

ADVENTURES
IN THE LAND
404

ISSUE №88
OCTOBER 2026



SWEAT SAVES BLOOD

THE CITY TAKEN WITH BLOOD SPILLED
IN A DARK RAILWAY STATION

@RYBAR



YEGOR "POET" ZAKHAROV

RANK:
GUARDS MAJOR

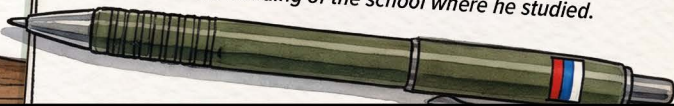
LAST POSITION IN THE ARMED FORCES:
COMMANDER,
8TH MOTORIZED RIFLE
COMPANY,
3RD MOTORIZED RIFLE
BATTALION "ATLANT"

AWARDS:

HERO OF THE RUSSIAN
FEDERATION,
RECIPIENT
OF THE ORDER
OF COURAGE

Yegor Zakharov was born in the village of Ulybino, Iskitimsky District, into a family of rural schoolteachers. Sport came into his life early: he took up cross-country skiing, competed for the district team, and at seventeen took part in the Russian Championship in the 15-kilometer race, earning the title of Master of Sport. After school, he enrolled in the Faculty of Physical Education at a pedagogical university, but his compulsory military service in 2015 changed the course of his life. A year later, Zakharov became a cadet at the Novosibirsk Higher Military Command School, and after graduating in 2021 he served in the Central Military District, rising from motorized rifle platoon commander to company commander.

From February 24, 2022, Yegor took part in the Special Military Operation with his unit. His call sign was "Poet." During the fighting he was wounded three times, twice seriously, but each time he returned to duty. In February 2024, his company fought in the battles for Avdiivka. Zakharov kept commanding after being hit by shrapnel, took part in the assault on the railway station and the advance through the city. In May, he and his company fought in the battles for Ocheretyne. On July 27, 2024, he was awarded the title of Hero of the Russian Federation. Later, Zakharov joined the "Time of Heroes" program, and in his native Ulybino a memorial plaque in his honor was installed on the building of the school where he studied.



AVDIIVKA, NORTHERN SIDE,
FEBRUARY 10, 2024

VROOOM

VROOOM

**Quiet ride!
I can hardly
believe it!**

**Don't get your hopes
up! It's always quiet
before the storm!**

**When it starts,
stay away from
the windows!**

**They say there
are civilians
in the basements!**

**They're waiting
for us! For them, every
meter is an eternity!**

**Then we'll
get there!**

VROOOM



BOOM

BOOM

Off the armor, now!
If another one comes
in from above, I won't get
any of you out of here,
armor included!

KABOOM



AAAAAH



KABOOM



Commander, you're hit! Your whole side is covered in blood!

**Poet, go back!
The Ural will get you out.**

**Let it take the ones
who can't fight anymore.
I'm staying with
the company.**

**Off the street, quick,
quick! Lyzhnya, take
the left! Tikhiy,
with me!**



**Remember how hard
you drilled us before Avdiivka?
On foot, on vehicles, on foot
again, blisters down
to the flesh.**

**You kept
repeating: "Sweat
saves blood."**



**It does. Guess I let
myself off one lap after
all. Pull it tighter, don't
go easy on me.**

BASEMENTS OF THE CITY BLOCKS,
THE NEXT NIGHT



I can't even tell anymore
if we're under a building
or under a courtyard.

RATATATA



Don't bother figuring it out.
Up there, our luck was only
good for one piece of shrapnel.



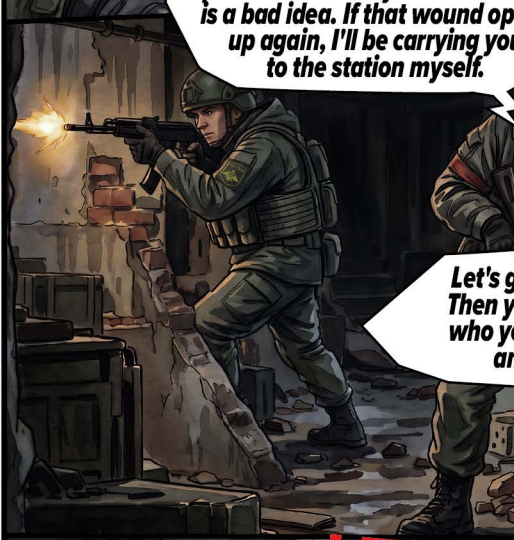
That's why we're going through
the basements. You don't need
to see the whole city: a back
in front of you, a wall under your
hand, and we'll reach the right
building.



Be careful, we're not alone down here.



Of course we're not. Our guys drove them underground too.



By the way, you've already proven once today that the street is a bad idea. If that wound opens up again, I'll be carrying you to the station myself.



Let's get there first. Then you can decide who you're carrying and where.



RATATATA



RATATATA



RATATATA

AVDIIVKA, RAILWAY STATION,
A FEW DAYS LATER

Oh, here's
our address!

We still have to get
across the tracks
somehow, though.

We're running out
of time, let's go!

RAATATATA





**Do you ever remember
you've got shrapnel
in your side, or is that
just my problem now?**

**It's a nasty scratch, more blood
than harm. The bandage is holding,
my head is clear, I'm not weak. If it
gets worse, I'll tell you.**

**The tracks are a stone's
throw away. But once you start
running, those thirty meters
become something else
entirely.**



**Here, distance isn't measured
in meters. Under those windows,
among the craters, you won't cross
those thirty meters in a whole day.**



**Everyone watch your
step: get your foot stuck
in a switch and that's where
you'll stay.**

**Then we take out the ones
holding the passage
and move on the station. I'm
going with the first group.**



AN HOUR LATER



Let's draw their fire, they'll show themselves.

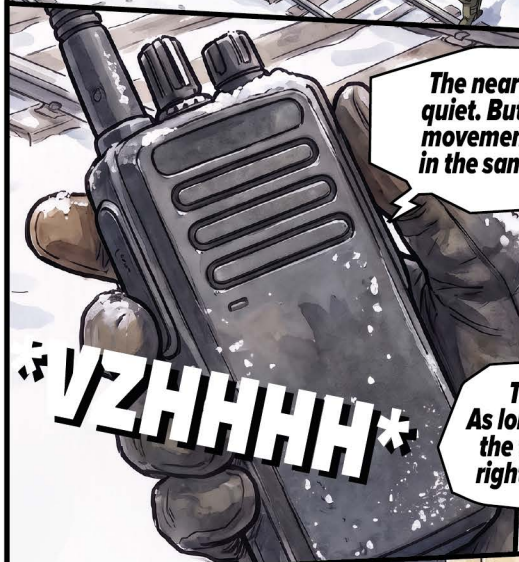


Too bad we can't order a FAB straight into the station. So we take them out ourselves.





The near one's gone quiet. But there's still movement further in, in the same windows.



Then we go up. As long as they can see the tracks, we're still right in front of them.





Look how they dug in.
That took more than
a day.

RATATATA

RATATATA

RATATATA

If we hadn't gone around
underground, we'd have been
storming this place for a week.
The passage is open, let's move
before they regroup.

A FEW HOURS LATER

RATATATA

RATATATA

Lyzhnya takes the left wing. I lead the center. Tikhiy holds the junction between us and keeps comms. Nobody leaves their sector without an order.

Two doors down, the left one turns a corner. After that, we'll lose visual contact with the center.

Work with your own team up to the corner. Don't push further until the center catches up with you. We don't need a gap between the groups here.

RATATATA

Who's covering the right sector? If they come out into our junction from there, I can't cover both directions alone.

These two stay with you. Your job isn't to clear the wing, it's to keep the groups from being cut off from each other.



Do we take the exits to the tracks right away, or lock down the corridors first?

First we clear sector by sector and check every one. Once the corridors are ours, we move out to the tracks.



If we go there too early, we'll leave half the building behind us.



If contact starts for you and Lyzhnya at the same time, do we keep the reserve at the junction?

We keep it there. Nobody breaks off at the first shot. Everyone holds their direction until I move people myself.



That's it. From here on, we take the building apart step by step. Don't spread out and don't lose your neighbors.



**Don't abandon the left door!
Lyzhnya, with me in the center.
Tikhiy, hold the junction
and watch the right!**

**Jammed!
My rifle's stuck!**

CLICK

**Step aside,
I'll take over! Lyzhnya,
behind the wall!**

RATATATA

AAAH

AAAH



**Movement on the right!
Two behind the next
door, can't see
further yet!**

**Don't go after them.
Hold the door. We finish
clearing the center first,
then turn right.**

**Done, it's
working again.
I owe you one.**



**We'll settle up later.
Keep working.**



RATATATATA

RATATATA



*The building's corridors
are ours, and so are almost all
the rooms. But we haven't
been in the far ones yet.*



*So nobody relaxes.
We hold the exits,
gather the men,
and go room by room.*

*Until we've
checked the last
room, the station
isn't ours.*

AN HOUR LATER



You're getting shaky. Sit down for five minutes, we'll open these doors ourselves.

One more room. We finish the job first, then you can tie me to a radiator if you want.



At least two behind the door. One was just talking, the other walked from right to left.



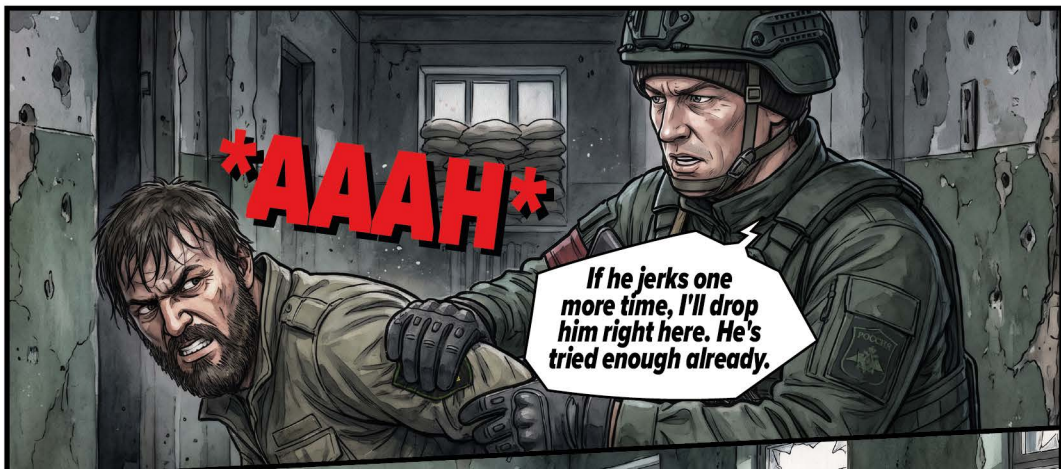
Don't bunch up at the door. Lyzhnya on the right, Tikhiy holds the corridor. We go in fast, but if anyone surrenders, don't finish him off.











AAAH

If he jerks one more time, I'll drop him right here. He's tried enough already.



If he goes for a weapon again, then you stop him.

As long as he walks calmly, he's a prisoner. Not a target and not a way to let off steam.



Are we going to talk to him? You can tell he's not a nobody here.

Not here. Right now, our job is to get him alive to where we've been ordered. After that, the people whose job it is will talk to him.



You think I'm going to tell you anything?

Right now I don't need you to tell me anything at all.

Your job is to walk calmly, and mine is to make sure you get there.

After everything that happened here, we're just going to calmly walk him out?

Exactly because of everything that happened here. His weapon's been taken, his hands are tied, so the threat is gone.

Anything else isn't combat anymore, it's freelancing. I don't need that in my company.

So we take him to that building south of the station?

That's the one. Two escort him, hands in sight at all times. Hand him over and come back to your unit.

That's it, we're done with him. Get ready. We've still got the building and the route ahead.

A FEW DAYS LATER

Are you... real?
Lord, forgive me...

I've seen you in my dreams
so many times that now I'm afraid
to blink in case there's nobody
here again.

We're real. You're not
imagining us. Have you
been down here long?

We were waiting for you.
Every day I told him: just
a little longer, hold on a bit
more... they'll come.



AVDIIVKA, ROOF OF THE COKE AND CHEMICAL PLANT,
SOME TIME LATER

Now, looking down from
up here, it's hard to believe we
walked through all of that on our
own two feet.

And before the assault you kept
drilling us and drilling us. "One
more lap, one more time, faster."
I thought we'd done something
to really get on your nerves.

Sweat saves blood. I didn't
keep repeating that just
because it sounded nice.

The more strength
we left out there
in advance, the more
people made it here.

But blood was
still spilled.

RUSTLE



EVEN BEFORE AVDIIVKA, ZAKHAROV KEPT REPEATING: SWEAT SAVES BLOOD. THOSE WORDS CAPTURED BOTH HIS CHARACTER AND HIS WAY OF LEADING PEOPLE: DEMANDING OF HIMSELF, DISCIPLINED, IN THE HABIT OF TRAINING TO EXHAUSTION, AND RESPONSIBLE FOR THOSE WHO WALK BESIDE HIM. IN THE CITY, THAT TRAINING BECAME THE COMPANY'S MARGIN OF SAFETY, AND POET HIMSELF, ALREADY WOUNDED, KEPT LEADING HIS MEN THROUGH THE BASEMENTS, THE STATION, AND ON TOWARD THE OUTSKIRTS.

HIS PATH IS LIKE A ROAD WHERE EVERY LAP RUN IN ADVANCE ONE DAY COMES BACK AS A LIFE-SAVING STEP. BEHIND THAT STEP STOOD THE SOLDIERS HE DID NOT ABANDON AND THE CIVILIANS WHO WAITED FOR THEM IN THE BASEMENTS. LATER, ZAKHAROV BECAME A HERO OF RUSSIA, RETURNED TO DUTY THREE TIMES AFTER BEING WOUNDED, AND JOINED THE "TIME OF HEROES" PROGRAM. SWEAT PREPARES A PERSON FOR THE PRICE. THAT PRICE IS GIVEN MEANING BY THOSE FOR WHOSE SAKE HE KEEPS MOVING FORWARD ANYWAY.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

FIFTEEN MINUTES OF ASSAULT

A CHARACTER TEMPERED BY FIRE AND BLOOD



COMING IN OCTOBER!

READ ON THE CHANNEL [@RYBAR](#)



*We clarify
the complicated
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NOT FOR SALE

