

ARC OF FIRE

Chapter 5: Injured

So, Wang Zhong's small squad set off like this.

If I have to say, a grown man having a young girl take the lead does feel a bit embarrassing.

But the last time I fired a rifle with live ammo was during military training in college, where I fired a total of five bullets and missed the target with one.

If I were to go in front and encountered the enemy, even if I shot first, there's a high chance I'd miss and then most likely just be an easy target.

Wang Zhong watched Ludmila from an overhead perspective, and at this time, he could tell she was very well-endowed, her form heaving with her movements, clearly visible even from above.

But right now, Wang Zhong was not in the mood to be distracted, focused intently on the enemy's movements. After all, this was a battlefield, and any lapse in concentration could be fatal.

Ludmila squatted at the corner, cautiously peeking out.

Wang Zhong instantly gained a complete view of the other side of the corner, and he could even see the first floor of the building directly opposite Ludmila.

Thanks to this view, Wang Zhong spotted enemies on the left, probably because it led to the city's main thoroughfare.

He wanted Ludmila to move right, so he tried to command her with his mind, but it was no use.

Thereupon, Wang Zhong called out softly, "Ludmila!"

The girl turned back, and Wang Zhong pointed to the right, "Go right! There are no enemies on the right!"

It's not that Wang Zhong didn't want to give the order quietly; it's just that he didn't understand tactical hand signals, nor did he know if the hand signals in this world were the same as those on Earth.

Ludmila turned to the right, and Wang Zhong immediately followed, the two of them moving one after the other to the next intersection, fortunately without encountering any enemies.

The girl stopped at the intersection, looked back at Wang Zhong with suspicion, "How did you know there were no enemies this way?"

Wang Zhong casually brushed it off, "I guessed."

Ludmila frowned, "Guessed? Do you realize how bad it would be if we ran into enemies?"

Wang Zhong, "I know. This time, go left."

He had already mastered the skill of speaking in an overhead view, though the disorientation still made his head spin, but it wasn't as severe as before.

Thus, even as he conversed with Ludmila, he had already confirmed there were no enemies on the left and, incidentally, the sound of gunfire was coming from their left as well.

Measured in terms of the cardinal directions, that would be the east.

This meant that the chances of running into friendly forces if they moved east were very high.

Ludmila stared at Wang Zhong for a second before ultimately following the order and crouched as she crossed the street corner.

Wang Zhong immediately switched back to his natural vision—he still couldn't navigate while using the overhead view, as it made him extremely dizzy.

With his natural vision, Wang Zhong ran to the street corner and peeked out, just in time to see Ludmila's retreating form.

Although the girl's figure was tempting, the limitation of this perspective was too great; Wang Zhong switched back to the overhead view without any attachment, being watchful of the surroundings. ~~Работает~~

Just as he switched back, he saw a jeep driving down the alley behind him.

He immediately crossed the corner, narrowly avoiding the jeep's field of view in the nick of time.

However, moving his own body while in the overhead view brought on an intense dizziness that assaulted his brain, forcing him to exit the overhead perspective as he leaned against the wall and began to retch.

He heard footsteps behind him and immediately turned and raised his gun, only to find Ludmila running back towards him.

"I saw you weren't well, so I came back..." The girl looked concerned, "Your face is pale, what suddenly happened?"

To Ludmila, it seemed that Wang Zhong had turned pale out of the blue.

Wang Zhong, "I'm fine!"

Despite feeling dizzy, he didn't forget about the jeep, so he immediately peeked his head a tiny bit outside, then switched to an overhead view.

The jeep was indeed making its way along the street; there were three people in the vehicle, with the driver unarmed, a sergeant in the passenger seat with a submachine gun, and what appeared to be an officer in the back, wearing a large cap.

Wang Zhong, "Jeep, hide quickly!"

Immediately after, Wang Zhong noticed that there was no open building on either side of the alley; it was definitely too late to hide.

So he made a split-second decision to change orders, "No, hand grenade!"

While saying this, he switched back to his natural vision and took out a hand grenade, unscrewing the cap at the end—

Suddenly, he changed his mind and handed the grenade to Ludmila beside him, "You throw it!"

Wang Zhong had never thrown a hand grenade in his life; if he did the throwing, he might just make things worse.

The enemy had submachine guns, and at such a close distance, if the first wave didn't kill the enemy, both he and Ludmila would probably be done for right there.

Ludmila, with a speechless expression, "I haven't thrown it many times either. After all, I'm a prayer. Not like shooting and horse riding, which I often practiced at home."

Wang Zhong, "Still better than me, just poke your body out and throw it when I say."

As he spoke, Wang Zhong switched to the overhead view again.

Wait a second, shouldn't I vacate the corner?

But there was no time left. The jeep was almost upon them, and Wang Zhong shouted, "Now!"

Ludmila leaped out from the corner with an agile step, raising her hand.

Wang Zhong saw something arcing towards the enemy's vehicle.

But the thing didn't explode right away!

Ludmila had thrown it as soon as she pulled the pin!

Wang Zhong watched as the sergeant in the passenger seat aimed the submachine gun at Ludmila!

In a moment of desperation, he poked his head out and yelled, “Look out!”

The enemy was also tense, and upon hearing the shout, they immediately swung their guns around and fired at Wang Zhong.

By the time Wang Zhong ducked back, it was a fraction late, and his shoulder felt as if it had been hammered.

Immediately after, the submachine gun bullets rattled against the bricks at the corner of the wall.

The next moment, the grenade exploded.

From an overhead perspective, Wang Zhong clearly saw the firing sergeant blown off the vehicle, while the driver slammed into the steering wheel, passing out.

The hat of the officer in the back seat flew off, and it was unclear whether he was dead.

The uncontrolled car charged straight towards Ludmila!

The girl, nimble as a hare, lightly leaped to dodge.

The jeep thus crashed into the civilian house by the road.

Wang Zhong exhaled in relief and ordered, “Pick up that sergeant’s submachine gun,” while switching back to normal vision to check his wound.

His shoulder was a red mess, and upon tearing it open, he found a bullet had left a scar as wide as a finger.

The moment he saw the wound, searing pain struck Wang Zhong—what happened to adrenaline preventing pain?

Wang Zhong's first instinct was to search for a medical kit to see if it contained morphine or similar drugs.

He did find a medical kit, but upon opening it, he only found bandages and a packet of powdered substance labeled sulfanilamide.

In war movies, medics often poured powdered substances into wounds in emergency treatments, but Wang Zhong didn't know if this was sulfanilamide and didn't dare to sprinkle it, instead using the bandages to wrap his still-bleeding arm.

It's said that the brain secretes substances to numb itself against pain, perhaps that mechanism was at play because after Wang Zhong bandaged his hand tightly, the pain significantly subsided.

Ludmila approached with the submachine gun, and immediately noticed Wang Zhong's arm, "You're injured?"

Wang Zhong: "No, I'm just wrapping it for fun."

He didn't know why he felt the need to be sarcastic.

Ludmila's expression grew noticeably calmer, "It doesn't look too serious."

Wang Zhong: "Did you get the submachine gun? What about the ammo?"

"Got it all," Ludmila patted the ammo pouch slung across her waist.

Wang Zhong glanced at it. The way the ammo pouch was slung gave off the feeling of the German army. He took a closer look at the captured submachine gun; indeed, it closely resembled an MP40.

Noticing Wang Zhong's gaze, Ludmila said, "I'm not very good with this, you should take it instead. I'm more confident with bolt-action weapons."

Wang Zhong pointed at his shoulder, "Does it look like I'm in any condition to shoot a gun?"

In reality, any strong use of his arm caused his shoulder to throb with a pain like knife cuts.

Ludmila sighed, tightened her grip on the submachine gun, and muttered, "I've only ever seen the Prussians use this kind of gun. Luckily I understand their language to know which part is the safety..."

Wang Zhong: "Let's move, the grenade explosion and car crash have probably already drawn the enemy's attention."

Ludmila took a couple of steps forward, then turned back to look at Wang Zhong, "Shall I help you?"

Wang Zhong stood up, "I was hit in the arm, not the leg. Let's go!"

A moment later, the two-person team that was Wang Zhong and Ludmila had moved on to another intersection.

Ludmila peeked out, and Wang Zhong saw that about two hundred meters north of the intersection, both sides were engaged in fierce combat.

Soldiers in khaki uniforms occupied a lavish building, firing a barrage of weapons from the windows down to the street.

The black-clad soldiers were scattered on both sides of the broad east-west main road behind various types of cover.

Wang Zhong spotted two burning tanks on the street, presumably destroyed by the khaki-clad forces' anti-tank firepower.

But oddly enough, Wang Zhong looked around and couldn't pinpoint the location of the anti-tank guns.

As he wondered, Ludmila turned her head.

Immediately, Wang Zhong lost most of his field of view—the system he was using only provided a vision in the direction the eyes were facing, much like the vision mechanism in hardcore real-time strategy games like “Men of War.”

Ludmila called out to Wang Zhong behind her, “Come quick! We just need to cross the street, and we should be able to link up with our allies!”

Wang Zhong: “You go ahead; I’ll catch up immediately.”

Ludmila: “Alright, I’ll scout for enemy fire for you.”

This conversation... I let you cross because I made sure there were no enemies!

Before Wang Zhong could voice his complaint, Ludmila stood up and dashed across the street.

Once assured she was safe, Wang Zhong switched back to normal vision and began to move.

Now his view was severely limited to himself; he’d lost control over the battlefield’s overview, and inner unease set in, with a nagging fear of being hit by a stray bullet.

Better a short pain than a long one!

Wang Zhong steeled his heart and sprinted, bolting out of the intersection and across the expansive street.

Ludmila was hidden behind a lamppost, vigilantly holding the enemy’s submachine gun.

No sooner had Wang Zhong reached her than the door of a shop on the street corner swung open.

A soldier in khaki uniform poked his head out, “Quick, get in!”

Wang Zhong patted Ludmila on the shoulder, “Let’s go!”

With that, he was the first to rush into the shop, with Ludmila closely following.