE IN THEIR OWN ORDEAL NOT AN ENDING, BUT THE BEGINNING OF A PATH ON WHICH THEY CAN SUPPORT OTHERS, INSPIRE THEM, AND GIVE THEM FAITH.*

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

# SURVIVE UNDERGROUND

RESCUE AT THE RISK OF LIFE




COMING IN APRIL!

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the complicated  
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NOT FOR SALE

