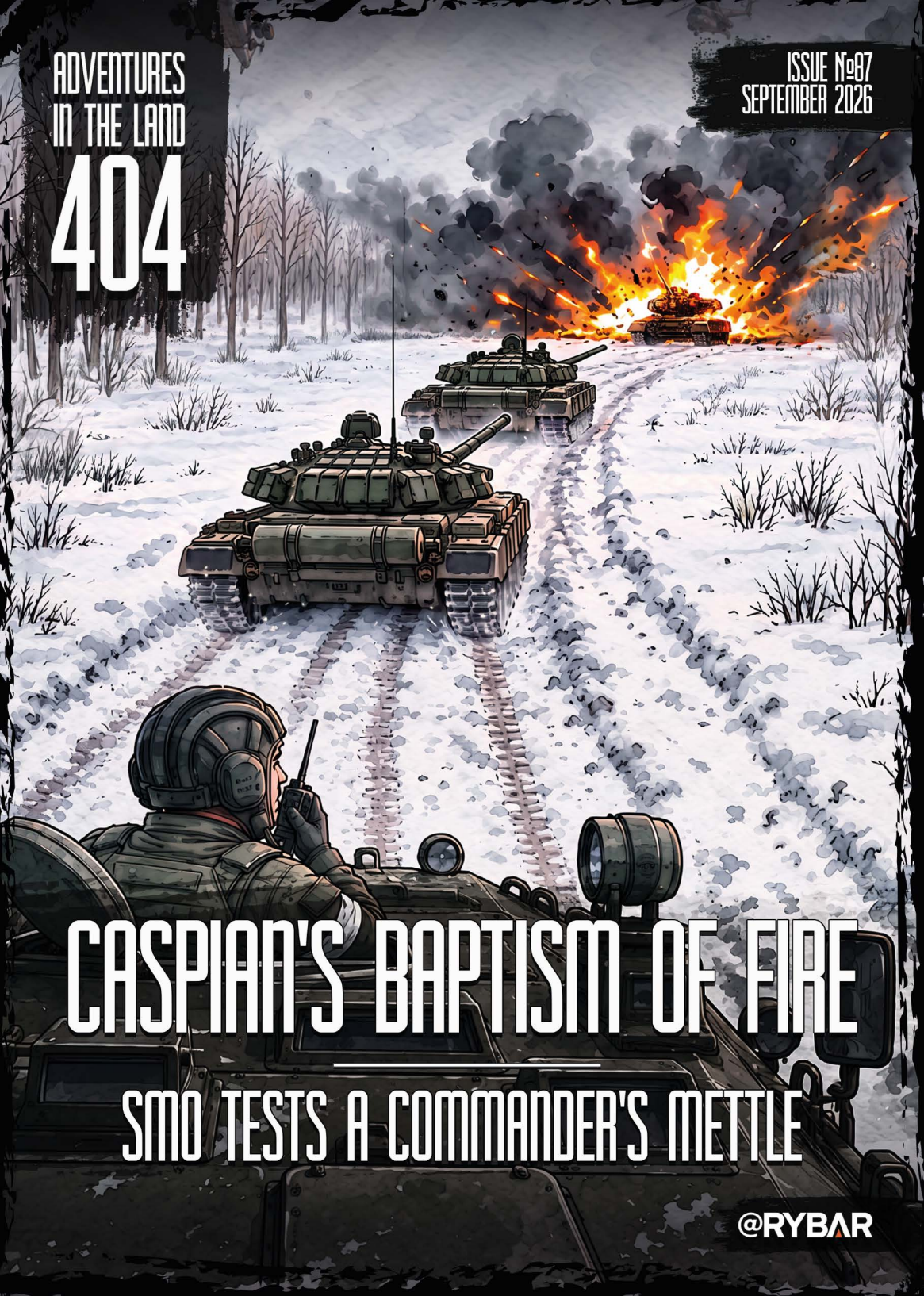


ADVENTURES
IN THE LAND
404

ISSUE №87
SEPTEMBER 2026



CASPIAN'S BAPTISM OF FIRE

SMD TESTS A COMMANDER'S METTLE

@RYBAR



ENVER "CASPIAN" NABIEV

RANK:
GUARDS MAJOR

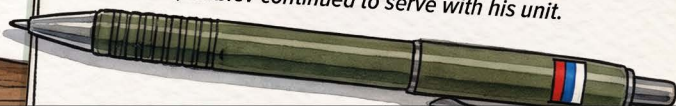
LAST POSITION IN THE ARMED FORCES:
**CHIEF OF STAFF
OF A TANK BATTALION**

AWARDS:

**HERO OF THE RUSSIAN
FEDERATION,
ORDER "FOR MERIT
TO THE REPUBLIC
OF DAGESTAN", MEDAL
"FOR COURAGE",
MEDAL
"FOR DISTINCTION
IN COMBAT", MEDAL
"FOR MILITARY
VALOUR", 2ND CLASS**

Enver Albertovich Nabiev, call sign "Caspian," was born in Kaspiysk, Dagestan ASSR, into a close-knit working-class family. After graduating from school in his hometown, he enrolled at the Kazan Higher Tank Command School and dedicated his life to military service. At the beginning of 2022, he was assigned to the 5th Separate Guards Tank Brigade of the 36th Combined Arms Army, Eastern Military District. He was deployed from the first days of the special military operation. Nabiev commanded a tank platoon, led the advance march guard, and personally drove a tank in some episodes. He had known his subordinates, Aleksandr Laptev, call sign "Lapa," and Zorik Zygbin, call sign "Furia," even before the start of the SMO, and had personally recruited them into his unit.

After completing combat operations on the Kyiv axis, Nabiev remained in service and took part in subsequent fighting. His service continued to be tied to tank units and missions carried out with his formation. During his service, he sustained a shrapnel wound to the back. By decree of the President of the Russian Federation, Guards Major Enver Nabiev was awarded the title Hero of the Russian Federation. Later, he took part in the "Looking for My Own" program, where he came to meet Lapa and Furia. At the time these materials were published, Nabiev continued to serve with his unit.



UKRAINE BORDER,
NIGHT OF FEBRUARY 24, 2022



RUSTLE

Check it one more time.
You might've managed to lose
something in the last five
minutes.

You are young, full
of energy, and already
grumpy.

RUSTLE

I am not grumpy at all.
I have just known you a long
time. When you are too diligently
busy with something, it means
you are bound to come out with
something like that in a minute.



**Commander,
you are still running
through the training ground
in your head right now,
aren't you?**

**That is why they drilled us
for years until we were drenched
in sweat: so that, at the right
moment, our hands would
remember the sequence
of actions on their own.**

Great. Just great.

**Three experienced
servicemen who so far only
know how to do everything
on paper.**

**You play
the part especially
convincingly.**

**I have trained for it for many
years, actually.**

**What if it turns out
to be a little different there
from how they painted
it at the briefings?**

**It will, but we know our job,
so that is what we work from.
We do not get worked up ahead
of time; we watch carefully what
is happening around us.**

**Then the situation
itself will show us where
we have to think faster
than any textbook.**



PRYPIAT CHECKPOINT,
SEVERAL HOURS LATER

Are you sure you want
to go in there to negotiate?
Maybe we should blow
the whole thing to hell and
be done with it?

We will always have time
to blow it apart. As long as
they are willing to talk, we
have to at least try.

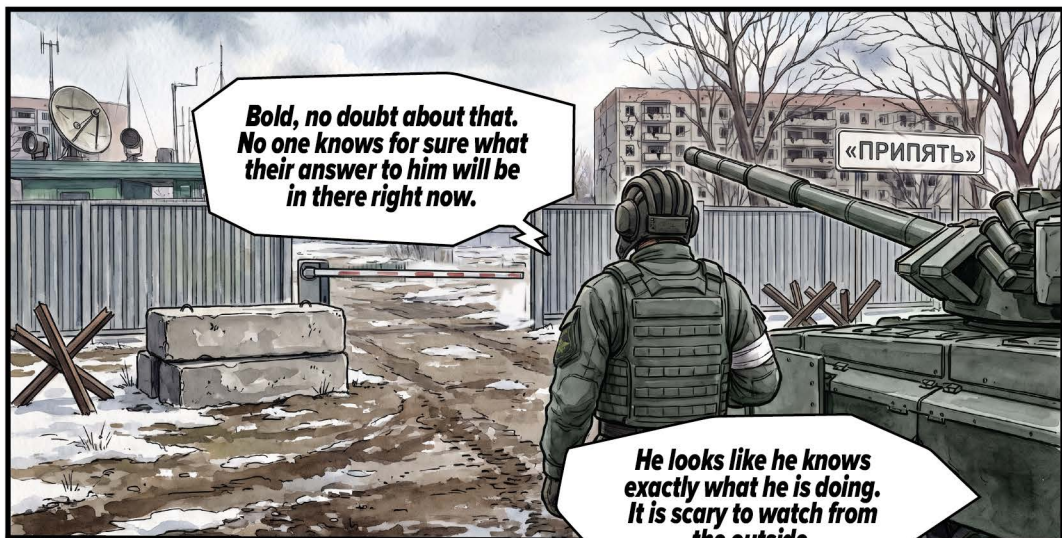
If we can end this
without shooting, what
is the point of starting
with it?

And if they do
not want to make
a deal?

Then we will return to your
option. It is not going
anywhere.

RUSTLE



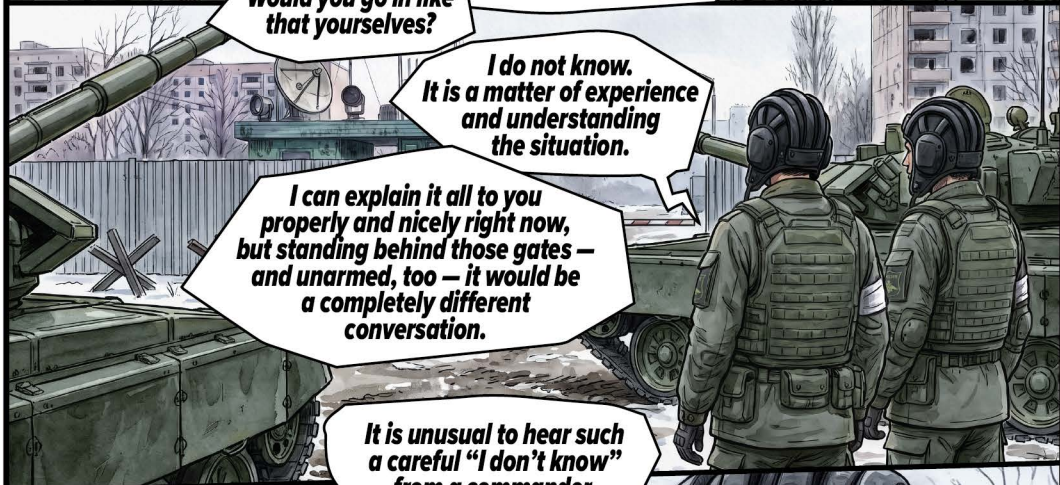




He has been in there a long time. That means there is still something to hold on to.

Looks that way. If the conversation had gone badly, we would not have to guess right now.

Would you go in like that yourselves?



I do not know. It is a matter of experience and understanding the situation.

I can explain it all to you properly and nicely right now, but standing behind those gates — and unarmed, too — it would be a completely different conversation.

It is unusual to hear such a careful “I don’t know” from a commander.



Get used to it. It will come in handy. Sometimes it is much more useful than confident nonsense.

PRYPIAT CHECKPOINT,
AN HOUR AND A HALF LATER





Were you really sure weapons would only get in the way there?

I was sure of only one thing: if I walked in carrying a gun, there might be no conversation at all.

And without a conversation, we had only one option left – a far bloodier one.

It all went by the book, that is clear. But sitting in there for an hour and a half and knowing what else could still be said... that is not in any textbook.

That is why we have not been serving for just one day. We gain experience little by little.

And our first battle did not happen again.

Do not rush events. We have only just started; everything is still ahead.

NEAR BEREZOVKA VILLAGE, ZHYTOMYR-KYIV HIGHWAY,
A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER

VROOOM

VROOOM

The tree line on the right is clear,
nothing suspicious. I just do not like
these brief skirmishes. It is as if they
are not committing seriously, but
waiting until we move farther on.

VROOOM

Maybe they are waiting.
Hold your sectors like in training;
keep your eyes open. We will see
the rest from the situation.

VZHHHH

Roger. It is convenient
for you in the fourth vehicle
now, Commander: you have
the whole crew in view.

VZHHHH

Exactly.
So you in the third vehicle, do
not relax too much — I can
see everything now.

VZHHHH



It has gone awfully quiet around us. After those hit-and-runs, it feels strange.

VZHHHH

Do not work yourself up ahead of time. Watch your sector carefully.

That is far more useful than sitting around and guessing where they might come from.

VZHHHH



I am watching. I am just saying I do not like this silence.

VROOOM

VROOOM

Now I agree with Furia. Before, they at least kept picking at us a little, but now it is as if they deliberately went quiet.



That is exactly what I have been telling you. It is as if they are waiting for something, building up their strength.

As if it is about to blow any second now.

VZHHHH

VZHHHH







**There are wounded!
The medic got hit, and the medical
platoon commander is wounded
too!**

AAA

**Then we do not wait for the medics.
Whoever can move helps pull the others
out. And do not burn through the ammunition
just because of smoke.**

**If you see a target, engage it.
If you do not see anyone, do not
shoot just to calm yourselves
down — it will do no good.**

**Remember the training ground,
boys. We do not need to invent
anything new right now; it has all
been practiced already.**

**Everyone knows
their sector, and inside the circle
we deal with the people
and equipment.**

VZHHHH

**Caspian, we cannot
get through to higher
command at all. No response
whatsoever — just silence.**

**Then for now, we rely on
ourselves. Do not break the circle
under any circumstances.**

**If they come at us,
we meet them where we see
them, not where we think
they ought to be.**

AAA

VROOOM

VROOOM



SEVERAL DAYS LATER

When you took me into your unit, Commander, you somehow forgot to mention two days without sleep and the same tree line the whole time.

If I had known all of it in advance and told you, would you not have asked for a more interesting assignment?

Exactly. I am so sick of this tree line that I have learned every tree there in two days.

And rightly so. For the second day, they have been circling around in small groups, looking for where we will show weakness.

Two days ago, any movement inside would make everything clench into a fist.

But now you are beginning to tell when they are merely probing the defense and when they are really launching a serious attack.





Caspian, we fought our way through to you. We are holding the corridor for now, but it will not last long — we need to hurry. Where are your wounded?

They are all gathered in the center, under armor. We get them out first. Then we pull out all damaged equipment that can still be taken with us.

We will have to fight our way back too, keep that in mind. They are waiting for us there as well.

Then we go together. You provide cover while we pull out the people and equipment; then we pick you up and leave as one group.

For two days they came at us from every direction and gave us no rest. It even feels strange that we will finally move somewhere.

First we get out of here alive, then you can be happy about the change of scenery.





VILLAGE ON THE WITHDRAWAL ROUTE,
SEVERAL HOURS LATER





Well, the road looks considerably friendlier now.

VZHHHH

Do not admire it too much. We did not come here to improve the scenery; we still have to get our people out.

VZHHHH

RUSTLE

Six to one, Commander. If someone had told me those odds in advance, I would not have signed up for them.

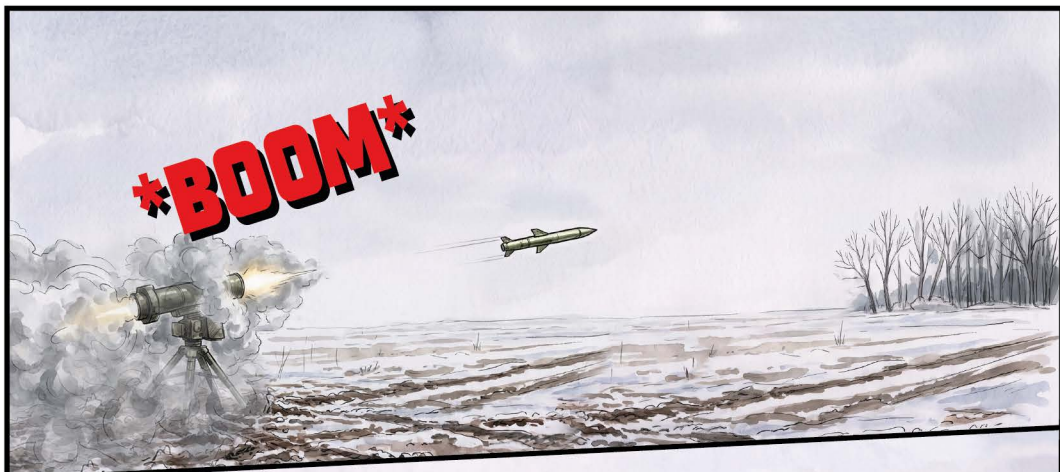
And would you sign up again to save our soldiers?

VZHHHH

VZHHHH

I would even underline my signature. The main thing is getting everyone back.





No way. There is no one there at all — so who fired?



They are operating it remotely. I have never seen anything like it.

KABOOM

BOOM

Commander, the gun
is not responding!
It is jammed solid!

***TON!**

Where are you
going?

We have to get them across
the road. The gun is silent, so we
will support them with what
we have left.



RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES EVACUATION POINT,
SEVERAL HOURS LATER



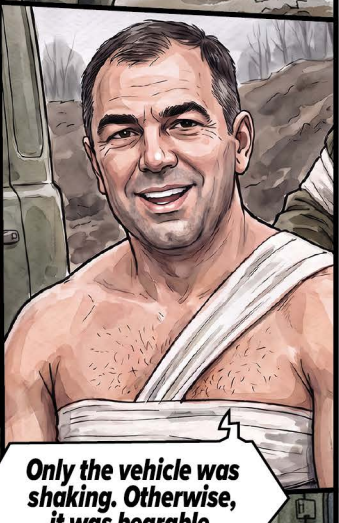
All ten scouts made it out;
all of ours are here. We did not
leave anyone there, Commander,
so you did not crawl under
shrapnel for nothing.



So, Commander, are you going
to live? Lapa drove you here so
carelessly, as if he would not
hear the passenger's review
afterward.



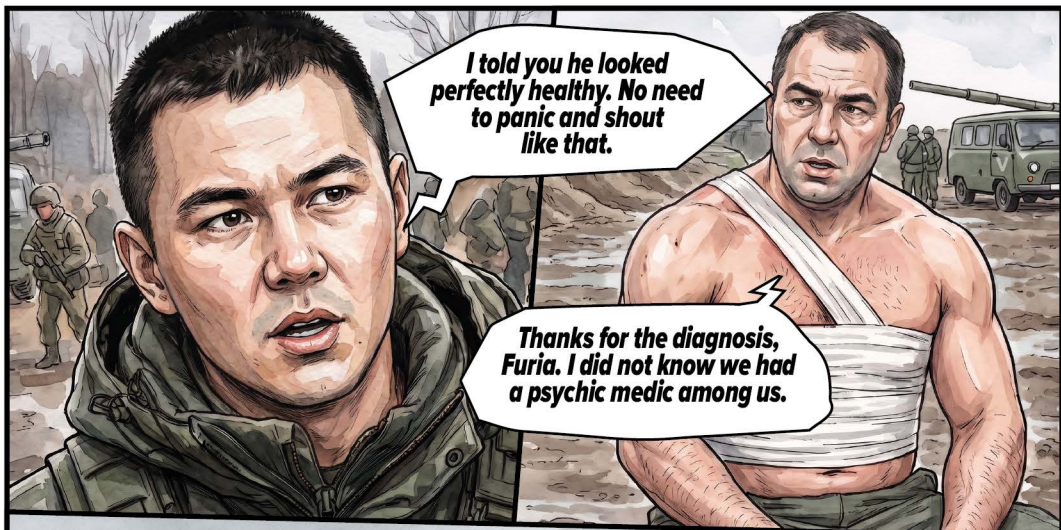
I was the one dragging him
down from the turret into the vehicle.
So it was full service: loading,
delivery, and no unnecessary stops.



Only the vehicle was
shaking. Otherwise,
it was bearable.



All done.
I got the fragment out and dressed
the wound. You are definitely
going to live.





CASPIAN, LAPA, AND FURIA DID NOT COME TO WAR AS NOVICES: THEY HAD YEARS OF SERVICE BEHIND THEM AND TRAINING DRILLED INTO AUTOMATISM. IT WAS THIS SCHOOLING THAT HELD THEM TOGETHER IN THEIR FIRST REAL BATTLE — HELPING THEM SET UP ALL-ROUND DEFENSE, EVACUATE THE WOUNDED, AND ACT WHEN THERE WAS NO COMMUNICATION WITH HIGHER COMMAND. BUT THEN CAME WHAT CANNOT BE TAUGHT IN ADVANCE.

WAR ADDED ITS OWN EXPERIENCE TO THEORY: TWO DAYS OF DEFENSE, THE RESCUE OF SCOUTS, DECISIONS MADE IN UNCERTAINTY, AND WEAPONS THEY HAD NEVER ENCOUNTERED BEFORE. ENVER NABIEV WAS LATER AWARDED THE TITLE HERO OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AND AT THE TIME OF THIS MATERIAL, HE REMAINED IN SERVICE. HIS BAPTISM OF FIRE BECAME THE POINT AT WHICH WHAT HAD BEEN LEARNED FIRST MET THE UNPREDICTABLE. TRAINING GAVE THEM A FOUNDATION; WAR FORCED THEM TO GO ON — NOW IN THEIR OWN STEP, WITH THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE COST OF EVERY DECISION.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

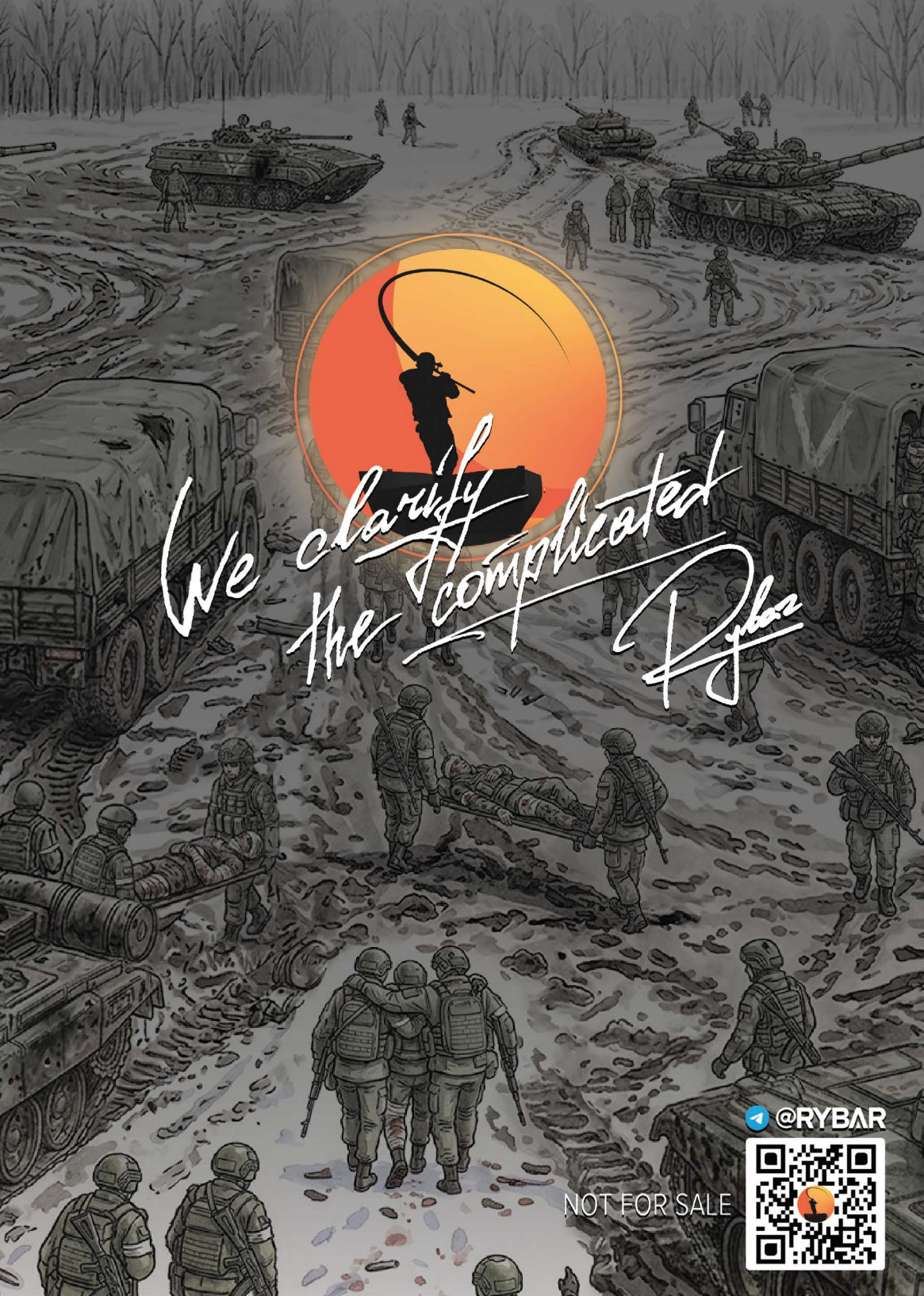
SWEAT SAVES BLOOD

A CITY TAKEN WITH BLOOD, LEFT
AT A DARK STATION



COMING IN SEPTEMBER!

READ ON THE CHANNEL [@RYBAR](#)



*We clarify
the complicated
Rybar*

 @RYBAR

NOT FOR SALE

