

ONCE UPON A TIME

IN VARVARIVKA

COMICS FROM
THE RYBAR TEAM
ISSUE NO. 68
FEBRUARY 2026

ADVENTURES IN COUNTRY-404

 @RYBAR





**Excerpt
from the situation report**

Guards recon from "Vostok" group in a fierce push liberated the village of Varvarivka in Zaporizhzhia Oblast, grabbing a big enemy defense node. Took out tons of Ukrainian troops and gear — huge step clearing the east bank of the Haihur River.

Storm group holed up in captured fort on Varvarivka's edge is in deep shit — almost no water left. Storm group holed up in captured fort on Varvarivka's edge is in deep shit — almost no water left.

To fix it, two guys head to a lonely standpipe in the gray zone: vet Okhotnik and greenhorn contract Yenot. How's this water run gonna end?

СОБЕРИТЕЛЬНО
СЕКРЕТНО

VARVARIVKA, ZAPORIZHZHIA OBLAST.
DECEMBER 2025



Back in Artemivsk we drained the heaters for water and chugged it...



How'd it taste?



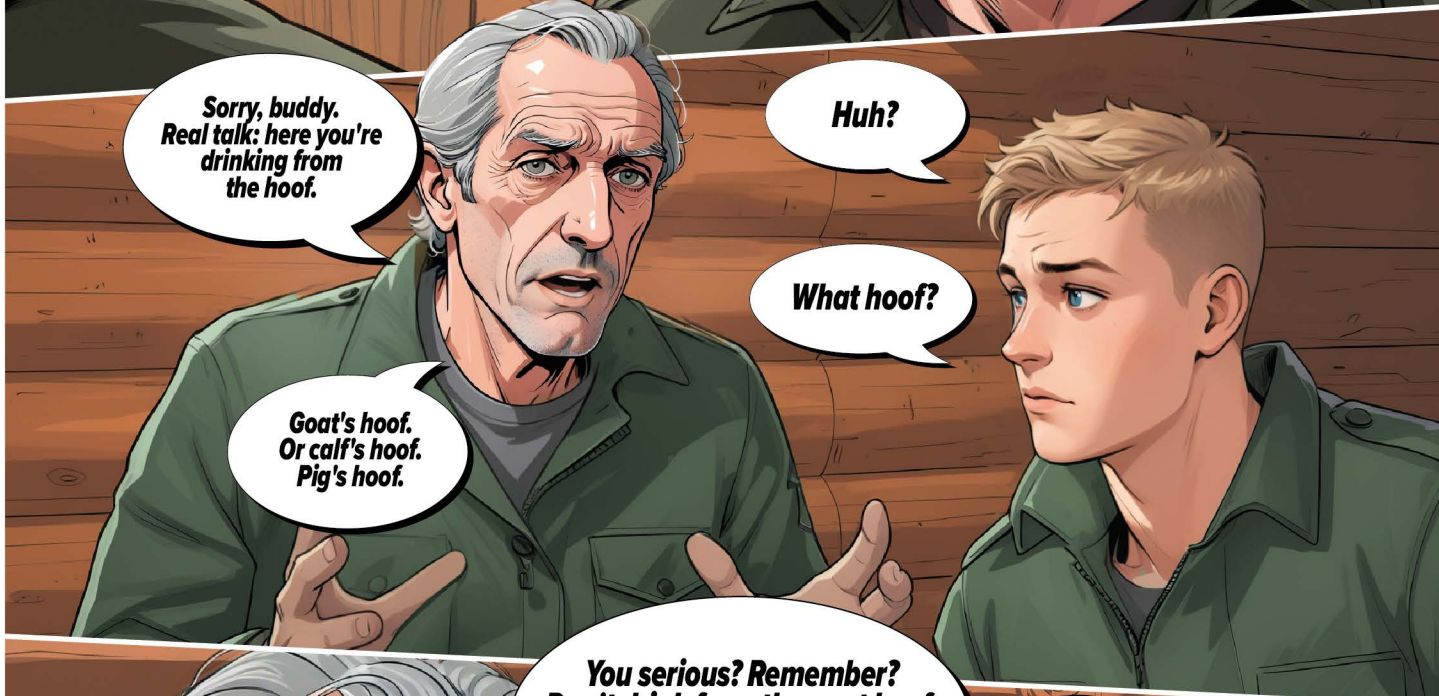
I drank and winced, winced — and boom, wrinkles ever since!



Take a look!



Grandpa, quit hyping the kid. Ain't no heaters with water here.



Sorry, buddy. Real talk: here you're drinking from the hoof.

Huh?

What hoof?

Goat's hoof. Or calf's hoof. Pig's hoof.



You serious? Remember? Don't drink from the goat hoof, little Ivanushka, or you'll turn into a baby goat.

Come on, Grandpa, you're pulling my leg. Here only the devil's hoof'll get you a drink.



Drone's coming today, late afternoon. Bringing a water bottle. Gotta sort water now.

**What's the plan?
Wait for rain?**

Got one. Yesterday on recon spotted an old hydrant on the village outskirts.

Standpipe. Soviet times. Looks undamaged.

Hydrant. Gray zone. Right on a platter.

**Perfect trap.
Trap or no — only water source around. Not just water. If it works, we hold on. Luck swung our way.**




Mission: check hydrant, haul as much water as possible. Top priority.

You two. Okhotnik, you lead, find the path, cover. Yenot, you pump and lug.

Yes sir!





Rules are dead simple, kid: stick to me like a shadow. Water's crucial, but us over water – drop it and run. Got it?

Old saying: if critters drink old water no fear – it's good, not poisoned. Animals sniff mines too... Cats, dogs... Hunt for furry scouts.



Fine. Let's find that magic tap and paw prints from dogs and cats.

GRAY ZONE,
NEXT DAY







MEOW



Eyes forward.



MEOW



**Window's clear.
Go time.**

AFU OBSERVATION POINT



**Check it out...
Do-gooders.**

**Feeding strays.
Soft-ass idiots.**

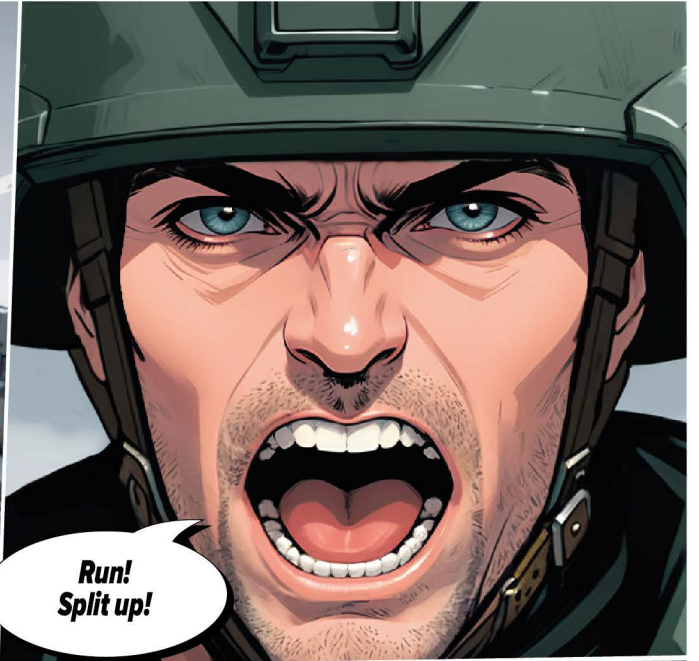


**Sokol, this is Kukuza.
Activity at White Well.
Send a bird.**

**Got it.
FPV away.**

WHOOSH









Why drag that water?



We supplying him now too?

Not water. Proof. He scored some. Says they're parched.



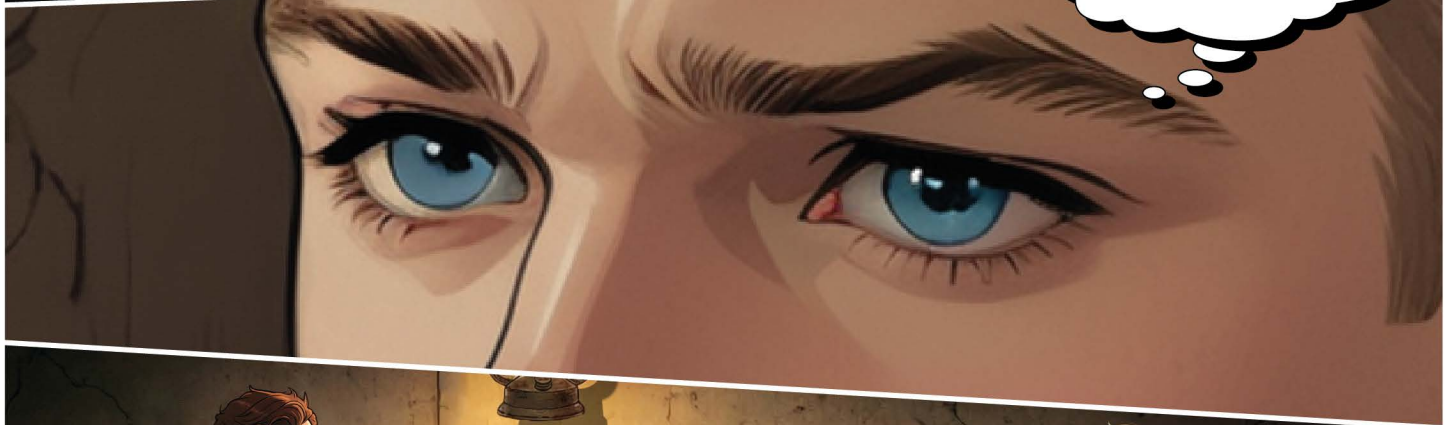
What's your name?



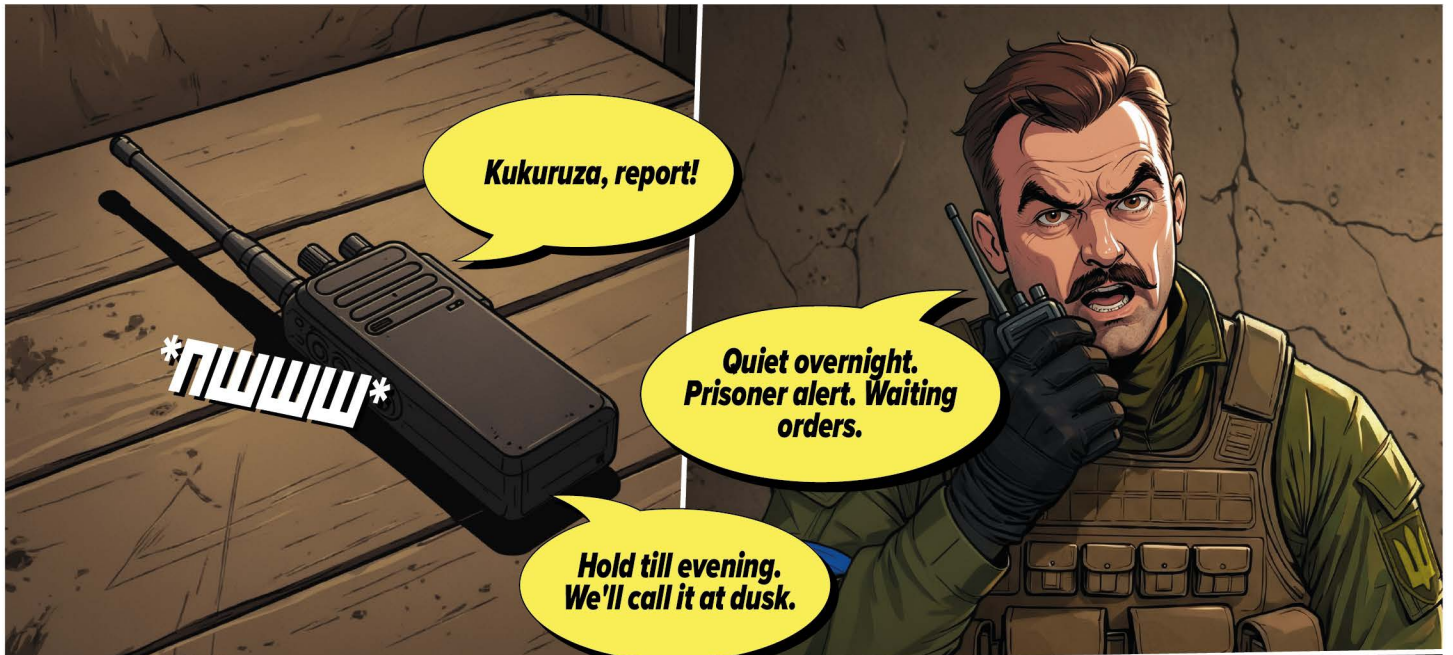
Alright. I'm Kukuruzza. This is Buryak. You watered those cats. I saw. For that, you live.

Got a cat back home... in Mariupol. No clue if she's alive.

Gotta break out...



Crash. Tomorrow, maybe your guys swap ya. War goes both ways.



Kukuruza, report!

**Quiet overnight.
Prisoner alert. Waiting
orders.**

**Hold till evening.
We'll call it at dusk.**



What's to call...



Basement tonight!



Fairy tale's over.



Buryak, knock it off.



Time's up!







Basement tonight!

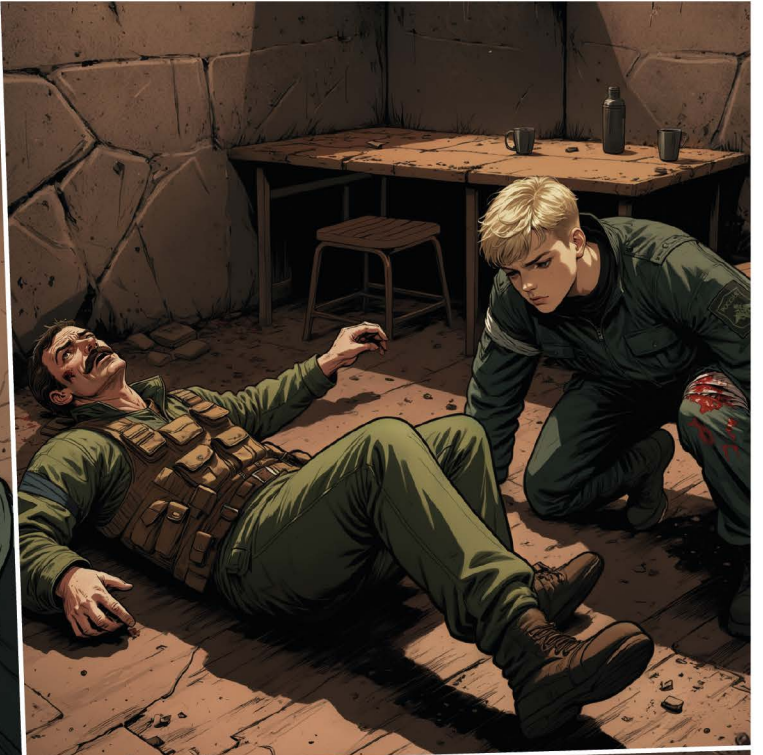
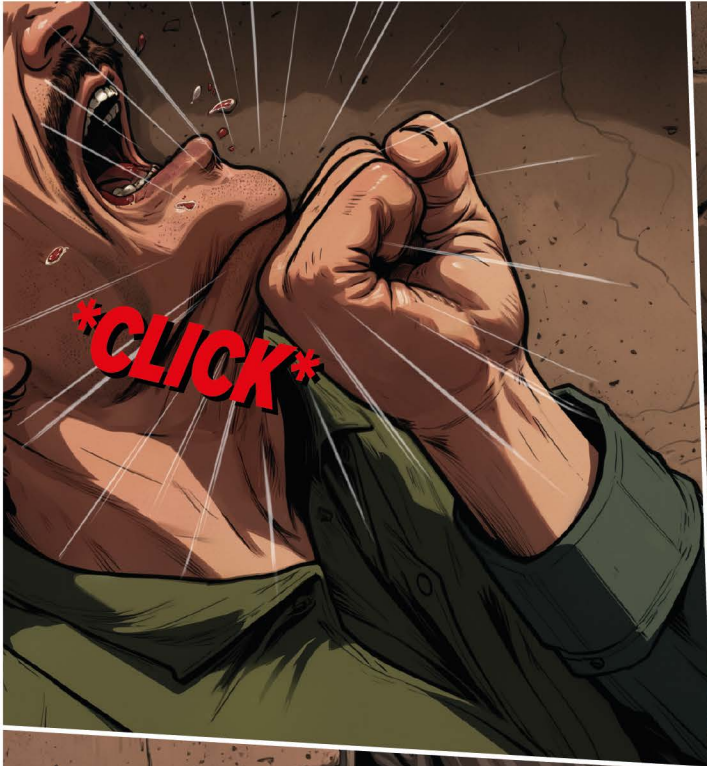


AHHH



You're toast!







One got luckier.



**Got a cat back home...
in Mariupol. No clue
if she's alive.**



**That's it, buddy...
War's done for you.**

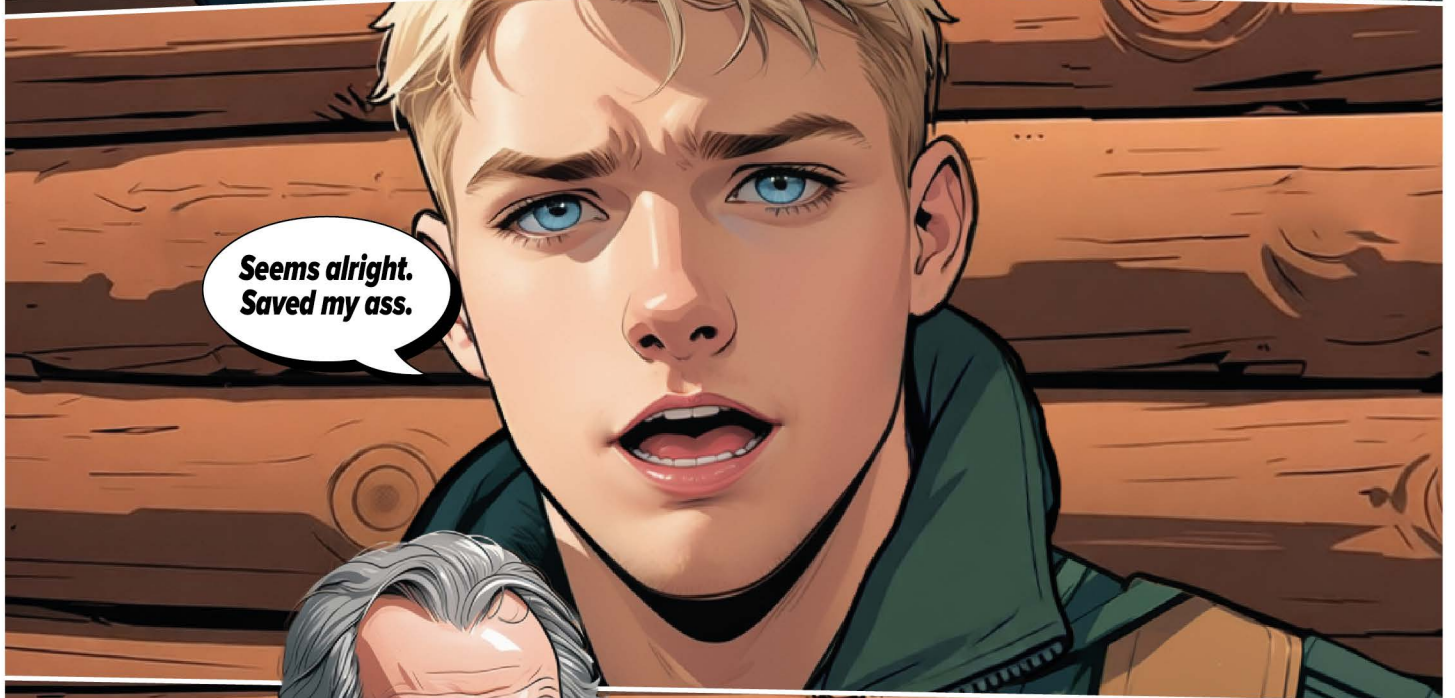


Kid, I came at you straight-up... But you...



**Why'd you
drag the POW?**

**No water...
Just nabbed a tongue...**



**Seems alright.
Saved my ass.**



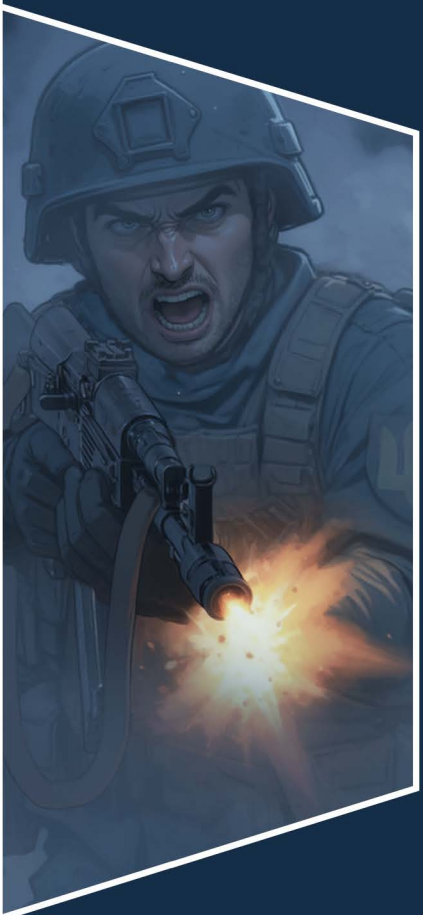
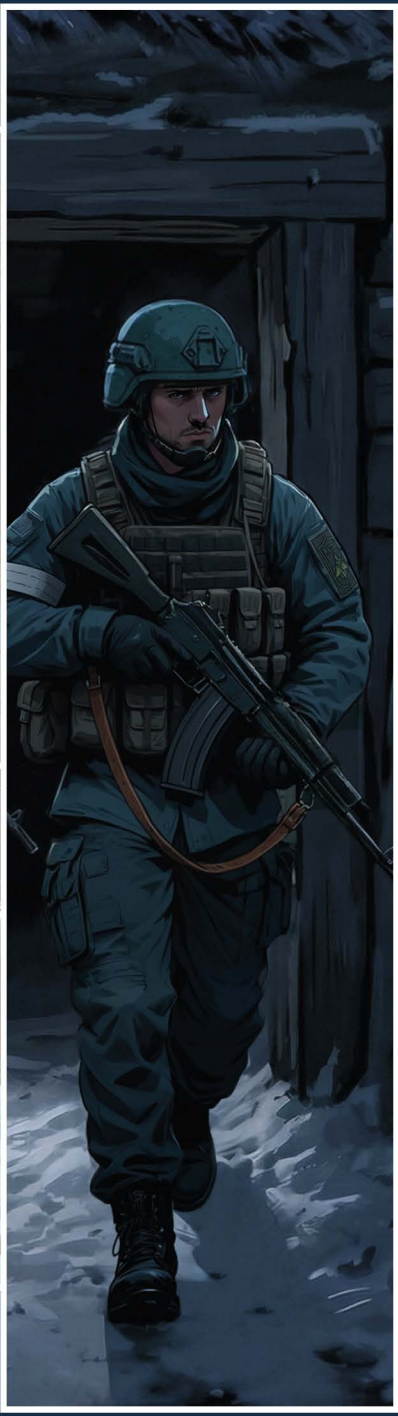
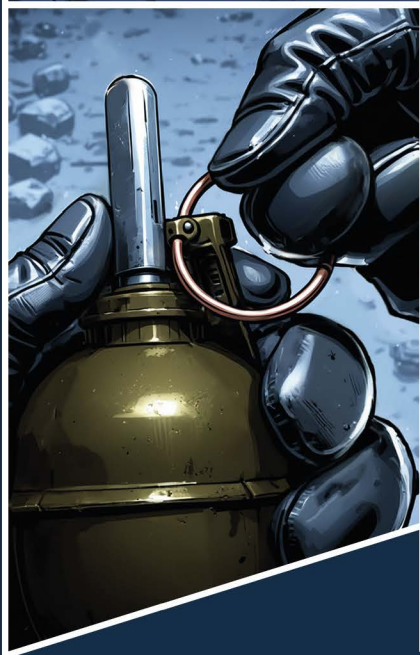
**Nice one, Yenot.
Means you skipped the pig
hoof. Don't start now.**



ON THE FRONTLINE, SNAGGING WATER FROM A GRAY ZONE STANDPIPE TURNS INTO A DEADLY CRAPSHOOT. FEW JUGS COST LOST BROTHERS AND BRUTAL CHOICES.

F
OR YOUNG YENOT, THIS RUN WAS HIS BLOODING. CAME BACK NOT JUST BANGED UP — A REAL SOLDIER. BATTLE-HARDENED, KNOWS DUTY AND BASIC HUMAN DECENCY.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: ONCE UPON A TIME NEAR STEPNOHIRSK



COMING IN FEBRUARY

READ ON  @RYBAR

We clarify
the complicated
Rybar

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NOT FOR SALE

