

# ONCE UPON A TIME

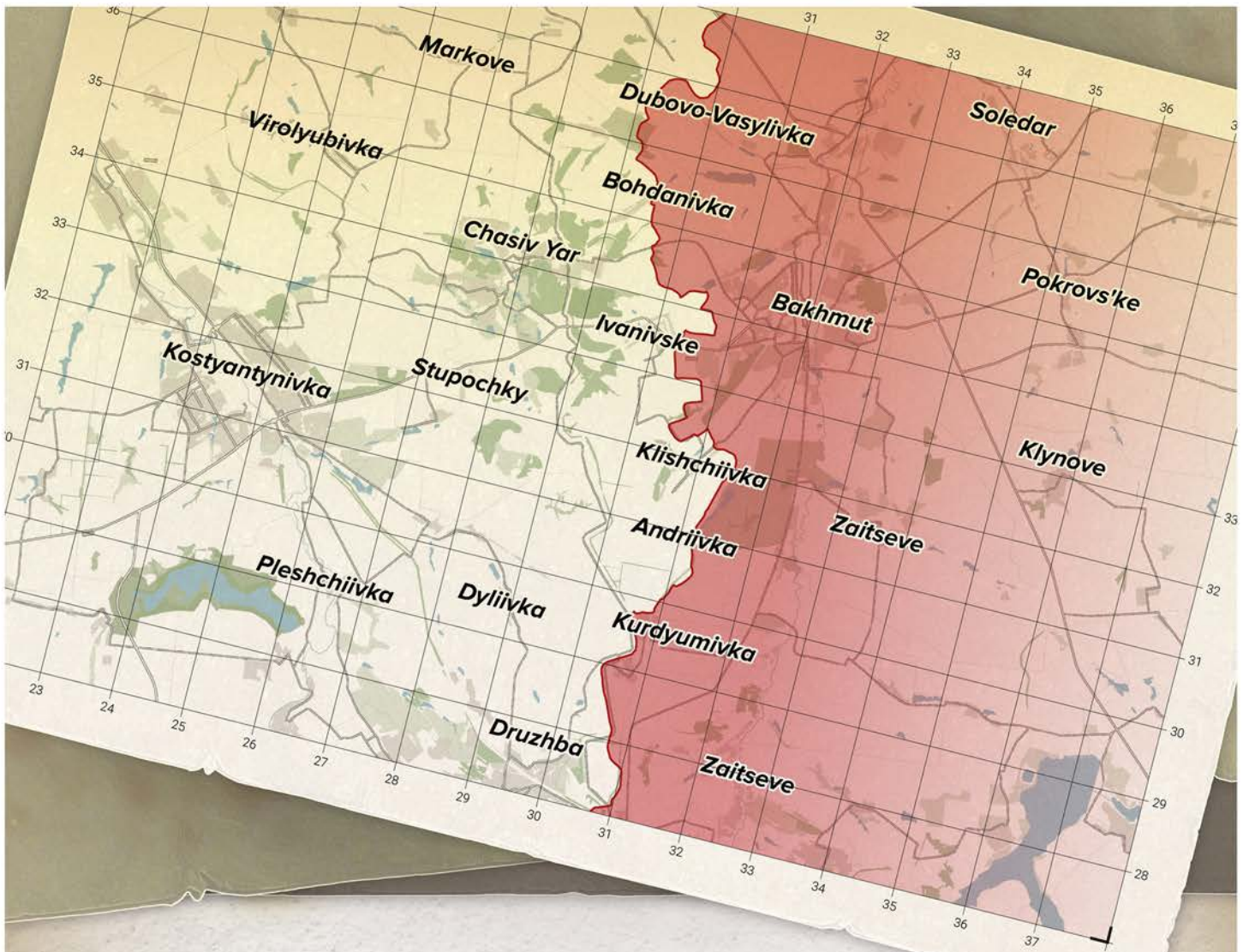
## NEAR BAKHMUT

COMICS FROM  
THE RYBAR TEAM  
ISSUE NO. 14  
FEBRUARY 2024

TALE OF AN UNSUCCESSFUL  
COUNTERATTACK

 @RYBAR





**Excerpt  
from the situation report**

The social circles and connections we form with people undoubtedly play a **significant role** in our lives, influencing us in ways that **are hard to underestimate**. Throughout our lives, we gain and, at times, lose those who were once our friends. The impactful events of our time also **leave a mark** on relationships, both among individuals and entire nations.

The protagonist of our comic is Ernesto, a Cuban who willingly came to help the country where he studied and lived. During his military integration, he observes the **diverse group** of Russian volunteers. They are all **ready to fight side by side**, help, and cover each other.

On the front lines, **friendship transcends its usual meaning** and becomes a true brotherhood in arms. **Courage, trust, and mutual assistance** often become the **keys to victory**. Every day, fate puts the soldiers to the test, challenging the best human qualities in challenging field conditions.

СОВЕРШЕННО  
СЕКРЕТНО

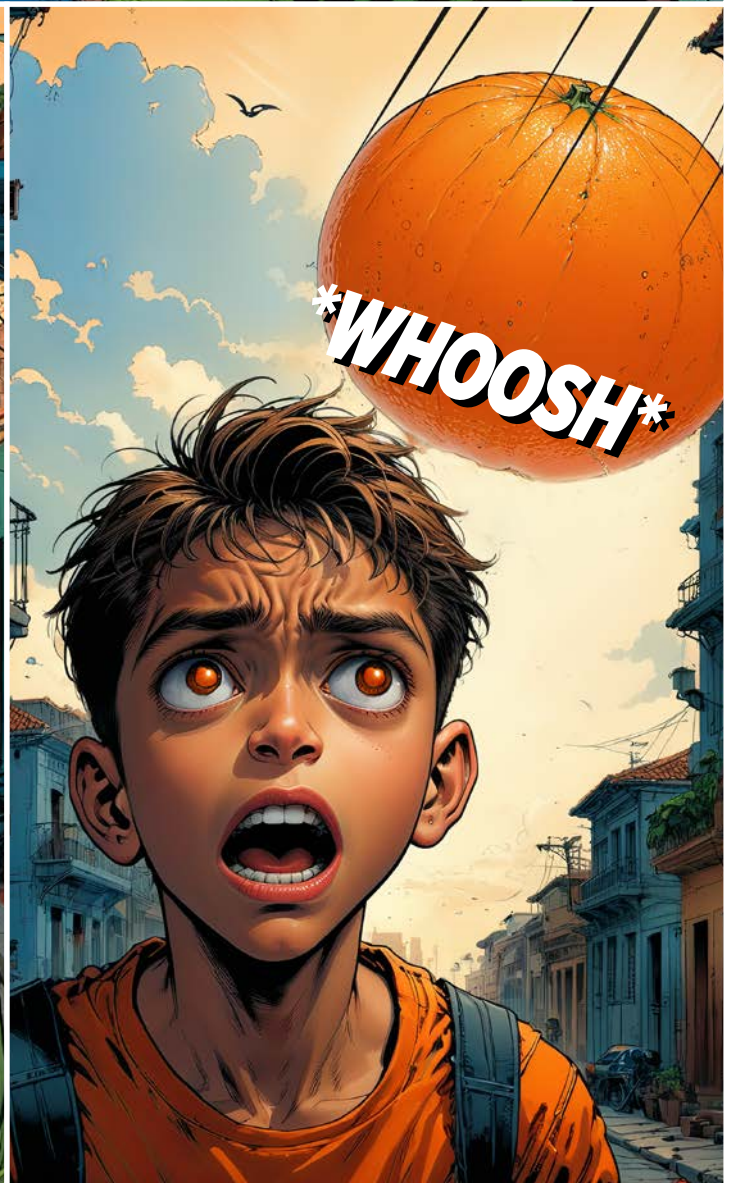
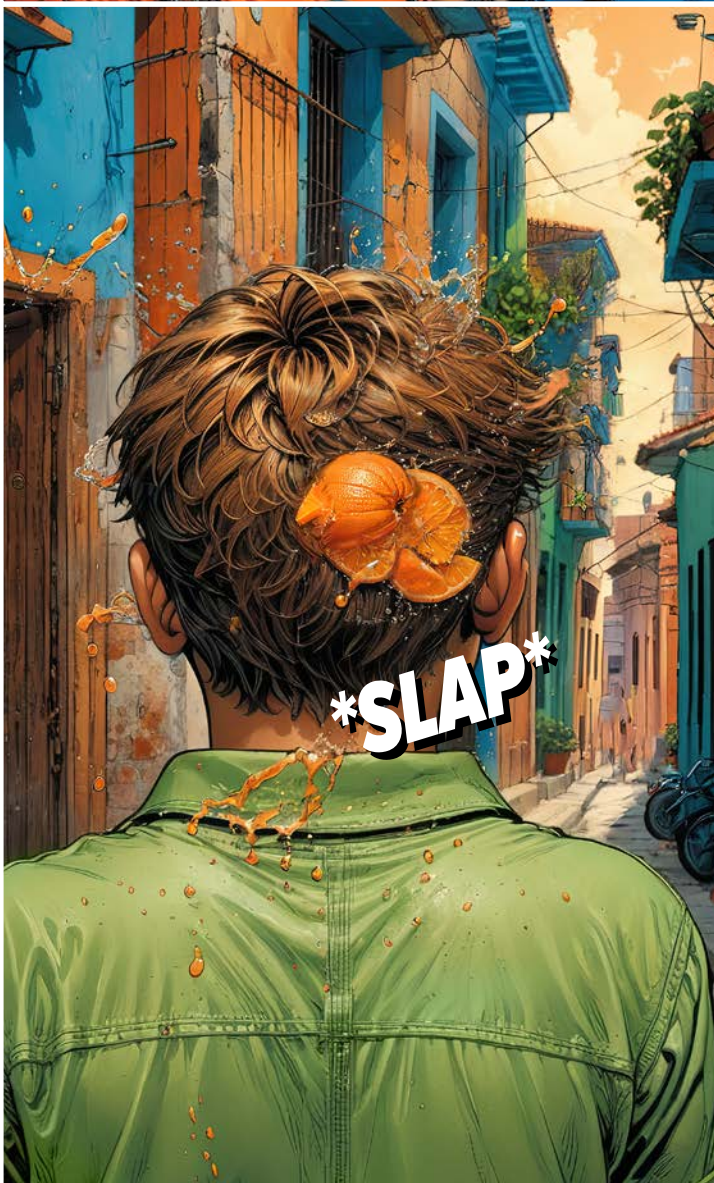
HAVANA, CUBA.  
EARLY 1990S

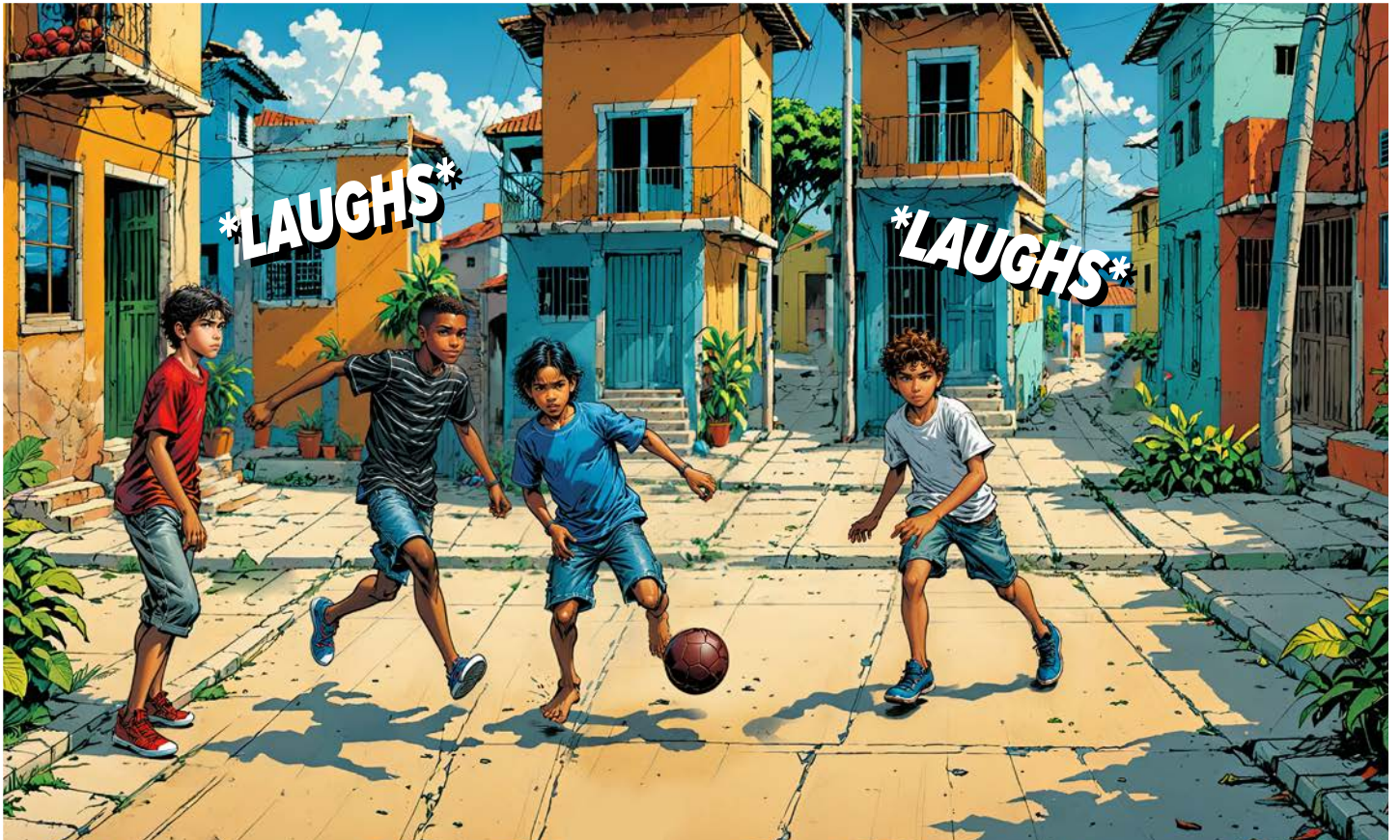
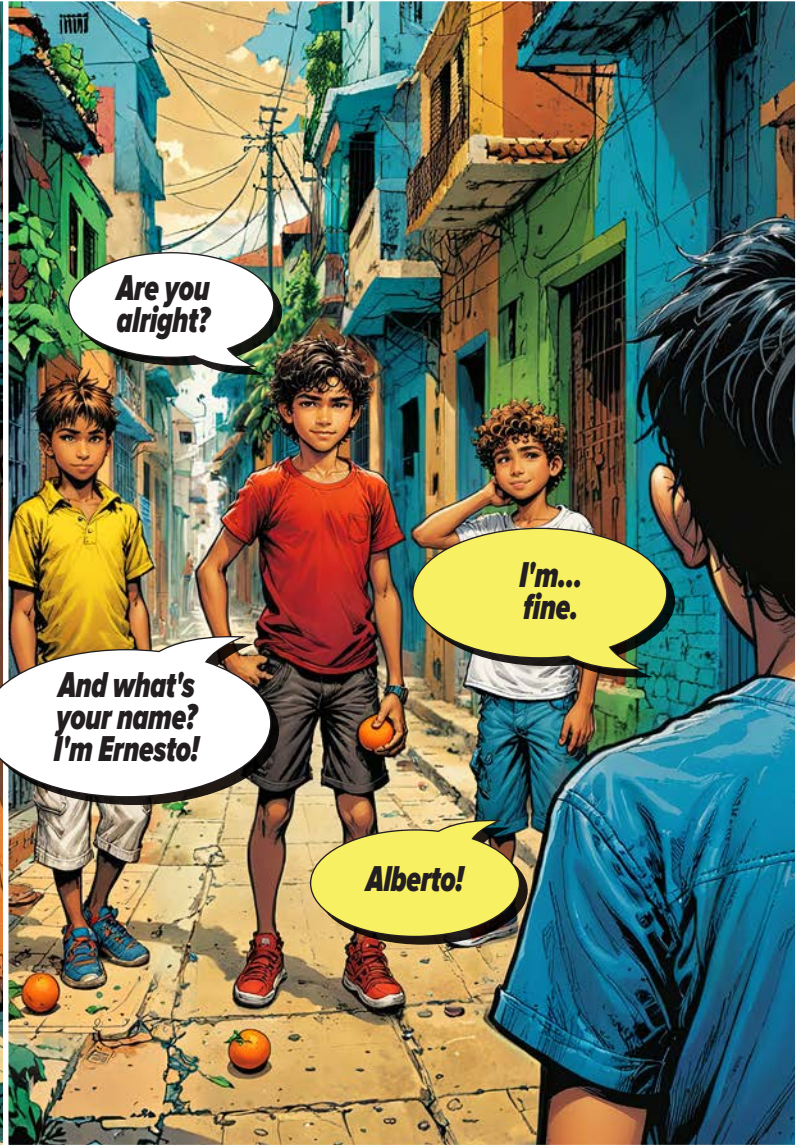
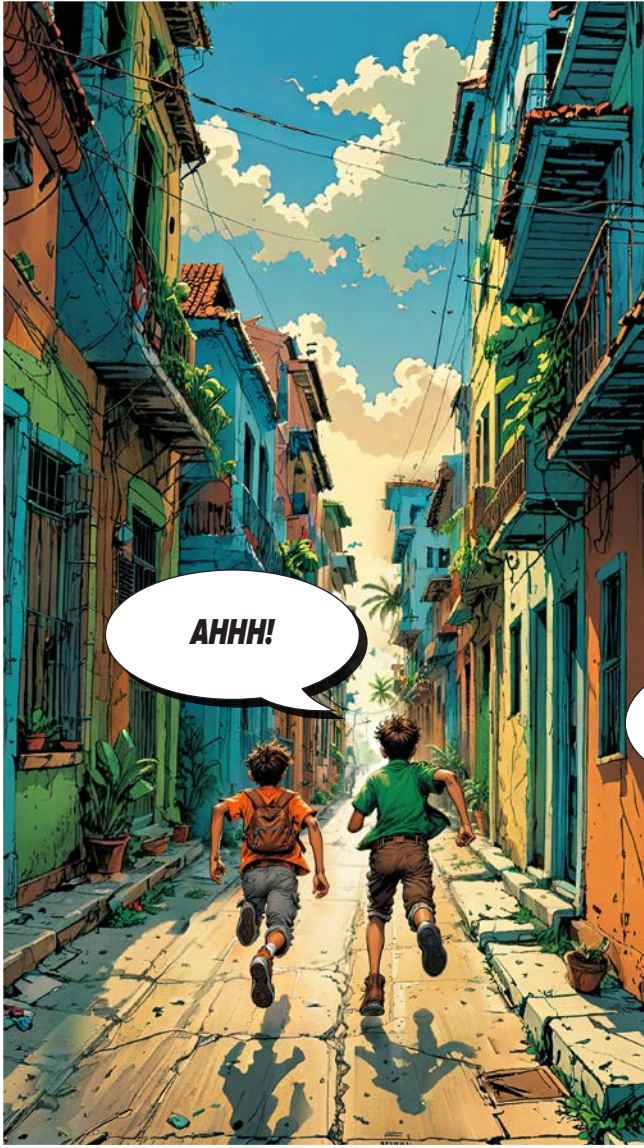


**You're here again!**

**We told you  
not to walk down  
this street!**

**But... I live here!**







**\*CRASH\***

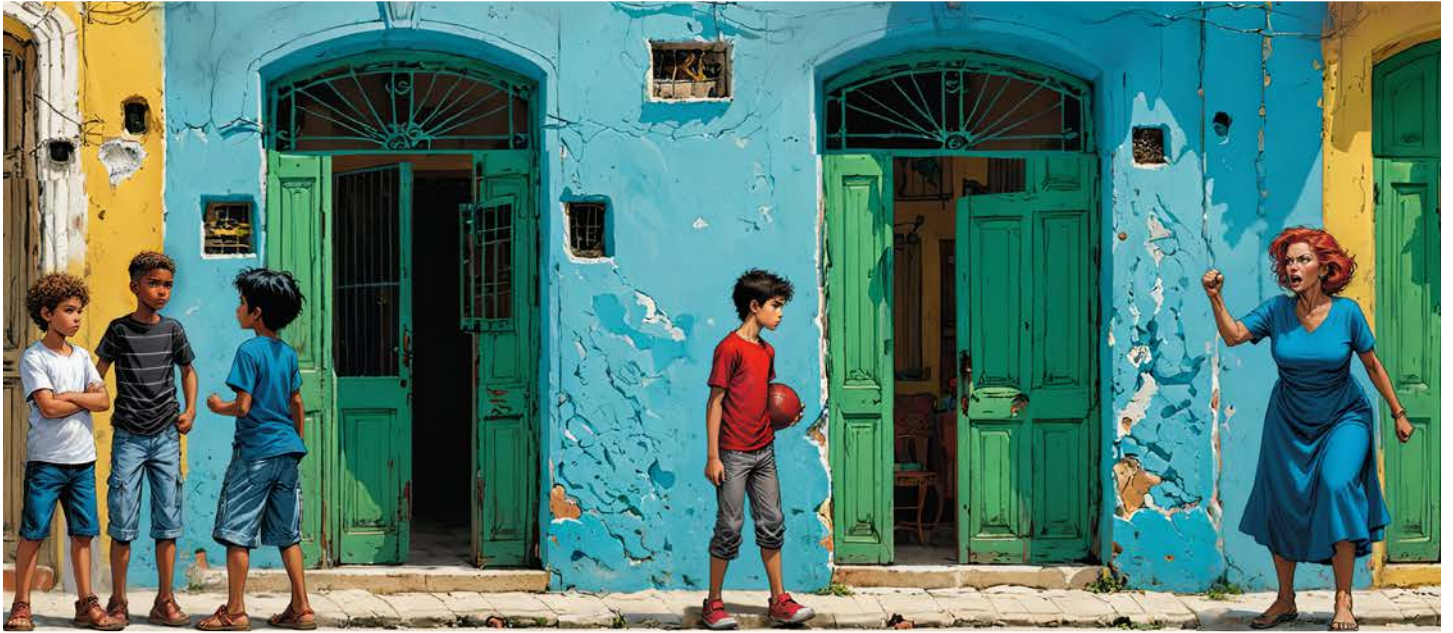


**WELL, I'M IN TROUBLE NOW. THIS IS MY WINDOW!**

**My mother will have a fit!**



**WELL, WHO DID THIS, TROUBLEMAKERS?!**



VOLUNTEER TRAINING GROUND. MOSCOW REGION, RUSSIA.  
SPRING 2023



**Hasn't anyone called you Che Guevara here yet?**

**So, you're a newcomer from Cuba, and they call you Ernesto.**

**They have, of course, when I was studying at the medical institute here.**



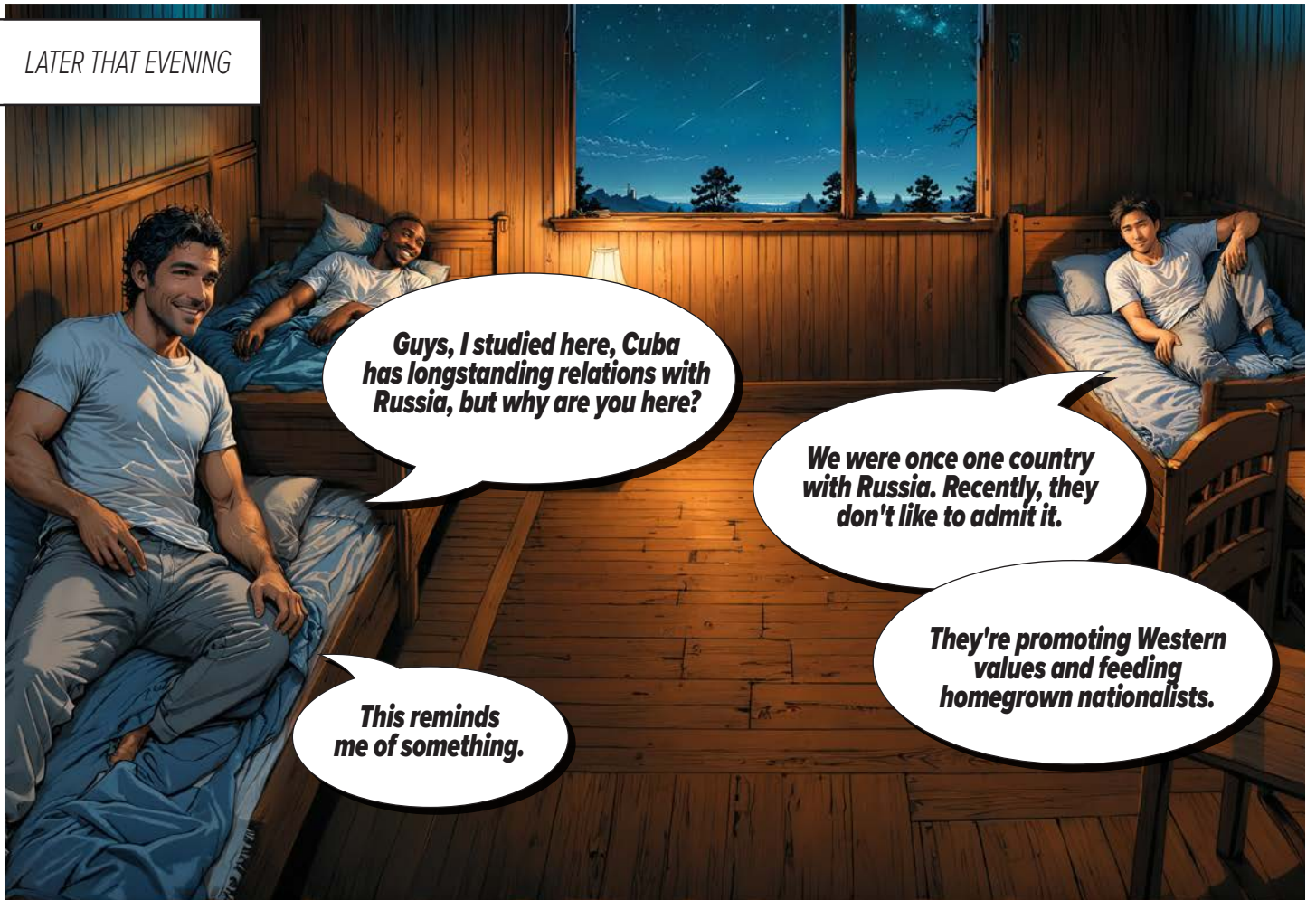
**Guess I'm not that original after all.**

**I started suspecting that from my call sign!**

**JORDAN,  
KNOCK IT OFF!**



LATER THAT EVENING



**Guys, I studied here, Cuba has longstanding relations with Russia, but why are you here?**

**We were once one country with Russia. Recently, they don't like to admit it.**

**They're promoting Western values and feeding homegrown nationalists.**

**This reminds me of something.**



**My dad is Russian, my mom is Russian too; I just happened to be born in Senegal.**

TRAINING GROUND. COMBAT INTEGRATION EXERCISES.  
SPRING 2023



**Move to the buildings beyond the tree line. Jackson, Lis - cover us, Che Guevara and Khan - break through. If you hear a machine gun - take action!**

**\*WHIRRING\***

**\*BANG\***



**Khan?  
A strong nickname.**

**It's just a call sign.  
And look at yourself, Che Guevara.**



**Che Guevara, throw smokes, now we'll cover Jackson and Lis while they come to us.**

**\*WHIRRING\***



**Our way out!**

**\*WHIRRING\***



**"A good thing - field kitchen!"**

SOMEWHERE NEAR BAKHMUT, DONETSK PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC (DPR).  
WINTER 2023-2024





***And we were. Ukrainian  
idiots either ran away  
or kicked the bucket.***

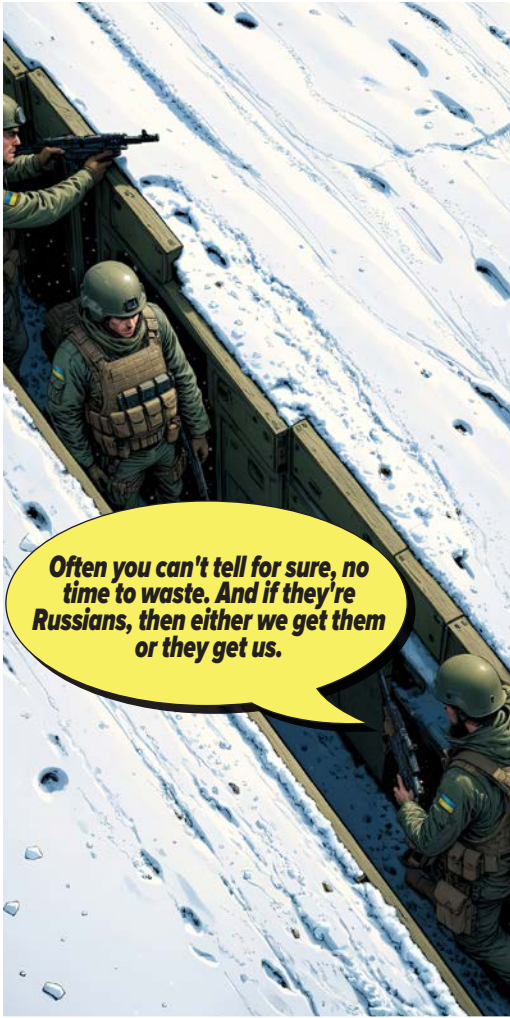


**LISTEN  
TO THE COMMAND!**

**We're going forward now.  
If you see anyone near  
the houses - shoot to kill!**



**AND IF THEY'RE OURS?!"**



**Often you can't tell for sure, no time to waste. And if they're Russians, then either we get them or they get us.**



**I'd prefer not to give them a chance, what about you?**

**And if they turn out to be our guys, we'll say the Russians put them there. No one will check.**



**MOVE, QUICK, CRAZY TEAM.**

**This one will take care of us; he'll become a hero.**







*Seems clear, but now we need to che...*





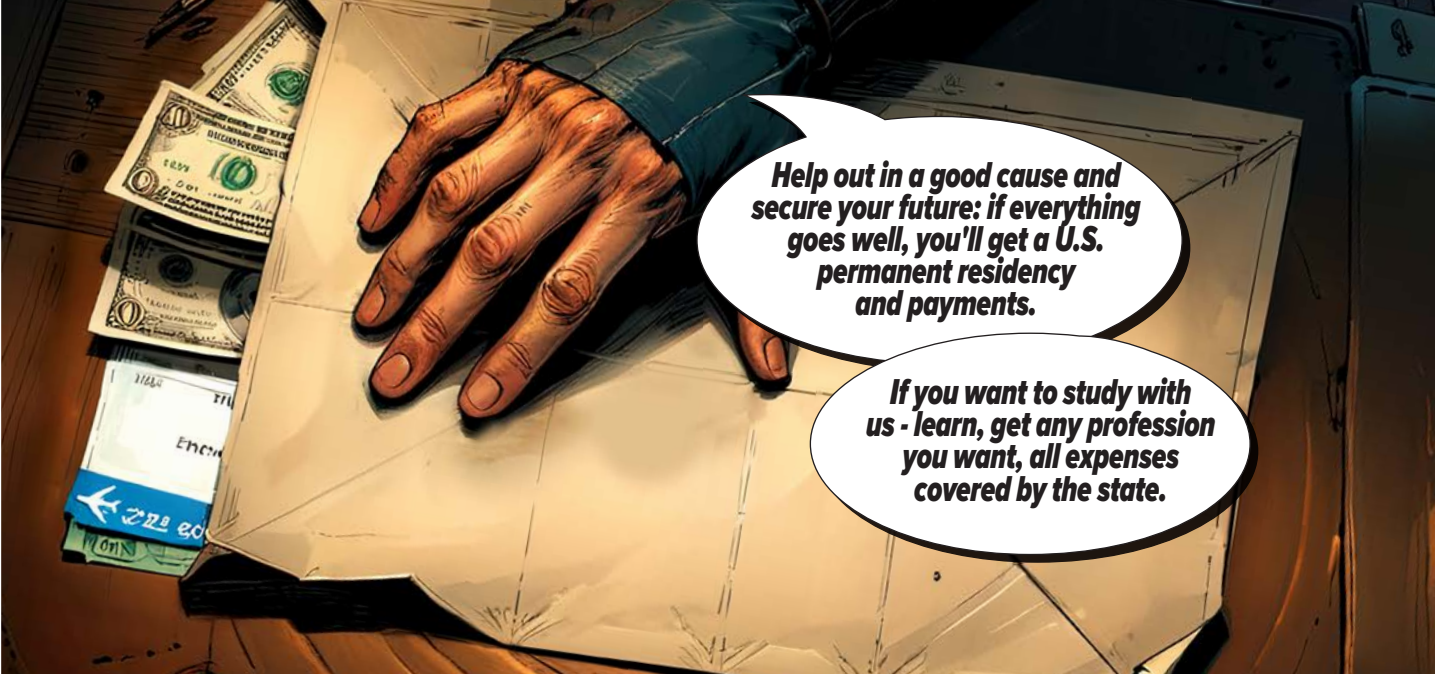
**Alberto?!  
What are you doing here?!**

HAVANA, CUBA.  
SPRING 2023



**Getting here is not easy.  
Over a day with layovers  
on planes to Romania.  
From Romania by bus.**

**Here are plane tickets  
and a card - you'll need it  
in civilized countries.**



**Help out in a good cause and  
secure your future: if everything  
goes well, you'll get a U.S.  
permanent residency  
and payments.**

**If you want to study with  
us - learn, get any profession  
you want, all expenses  
covered by the state.**

KYIV, UKRAINE.  
SUMMER 2023



NATO TRAINING CAMP, UKRAINE.  
A FEW DAYS LATER



**Remember, you're not here  
for money but for justice!**

**And for what you'll  
get later - U.S. residency.**

**YOU WANT  
TO GO TO THE U.S.?**

**YES, SIR!**

SOMEWHERE NEAR BAKHMUT, DPR.  
WINTER 2023-2024



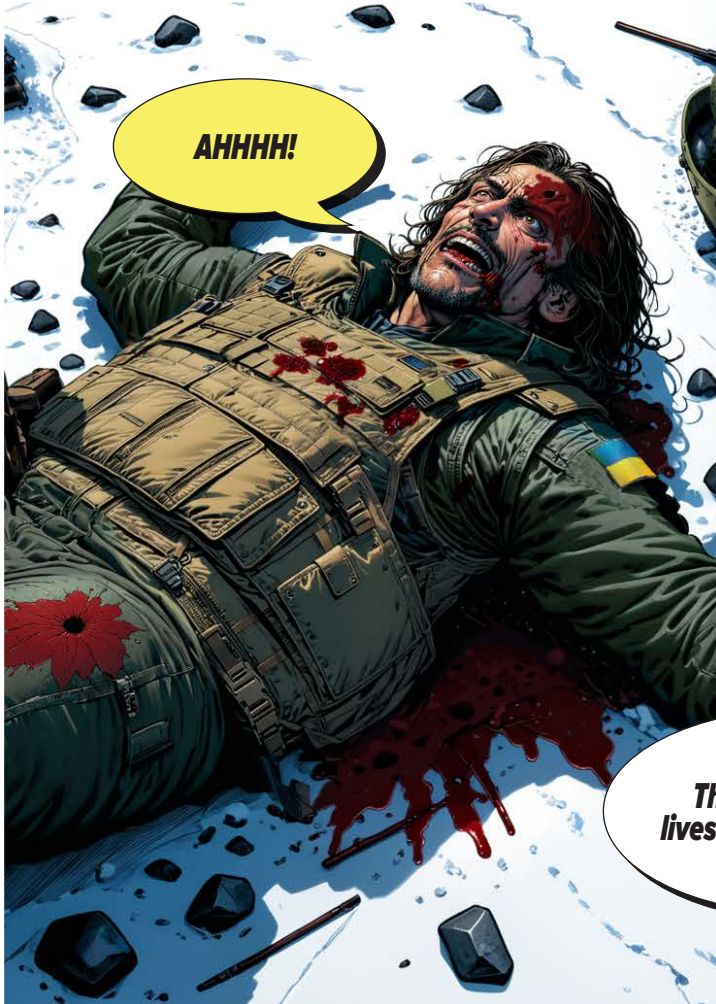
**I'm ridding the world of guys like  
you! Once I'm done here - I'll move  
to the States, and maybe we'll come  
to Cuba and build a proper  
democratic state!**



*Never thought I'd meet  
a childhood friend here.*

*Childhood ended  
a long time ago,  
along with the friendship.*

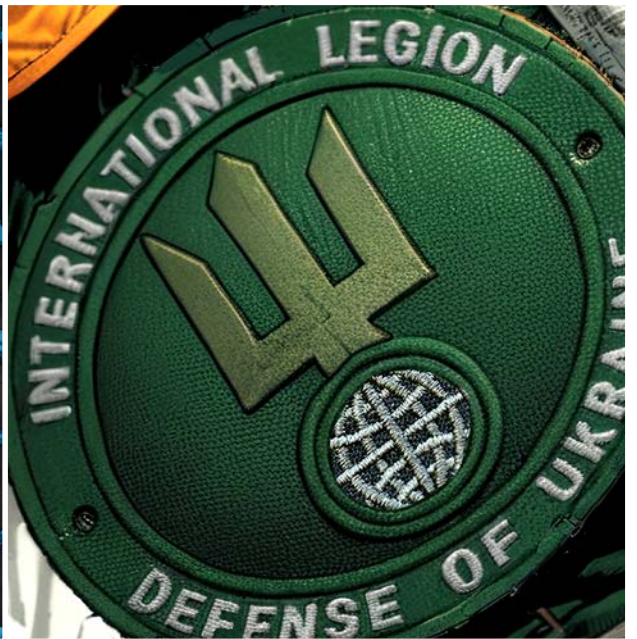
**\*RATTLING\***



**AHHHH!**



*They say friendship  
lives through reciprocity.*







**Yeah, it was tough for us today.**

**Informed and very dangerous!**

**Good thing those Ukrainian soldiers surrendered and warned us.**

ON THE FRONT LINES, THE SAYING "A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED" TAKES ON A NEW MEANING. IT IS CRUCIAL TO BE WITH THOSE YOU CAN RELY ON AND ALWAYS BE READY TO HELP A COMRADE.

THE SMO UNITES PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS REGIONS OF RUSSIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN OUR ARMY. IN THE TRENCHES, THEY SPEND LEISURE TIME, SHARE LIFE STORIES, AND IN BATTLE - COVER EACH OTHER FROM BULLETS.

# IN THE NEXT ISSUE: ONCE UPON A TIME FEBRUARY 24TH



NOW IN FEBRUARY!

READ ON  @RYBAR

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**РВКО**

FOUNDATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF MILITARY CULTURE AND RECREATION

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