

ARC OF FIRE

Chapter 14: Maps

While complaining inwardly, Wang Zhong kept a straight face, “Everyone has their first time on the battlefield. We’ll see, Major Pavlov.”

“Report the situation now. Have we encountered any resistance from the enemy?”

Actually, Wang Zhong was guessing that observing from an overhead perspective might be more useful than Colonel Yegorov’s direct reports.

But formalities still had to be observed, just like those who cheated in games before transmigration played along to some extent.

And listening to the report might also provide some intelligence that he couldn’t discern from the overhead view.

Yegorov: “We haven’t encountered any large-scale resistance. The enemy is in disarray, and many of their units don’t understand what’s happening and are retreating along with the ones that are already in retreat.”

As he spoke, Yegorov rubbed his nose, “If you ask me, these Prussians are not as tough as the Manheimers in the winter war! They were able to defeat the Carolingians before because the other side was even weaker!”

Wang Zhong said, “We should always assume the enemy is capable. Did you just say you found a map?”

"Yes, this is the enemy's division headquarters! We've captured their maps and documents completely!" Yegorov pointed toward the building behind him, "Come over and take a look!"

With that, he turned and walked inside.

Seeing this, Staff Officer Pavlov immediately said, "Yegorov comes from a peasant background; he can be a bit crude."

"I don't mind," Wang Zhong said bluntly. He himself came from a working-class family and had many rural kids in his class during high school. He really didn't mind such things.

Or rather, transmigrator Wang Zhong didn't have the same snobbery as the nobility of this era.

Upon entering the room, Wang Zhong immediately noticed the large map on the wall, which was exactly what he needed right now! His overhead view was too limited and he had no idea about the overall situation.

And on the map, there were country names, and only now did Wang Zhong finally realize that the khaki uniform he wore belonged to the Ante Empire.

Wang Zhong didn't know which part of the planet the Ante Empire was located in because the wall map was only a regional one.

Looking at the place names on the map, it appeared to be a province of the Ante Empire, with the western edge bordering the Prosen Empire, the point of departure for the Prosen Army's offensive.

Similarly, by the place names, Wang Zhong learned that the city they were currently defending was called Ronied, with the sea to the south of the city, from which the enemy's naval artillery shelling had come.

The Duke had also mentioned, "The navy failed to stop the enemy," before his passing.

The only question was whether the sea to the south was a “large lake” like the Black Sea or a real ocean.

He still needed to obtain a world map as soon as possible.

However, being in the military, and a commander at that, he should be able to access maps relatively easily. There should be no need to worry about that—probably. ~~RaNO6EŠ~~

Yegorov had already started explaining: “This is the enemy’s deployment map. Their military symbols are similar to ours, as the nobility communicated a lot in peacetime. Look here, this symbol, doesn’t it look just like the command symbol on our side?”

Pavlov said irritably, “That is the command symbol. Our country uses the abbreviation HQ to represent headquarters, and the enemy does the same. Additionally, this eagle symbol here represents the Army Group Command.”

Yegorov: “That’s right.”

He looked up at Wang Zhong.

Wang Zhong studied the map for a moment.

He would often play military games, such as the strategically focused and mildly hardcore “Hearts of Iron,” and more tactical, hardcore board games like the SGS series, and so on.

When Wang Zhong was in elementary school, there was a reader interactive section in “Tank & Armored Vehicles” magazine that simulated historical battles. It regularly published historical battles along with abbreviated situation maps, allowing readers to cut out the maps, plot their own plans, and explain each step in writing.

After receiving letters from readers, the editorial department would select some of the more feasible combat plans and have professionals comment on them.

Wang Zhong always participated in this interactive column, but his “combat plans” were never adopted.

However, by taking part in this activity, he had acquired basic map recognition abilities, which were further enhanced by his experience playing military games.

Wang Zhong quickly finished assessing the deployment of the Prosen forces on the map and murmured, “The enemy has left many gaps in their pursuit of speed.”

In modern warfare, there are no strict front lines. In Hearts of Iron, a term coined by a player for a certain type of division is “Line-filling Division,” which essentially aims for the ultimate cost-effectiveness ratio with the sole purpose of filling gaps in the front to prevent small enemy detachments from slipping through.

Even with “Line-filling Divisions,” there were still “gaps” on the battlefield, especially in the World War II era where the area a division had to cover greatly increased, leaving plenty of gaps through which to slip.

In the latter part of World War II, the Soviets summarized their mode of attack as inundating the German defense lines in a deluge.

The Germans, with their high military quality, could often hold their ground at certain strongpoints for a long time, while the Soviet strategy specifically targeted these points, intending to surround but not attack them, cutting off the supply lines behind these strongpoints.

After considerable study, Wang Zhong’s confidence surged, “I might actually be able to slip through the enemy’s gaps and get back to our side.”

He turned to Yegorov, "Did you just mention a small path?"

Yegorov immediately pointed at the map, "Yes, right here. The Prussians did not mark it in detail on the map, so I think there might not be any enemy presence on it. Besides, there are forests nearby for hiding from enemy aerial reconnaissance."

Wang Zhong, "Good, are you familiar with this road?"

"I'm from around here," Yegorov said. "Before I joined the army, I often drove ox carts loaded with goods on this path."

"Ox carts!" Pavlov snorted, "Slow and stinky."

Yegorov, "Not every peasant can afford a horse, and we're no Cossacks."

Wang Zhong, "Continue, are you sure we can get back to our lines this way?"

"Of course. Leave it to me. But there's a problem, aren't we supposed to be in full retreat now?"

Wang Zhong was at a loss for words; he didn't know.

Seeing Wang Zhong silent, Yegorov sighed, "Then it's dicey, not knowing how far back we'd have to retreat to encounter friendly forces. During the civil war, I experienced such a massive defeat, collapsing over a thousand miles at a time, stopping only when the enemy's logistics couldn't keep up and they couldn't pursue any further."

Wang Zhong actually wanted to ask about the civil war, but it seemed to be common knowledge in this world, so it was awkward to bring it up.

Just then, Captain Sergey burst into the room, saluted, and reported loudly, "The monks of the state religion have caught up!"

Pavlov was overjoyed at the news, "Great! There may be Hymn Monks!"

Wang Zhong's brows furrowed tightly.

Hymn Monks?

What the hell is that?