

ONCE UPON A TIME

IN HARD TIMES

COMICS FROM
THE RYBAR TEAM
ISSUE NO. 42
MARCH 2025

Спаси и сохрани

ADVENTURES IN COUNTRY-404

 @RYBAR





Excerpt
from the situation report

The Orthodox cross stands as a great symbol **not only** for believers but for everyone living within the cultural paradigm of our world. Even those who do not believe, or do not yet believe, know **the story of the Savior** and **the significance of this cross.**

That is why it was important for **the Russian fighters** to **restore the Lord's cross**, which had been toppled during the fighting **in the Zaporizhzhia region.** Despite all the risks, despite the fact that it might be damaged again, this simple act carried a deep hidden meaning.

On the front line, survival is important, but so is **remaining human** — keeping one's heart open to **sympathy, compassion, and kindness**, things that **will be invaluable in peaceful life** when it finally comes.

СОБЕРИТЕ
СЕКРЕТНО

ZAPORIZHZHIA REGION, 2024.



Well, this looks better now.

If they try to push in, we'll fight them off. Our guys will be here soon.







There are moments of silence on the front...

It's like a quiet angel passed by. I had heard the phrase before but never paid attention to it, or maybe I just didn't understand it.

But now I do. I can feel it.



*It's strange,
but in war, God somehow
feels closer.*



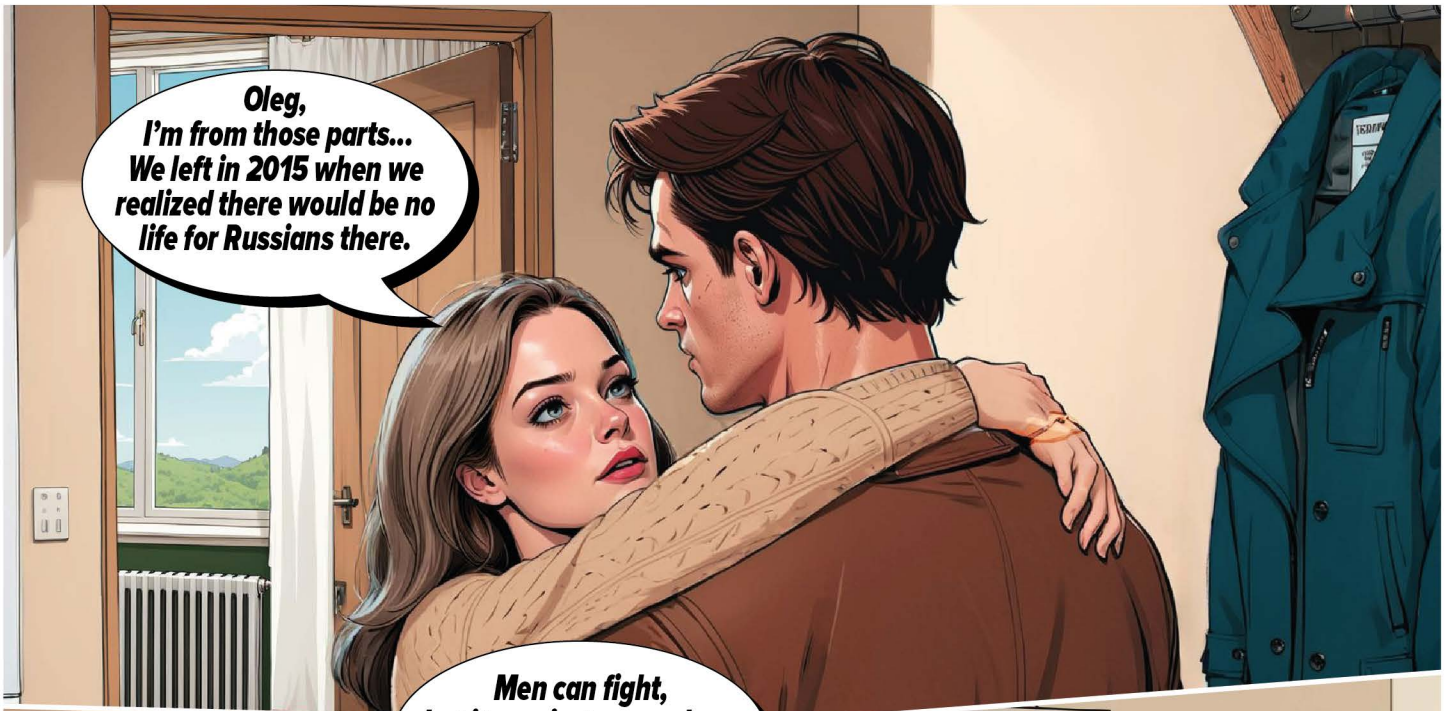
*That's true.
There are miracles,
salvation, and still
room for hope.*



*Maybe it wasn't
a miracle, but there was
this one time...*

SEPTEMBER 2023.





Oleg,
I'm from those parts...
We left in 2015 when we
realized there would be no
life for Russians there.

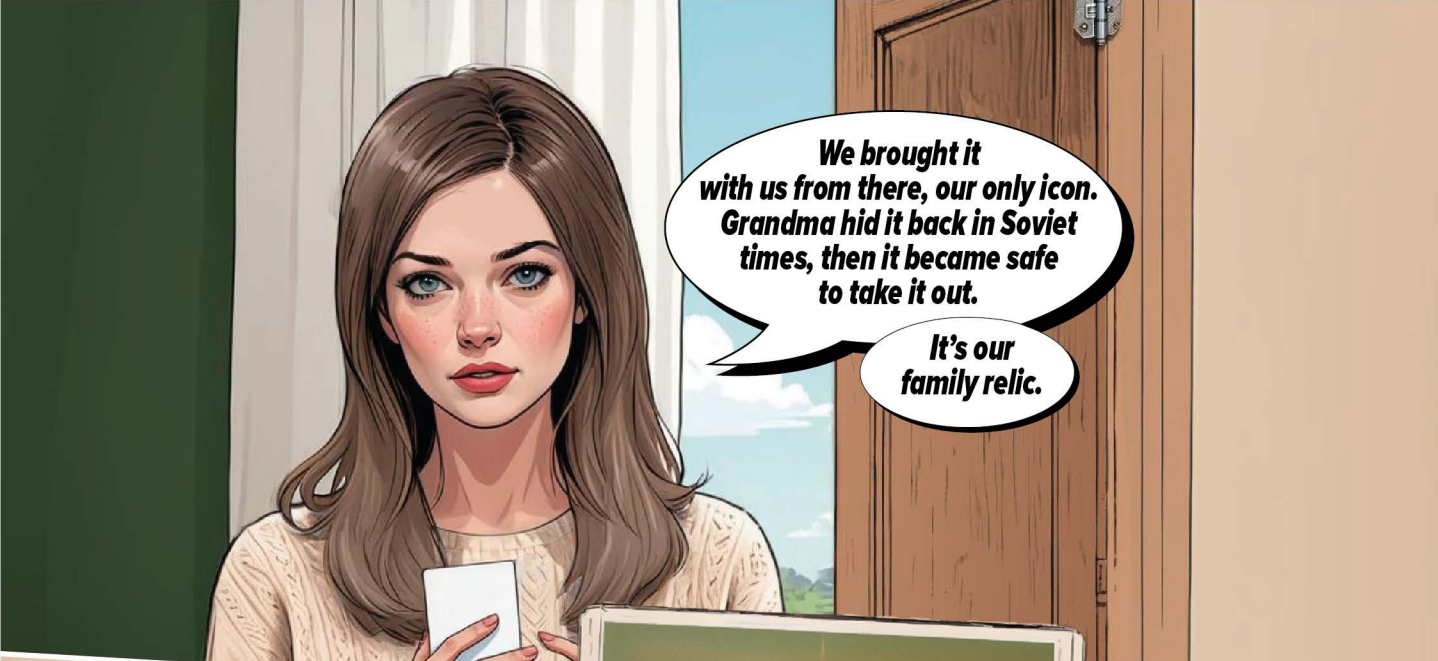
Men can fight,
but it was just me and my
mother—how much could
we do?

Wait
a second...



Where is it?
Ah, here!

CLICK



We brought it with us from there, our only icon. Grandma hid it back in Soviet times, then it became safe to take it out.

It's our family relic.

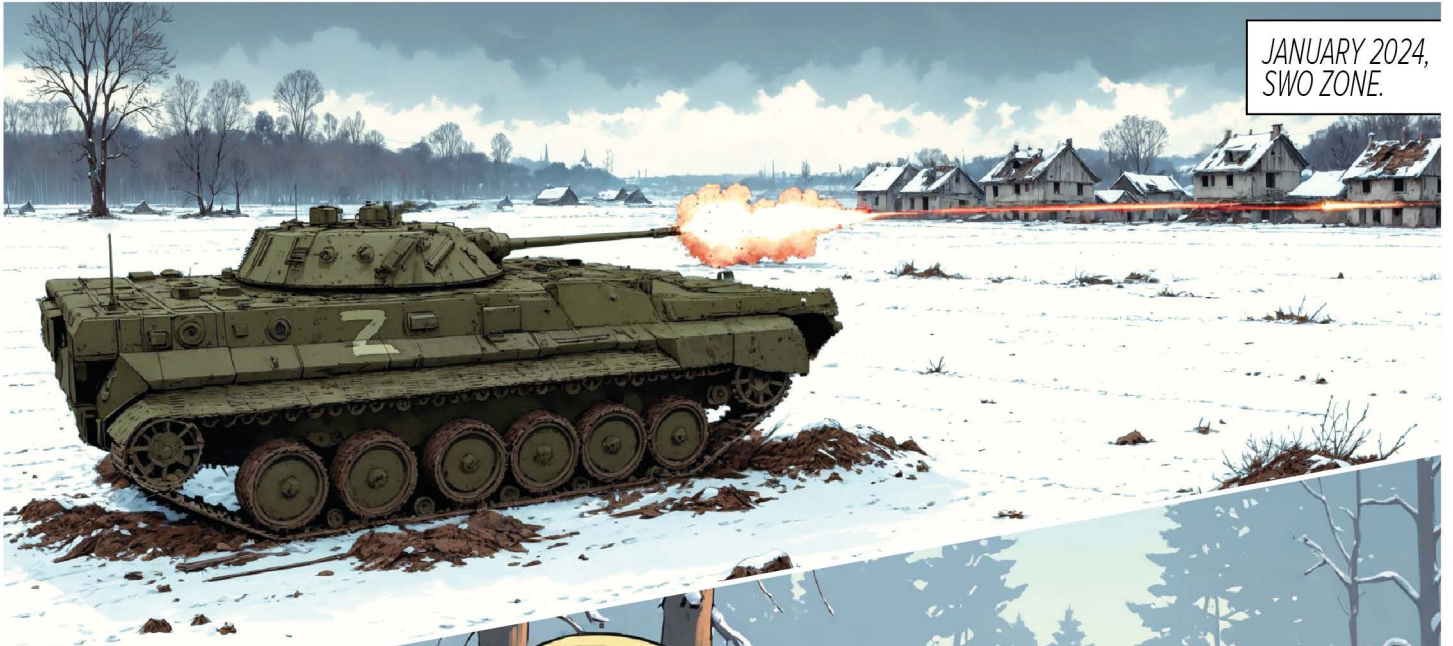


Olga, you know I...

It doesn't matter whether you believe or not! What matters is that God believes in you and will protect you. Keep it with you always, close to your heart. Promise me.

I promise.

JANUARY 2024,
SVO ZONE.



My group is about to go on the offensive, BMPs will cover us with fire.



Once they focus on us, Kot, you and Boroda will take your positions and take them out.

Got it.



Let's go!



Damn it!
Rookie!

Get down!
Get down now!



?!





BOOM



**He's alive!
Not even wounded!**



OH...



Gosh!



Looks like you just had your baptism by fire... But don't ever charge into an attack like it's a walk in the park again!

One miracle is enough.

ZAPORIZHZHIA REGION, 2024.

That's how things go...

Once we were on rotation, transporting ammunition...



APRIL 2023,
COMBAT ZONE.



VR-R-R

VR-R-R



VR-R-R

VR-R-R



A MINUTE LATER



Am I alive?



Vasilich,
why are you lying down?
Are you okay? Then get up, we
need to pull out the
wounded!



Would you
look at that, the ammo
crates for the "Utes" machine
gun are perfectly intact, but the
two that got knocked out caused
a mess...

Yeah. Feels
like a miracle...



Help is on the way, just hold on, brother!



BOOM



The enemy isn't sleeping...

At least no one is dead... And the armor is already en route for the wounded.

And they haven't hit the car with the ammunition yet.

A LITTLE LATER

If you're unhurt, grab what you can and move to our positions. They're under attack, and their ammo is running low.

How did they miss him after all those hours of shelling... It's like God was shielding him...

I was driving when the explosion hit... Since then, I always pray to St. Nicholas.

There must be mines here too, but we can't see them in the dark...

And? Does it help?



THE NEXT MORNING

Right now, it sure will.

How did you even make it through the night with all this, especially with the minefield?

It felt like someone was guiding you...

Look at this!



ZAPORIZHZHIA REGION, 2024

I have a story about being wounded too. And like Oleg, it involves the Virgin Mary...

JULY 2022





RATATAT

One on one —
now that's a fair fight!



RATATATAT

ARGH...



CLICK



BOOM



No time to lie around, gotta get out before their drones spot me!

Damn, I won't get far like this...



At least I need to reach there...



Just a little more...



*How did Grandma pray?
Mother of God, help me,
shield me...*

*Or better yet,
send me crutches, so I can get
back to my own...*



*I can still
stand on one leg,
I just need...*





That's how I made it back. And I haven't parted with my icon since.



I'm baptized, I believe. On the front, I try to confess when the priests visit...

Once, a priest came, the kind who travels to all the hot spots.



He said, "On the front, it's not just about surviving, but about not becoming a beast."

A soldier needs God to fight his own demons, his bad habits, to guard his heart and not let evil in."

That's important, so that when we return home, it will be easier for us in peaceful life. Because there will be peace, even if we don't think about it during war...



WHIRR



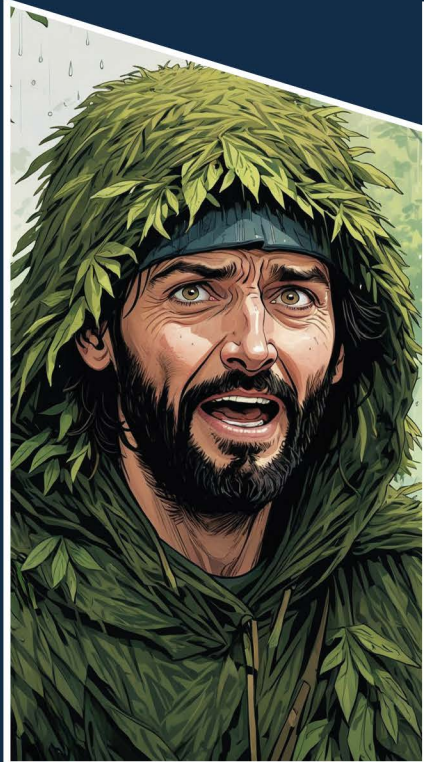
Drones incoming! Get ready!



RUSSIAN SERVICEMEN IN THE SPECIAL MILITARY OPERATION ZONE MANAGE NOT JUST TO EMERGE VICTORIOUS FROM FRONTLINE TRIALS, BUT ALSO TO KEEP THEIR SOULS ALIVE, THEIR FAITH AND GRATITUDE TO THE ALMIGHTY FOR SALVATION.

BY COMING TO GOD IN THEIR SOULS, EACH SOLDIER HAS ALREADY WON A HUGE PERSONAL VICTORY AND IS BRINGING THE GENERAL CLOSER IN THE STRUGGLE "AGAINST THE WORLD-DWELLERS OF THE DARKNESS OF THIS AGE".

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: ONCE UPON A TIME NEAR UKRAINS'K



COMING IN MARCH

READ ON  @RYBAR

We clarify
the complicated
Rybar

 @RYBAR

NOT FOR SALE

