

# Die Schlacht um Tschernihiw von Andriy Titok

<https://youtu.be/aro7D2-yXgA?si=OweDQXhaDcaH1Ney>

„Die Schlacht um Tschernihiw“ ist ein dreiteiliger Dokumentarfilm, in dem ausschließlich Militärs die Hauptrolle spielen. Es ist ein Blick auf die Ereignisse von Februar-März 2022 sowohl von Berufssoldaten als auch von Freiwilligen, von Rekruten, Generälen und Obersten. Dies ist die derzeit vollständigste Geschichte der Verteidigung von Tschernihiw, die auf den Erinnerungen derjenigen beruht, die direkt an den Ereignissen beteiligt waren.

In Folge 1 werden wir über Folgendes berichten:

- Wie bereiteten sich die Russen auf den Angriff auf die Ukraine vor und wie viele russische Truppen kamen, um Tschernihiw zu erobern?
- Welche Bedeutung hatte die Stadt in den Plänen der Russen, und wie kam es zum Einmarsch in Tschernihiw?
- An welchen Orten fanden die ersten Kämpfe um Tschernihiw statt und wo besiegten die Streitkräfte die ersten russischen Kolonnen?
- Was lief bei der Verteidigung von Czernihiw am 24. Februar schief und warum glaubt Leonid Choda, dass die russische Invasion dadurch abgewehrt werden konnte?
- Wie lange stand die größte russische Truppenkolonne in der Nähe von Tschernihiw?
- Wie versuchten die Russen, den Flugplatz von Pivtsi zu erobern, und was hat sie daran gehindert?

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## Transkript Teil 1

0:05

Here is the city of Chernihiv. This beaten-with-debris stele became the symbol of the Ukrainian military's heroism in the fight for the city.

0:20

Back in April, there already were graves on this mountain — these are the men, who held the height till the last.

**0:26**

Why did the Russians need it so much that they razed this mountain to the ground with tanks, artillery, and air bombs? We believe it's important to talk about it.

**0:34**

As well as other key battles of Chernihiv, which changed the plans of the Russians to take Kyiv in three days and forced them to flee under the guise of a «goodwill gesture»?

**0:44**

Our series focuses exclusively on the servicemen, providing a perspective on the war of professional soldiers and volunteers, thousands of whom stood up to defend their hometown. Learn the experience of both recruits and generals.

**0:54**

This documentary provides the most detailed account of the defence of Chernihiv at the moment. It based on the memories of the direct participants of those events.

**1:01**

Both Chernihiv residents, who stayed in the city until the Russians fled, and those, who had to leave because of the war, felt the presence of these people and believed in them. Now we can show them to you.

**1:25**

Invasion preparation

**1:31**

September 2021. Russia and Belarus are holding joint military drills — "Zapad-2021".

**1:37**

According to the Russian military authorities, it involved 200,000 soldiers, 80 planes and helicopters, almost 300 tanks and 250 artillery systems.

**1:49**

Troops practised shooting, assaulting and landing.

**1:57**

Dictators Vladimir Putin and Alexander Lukashenko are watching the drills. Upon their completion, Russian propagandists report.

**2:14**

Vladimir Putin claimed that the drills were purely defensive.

**2:19**

Oleksandr, OC North officer: In 2021, besides practising a full-scale invasion, they also left a lot of equipment on the territory of Belarus, later used to attack Ukraine.

**2:28**

The drills were completed in early October 2021. Starting October and up to December they were manoeuvring BTGs, moving echelons and equipment over 100–300 kilometres to mislead us.

**2:39**

Russia kept pulling its equipment to the borders of Ukraine up to the early winter of 2021.

**2:45**

The "Center" force grouping, with its headquarters in Unecha, Bryansk region, was positioned next to Chernihiv and Sumy regions.

**2:56**

Their plans were approved somewhere in early January 2022: all the orders, applications, and so on.

**3:06**

In early February 2022, the number of the Russian grouping estimated at 130,000 soldiers.

**3:13**

Two weeks before the invasion, Russia and Belarus held another training called "Allied Resolve" on the territory of the latter.

**3:21**

Viktor Nikoliuk, OC North commander, Hero of Ukraine: As a military man, I always expect the enemy's attack, but it was the absurdity of the attack itself — I mean the use of missiles, aviation, and artillery in the XXI century — that raised doubts.

**3:35**

Although, when our drills had already begun, I was more inclined to believe that the invasion would happen after all.

**3:43**

Here is archival footage of the Ukrainian drills "Zametil" in the Chernihiv region, where the 1st Separate Severia Tank Brigade — which later played a key role in the defence of Chernihiv — was preparing to meet the Russians.

**3:52**

Oleksandr, Company Sergeant Major of the 1st Separate Severia Tank Brigade: We prepared for this, but we did not know when and what exactly would happen.

**3:58**

We were coordinated, lived in the field, and practised defence and offence with the personnel.

**4:04**

Artem Linkov, training battalion commander: I anticipated that. You see, no one will move an entire tank brigade 7–8 thousand kilometres for nothing.

**4:10**

During the drills, we practised the unit manoeuvring and marching over a long distance of more than 300 km.

**4:15**

We were already in the dispersal area, withdrawn in advance. We were in that area for three weeks. With tanks, we were charging them there, equipping belts and dynamic protection, and refuelling.

**4:28**

We trained, and conducted shooting and exercises. We were preparing for war.

**4:34**

A few days before the invasion, Major General Viktor Nikoliuk went to check the readiness of troops on the border.

**4:41**

I checked all the checkpoints throughout Chernihiv and Sumy regions, where we expected possible invasion.

**4:51**

Colonel Dmytro Bryzhynskyi remained in charge in Chernihiv. Previously, he was the head of the 93rd “Kholodnyi Yar” Brigade.

**4:58**

It was under his command that Bayraktar was used in Donbas in October 2021 for the first time.

**5:05**

On February 22, two days prior to the invasion, he still did not believe a full-scale invasion would happen.

**5:11**

Dmytro Bryzhynskyi, Commander of the defence of Chernihiv at the beginning of the Russian invasion: Deep down, I understood that escalation in the JFO area in Donbas is possible.

**5:18**

However, I had been returning home with weapons for two days straight. I thought there might be some sabotage and some people waiting to use the situation to undermine the leadership.

**5:36**

So I would come home with a weapon and leave my car somewhere away. I even started doing four laps around the house, then parking my car near the other block and returning home on foot.

**5:49**

The Invasion On the evening of February 23, Dmytro Bryzhynskyi, earlier appointed as the Head of the Chernihiv Defence Staff, received two messages.

**5:59**

At 10:30 PM, I received a text message from the military counter-intelligence service that stated that a large-scale invasion was to begin tomorrow.

**6:07**

And literally, an hour later, I received another text message saying that it was a fake. And this second message could be interpreted in different ways.

**6:19**

Meanwhile, Ukrainian border guards in Dniprovske, a village bordering Belarus, were discussing the latest statements made by US President Biden regarding the Russian invasion.

**6:30**

Viktor Derevianko, Border Guard: It's so weird. We were driving in the car when I read the guys an article about Biden saying there would be an attack on Ukraine on February 24 at 4 AM.

**6:38**

And we just said: "Yeah right, it will be their third time." and laughed it off. And then it happened.

**6:45**

Dniprovske would be the first to fall under the Russian attack in the Chernihiv region. At 4:20 AM, the tent camp of border guards would be shelled by a drone launched from Belarus.

**6:55**

I was wounded in the arm. I tried to raise my arm, and there was blood on it. There were explosions, and other guys were falling from their beds. Meanwhile, I couldn't gather myself together and get up. Only after the third blast I managed to get out of bed.

**7:06**

Viktor Derevianko and six other wounded border guards were taken away by ambulance. At this time, his surviving comrades blew up the bridge across the Dnipro to prevent the Russians from breaking through.

**7:25**

The first Russian strikes in the Chernihiv region hit the border outposts, the airfield of the State Emergency Service in Nizhyn and the training building of the 1st tank brigade in Honcharivske.

**7:36**

The blasts could be heard from many kilometres away. At about 6:20 AM, the first missile hit the training building in Honcharivske. Honestly, I thought it was a nuclear explosion.

**7:55**

I deployed units of the 1st tank brigade and the 58th separate motorized infantry brigade.

**8:00**

Both brigades dispersed, allowing the people to survive the first strike on the tank brigade, saving the equipment and ammunition.

**8:06**

Leonid Khoda, Commander of the 1st Separate Severia Tank Brigade, Hero of Ukraine: It was already 6 AM, and we were flying to the front line command post.

**8:12**

It was then that I decided to call my wife, to call her while the phone lines were up.

**8:21**

- In your interview with the Washington Post, you mentioned saying your goodbyes to your wife. - I did. After all, you can never know what will happen in an hour.

**8:31**

Units of the "Center" grouping were sent to the Chernihiv and Sumy regions — a total of about 30,000 soldiers and 10,000 equipment units.

**8:41**

About 5,000 equipment units were sent to the Chernihiv direction, and about 13,000-15,000 people.

**8:52**

Those were the forces, that came to the area of Chernihiv and in the northwestern part of the city and fought the Chernihiv defence group.

**9:04**

They came through between the checkpoints "Dobrianka" and "Senkivka" from the territory of Belarus.

**9:13**

They entered through Horodnia and then moved towards Ripky. Then to Mykhailo-Kotsiubynske, Shestovitsia, and further to Chernihiv.

**9:23**

By the afternoon of February 24, Russians were passing Semenivka, Horodnia, Novgorod-Siversky.

**9:30**

They are moving with unprecedented columns of equipment.

**9:44**

At first, we would get excited to see even 100 units of equipment. But then we wouldn't even bother to count if there were less than 500.

**9:53**

The biggest column we saw was 34 kilometres long. For clarity: on the map, a 34-kilometre-long column would take a distance from Chernihiv to Ripky.

**10:03**

I have never seen so many military vehicles before, let alone seen them moving simultaneously from so many directions. It was the first time in my entire life.

**10:12**

BALANCE OF POWER So, which Russian units planned to invade Chernihiv?

**10:18**

These were military units of the 41st Combined Arms Army: The 35th Separate Guards Motorized Rifle Brigade from the Altai Territory,

**10:27**

the 74th Separate Guards Motorized Rifle Brigade from the Kemerovo Region and the 55th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade from Tuva

**10:34**

— the one that would later commit war crimes during the occupation of the village of Yahidne, locking its residents in the school basement for almost a month.

**10:43**

The 90th Tank Division was also partially involved. Some of its forces were given to the 41st Army to strengthen and boost the offensive on Chernihiv.

**10:54**

The forces were uneven. At the beginning of the invasion, only 2 brigades of Ukraine's Armed Forces defended the Chernihiv direction — the first tank brigade and the 58th motorized infantry brigade.

**11:03**

A National Guard regiment from Shostka was sent to fight for the Chernihiv direction. The National Guard units were also among the main ones in Chernihiv. During active fighting, border guards came to the city from everywhere.

**11:17**

If we count all the volunteers and territorial defence forces, which will be discussed later, the enemy still had an advantage both in the number of fighters and especially in the number of equipment.

**11:27**

They knew that there only were the first tank and 58th infantry brigade. Two brigades against three brigades and half of the tank division — it was clear they had an advantage.

**11:43**

In total, there were 21 tanks in Chernihiv in March. They scattered in each main direction leading to the centre. The ratio was 1 to 10, 1 to 20.

**11:58**

Perhaps, it was similar to Aliosha Popovych fighting the eight-armed, eight-headed serpent. That's what it felt like.

**12:05**

One of its heads appeared in Ripky — and it was cut off. Another head in Kyselivka — cut off as well. And one more in Pivtsi. All its heads were appearing here and there all over the Chernihiv region.

**12:20**

If we were to assess the Chernihiv direction, the enemy had enough forces and means to take the city.

**12:35**

But what was the importance of Chernihiv for the Russians? Control over the city was necessary for the offensive in Kyiv. Chernihiv, if captured, was to become a logistics hub for Russian troops halfway to the capital.

**12:48**

Having held Chernihiv, we managed to avoid the Russians getting one of the main directions to attack Kyiv from the north and east.

**13:00**

There is such a notion as a "supply link". The Brovary group, which came from Konotop, had a supply link of up to 300 kilometres.

**13:17**

And when there are about 15-20 thousand troops and 5-6 thousand vehicles, you require a lot of equipment to ensure the supply of food, ammunition and everything you need.

**13:30**

The link that went to Chernihiv was much shorter, half as long. By going along the M-01 highway, they would solve this problem more efficiently.



**13:43**

During the first day of the invasion, the Russians wanted to advance as far as possible. They were advancing very quickly. There were even instances when they were one and a half or two kilometres away from a bridge, so we had to hastily blow it up to make them go in the direction we wanted.

**14:05**

We forced them to get off the main roads and made them go to the fields. They got completely bogged down in the swamps, where we could get them easily.

**14:17**

According to the initial plan, the Armed Forces had to keep the defence on the line "Ripky-Horodnia".

**14:23**

Due to the rapid advance of the Russians, the plan had to be adjusted on the spot.

**14:28**

Thank God, we went a bit off the plan. As sad as it is to admit, but we were not ready to fight with such a horde in an open field, because we would have been swept away.

**14:41**

And we would have lost both human and technical resources. They would have entered Chernihiv with no trouble. Therefore, we had to disperse them and fight where we needed — in Chernihiv.

**14:58**

Yes, they shelled the city, but we had to pull them away. If the enemy is strong, we should partially give up our territory to inflict damage on small groups. Here and there, exsanguinating its main units.

**15:22**

On February 24, units of the 1st Separate Tank Brigade were sent to meet the Russians near Chernihiv.

**15:33**

Ripkinskaya highway near Chernihiv. Here, on the evening of February 24, Russian troops, who had marched dozens of kilometers before that, were ambushed.

**15:41**

Dmytro Ordynskyi, Company Commander of the 1st Separate Severia Tank Brigade: At first, we had a mission to support the artillery to stop the enemy on its approach. In other words, our Grad systems were firing, and we had to cover their flanks.

**15:54**

Mykhailo, Squad Commander: And just as we were taking a smoke break and loading ammunition, we heard our rocket systems start to work, launching a full package of shells.

**16:07**

We asked "Hunk" what was going on, and he answered: "This is war". Before that, a week earlier, we conducted a demonstration and went to these frontiers. There is a swampy area behind Ripky, so a mechanized company was heading there.

**16:26**

They knew the terrain well. Thanks to this, the tank brigade held this invasion back.

**16:36**

One after another, the first tank brigade destroyed two vanward columns of Russians.

**16:46**

Their reinforced company tactical group was driving with tanks, at full speed. So we pulled the tanks away and ambushed them. I still had time to call the battalion commander, the communications were working.

**16:59**

I told him to let them approach and order the artillery to work. And we started with the battery, and so their first column was almost completely destroyed at the front.

**17:17**

They did not even understand anything. They thought it was their artillery covering them, I guess.

**17:28**

Their second column followed the same path. We took a captive and asked that fool: "Why did you even go there?" And he said: "We were told those were destroyed Ukrops' tanks."

**17:39**

They even lied to their men, so they wouldn't be afraid. Thus, in a couple of hours, the second column was destroyed in almost the same place.

**17:50**

During the battle, the reserve under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Artem Linkov went to help the main forces.

**17:57**

An officer from the North gave an order, saying there was a column coming from the direction of Homel. There was a fight, but something was wrong with our men. There was a slack in the defence! Two columns met, and there was a counter battle, but it wasn't clear who was winning.

**18:08**

At first, Artem Linkov had only three tanks under his command. We departed with three vehicles. My vehicle broke down, and another one got overheated and stopped working.

**18:17**

So I reached the checkpoint near the turn to Khaliavyn with only one tank. I told the men there to go along since we had to help the guys in the battle.

**18:30**

At least we could get those who were still alive out of there. They said the infantry was coming with two IFVs, so I could take them. I got into my tank, waited for those two IFVs, and then we headed off.

**18:44**

By the time I arrived, there were destroyed columns with broken IFVs.

**18:53**

I looked around and saw an IFV right in front of me. I said to the gunner: "See the IFV? Fire." And he was like: "For real? I gotta shoot at the IFV?". "Yes, for real, it's no training!"

**19:02**

So he shot from our tank, and the IFV's turret blasted into the air.

**19:10**

A dead Russian soldier was lying near a truck. Then we started to inspect the equipment.

**19:22**

There was one working "Tigr", so the guys from the infantry guys took it as a trophy. There was also a BMP-2. We knew how to use it. I drove it to the road and told the tank driver to go ahead since he had our flag.

**19:36**

Meanwhile, I had nothing but these Russian markings. The last thing I wanted is to get killed by my people.

**19:45**

While taking the equipment, I examined the chevrons and figured we were up against a marine reconnaissance.

**19:52**

On the first day of the invasion, a reconnaissance platoon of Russia's 74th motorized rifle brigade surrendered.

**19:59**

Konstantin Buynichev, Russian invader

**20:10**

On February 24, Russian troops stopped on the Velyki Osniaky–Sedniv line — about 25 kilometres from Chernihiv.

**20:24**

The blockade of Chernihiv is complete, and units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine offer no resistance.

**20:40**

While Konashenkov reported on the blockade of Chernihiv and said that the Ukrainian army was not resisting, on February 25, the Armed Forces smashed another convoy of Russian equipment — this time on the outskirts of Horodnia.

**21:00**

The column lined up in three rows of armoured vehicles. This was reported by the local resistance movement. The missile division hit it, and the whole convoy burned down.

**21:22**

Armoured vehicles: IFVs, APCs, tanks, artillery. Up to 20 pieces of equipment were destroyed.

**21:35**

In the Ripky direction, the Russian army is making a second attempt to break through to Chernihiv.

**21:41**

The village of Khaliavyn is about 13 kilometres from the centre of Chernihiv. And at this crossroads, on the morning of February 25, the Armed Forces faced the occupation troops.

**21:51**

We got the order to start a battle with them, to force them to deploy in combat formation, and at that time, our artillery had to work.

**22:04**

On the morning of the 25th, civilians called us and said that a convoy was moving in the Ripky direction.

**22:13**

Up to fifty units of Russian equipment were moving towards Chernihiv. We had two tanks on the defensive. One was over here, the other on the right side, a little closer. We were on duty at the checkpoint at the time.

**22:27**

As infantrymen, we were ordered to reinforce our tank group. In total, we had three IFVs. One remained to cover the tanks, and two went to the psychiatric hospital, so they could not outflank us.

**22:40**

Here was the tank, and I took a position on the elevation right there. We lay in hiding. We had some RPG-26, so-called "Flies". So, we lay down and handed out these weapons to the others.

**22:59**

Then we sent a soldier — the one with iron balls, so to speak — to the very checkpoint to watch for the convoy.

**23:10**

Andrii was the soldier at the checkpoint. Andrii, Squad Commander of the 1st Separate Severia Tank Brigade: - I'm nostalgic for the checkpoint. - Nostalgic? - Just kidding.

**23:18**

The morning of February 25 was nice and sunny. I hated it when I figured that the village of Velyka Vis, where I come from, was still under occupation.

**23:28**

I was worried sick about my family. I stayed to watch the checkpoint and noticed the enemy's convoy. Then I threw a couple of bursts and began moving to the left, where my men were.

**23:50**

After that, we informed our senior command, and they raised the "bird" in the air, and then we heard our artillery working.

**23:58**

Our tanks were quicker to react and started shooting and manoeuvring first. I literally fell in love with the tankers and artillery during this period.

**24:12**

And the combat started. We still had our IFV standing there. My gunner and driver mechanic was hiding in a covered position.

**24:22**

He did not see the enemy himself, but we told him where to shoot. We made up to five shots, after which the tanks began to retreat,

**24:31**

since there was such a furious barrage of fire that we could not raise our heads while lying there.

**24:41**

The battle was taking place near this bus stop. Six months later, there are still shell holes on the road. Do you see this hole in the road sign?

**24:50**

It is the result of a tank shot — the Russians were aiming at the armoured vehicles of the 1st Tank Brigade.

**24:56**

Tanks were shooting. They mostly fired at our IFVs. When I got into it later, I saw that the turret did not turn at all — there was a hole in it from a shell.

**25:13**

Everything went just as we had planned. We stopped them, the battle started, they deployed in combat formation, and our artillery began to fire, while we had to go back to Chernihiv.

**25:27**

We started to move back together, thinking that the mechanic would leave that IFV behind since there was no chance to start it.

**25:37**

But he had balls, so he got into it, and soon I could hear the IFV moving. We thought it was hopeless. But he managed to drive away from there.

**25:47**

We were heading to ZAZ-district, but got ambushed. We got into this damaged IFV, started moving, and then got shot twice by the RPG, hitting the vehicle while we were in it.

**26:00**

After the second shot, I fell, and the shooting started. I was wounded in my arm and got shrapnel in my leg.

**26:08**

In this battle, Oleksandr's commander Serhii “Hunk” Telushkov got killed.

**26:13**

He was 24 years old and was to get married in two weeks. In August, his bride would give birth to their son and name him Serhii after his late father.

**26:26**

While the battle in Halyavin continues, Russian troops are preparing to meet them already at the entrance to Chernihiv from the side of the ZAZ microdistrict.

**26:33**

Serhii Romanenko, Sergeant Major of the National Guard: The majority was from the territorial defence. They all came here: some by civilian cars, some on foot.

**26:43**

Every hour, 10–15 more people were coming here. Their number was growing every minute. Around 12 o'clock there was a command in battle.

**26:54**

At the turn to Polubotky there was a Russian tank, I saw it shooting, and the shell flew over our heads. Then there was an explosion, and saw that the tank was smoking, but it managed to escape behind the corner.

**27:15**

After a while, about an hour and a half, our IFV with no turret came back. There were wounded and killed people. Paramedics were working.

**27:27**

Following the battle near Khaliavyn, the OC North reports on the destruction of 10–15 units of enemy equipment.

**27:35**

We hit five enemy tanks at once. Unfortunately, several of our vehicles were also shot. The enemy tried to surround one of the companies.

**27:41**

I remember them wanting to surround one of our companies, but they managed to get out. The brigade commander Khoda made the right decision.

**27:54**

He took them a few kilometres away, conducted a counterattack, and so our people stayed alive. We lost two or three vehicles back then, but so did the enemy we destroyed them in the first battle. The 1st Tank Brigade.

**28:08**

We are military men, and we have been serving for many years. But it was our very first real battle.

**28:14**

It was very scary, but the adrenaline was doing its work. After all, it feels great to know you have kicked the orcs' butts!

**28:24**

What are they like in the battle? They are just like orcs: just go in herds with no tactics.

**28:32**

On February 25, they were already in the Rivnopillia area, Khaliavyn and could even see the northern outskirts of Chernihiv.

**28:39**

They started approaching the city from the west, went down through Horodnya, and got near the area of Brusyliv.

**28:50**

“Tourist”, Fighter of the State Border Guard Service: You can see our landfill over there. Russians were all over this place.

**28:57**

On the same evening Viktor Nikoluk, who had not yet managed to get to Chernihiv, recorded a video message.

**29:03**

We will win, and our victory will be beautiful.

**29:23**

Do you remember the story of the National Guard soldier Serhii Romanenko about dozens of volunteers willing to stop the Russian breakthrough to Chernihiv?

**29:31**

They came to the military commissariat in the very first hours of the invasion. Here are some of their stories.

**29:37**

Kostiantyn “Cossack”, Soldier of a Separate infantry battalion : On February 24, I took my wife from the maternity hospital, and took her to Kulykivka, to my parents. And my brother and I went to the military commissariat.

**29:49**

Oleh, Soldier of a Separate infantry battalion: I spent two days going back and forth from the flat to the basement. I was so sick of it. So, I told my wife: “That’s it, I’m going to commissariat.”

**29:58**

Serhii Vorobiov, Soldier of the Regional military commissariat: I have never been in the army, and, to be honest, I even used to say that we didn’t need such an army.

**30:04**

Nobody was going to attack us. But somehow, on February 24, I figured the war had started. I came home and almost immediately said I would probably go to the military commissariat.

**30:18**

I was standing in line. It was unreal. The commissariat was on the fourth floor, but we were standing outside. The line seemed endless.

**30:27**

Serhii “Kalyna”, Officer of the 119th Territorial defence brigade: I did not doubt that the citizens would defend the city. But I didn’t expect so many of them to come.

**30:34**



They didn't have enough weapons for everyone. There were about 5–6 thousand people: both young people, who for various reasons had never served in the army, and elderly people, people over 50.

**30:45**

Roman Lashchevskyi, Officer of the 119th Territorial defence brigade: I came with my lad. We were receiving weapons.

**30:55**

We submitted applications for joining the territorial defence and stood in line for weapons, but there was an air raid alarm. Then we were ordered to dig in as there was a possibility of a breakthrough.

**31:03**

So we were digging the trenches from 11 AM to 4 PM. When we finished, there were no more weapons. I received a gun four days later.

**31:23**

Vladyslav Mohylnyi, Officer of the 119th Territorial defence brigade, ATO-veteran: Tanks were shooting somewhere nearby, planes were flying, and we had a race for machine guns.

**31:37**

Those, who managed to get one, ran to the trucks. And those who didn't — ran to the basement as soon as a plane could be heard. Again and again.

**31:47**

Dmytro Bryzhynskyi recalls that before the influx of volunteers, they lacked fighters to defend Chernihiv.

**31:53**

What had we got? Thirty people from the penitentiary service, forty police officers, one KORD unit, and a National Guard battalion — but it was only a company at the time.

**32:10**

We had minimal personnel, and I knew this was not enough for street fighting.

**32:17**

And when on the second day, a military commissioner came to me, saying there were 1,500 people,

**32:25**

I asked him who were they, and where did they come from. And he told me they were volunteers who came to the military commissariat to defend their city.

**32:36**

Chernihiv was preparing for street fighting. Checkpoints and barricades were set up on the main streets while citizens were making Molotov cocktails.

**32:45**

We started building barricades across the city. There were over five barricades in each direction. The Russians conducted aerial reconnaissance and saw that the city was preparing to defend itself.

**32:59**

They felt the resistance and realized they could not simply walk in.

**33:09**

Destruction of bridges and resistance of people from the settlements in the rear of the enemy slowed down the Russian offensive on Chernihiv.

**33:16**

That is how the occupation troops were met in Bakhmach, Koriukivka and Horodnia.

**33:29**

They expected the total support of the locals, which turned out not to be the case. They were taken aback.

**33:36**

The rapid advance on the first day played a cruel joke on the Russians as well. The occupation troops got lost and didn't know the roads — for example, on the first day of the invasion in the village of Maksaky in the Menshchyna region, two Russian tanks drowned in the Desna River — they were looking for a crossing that did not exist.

**33:54**

They were lost and didn't know the way. They had a big year-long preparation stage studying the terrain at various training grounds, but, probably, when you ride in a tank, you can't see what is happening around you.

**34:16**

Besides, all road signs with the names of settlements were removed. It helped a lot. It really did because even we get lost sometimes.

**34:46**

BATTLE OF PIVTSI

**34:52**

February 24. It is what the airfield "Pivtsi" in Chernihiv looked like when the National Guard fighters came to defend it.

**35:00**

Kostiantyn Haltsev, Chief Sergeant of the National Guard: There was confusion in the team, especially among the young servicemen who had just joined the military service. They were scared.

**35:08**

The order came, and we spent half a day taking positions, stretching the tires, and blocking the airfield with IFVs to make it impossible to land there. All working equipment would get moved behind the runway.

**35:25**

The airfield to the north of Chernihiv was of strategic importance and was the main target of Russian troops in the first days of the invasion.

**35:32**

I questioned the reconnaissance platoon commander, and he said that the objective was to capture the Pivtsi airfield. It was to be used as a logistics centre for the deployment of equipment.

**35:44**

Send in the helicopters. That would be easy. I think that with their capacities, they could've quickly got this airfield working to use it for assault aviation.

**35:56**

On the evening of February 24, the National Guard in Pivtsi was reinforced with units of the Armed Forces and tanks.

**36:03**

Volodymyr Kyslovets, Sergeant Major: It was said there was a possibility of helicopters landing here. If it had happened, the city would've been doomed.

**36:13**

There was a radar station on the hill, but it had already burned down.

**36:19**

The National Guardsmen were standing there, so we asked them what happened. They said a rocket hit the radar.

**36:32**

The first night passed calmly. The next day at 10:30 AM, near the airfield in the area of Shevchenko village, they noticed the vehicles moving.

**36:38**

The tank commander ran, shouting: "To the battle!" There was a breakthrough.

**36:50**

At first, they tried to break through the field, but our tankers shelled them and hit four of their tanks.

**36:56**

When a tank is not burning, it smokes white. So our tankers were shooting these smoke clouds.

**37:13**

They did a great job and never missed the target. They stood in the covering and were almost invisible. And when an enemy tank moved somewhere close, they would storm out of the bushes, make a shot, and go back.

**37:36**

The Armed Forces repelled Russia's first attack attempt. Nature was also on our side — Russian equipment bogged down in the fields.

**37:44**

At first, they tried to go through the field and the ditch — an old tributary of the Stryzhnya river.

**38:00**

Later, the positions of our soldiers at the airfield would get shelled by artillery.

**38:06**

It literally rained shells. They used everything: AGS, Grad, mortar, and barrel artillery.

**38:18**

Three out of our five tanks broke. So to make a shot, we had to load them manually. Nowadays, manual loading is no option in combat.

**38:35**

And it was clear that there would be a second attempt to break through, but we did not have any resources to repel it.

**38:48**

Soldiers at the airfield were replaced by other units. After the first failure, the Russians wouldn't give up on Pivtsi.

**39:01**

Ahead is the battle of Epicentre. Russians would try to surround the city and enter from the south, General Nikoluk would get ambushed,

**39:10**

and occupation troops would get defeated in Kolychivka yet manage to capture Lukashivka. [Learn more about this in the second episode.](#)

**In Episode 2 werden wir Ihnen über Folgendes berichten:**

- Das Gefecht am Einkaufszentrum Epicentre: Wie es den ukrainischen Streitkräften gelang, den russischen Kommandanten Schtschetkin gefangen zu nehmen;
- Die Russen, die Tschernihiw von Westen her umgingen: warum sie versuchten, die Sparta-Stellung zu zerstören;

- Tschernihiw's „Chornobaivka“: warum das Dorf Schestowyzja berühmt wurde und wie viele Russen dort getötet wurden;
- Gequetschter“ Kontrollpunkt und Hinterhalt: wie Generalmajor Nikoluk die Russen in Jahidne bekämpfte;
- Versuche, Tschernihiw zu umzingeln: wie die russische Armee in Kolitschiwka besiegt wurde;
- Die Kämpfe um Lukaschiwka: Wie die russischen Brüder Butusin, die auf der Seite der Ukraine kämpften, starben.

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### **Transkript Teil 3**

**0:01**

The Russians are making an attempt to enter Chernihiv the next day, February 26. They are now attacking through the village of Tovstolis, breaking through the Ukrainian checkpoint.

**0:13**

Russian armored vehicles - tanks and BMPs – are moving into the outskirts Chernihiv - here, in the area of the “Epicenter” hypermarket, and even park near one of the high-rise buildings.

**0:27**

Leading the formation is Leonid Shchyotkin, chief of staff of the 35th motorized rifle brigade. This breakthrough will be the greatest success of the Russian army in Chernihiv.

**0:34**

That is if you can call a success [the operation that resulted in] a burned Russian tank, a captured Russian commander, and Russian armored vehicles captured as trophies.

**0:53**

Battle at the "Epicenter"

**0:59**

On the morning of February 26, Kostyantyn Haltsev's unit held defense in the area of Kiltseva Street.

**1:05**

Kostyantyn Haltsev, chief sergeant of the National Guard: We went to look and reconnoiter the situation. We literally got here and saw 2 tanks that jumped here along the far side of this green building.

**1:20**

The tank, in which was the Russian commander Leonid Shchyotkin, manages to shoot at a high-rise building and drives out onto the Kiltseva Street.

**1:27**

On the outskirts of the city, enemy tanks are met by the soldiers of the Armed Forces, who are not yet morally ready for such battles.

**1:34**

Leonid Khoda, commander of the Siverska 1st separate tank brigade, recipient of the Hero of Ukraine award: On February 24, when I give the order to drive the tanks into the yards, the soldiers look at me wide-eyed and say:

**1:44**

“But these are people’s fences”. This is our Ukrainian culture, the mentality that does not allow us to somehow drive our equipment into someone else’s yard, to break something.

**1:58**

Shchyotkin’s tank headed for the Pivtsi airfield. After driving a hundred meters along Kiltseva Street, he was ambushed by fighters of the 1st tank brigade.

**2:06**

Here they are - Artur Olefirenko and Maksym Borysenko. We wanted to talk with them in more detail about the circumstances of the battle, but the guys have been fighting in the hottest areas of the front for several months now.

**2:18**

This attempt to speak to them came at a time of relative quiet on the front line.

**2:28**

So let’s listen to what they told our colleagues from the 1+1 Channel. Artur Olefirenko, commander of the company of the 1st Siverska separate tank brigade: There were 7 tanks and 7 infantry fighting vehicles with infantry.

**2:40**

“The second most powerful army of the world” yet advancing just like in World War II. The main thing was that the battalion commander or whoever was in charge rides at the head of the convoy. And our task was not to let this enemy pass deep into Chernihiv.

**2:54**

We hid behind the fence and waited for this enemy. We used “live bait,” so to speak.

**3:04**

Kostyantyn Haltsev, chief sergeant of the National Guard: They first shot his caterpillar tread, while the shot of the Russian tank missed its target. Because the caterpillar tread flew off, the tank began to spin, turn sideways. He was turned sideways, so his second shot hit the engine and fuel tanks.

**3:21**

Mechanic Dmitriy Opoikov dies in a Russian tank, injured Shchyotkin and gunner Mikhail Kulikov manage to get out of the burning tank and hide in the shed of the nearest house. After negotiations, both surrender.

**4:07**

This young guy came out, and he says that the chief suffered contusion, he can't hear anything. They looked awful. Torn puffer boots, like homeless bums. Uniforms of any which kind, torn, dirty, all black.

**4:25**

The absurdity is, of course, that they stupidly throw their soldiers to slaughter. The commander who was captured.

**4:32**

I talked to him, I said: What is the point of the attack? - We were assigned, we are going until we die. – Well, okay. And the result? Here you have sent your soldiers. - Well, they will, like, send more.

**4:42**

Ukrainian projectice also caught up with the second Russian tank that broke through to Chernihiv. Maksym Borysenko, tank commander of the Siverska 1st separate tank brigade: Their other vehicle, which wanted to break through further, I had enough courage under the fences to shoot and hit another of their tanks, hoping not to damage anything for the people's house. But didn't finish it. I just set it on fire.

**5:03**

Other Russian BMPs and tanks involved in the breakthrough are gathering in the parking lot near this new building. This video was taken by a surveillance camera and it shows very clearly the moment when it dawns on the Russians that things are not going according to plan.

**5:24**

They lost the chain of command. Because there was a battalion commander in one tank. And after that, those who remained, they ran away.

**5:36**

The first armored group that jumped out, it got lost and did not have a clear task.

**5:42**

We took the charts of advancement from the commanders, straight from Google, and saw that these first units did not have the task to enter the city.

**5:54**

Their task was to blockade the city and ensure the advance of the main forces in the direction of Kyiv.

**5:59**

Another Russian BMP, which reached Chernihiv and opened fire, is destroyed by the fighters in the territorial defense unit.

**6:05**

That BMP was burned. It burned with all the crew and all the infantry that was there.

**6:11**

Attempted Russian offensive ends in failure - 7 Russian tanks and 7 BMPs with infantry are stopped by 4 of our tanks and up to 70 infantrymen.

**6:19**

Dmytro Bryzhynskyi calls this moment one of the key moments during the defense of Chernihiv. Dmytro Bryzhynskyi commanded the defense of Chernihiv at the beginning of the Russian invasion: From the side of Pivtsi, the "Epicenter", the situation there is difficult.

**6:32**

Because there is an open area, wide, and there the enemy could deploy and move very calmly. And they had such an area there that they could advance and reach the city center.

**6:47**

It is very difficult to find an enemy in the city. We understood that they are difficult for the enemy, if they enter in columns, and in the future for the clearing operation. Because the territorial defence units that were in the city, they were not really prepared for the urban warfare.

**7:16**

The result of the battle is that the defenders of Chernihiv get trophies - a tank, a BMP (armored personnel carrier) and a BTR (infantry fighting vehicle). Russian troops abandon them while fleeing. T-72 is taken as a trophy by Artem Linkov.

**7:27**

His unit of three tanks was simply sent here during the battle from Kyinka to stop the breakthrough. According to preliminary information, a tank battalion was supposed to enter Chernihiv at that time.

**7:37**



Artem Linkov, commander of the training battalion: I received an order to advance to the "Epicenter" and immediately attack the tank battalion.

**7:45**

Tank battalion, this is - if all vehicles are in working order –31 tanks. Very unequal forces, 1 to 10. An order is an order, it must be obeyed. I think, oh well, maybe I'll survive.

**8:05**

You know, men never ask for help, but when they do, they need it. Because that's all, the last cry of the soul. And when the officer from the North shouts, come on, run for the "Epicenter", because there is trouble there.

**8:15**

I understand that if the colonel shouts "Trouble", then it is definitely "Trouble".

**8:28**

The Russian breakthrough was dealt with even without the reserves of Artem Linkov. Arriving at the end of the battle, he finds an abandoned Russian T-72 in a field near the road to Tovstolis.

**8:48**

He records this whole process on video. The first days of this aggression were so chaotic, everyone was scared. People, military, everyone is scared.

**8:59**

And I posted this video to show that we too can fight, and we don't need to be afraid. No matter how many tanks arrive there: 100, 200, it doesn't matter. We can also fight well with three tanks.

**9:13**

Second video - already with a trophy Russian armored personnel carrier, Artem Linkov films for his father, who lives in Russia, his friends do not believe in the Russian invasion.

**9:40**

The next day, February 27, the Russians will hit the positions of Ukrainian fighters near the "Epicenter" with a missile.

**9:50**

I was wounded in the head. The gunner's leg was broken by the shock wave.

**10:02**

I was already lying on the ground and I see that the tank crews began to get out. And that's when the artillery began its work. The 152 caliber was working, and the tank of the Hero of Ukraine was hit right in front of my eyes.

**10:22**

Oleksiy Seniuk, the tank commander, he died right before my eyes. I already lifted my head, I see that the tank is on fire, he shouts "I am burning", then the ammunition set detonated, he was thrown out of the tank and that was it.

**10:44**

The "Epicenter" area will be shelled continuously during the blockade of Chernihiv. On February 28, Russian troops will destroy the hypermarket itself.

**11:03**

The line of defense here ran right along the border of the residential area. The field behind the "Epicenter" was already considered a "gray zone".

**11:10**

These were already the outer positions, there was no one between this position and the enemy. Further out it was already mined. There were guys with a machine gun.

**11:20**

There were trenches right along the creek in the birch grove. On March 14, soldier Mykyta Melnyk died there during shelling. A young guy. He was in the trench with his father. Father survived, son died.

**11:37**

Civilians died from the Russian shelling. On March 16, not far from here, a projectile hit a queue of people waiting for bread - 14 people died. Buildings next to the contact line are also shot from tanks with direct fire.

**11:53**

This is building number 154. Here we see how purposefully, with precision they destroyed the stair riser from the tank. For a tank, a kilometer or two kilometers, it is very easy to aim and shoot.

**12:10**

A retiree Oleksandr Chalysh lives in this house. We decided to tell his story because it is very revealing. The man is 70, and 4 years ago he suffered a stroke - due to the ailments, he could not read and write.

**12:24**

The man was rehabing himself by walking to Tovstolis. He walked there with his dog until, on February 26, he saw a convoy of Russian tanks. Without hesitation, he picked up his own rifle and, together with the military, patrolled his own neighborhood for a month.

**12:41**

Oleksandr Chalysh, retiree: In the morning it started at 6:30 and went until 6-7 in the evening. After a stroke, all was behind me. But I felt the power! I felt that I was still needed for our native Ukraine!

**13:10**

Here, boys, is the rifle that I walked with, and that protected both me and the city! 60 pieces, all loaded with buckshot and bullets. Well, we wanted to meet them.

**13:24**

I shoot a hare on the first try. A Russian I would kill at once! “Sparta”

**13:29**

While Chernihiv is recovering from the first battles, Russian troops bypass the city from the west, hoping to reach the highway to Kyiv.

**13:36**

These plans are hindered by the blown-up bridge in Shestovytsia, and also the village of Kyinka, which is basically the western gates to Chernihiv, where the units of the Armed Forces are being concentrated.

**13:46**

Serhii, code name “Docent”, soldier of the 119th Territorial Defense Brigade: If you actually look at what was here in this Kyinka, it would be very difficult for them to pass here.

**13:52**

The military had a lot of weapons. The military had the mindset such that, if they were alive, no one would have passed through here. There were both grenade launchers and ambushes.

**14:08**

On February 28, Kiyinka was fired at with 2 packages of cluster munitions - three policemen were killed and 16 more were injured.

**14:16**

Positions in the forest outside the village, near the key clover leaf road interchange, are occupied by the troops of the regional and district recruitment centers – both regular personnel and those called up for mobilization, such as Serhii Vorobyov.

**14:29**

So that you understand, at that time in the whole military recruitment and mobilization office, there were only 1-2 officers and 2 shifts to guard the checkpoint, and there was a cat there. That is, the entire military recruitment center was dispersed to all of the positions.

**14:47**

Positions in this forest will be called “Sparta”. Why 40 Spartans? Because living conditions were very difficult. It was so cold that you wake up from pain and realize that this pain is just an uncontrollable shiver.

**15:01**

During the first few nights, I thought that I would not survive, but would simply freeze to death.

**15:07**

The main task of the “Spartans” was to not let the enemy convoys pass on this road. For this, we made the roadblocks and also prepared to meet the Russian armored vehicles.

**15:16**

We were given 4 RPGs for a certain number of launches. We have no armored vehicles, no helmets, no underbarrel grenade launchers, only machine guns and RPGs and also F-1 hand grenades, about 2 for each of us.

**15:35**

We didn't have HIMARSes, we didn't have Javelins, but we had a very strong desire to defend the city.

**15:43**

In total, we had about 5 fights here. But they were very short. As a rule, when they sense that there is resistance, they retreat.

**15:55**

After they realized that there was a barricade here and there was resistance, they began to bypass our position through the town of Mykhailo-Kotsyubynske.

**16:04**

Unable to pass these positions, the Russians begin to raze them to the ground. Look at this forest, there is virtually no surviving tree.

**16:12**

They were sure that here we had an entire forest stationed with troops. The fact is that our tanks were working. What is it called there? War of maneuver. That is, they moved to shoot from here, to shoot from there.

**16:27**

I think that from their point of view, if there was a tank and there was a tank. They thought that there was everything everywhere.

**16:33**

Serhii Vorobyov, a fighter of the regional military formation center: This is where we had the first casualties. Here died Volodya Sekh, the captain. We were given the task of occupying the frontline, building firing positions.

**16:47**

There were a lot of battles with tanks, artillery, aircraft, and Grads. Look at this video - it shows just one of these strikes on positions in the forest, two soldiers were killed then.

**16:59**

We received reinforcements of fighters. And we didn't even have time to meet them, because they were killed within something like 2-3 hours.

**17:07**

They were given the task of digging a trench here. And there was an air raid, the first explosion was somewhere near the road.

**17:12**

What you had to do was to lie down on the ground right where you were. And for some reason they jumped up and ran towards the village. A second explosion, and they were killed.

**17:22**

Here also another fighter died from a sniper's bullet. Serhii Vorobyov recalls that he had poor eyesight and the only thing he asked to be delivered to his position were eyeglasses.

**17:33**

I contact the volunteers, I say: "Can I have eyeglasses, the soldier has minus 4 there." They found a pair in Lviv and said that they will be delivered. And one night he was on duty with a thermal imager.

**17:43**

And from that side, we think that there was a pipe under the road. The enemy entered, and the sniper killed him. And in the morning I already call to say: "The eyeglasses are not needed anymore."

**17:51**

CHERNIHIV "CHORNOBAYIVKY" Having a huge advantage in heavy equipment, regardless of losses, the Russian troops continue to move to the south of Chernihiv to the village of Shestovytsia. There they are regularly hit by the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

**18:06**

People were constantly calling and reporting that a convoy had passed here, in such and such a direction, we passed all this information to the commanders, and they were hit there. As we were told then, only 30 percent of their convoy reached Shestovytsia.

**18:26**

Roman Lashchevskyi, a soldier of the Territorial Defense Brigade: From here to the village of Shestovytsia is 2 kilometers. Russians opened fire regularly. Our aviation engaged, their aviation engaged, the intensity of the explosions was off the charts. At times, in just 15 minutes a hundred explosions could be heard.

**18:47**

Control over Shestovytsia and nearby villages was necessary for the Russians to establish a crossing over the Desna river.

**18:54**

On the 28th of February, they unexpectedly constructed a crossing over the Desna in just a few hours, in a spot where theoretically there should not have been a crossing.

**19:07**

They planned out the spot, chopped down a part of the forest there, made a crossing and even managed to bring over the recon and to one BTGr of equipment and personnel.

**19:21**

The situation was saved by the fact that all of this was noticed in time, and, with a direct hit of the “Tochka-U” missile, the crossing was torn to pieces and swept down the stream.

**19:38**

2 days before the events near Shestovytsia, the Armed Forces destroyed another Russian crossing - in Makoshyny near the town of Mena.

**19:48**

The value of our artillery is in the destruction of the enemy. With just the first salvo of the “Uragan” rocket launchers, we hit and burned 10 tanks at once.

**19:58**

Based on the military science, any commander on that side should have rescinded the decision to continue, but they continued anyway, and there were a lot of tanks destroyed, I think no less than a battalion.

**20:11**

The battalion is 30, but there they had more, somewhere up to 60. BTRs, tanks - damaged and destroyed. They were drowning these tanks. They sank three tanks, and there they remained.

**20:19**

It often resembled what later would be called “Chornobayivka.” At that time, the Chornobayivka battle had not happened yet, but the stupidity of the enemy always surprised us, because they move into this one position, they get hit, their tanks sink, yet they continue to move and move into that place, and we are basically destroying a warehouse.

**20:37**

Later on, the village of Shestovytsia would itself earn the glory of the Chernihiv’s “Chornobaivka” - according to the Operational Command “Pivnich” (“North”), during the entire period of hostilities about 40 percent of the Russian troops and equipment entering the village were destroyed.

**20:47**

These video show the consequences of the work of the Ukrainian artillery on March 7. Russian equipment will also be destroyed at the local airfield - from there the invaders fired at Chernihiv itself.

**20:59**

Oleksandr, officer of the headquarters of the Operational Command "Pivnich" ("North"): Shestovytsya airfield, if you look at the map, is in the form of a ship. And this ship, it just magically attracted the enemy. They always drew their forces there, and we were destroying them there very diligently.

**21:13**

Plus the road that led from the airfield to the crossing. The enemy - every day, several times – was mercilessly shelled, but even under fire, they moved across the crossing.

**21:27**

The crossing over the Desna river, which Oleksandr spoke about, was built by the Russians near the village of Shestovytsia in early March. This crossing did not sink under artillery fire.

**21:40**

Oleksandr, officer of the headquarters of the Operational Command "Pivnich" ("North"): This was a special crossing. This is a crossing intended for strategic missile forces. Between the layers of this crossing, there is foam. And we saw that, when there were direct hits of the crossing, there were holes, but the crossing did not sink and stood.

**21:51**

This crossing did help the Russians bypass Chernihiv from the south. On March 3, they occupied the villages of Zolotyanka, Ladyanka, and Yahidne. On this day, Major General Viktor Nikoliuk arrives at the checkpoint near Yahidne. He makes a decision to personally go out and scout the enemy positions.

**22:08**

The soldiers were not morally ready to go beyond the checkpoint. They didn't refuse, they just weren't ready. If we took them with us, we would simply suffer losses, there they would have remained.

**22:21**

Four. Four of us went to recon the objective. There was also a vehicle with the personnel of the 58th brigade. They got through the ambush. They were traveling in the "Ural". And we were in the "Tucson" and we really "shut down" several firing points. Then, unfortunately, Andriy Katkov was killed.

**22:39**

The driver, but he also took part in the battle. One of our special forces troops was also wounded. They began to fire at us with mortars, AGS, then the BTR 82 came out and simply unloaded on us with the 30 mike-mike.

**22:55**

We had to retreat. I had an AK-74, a grenade launcher, an RPG-22 and an RPG-26. I unloaded everything I had, but there were a lot of them. We left in the dark, our infantry met us. We had to learn the word “palyanytsya”.

**23:14**

Because we wouldn't have gotten out without the “palyanytsya”. Then in the morning I made a decision: we went and retrieved the body of Andrii Katkov. There was another battle, we did damage, our scouts burned down the “Tiger”. Then we found out that there were about 6 people there, whom we destroyed. We also destroyed another firing position with a grenade launcher. We took the body and got out on the recon BMP (armored vehicle).

**23:47**

Russians knock out Ukrainian infantry from a checkpoint near Yahidne. Reclaiming the checkpoint would take a fight. Viktor Nikoliuk leads the troops.

**23:55**

Russian checkpoint. It's done, Glory to Ukraine. The commander “took over” the checkpoint.

**24:04**

In the army, all are equal, both generals and soldiers... And before sending a soldier to death, I must also go there first.

**24:09**

We held out for about 4 hours, artillery and mortars began to work us over - 122, 152 mike-mike. Then the “Uragans”, then the “Grads”... then the planes ironed us out ... But we sat tight.

**24:20**

And then a decision was made about the redeployment of equipment and the evacuation of personnel. This saved lives, because at night they launched a rocket-bomb attack and almost nothing remained of the checkpoint.

**24:45**

On March 5, the Russians advance even closer to the southern outskirts of Chernihiv - they occupy the village of Ivanivka located 13 kilometers from the city.

**24:54**



They cover fired (the village of) Ivanivka with artillery, while coming in from the other side. They entered from several sides. The 58th brigade was fighting. Unfortunately, all our BMPs were destroyed. The enemy's equipment was destroyed, but about 2 companies got in, whereas what we had there were 5 BMPs and about 50 personnel.

**25:16**

To complete the encirclement of Chernihiv, the Russian troops have to take the last step.

**25:22**

Battle at the Kolichivka This last step would have to be the village of Kolychivka, basically, the southern gate of Chernihiv. Control over the village would have allowed Russian troops to cut off any connection between Chernihiv and the "big land".

**25:35**

The road behind me leads to the automobile bridge over the Desna - at that time it had not yet been destroyed. On the left - the road to Kulykivka. After the occupation of Ivanivka and Yahidne, the connection with Kyiv was maintained through this village.

**25:49**

Completing the encirclement of Chernihiv would have allowed the Russian army to plan the attack on the city. The attack had to start from the southern direction as well.

**25:58**

We can assume that this was going to happen sometime between March 10th and 15th.

**26:07**

The city would have been divided into sectors, each combat unit would be assigned a specific sector. The priority and direction of the attack on the main sectors would have been determined. The main sectors were the CHP (combined heat and power) plant area and the silicate brick factory area. That is, from the south across the automobile bridge. Everyone expected the capture of these lines.

**26:36**

Code name "Kipish": If they took Kolychivka, there would be no Chernihiv.

**26:45**

On March 7, the Russian army first cover fires at Kolychivka with their artillery, and then armored vehicles enter the village.

**26:52**

It was an enemy breakthrough. A mechanized company, a motorized rifle company, reinforced up to about 2 tank platoons, all took positions.

**27:05**

Hryhoriy, code name “Afghanets”, company commander of a separate rifle battalion: So if we look at Kolychivka, the whole village was completely filled with military equipment.

**27:11**

The first BMP stood at the beginning and they stretched until the very end, I hit the last BTR with the landing party in it, that was closing the column.

**27:23**

They advanced, fired to the right and to the left. Of the houses, only the foundations remained.

**27:34**

Rifle battalion and the National Guard, a lot of them there were coming out of encirclement. Well, what do they have, automatic weapons and RPGs. And there they have tanks and BMPs. Of course, they did not exactly flinch, but maneuvered. In the army is, like what, 3 types of maneuver: envelopment, flanking and withdrawal. We maneuvered, yes.

**27:54**

Russian tanks reach the edge of Kolychivka. Artur, a soldier of the National Guard regiment of the town of Shostka: Before the column entered, artillery and tanks worked us over and they thought that there were no more personnel left. They advanced in a column directly to Chernihiv.

**28:13**

They are met by tankmen of the 58th brigade, units of the National Guard from Shostka and a rifle battalion recruited from volunteers. At a critical moment, Viktor Nikoliuk arrives at the positions.

**28:25**

You know, without any illustrations, just as they portray it in the movies: “After me, not a step back”!

**28:32**

So you understand, the general stands, the subordinate personnel too. Here are BMP explosions, there the tank is on fire. And he is without a bulletproof vest and even without a helmet. He sets the task “You there, you here, I’m in the center.” And they advanced to recapture the position.

**28:48**

Artur, a soldier of the National Guard regiment of the town of Shostka: My grenade launcher was the first to meet the column. After the first shot I was so lucky that I hit the compartment where they have fuel. The tankie caught fire. Then the other shots were accurate.

**29:04**

Over there was a tank, it was unloading on Chernihiv, and when it was unloading on Chernihiv from this side, I hit it in the side, in the engine compartment, and it caught fire. The AS (ammunition set) has unloaded, the turret effing blew off, flew away together with the orcs.

**29:18**

All enemy tanks were destroyed, we captured 1 tank that broke through, the infantry moving in BMP was destroyed. The National Guard unit and the tank unit of the 58th Motorized Infantry Brigade played a major role, because they destroyed the BMP with the unit inside it. We counted about 10 heads that remained, burnt.

**29:51**

We could see them very well. These were the Buryats. “Kipish” was providing fire cover for his brothers-in-arms.

**29:58**

The machine gun overheated, and he had to stop for a while to cool it down. I had 4 rounds and used about 8-9. We charged, we recharged.

**30:13**

Hryhoriy, code name “Afghanets”, company commander of a separate rifle battalion: And in the end, I neutralized this BTR with a direct shot from an RPG. It caught fire, the ammunition set detonated and, maybe, those who remained alive, they retreated.

**30:27**

This junction, on the way out of the village in the direction of Ivanivka, was held by a group of the serviceman with the code name “Jordan”.

**30:33**

Code name “Jordan”: While the “Afghanets” was fighting with a tank and BTR, the column was pulling up. We engaged them from around the corner, near the tile factory. And I was ‘working’ from a position where the silo pit is. Their vehicles, ZIL or Ural, were moving. And I hit their armor with an RPG, it caught fire, and people began to retreat.

**31:06**

The recon guys of the 1st tank brigade, captured the BTR-82 from the Orks and drove back in it. Imagine: a BTR drives out of the line of fire. We almost shot him, thank God we didn’t, our scouts were there. We took this BTR and now it serves our 134th guard battalion.

**31:24**

Separatists' BMP, separatists' tanks, all separatists' armor is on fire. Thank God, our guys have worked then over well. We hold on! Glory to Ukraine! Glory to Heroes!

**31:39**

Code name "Kipish": We are modest, but we can f\*ck them up (laughs) They didn't even take their 300s (wounded). When they were retreating, their cries could be heard in the landings. They mostly tried to take away their equipment.

**32:05**

When they finally came back they were retrieving 'parts', because many were blown up. Our "arta" was doing its job there at that time.

**32:32**

"Afghanets" will be awarded the Order "For Courage" of the 3rd degree by the President of Ukraine for his actions in Kolychivka. Viktor Nikoliuk will once again confirm his reputation as a general who personally leads the troops into into attack.

**32:42**

Owing to him, Kolychivka stood firm. Extreme attack, when tanks, BMPs were destroyed. And he led personnel, that moved forward and recaptured the position in Kolychivka.

**32:59**

This is the usual work of a commander, that is, as defined in the statute: "The commander must be where it matters most." Accordingly, such a decision was made. Not only in Kolychivka but all around our commanders are like that. Everyone wanted to fight, to destroy the enemy.

**33:21**

Battle at the Lukashivka After the defeat in Kolychivka, the Russian army does not stop trying to surround Chernihiv and attacks Lukashivka - a village near the route to Kulikivka is important for controlling both the route itself and all the villages near Desna.

**33:34**

On March 9, the invaders, who had not less than three dozen tanks alone, entered Lukashivka from three sides. The forces were too unequal – the Russians are being held up by 200 Ukrainians, most of them newly mobilized, who, just 2 weeks ago, led civilian lives. In terms of equipment, they have 2 tanks and 4 lightly armored BRDMs. Under such conditions, the soldiers of the Armed Forces hold their defense to the last, destroy enemy armor as they withdraw, and figure out how to escape from Russian captivity.

**34:02**

Volodymyr Haidaichuk, soldier of the 58th separate motorized infantry brigade: To put it simply, they made “cauldron” for us. We could neither get out, nor get in.

**34:08**

On March 9, a unit of the 58th brigade led by Volodymyr Haidaichuk held defensive positions at farm in Lukashivka. For 3 days prior, it has been under the constant fire from Russian troops.

**34:18**

On the 6th, Uragan and Grad missiles were incoming. Over here, to the village, near the cowshed, near the water tower. And, where we had our tank standing the first time, the missile just fell right under the wall and blew off half the head of the guy. He was lying on top of the tank, resting.

**34:49**

Here we had a Kamaz truck. First the tank fired at it, then the BMP began to work it over, and it was set afire. There lie a projectile that flew in that time.

**35:01**

At 7 in the morning on March 9, the Russians launched an assault – their armored vehicles began entering the village.

**35:07**

There was a lot. We didn’t expect even that there would be so much. When they brought us here, they told us to stop the breakthrough and that there would be a maximum of 2 tanks here.

**35:30**

Volodymyr held the defense line at this stream. Seeing the first Russian tank, he managed to take a grenade launcher and shoot.

**35:38**

I crouched, raise the gun, stand up, fire a shot, sit back down, turn around, take a step, and see a man from the 21st battalion crawling. I tell him: “Lie down.” And then I got a sharp slap on the back.

**36:07**

A tank shell flies over the embankment. Volodymyr is wounded in the heel, arm and lung.

**36:13**

I immediately screamed because I could neither breathe, nor move. I could not feel my legs at that moment. I just ripped off the safety and lay there, clenching a grenade. And I understand that if even they start shooting at me and approach me, I understand that, by unclenching my hand, I will take several enemy people with me, or they will simply kill me. I made my choice then.

**36:49**

The grenade is taken from Volodymyr by his comrades and the wounded comrade is carried to the chicken coop. A Russian tank shoots at it three times with direct fire, Volodymyr miraculously survives again.

**37:00**

We were under the debris. Other tankmen came and dug us out. They dragged me into the next room. The BMP and the tank began to shoot, again we were buried. They dug up again. Then they dug me up a third time, dragged me into the next room, then dug a trench and put me there. It was already dark by then.

**37:21**

I no longer felt pain. I would switch off, stuff would fall on me, I would switch off again and felt nothing.

**37:29**

Volodymyr is given an injection, thanks to which he will be able to walk. The fighters are making their way to the neighboring village through the fields.

**37:36**

Halfway to the village of Budy, I realized that I cannot walk, I began to lean on the tankman, I held on to his bulletproof vest and we walked side-by-side. We reached a bridge. I sat down under a tree and immediately “switched off”. I could no longer stand up at all, and I couldn’t breathe either.

**38:03**

They took me in their arms, crossed their hands, and carried me to Budy, about kilometer and a half.

**38:17**

Another group of the fighters - about 60 soldiers, withdrew from the farm earlier and took a different road - to the village of Baklanova Muraviyka.

**38:25**

Oleksandr Zelenskyi, a soldier of the 21st separate rifle battalion, mobilized: There is shooting from there, explosion here, explosion there, blasts from that side. Moving out from the farm, the fighters notice Russian equipment. The road is there - this is how it goes, there was a convoy of 70 vehicles. Oleksandr and his comrades shoot up to 5 trucks with ammunition, these pictures here they took right in the middle of the combat.

**38:49**

We began to hit the column with small arms, and the RPG was lying there. We brought a bag with shots (cut). A Russian BMP (infantry fighting vehicle) was moving towards the fighters hiding in this pit. Oleksandr hits it with an RPG.

**39:02**

Well, while the BMP was looking for us, I said to the commander: “Vova, I’ll f\*ck it?”, - “Go ahead and f\*ck it.” Well, I stuck my head out of this ditch. Shouted “Fire” and fired. Well, they there showed me where to aim. They have a circle sign on the turret. So I fired at the circle.

**39:23**

I understand that there under the turret there should be 2 of them and also a mechanic-driver in the front, so 6 thousand degrees of cumulative jet, so must have been fun. Well, the mech-driver was still trying to get out, so we cut him down a bit there.

**39:43**

The Russians calculate the positions from which the Ukrainians were firing. Our company officer was killed from this machine gun. He brought another bag of ammo. He was hit right under the helmet between the eyes. Oleksandr and his comrades leave Lukashivka through the fields.

**40:03**

And in the field, we were already at the distance where artillery can be used, so the artillery worked them over.

**40:17**

The soldiers of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, who remain in Lukashivka, hold the defense until the last. Into the village entered the Russian tanks, the BMPs. Of course, they threw up smokes, and a special unit entered in. So, 21st battalion and 58th brigade suffered losses. Part of them from the 58th were surrounded and captured.

**40:43**

Brothers Roman and Leonid Butusin die near one of these houses. They are Russian citizens who, in 2014, along with their father immigrated to Ukraine and joined in its defense.

**40:55**

Code name “Viking,” serviceman of the 58th brigade: They overtook an enemy armored personnel carrier or BMP, I don’t remember, and blew it up. Then they retreated to the town and directed the artillery fire.

**41:07**

The brothers fought to the last. Their armor was - a mess of rags and slabs, broken slabs. In each of their helmets there were several bullets. When we found them, the boys were lying one with the other as if they hugged in their last seconds.

**41:29**

“Viking” has its own incredible story, which he told to journalist Yuriy Butusov. In Lukashivka, together with other fighters, he was captured by the Russians, where they immediately began to torture him.

**41:39**

We were tortured by the enemy's battalion commander himself. He came out immediately and met us with a bat. He chose me because he thought I was from the SSO (Special Operation Forces), looked closely at my tattoos... He took out a bat, hit me 5 times on the back, and was trying to learn something from me. For that, he received negative comments, addressed to him.

**42:02**

We were loaded onto the "motola" (MT-LB armored vehicle) They were bringing us as a gift to the "combrig"(brigade commander). On the "motola" we went along the road to Ivanivka. They had a brigade headquarters there.

**42:13**

On the way, the Russians get blown up on their own mines. Ukrainians take revenge on the enemy and flee to their side barefoot: the Russians took away their shoes.

**42:22**

I fell off, but the guys caught me right away. There were 9 of us. The boys jumped, I was already hanging on the rope, my beard saved me, softened the strangulation. The guys found a piece wreckage, cut off my role, cut off everything I was wearing. The crew of this "motola" jumped out, opened the hatch: "Brothers, help." We helped them, closed the hatch. We went into the field, we already heard that the chase for us began. 9 people, all wounded, waited for darkness, came out in 12 hours.

**43:03**

Dmytro Bryzhynskyi calls the battle in Lukashivka one of the most heroic pages of Chernihiv's defense.

**43:14**

In Lukashivka, the military personnel who were there, they understood that tanks were coming, armored vehicles were coming. They stayed and later they showed me photos of how they were fired on again and again. But they carried out their task. Although, what kind of preparation was there? Literally just a week. It was very impressive that the personnel did not leave their positions, realizing that this could be the road to a certain end.

**43:40**

Heroism – that is clear. Because yesterday's farmers, teachers, cooks and everyone. When people found out just how much enemy armor we shredded here. Yes, we also suffered losses, but. And this was the beginning of the war, the Russians were still trained military personnel, not the prison inmates they would use later.

**44:09**



For the battle in Lukashivka, Oleksandr Zelenskyi will be awarded the Order “For Courage” of the 3rd degree by the President of Ukraine.

**44:16**

Well you see, and people say that the President’s family members do not fight in the military. ... Just kidding. Not a relative, just the same last name.

**44:28**

The occupation of Lukashivka lasted 22 days. After the liberation, the bodies of killed Ukrainian soldiers and local residents will be found in the village. From Lukashivka, the Russian military will fire at the evacuation convoys that were breaking through from the blockaded Chernihiv.

**44:41**

The fighters of the Ukrainian Armed Forces will not let the Russians move any further than Lukashivka.

**44:48**

Further up is the village of Baklanova Muraviyka, that is, practically the entire village... we deployed the ATGMs (anti-tank guided missiles) So, any movement of the military equipment, which was carried out here, we hit these targets every day, destroying 1 or 2 units of equipment. And the enemy groups that tried to leave the village, we simply destroyed them.

**45:07**

In the next part, we will tell about the attempts of the Russians to destroy Chernihiv – about the shelling of the city from airplanes and heavy artillery and how our soldiers fought back.

**45:16**

What military targets were in the imagination of Russian generals at the Gagarin Stadium and at the “Ukraine” Hotel? The battle at the skiing base and the battles for the mountain in Novoselivka - what was the price of the heroic defense of a strategic height, on which the Russian planes dropped more than fifty aerial bombs.

**45:33**

Russian DRGs in the city - how many there were and how they operated. Attempts of the invaders to surround Chernihiv - why they failed and the Russians were forced to flee. About all this - in the third part.

**In Episode 3 werden wir Ihnen über Folgendes berichten:**

- Wie unsere Soldaten die russischen Flugzeuge bekämpften. Die Geschichte des legendären Abschusses des Flugzeugs von Pilot Krasnojartsev;

- Wie die russische Armee Tschernihiw zerstörte, wo und von wo aus sie die Stadt angriff, wie unser Militär dagegen ankämpfte, wie die örtliche Bevölkerung ihnen half, wie Luftaufklärung und Korrektoren funktionierten;
- Die dramatischsten Schlachten während der Belagerung von Tschernihiw waren die Kämpfe in Nowoseliwka, die Kämpfe auf dem Berg, das Eindringen der russischen Truppen in die Skistation, in der unsere Sportler vor der Invasion trainierten;
- Wie die Russen versuchten, Tschernihiw vollständig zu umzingeln, wie sie die Straßenbrücke zerstörten, wie sie in dieser Zeit Waren transportierten;
- Russische subversive Gruppen in Tschernihiw: Warum haben die Russen das Hotel Ukraina und das Gagarin-Stadion zerstört?
- Was veranlasste die Russen am 29. März zu einer „Geste des guten Willens“, welche Rolle spielten die Verteidiger von Tschernihiw dabei, und wie planten die ukrainischen Streitkräfte den Lukaschiw-Kessel?

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### **Transkript Teil 3**

**0:16**

At the end of February and the beginning of March, after unsuccessful attempts to take Chernihiv by storm, the Russian army changes its tactics.

**0:23**

Oleksandr, staff officer of OC “Pivnich” (Operational Command “North”): A characteristic of Russians is - when they cannot do something, they start to level it with the ground.

**0:29**

The doctrine of Gerasimov, chief of their General Staff. The scorched earth theory. Just stupid shooting, by wagons, echelons.

**0:51**

On March 3, Chernihiv finds itself under one of the most massive bombardments. On the outskirts of the city, the Russians destroy an oil depot.

**1:01**

And nearly in the very center of Chernihiv, on Chornovola Street, residential buildings are hit by airstrikes.

**1:24**

Almost simultaneously with this strike, the Russian aviation destroys 2 schools in the Podusivka district with 500 kilogram bombs.

**1:38**

At that time, the regional authorities reported 47 dead and dozens of wounded from a Russian airstrike, human rights experts qualify this attack as yet another Russian war crime.

**1:46**

Yaroslav, the commander of the unit of portable anti-aircraft missile systems, sees the consequences of the bombing at his post.

**1:54**

Yaroslav commander of MPADS unit: I can't even tell you what it was like. I thought it was my fault because I didn't shoot down the plane. Yaroslav gets a chance to shoot down a Russian plane the next day, March 4.

**2:04**

At one in the morning he received a command that an air raid was being prepared. Our aviators were not in the air.

**2:14**

In such a raid, there always were three or more planes approximately. In a day, there could be 2 or 3 or 4 such raids.

**2:21**

Yaroslav's comrade saw the plane through the binoculars. They thought that it would be easy for them, and they flew at very low altitudes - a kilometer, two kilometers. And the Igla (portable surface-to-air missile launcher) can reach 2.5 kilometers.

**2:35**

Yaroslav took aim with the Soviet-made "Igla" MPADS and hit the target: on the first try and on the first combat launch in his life.

**2:42**

The Russian airplane was just flew behind the building. And I immediately aimed right outside of the building and waited for him to appear.

**2:52**

As soon as he reappeared on the other side of the building, I launched and the missile hit the target. This was an SU-35 aircraft. It fell on the territory not under our control, somewhere in the fields.

**3:06**

This was my first combat launch. I was lucky, it turned out. Because “Igla” is less effective than other MPADS.

**3:15**

“Igla” is 33 percent effective. So, it is necessary that 3 people from the in the crew to shoot with intervals.

**3:25**

On March 5, Ukrainian soldiers shoot down the SU-34 of the Russian ace pilot Oleksandr Krasnoyartsev. They were using all possible launchers to aim at his plane.

**3:42**

A shot from “Igla” at Krasnoyartsev’s plane is made by the mobilized manager of “Ukrposhta” (Ukrainian Postal Service) Serhii Chyzhykov.

**3:48**

A launch that hits the Russian SU-34 is made by the border guards using this same Soviet-made anti-aircraft gun. This is done by the unit under the command of Vladyslav Kryvolap.

**3:57**

Vladyslav Kryvolap, chief of the border outpost of fire support: In the air, we can hit targets at an altitude of up to 1,800 meters. For ground targets – 2,500 meters.

**4:04**

He flew very brazenly, at an altitude of up to a thousand meters. Why so low? Probably for the purpose of sheltering from more powerful anti-aircraft systems and simply did not expect that we could be on this direction. We shelled him until the end. Fully 2 boxes of shells went into it.

**4:22**

Krasnoyartsev’s navigator, Major Krivolapov, dies during landing. Krasnoyartsev himself, a veteran of the war in Syria, who was photographed with Putin and Assad, ejects and falls on a residential house in the Masany neighborhood.

**4:35**

Trying to escape, he shoots a local resident, Vitaly Sergiyenko, who tried to detain him. Krasnoyartsev is captured by the Ukrainian military.

**4:45**

You were just lucky that the civilians didn't tear you to pieces. On the 4th and 5th of March there were already a lot of downed planes over Chernihiv. There were 5-6 planes somewhere during these days.

**4:55**

Russian pilots, welcome to hell! Today, three SU-24 or SU-35 were shot down over Chernihiv.

**5:08**

As the first planes were brought down on the 4th and 5th, the planes began to unmask themselves less and began to fly more at night, when they are less visible. Plus they began to descend less to low altitudes.

**5:27**

Leonid Khoda, Commander of the 1st Separate Severia Tank Brigade, Hero of Ukraine: The turning point came when the first plane was shot down. Then the guys began to believe in the power of the weapons and in their own capabilities.

**5:37**

And psychologically, it opened up in them this sort of a thrill of the hunt. And after that they began to compete with each other to see who could hit more.

**5:48**

In March, a batch of American "Stinger" MPADS arrives in Chernihiv - a more effective weapon for combating enemy aircraft.

**5:56**

Vladyslav Mohylnyi, serviceman of the 119th Territorial Defense Brigade: We arrived, received weapons, we don't know what to do. Started to figure it out. How to do it? There is Internet, there is YouTube. We watched on YouTube, click-click, and we learned.

**6:12**

This is how Vladyslav Mohylnyi talks about his first acquaintance with a "Stinger". I always wanted to become a pilot but it turned out just as the guys here joke: "You don't fly yourself and you don't let the others!"

**6:23**

Together with his comrade Mykhailo Kuprienko, code name "Molodytsya" (Ukrainian for 'young married woman') they would wait for hours - with a 15-kilogram "Stinger" on their shoulders and under the constant

fire – at the post in the “Epicenter” supermarket area in order to catch an enemy aircraft. At midnight on March 14, Vladyslav succeeds.

**6:41**

Some kind of stormtroopers, Sushki (Su aircraft) for sure, but I don’t know which ones. They were just rounding a circle above us. I think he just dropped a bomb and was ascending.

**6:52**

And I caught him at the moment when he was starting to gain altitude. So it turned out that I was shooting blindly - at the sound and a little ahead of it.

**7:12**

“Molodytsya”, the one I was standing next too, shouts “F\*ck it, f\*ck it!”. I launched, it blinded. I launched the rocket, and that’s just when “Docent” calls. “You f\*cked it, you f\*cked it, even made it mushroom cloud!”

**7:27**

The plane fell onto the uncontrolled territory. Then “Molodytsya” said: “That’s it, the next one is mine!”. And even when I came to rotate with him, he remained standing behind me. And he says: “If the plane comes, it will be me!”.

**7:41**

For the next 3 days, he just lived at the post, just for a chance to f\*ck a Russian plane.

**7:47**

No more Russian planes appeared in the “Epicenter” area, and “Molodytsya” continued to lie in wait with the “Stinger” on his shoulder, singing Ukrainian folk songs all the while.

**7:58**

With a Stinger on his shoulder “What a moonlit night”.

**8:06**

Mykhailo Kuprienko, code name “Molodytsya”: This was during an air raid warning, and I was at the ready by then. Information was received that there will be shelling from the air. I was ready and, for about 2 hours, walked around the roof with the rocket launcher. Well, I walked in such a way that I could not be seen.

**8:19**

And my partner stepped out and took a video of me walking and singing.

**8:24**

“Dearest mother of mine” (the first line of a well-known and beloved Ukrainian song)

**8:54**

This is not a song, it is a cry of the soul. When I sang under fire about mom, this is what my soul told me.

**9:08**

When it was very nerve-wracking here, explosions and shots from everywhere, I cheered myself up with songs on my post.

**9:22**

And my partner was so pleased. He was asking, how can I do be like that? I could see that he liked it, and at this height no one could hear me. Well, I cheer up my partner, and all if fine with us.

**9:42**

All in all, during active fighting in Chernihiv region, Ukrainian air defenders shot down 9 Russian planes, 1 drone, and 1 helicopter.

**9:51**

How Chernihiv was being destroyed Those shots from the bombardments

**9:58**

Typical shots of the ‘vistas’ of besieged Chernihiv in March 2022. In this video, residents of the Masany district filmed the shelling of Chernihiv heat and power plant and the Sherstyanka neighborhood.

**10:09**

— Have you heard about the city of Chernihiv? - So. - He is not there. - Well, no. - Leveled to the ground. - And who equalized? Russia? - Yes, our troops have leveled.

**10:21**

Russian artillery and aviation destroys critical infrastructure - until the middle of March, the city is without electricity, mobile communication, and water.

**10:29**

After getting close and blocking Chernihiv, the occupiers are shelling almost every neighborhood. Missiles are coming from the village of Tovstolis in the north, from Zhukotky in the west, from Shestovytsia in the southwest of Chernihiv, and from Ivanivka and Yahidne in the south.

**10:46**

Oleksandr, staff officer of OC “Pivnich” (Operational Command “North”): At first, the enemy’s artillery was lining up up, 12-18 units of 2C19 howitzers and was firing from there.

**10:56**

There were at least 4 divisions from the 120th artillery brigade, at least 2 divisions of the “Uragan” rocket artillery from the 234th rocket brigade. Plus artillery that was part of the battalion tactical groups.

**11:16**

The Russian army has a many-fold advantage in the number of launchers and shells. The advantage was 4-6-8 times. It depended on the period.

**11:25**

In the conditions of the blockade of Chernihiv, Ukrainian artillery is forced to shoot from the territory of the city. I think everyone has seen this legendary video, recorded at the foot of St. Catherine's Church.

**11:37**

We had one small area, on which we maneuvered and tried to perform our tasks efficiently. The enemy, however, was on all sides.

**11:49**

When the maneuver paths were already a bit cut off, and the artillery was engaging from the city, the Grad rockets were constantly working there, as this was the area of their firing positions.

**12:05**

They moved in, maneuvered and fired, including from the St. Catherine's Church.

**12:11**

Leonid Khoda, Commander of the 1st Separate Severia Tank Brigade, Hero of Ukraine: You can say that our artillery gunners balanced like ballerians on their points – they would roll out, fire, and quickly leave.

**12:20**

We were careful to save our missiles, we didn't just shoot anywhere and nowhere, like the Russians do.

**12:26**

Just in one month, the shells count in the thousands. For the most part, the Russians 'assessed' the work of our gunners with obscenities.

**12:35**

In hitting their targets accurately, the Ukrainian armed forces were helped by the civilians who passed the location of the occupiers, by the aerial reconnaissance and by their own observers. A border guard with the code name "Tourist" was watching the enemy on the roof of one of the industrial enterprises in the Masany neighborhood.

**12:50**

Code name "Tourist," soldier of the State Border Service: This place is the strategic height of this area. Here we had visibility of 2-3 kilometers ahead. You can see the approach of the enemy, their dispersion.

**13:00**

On February 24, "Tourist" once again returned to the ranks of the border guards - he served here under contract, and under mobilization during the anti-terrorist operation.



**13:10**

He actually serves as a sniper, but the only thing that he shares about this aspect of his work has to do with the captured Russian ammunition.

**13:18**

We have had a Russian 'Lend-Lease' here. We are very happy with it, good ammunition, very accurate. Thanks to it, we hit the target with precision.

**13:31**

Somewhat more willingly, "Tourist" talks about his work as an observer, which, he adds, brought much more benefit than shooting with a rifle.

**13:41**

He recorded his observations of the enemy in this notebook, drew plans of the location of their troops and equipment, and calculated coordinates.

**13:49**

According to our information, we destroyed a tank, two Ural and one KAMAZ trucks during the reloading, and we reduced their troops by 20 to 25.

**14:04**

This is the central road, the approach to the lake. They hid their tank there. Thanks to the transmitted information, the tank of the 1st tank brigade, code name "Klym," worked out on it and, with the first shot, turned the Russian tank into a pile of scrap.

**14:25**

Here is the drone footage of that hit. The Ukrainian tank demonstrated a "jeweller's precision" in the shot from a closed position.

**14:32**

He hit a target from a distance of 7 kilometers, the target that he didn't see - soldiers of the 1st Panzer Division practiced such exercises before the invasion.

**14:40**

The "Tourist's observation of the enemy from the roof could last for hours. The hardest part of the job was the cold and the shelling.

**14:48**

I was always afraid that I not "flinch" when something depends on me. That is my biggest fear. These are concrete slabs, frozen ground. I had to lie down, then constantly stand on my knees.

**15:04**

At some point we were found out. And immediately the rockets rained onto the roof. Somewhere at 8:21 is when the first ones arrived. Then the neighbors' gardens down below were tilled by the 80-millimeter ones.

**15:22**

One of the missile strikes on Chernihiv – the “Iskander” rocket that hit the “Ukraine” hotel – receives ‘coverage’ from the Russian propagandists.

**15:40**

The hotel was empty at the time of the attack and no one had lived there since February 24. However, if you think that the story of the base of foreign mercenaries in the “Ukraine” hotel is a merely the figment of the of the Russian propagandists' imagination, you are wrong. This fiction migrated there from the Russian military.

**15:57**

The documents were seized in March. Among them was a map. It outlines how the operation to storm Chernihiv took place.

**16:09**

Dmytro Bryzhynskyi, Commander of the defence of Chernihiv at the beginning of the Russian invasion: I was thinking, how interesting. Why did they hit the hotel “Ukraine” after all? And they wrote on their social media that there was a stationing center for foreign mercenaries. And on the map they had a flag there.

**16:27**

One day earlier, on March 11, Russian airforce destroyed the Gagarin Stadium. The answer to the question, what so important the invaders saw in the sports facility will also be found on the captured Russian map.

**16:40**

We were very amused to learn that, as it turns out, we have had here a serious cell of the “Right Sector”. And there are flags and signatures stating that we have a lot of national battalions here.

**16:54**

Do you know where the “Right Sector” headquarters were located? On the stand of the Gagarin Stadium! That is why one bomb flew in there, and then the second. Poor wretches, whoever told them such nonsense!

**17:07**

These people have an ‘idea’ of what Chernihiv is, of the people who live here and of the situation. They were told something in their central military district and off they went to attack!

**17:21**

DRG in Chernihiv Russians received information about the situation in the city and the location of the units of the Ukrainian Armed Forces from the DRGs (Russian sabotage and reconnaissance groups) operating directly in Chernihiv.

**17:33**

Leonid Khoda: We found a lot of documents of their DRGs, where they used fake passports and driver's licenses, and saturated Chernihiv with their DRGs disguised as civilians. Our analysis showed that there were up to 500 people in these ready-to-work groups in Chernihiv.

**17:56**

They walked about as civilians, and "amateurs" and collaborators poured reports into their program, noting what, where and how. I am referring to our positions, the location of the tanks.

**18:14**

And that's why we suffered losses. One time, 2 planes were bombing one tank. Unfortunately, the crew was killed. And they then dropped eight 500-kilogram FAB bombs on the tank.

**18:27**

Novoselivka: battles on the mountain

**18:38**

The village of Novoselivka in the first days after the the Russians fled. This northeastern suburb of Chernihiv was virtually wiped off the face of the earth.

**18:45**

Combat operations and shelling did not abate here from the beginning of the invasion until the last hours of the blockade of Chernihiv.

**18:52**

Mykhailo, commander of the detachment: On a 12-point scale, I say that Novoselivka was the most hellish battle in the defense of Chernihiv.

**19:00**

Those who were in the Novoselivka battle, saw their whole life flash before their eyes. And, quite likely, they learned all the prayers.

**19:07**

Novoselivka was on the main line of attack of the Russian troops. The fiercest battles for the village took place here, on the hill.

**19:15**

When the guys moved onto that height, they crossed themselves as they went, because every day there were substantial and great losses there.

**19:27**

There were as many as 8 guys killed in one day. That's why they went to that height, like for their last time, their last day.

**19:36**

The Ukrainian military called these positions "Korshun" ("Black Kite"). Whoever controlled the hill controlled the approaches to Chernihiv from the north-eastern direction.

**19:46**

Leonid Khoda: That is why, it was simply being destroyed from the get-go, both the village and the positions were razed to the ground. As one of my soldiers quipped: "Commander, there the bricks are to one side and the boards to the other."

**19:59**

Therefore, it was decided, despite the losses, to hold that height at any cost. Because, if we did not, the losses could have been ten times greater later on.

**20:10**

Here at the outer block posts, the Russian assaults were repelled by up to 40 soldiers. We only had small arms, RPGs and that was it.

**20:21**

In the trenches and dugouts in Novoselivka, fighters are still finding shell fragments.

**20:26**

Code name "Burunduk" fighter of a separate rifle battalion: I saw it with my own eyes. A tank would ride out, half of its muzzle sticking out from behind the hill. He was shooting directly at the dugouts, our heads were definitely buzzing.

**20:39**

My brain simply gave out. I understood that there was shooting, explosions and everything else. But in my ears there was deafness and squeaking. That's it, I could not hear anything else.

**20:52**

I was told about the Novoselivka battle, that there was nobody there who did not suffer concussion. - Yes, it is likely exactly how it is. 99.9 percent, that that's how it is.

**21:02**

One of the typical days in Novoselivka began with the arrival of Russian sabotage groups. After repulsing the attack, the positions of Ukrainian fighters were hit from several tanks.

**21:13**

The tanks shot out all their ammunition, went for reloading, and at that moment the Russians would begin to fire from the mortar launchers, artillery, and multiple rocket launchers.

**21:21**

Valentyn: The atmosphere was - the wounded are screaming in the landings, we can't pull them out. Our superior shouts: "Brothers, brothers, help" in order to somehow press and temp down the enemy artillery, so that it does not strike at us so intensely, so that there would be some time interval to evacuate the wounded.

**21:45**

This road here was was such a shoot-through, that it was impossible to pass. There were times when, after the intense artillery shelling, we had two to three 300th (code word for wounded), one 200th (code word for killed). Every day, yes.

**22:00**

Denys Kuzmenko, a soldier of the 1st separate Siverska tank brigade: Well, did you say goodbye to your life there? - Yes, every day, a couple of times! What should I do, get used to it or what? I have nothing to lose, I love Chernihiv! Here McDonald's is cool.

**22:10**

We stayed positive, supported each other, laughed about it, said that they were 'poor shots'.

**22:16**

Code name "Sarmat", fighter of a separate rifle battalion: Such was the high density of the fire, that after each attack they adjusted their artillery immediately, nailed us to the ground, so that we could not see what was going on.

**22:36**

Code name "Burunduk", fighter of a separate rifle battalion: They were firing non-stop for 40-50 minutes. Every 20-40 seconds, while the reloading was going on, we rested. And then it started again - one or two shots. And then there were times, when they were hitting from two sides - from one side of the landing and from the field.

**22:55**

Mykhailo: In Novoselivka, you smoke cigarette after cigarette and you don't wish for anything, not to eat, only to have water.

**23:01**

Valentyn: Stress comes continuously, constant stress, you are under stress and there is not a moment when you can relax.

**23:12**

Ukrainian artillery could not give a symmetrical response to the Russians - the enemy had more barrels and ammunition by orders of magnitude.

**23:20**

Mykhailo: When our scouts were in the village of Ulyanivka, they directed our mortar launcher, sometimes they called for our artillery to 'work out' on the Katsaps' (Russians') positions.

**23:29**

They reported that, yes: "The AS (ammunition set) of the Katsap tank 'worked,' meaning, it was destroyed. We pinned down a group of their infantry that was walking around Ulyanivka at night."

**23:40**

They are collecting their 300s (wounded) and 200s (dead). We worked out well.

**23:46**

Valentyn: I heard on the radio exchange that we had a 120-mm mortar somewhere there. He helped us there but, as I understand, there was a bit of a problem with ammunition at that time, so we 'answered' sparingly.

**24:00**

Mykhailo: Our late platoon commander. He climbed a tree, hugged the trunk. Binoculars, radio station, I am near him in the trench.

**24:09**

And just then the shells are coming, the tanks are coming. And this tank shell is landing quickly - out and immediate arrival. He sees a flash and continues to direct the fire for the "Desna" over the radio - to the right, forward, 500 meters correction to the right.

**24:25**

100 meters ahead. And the shells are falling all around. I tell him: "Seryoga, shards!" "Oh, don't bother me and let me work!"

**24:33**

There were two BMP-1 fighting vehicles standing there, it was a reserve group. And in the event of something, they jumped out on these BMPs and shot from the canopy in the direction of Ulianivka, Kyselivka.

**24:46**

And when they started using aviation on us, my friends and I realized how strong we are, that they are starting to use aviation, 500-kilogram bombs on us.

**24:57**

This photo shows the consequence of the landing of a 500-kilogram air-dropped bomb on the Ukrainian positions.

**25:03**

Denys Kuzmenko, a soldier of the 1st separate Siverska tank brigade: Where the bomb hit, there was a tree there, with a trunk so thick that you couldn't wrap your arms around it. Branches was all that remained of that tree. The pit is 15 by 15. And all this sand flies onto the guys' heads.

**25:13**

It was fortunate there were two of them there in that trench: one got out of this sand by himself, the other screamed from under the sand: "I'm suffocating, I can't!".

**25:24**

So in the middle of the night, it was so cold, we were digging him out with our hands. First we dug out his hand, then he yells from under the sand: "Dig up the head too." We dug up his head, face, then sat down, took a breather, laughed about it. We got lucky.

**25:55**

In March, Russian special forces begin to storm our positions in Novoselevka. They were definitely moving in with their usual 1 to 5 tactic. There were almost always five of them for each one of our troops.

**26:09**

Code name "Sarmat", fighter of a separate rifle battalion: We took from them their well-known "Tiger" vehicles and light armored vehicles too. And in them, they had the flags of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Russian Federation, and judging by the configuration of the vehicles, and by the actions of their servicemen storming our units, it was clear that these were special forces.

**26:29**

Nikolyuk: Intelligence units came. And mind you, those that fought in Chechnya, that had experience in Afghanistan, because when we captured them, we really got such well-trained personnel.

**26:42**

In the end, they always stayed behind us. Then over some passes, there would be on the side, then they were somehow retreating. But how to say it correctly? Not all retreated.

**26:55**

On March 9, they decided to really take us out of here, from this position. And to seize it. We survived, but they fired at us from everything possible weapon.

**27:09**

We retaliated, started shooting back, they realized that they would not pass here, and therefore began to use their artillery on our positions big time. On this day, March 9, we had two 200 guys (killed).

**27:32**

A week later, on March 16, the Russians launch a new assault of the hill. First, 3 tanks rode out, their artillery engaged right before, then they secured themselves, and 3 more tanks jumped up there. That is, they brought to positions 6 tanks and 4 tigers, and their reconnaissance pulled up. Then the BMP was pulled up.

**27:52**

Denys Kuzmenko remembers those events - before the start of the assault, he slept after his watch. I woke up because sand fell on me. We got into position, literally just half an hour passes, and the real 'meat' begins here. Bullets were flying, I thought we were breathing those bullets there. There was simply no free space in the air.

**28:11**

RPGs are there, bullets are there, VOGs are there, AGS grenade launcher is there, everything is there.

'Tigers' are sewing us with machine guns, machine gunners are on both sides, the plane is coming. It was altogether a horrible picture.

**28:22**

The Ukrainian military receives a command to withdraw from its positions. But we would have managed, had the order not arrived. We would have stood to the last, there was no other way.

**28:33**

Denys' comrades die in that battle. Many guys laid down their heads here, our regulars. Yura Bilyk and Zhenya Tetyanenko, they died here on the left flank on the 16th.

**28:48**

On the same day, a medic of the 1st tank brigade died in Novoselivka, Volodymyr Andriichenko, who, in peacetime, was the head of the regional branch of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine.

**28:57**

Under the heavy fire from the Russians, he drove out in this small car to the front line to evacuate the wounded and dead.

**29:04**



Vova is driving, still driving over there somewhere, and machine guns start firing at him. Then he drops off “Shaman”, our Chief of Medicine.

**29:15**

He is driving at high speed here alone. And an RPG falls right in front of him, he falls out of the moving car, I catch him and hear his last breath and that's it. He had a pneumothorax, a severe contusion, and that is what he died from.

**29:30**

Ukrainian armored vehicles are providing fire cover for the withdrawal from the positions. There was a command on the radio to launch a “bears” (tanks), for them to pull up here to rescue us. Then armored groups, there were 2 of them, it seems, that was when (code name) “Horobry” sent 2 of his “boxes” to help us.

**29:50**

They just began to approach us, and the order came that it was not necessary, because the Russians are no longer ‘twitching.’

**29:59**

I personally think that they were just afraid. There were 30-40 of us standing here, and they barely cleared the position here with all their strength, but what would have happened there.

**30:11**

The Russians hit one of the BMPs of the 1st tank brigade, which was covering the retreat. Two of the three crew members die - Dmytro Tatarenko and Eduard Tyagun.

**30:25**

The Ukrainian military is setting up new advanced positions just at the entrance to the city. Hans: Very symbolic to hold the defense along the line of the entrance to Chernihiv.

**30:37**

Code name “Sarmat”, fighter of a separate rifle battalion: The Russians entered the outskirts of Chernihiv with sabotage groups. In our direction, at the end of March, they already entered the suburbs of Chernihiv and could not advance anywhere further.

**30:52**

Code name “Hans”, commander of the company in the 1st separate Siverska tank brigade: We had an anti-tank unit in this area, and my infantry was located directly in the village itself. There was a system of observation points, an anti-tank reserve. This is, roughly speaking, where Novoselivka turns into the Bobrovytsia district.

**31:06**

So, really, the battles were fought on these borders, on these directions. The enemy did not advance any further.

**31:15**

The body of the deceased Volodymyr Andriichenko will be found in a ditch near a burnt-out car after the Russians would flee. And on the hill will be found a grave of an unknown soldier and of Yury Bilyk, who died in battle on March 16.

**31:27**

Khoda: We haven't found everyone on that hill yet, unfortunately. A couple of men are missing. And I hope that, on this mound, there will be a memorial erected to those guys. We lost many of our our guys there.

**31:52**

It's hard to accept every day, when the guys die. Why? In order to understand this, you need to have your own children, send your children to war. My eldest son is also fighting.

**32:09**

Fights with special forces In this video, which was published by Russian propagandists, we see the moment of the shooting of a car of Ukrainian border guards near the landfill in Masany. There Russian special forces set up an ambush for the defenders of Chernihiv.

**32:24**

Bryzhynskyi: When the situation around the city stabilized, the enemy realized that they could not take us from the east. They set up an ambush for the border guard patrol, fired at a car from Shmel (Bumblebee flame thrower), 6 people died immediately and 4 were taken prisoner.

**32:54**

Oleksandr Chorny, head of the 105th border detachment: The personnel of the border patrol group, 11 people, moved to the position. One group of the enemy was located on the right side of the road, the second on the left. The first group missed the car, the second inflicted damage.

**33:06**

They used small arms: machine guns and Kalashnikov assault rifles. And also used missile launchers, we found 3 empty tubes from RPG-26 and one tube from Shmel (Bumblebee).

**33:23**

The car was hit by the Shmel (Bumblebee flame thrower) and burned up almost immediately. It rolled over, the driver was killed first.

**33:31**

The cartridges we found provided evidence that these were special forces, due to the fact that there were no markings of any kind on the cartridges. These sleeves were without numbers at all.

**33:40**

Nikoliuk: First of all, two special forces regiments that were around Chernihiv, units of the reconnaissance battalion of the 41st army. They are quite the opposite. They fought decently. The border guards, who were stationed here, and the mass, they suffered losses, because it was the special forces who fought against them. That is, battles mostly took place at night. People who are ready, with night vision devices. To say that these are stupid troops, that is not so.

**34:06**

“Tourist” observed the actions of the Russian special forces daily from his position in the Masany neighborhood.

**34:12**

Code name “Tourist”, soldier of the State Border Guard Service: At the dachas near Chernihiv, after we straightened out our defense line, our positions were occupied by Russian troops.

**34:21**

These groups went into the forest, they used the terrain, something they were taught at the training grounds. They approached us as close as 200 meters.

**34:39**

Well, and through the forest they tried to get into the industrial area, to gain a foothold, but we didn’t let them do it.

**34:51**

Oleksandr Chorny, head of the 105th border detachment: During the execution of our tasks, we recorded 11 approaches of such combat intelligence groups, all their attacks and attempts to enter the city were repelled.

**35:02**

The enemy suffered significant fire damage and there was information from the local population - from the the Staryi, the Novyi Bilous, where our section is - that during the retreat, they carried out their wounded and killed troops.

**35:17**

The groups were 10-15 people, very well equipped, very well prepared. With evidence of their ‘work’ as they approached.

**35:22**

On the night of March 14, the Russian DRG (sabotage and reconnaissance group) made an attempt to take positions in this forest near the village of Novyi Bilous. Here the Russians are met by the border guards.

**35:31**

Maksym, code name “The Cat”, a soldier of the Chernihiv border detachment: At night, we noticed their group, their BMP (infantry fighting vehicle). They disembarked and after 20 minutes the battle began.

**35:41**

They were getting out from the road and advanced toward us. It turned out that there was not one group, but two groups. There were 12 of them in front and another 8 were moving to our rear.

**35:51**

We saw them only through the thermal imager. These were very well-prepared groups, these were Russian special services.

**36:00**

They had pretty good equipment, gunsights with night vision. And they shot very well.

**36:11**

A Russian sniper kills border guard Bohdan Nazarenko and tries to aim at Maxym.

**36:17**

With them it was one bullet, one person. Another bullet... They were aiming at the thermal imager. I was looking through the imager, then moved it to the side, and sure enough they ‘worked’ at the thermal imager. If I held it near my face, I wouldn’t be here.

**36:31**

The bullet hits Maxym’s thumb. The finger was pierced here and hung only on this piece of skin. There is no bone here. With my one hand, I could not wrap it, so I asked my comrade to wrap my thumb back.

**36:48**

There was pain. But we all want to live. If I retreat, who will protect the guys?

**36:58**

The fight lasted for up to 20 minutes. The border guards run out of ammunition and begin to retreat.

**37:04**

The emotions – like in the Commandos movie. Explosions, shots, grenades, VOGs, everything was there. When we started to retreat, their third group began to ‘work’ at us. They aimed mortars, tanks, and SPAs (self-propelled artillery) at us.

**37:17**

There is that forest - there is no living thing left in the part of the forest where we were.

**37:34**

The Russians, having suffered losses, also leave their positions in this forest.

**37:39**

The next day, when we came back here, there were a lot of drag marks. According to our calculations, 7-8 people.

**37:50**

The comrades of the fallen Bohdan Nazarenko will not tell his wife about the death of her husband until the last moment.

**37:57**

His wife was pregnant, and when he was killed, there were 2 weeks remaining until the due date. We didn't tell her until the last moment, so that everything would be fine. He had two newborn boys.

**38:12**

Battle at the Ski Base These shots were shot in Chernihiv on March 22. The battlefield is a ski base, where Ukrainian biathletes trained and prepared for competitions before the Russian invasion. Artillery, mortars, and airplanes bombarded the base for the entire month since hostilities began, destroying it almost completely.

**38:34**

Here everything was covered with fallen trees. There were no leaves yet, so the forest was buzzcut to number 3, as one guy joked.

**38:44**

This is not the first time the Russian army has tried to enter and gain a foothold here. On March 16, at the same time as the storming of positions in Novoselivka, up to a dozen Russian troops entered here. Oleh's unit lost two soldiers in this battle - a platoon commander and a sergeant.

**39:00**

Oleh, a soldier of the 21st separate rifle battalion: He was standing here. And the DRG came in, as I assume, from these positions, and he was killed. A bullet straight to the heart, I think, because he didn't even have time to peep. And our sergeant, he was cooking dinner, and he was also shot dead.

**39:25**

Oleh and his comrades enter the battle and force the Russians to retreat. We hit them with grenades, they definitely had a 300th (code word for wounded). Because they retreated and, taking him away, they threw his bulletproof vest, and the helmet, and the gunsight there under the fence. There was blood on the body armor.

**39:53**

The Russians come back on March 22, this time with much larger forces. Using Tiger fighting vehicles and BMP, they attack from the side of the occupied Tovstolis.

**40:01**

Bryzhynskyi: They can no longer advance through Kyselivka and Novoselivka, because there is one of our brigades there, a mechanized battalion equipped there a very serious strongpoint, the tanks were already stationed there and the street there is very narrow and inconvenient for advance. And on the right, Desna river and the swampy area.

**40:23**

That is why they advanced with this goal in mind. Because to build a long 'intestine' from Kyselivka, Novoselivka to Chernihiv - it would have been destroyed, definitely in the village residential sector. They needed additional paths of advance.

**40:35**

The ski base was needed by the Russians in order to gain a foothold in the city and continue the movement deep into Chernihiv. If they captured it, the next target, most likely, would be the Chernihiv radio equipment plant located 3 kilometers from here.

**40:48**

Bryzhynskyi: CHEZARA (the acronym nickname of the radio equipment plant) as we understand, it's a monolithic building, with a bomb shelter, many underground passages and bomb shelters. I understood that if we let them move into CHEZARA, it would be very difficult to strike them out of there.

**41:00**

At 10 o'clock on March 22, our fighters on the positions at the ski base receive information about the enemy's advance.

**41:07**

And this 'armor' (infantry fighting vehicle) rode out towards us on this paved path. After a shot from the RPG (anti-tank grenade launcher) it rolled back. In its place, now the infantry began to run through the forest like hares.

**41:18**

Not in full height, but crouching, so only their backs could be seen. We fought with them for 4-5 hours, I can't say for sure. At first they ran around, then we could no longer see them, and only heard single shots from there.

**41:43**

The defenders of the ski base are running out of ammunition. Some of them decide to retreat, while the Russians are pulling up reserves at this time.

**41:52**

We, a group of 7 people, went alongside this fence to the garages. The person walking in the front looks around the corner of this garage and says: "4 Tigers are standing!".

**42:11**

I take a peek, and he just starts to spray from a machine gun into this corner. Tiger is shooting. And it was spring then, and there was no vegetation yet, everything was dry. And while they were throwing grenades and explosives, the grass caught fire, and everything was in smoke.

**42:32**

And we made a decision to retreat through the smoke over there to some farm buildings.

**42:37**

The rest of the fighters continue to fight in the encirclement, preparing for the worst.

**42:42**

One of them pulls out the safety from a grenade and says: "I will not surrender. Petya, are you with me?". The other replies: "Yes". But in some miraculous way, they managed to retreat into the basement.

**42:59**

Ukrainian soldiers are hiding in this basement. Reserves are drawn up to the ski base - the Russians retreat after the first shots.

**43:06**

The support from our mechanized battalion arrived, a platoon of grenade launchers. And they repulsed the attack. They shot a couple of times with an RPG, and this Russian armor suddenly turned around, and its caterpillar track just flew off.

**43:23**

They abandoned the damaged combat vehicle and left, and the "Tigers" also left. Nikoliuk: If we look at the ski base where the battle took place, our scouts did good here already. Thanks to the scouts and thanks to our 134th guard battalion. It was thanks to them that the elite unit of the reconnaissance battalion of Russia's 41st Army fought such a worthy battle.

**43:46**

It was thanks to them that the enemy was kicked out of there. The Russians just ran away from there... "valiantly"... alas, there was no drum to give them.

**43:54**

Simultaneously with the assault on the ski base, the Russian army is trying to advance to the positions of Ukrainian fighters near the Yatsevo municipal cemetery.

**44:04**

At that moment, the closest trenches of the Russians were not far away - in the forest on the opposite side of the cemetery.

**44:15**

Maksym, code name "Kasper", a soldier of the 21st rifle battalion: Katsaps were there, there, and then they came out of their landings toward us on the 22nd.

**44:23**

Maksym recalls - that day was not particularly different from the rest in terms of positions.

**44:28**

Russian artillery shelling came as if on schedule. We already knew the timetable. They start at 4 in the morning and finish at 11. That's when they have lunch!

**44:36**

15 minutes later they began to emerge from their landings and they came out in staggered order. They were shooting from the cemetery and we could hear them scrambling behind the fence of the cemetery. Shot of the transition from the tree to the fence.

**44:53**

Ukrainians engage in combat near this road. The three of us lay low to the ground. One of us was immediately "taken down" by a sniper. The Russians were coming under the cover of their snipers. So, one of us was shot down by a sniper, there were just two of us left.

**45:08**

Maxym and his comrade shoot back at ten attacking Russians, killing four of them.

**45:14**

What was most interesting is that there was no fear for some reason, the hands did not shake. Just a cold calculation. Out of four cartridges, I had just 3 bullets left in the last one!

**45:25**

They moved back to the landing. And once again the mortars began to fire at us. And the rest, I don't remember well. A mine fell nearby, and a fragment flew into my cheek.

**45:40**



**BLOCKADE** The day after the failed assault on the ski base, on March 23, Russian aviation destroys the road bridge over the Desna river. 6 aerial bombs are dropped there, one of them hits the span and the bridge collapses.

**45:58**

Chernihiv was connected to the “big land” through this road bridge. With the destruction of the bridge, the Russians testify to their own inability to capture Chernihiv.

**46:07**

They cannot take Chernihiv from the 24th of February. Here is the recording of the intercepted communication of the Russian invader, made public on March 17.

**46:19**

Kalyna: When they blew up the road bridge over the Desna, I have already clearly realized that they would not go on an assault, we would be in a ring.

**46:28**

I told the soldiers about Sarajevo during the Yugoslav war. And I prepared myself for the fact that we will probably be surrounded for a month, two months, or a year.

**46:39**

Personally, inside, I was preparing for everything, all the way to the partisan warfare. I had no intention of leaving Chernihiv. I am from Snovsk, my parents and family are here, so where would I go?

**46:55**

Well, there was no way I could be taken prisoner, because there is a criminal case against me in Russia. And at that time they had a warrant for my arrest. I understood that I would get at least 20 years.

**47:13**

Oleksandr: The Russians pronounced it, with great pomp, the “operational encirclement”. But the operational encirclement was never really completed, and the realization that it would not be possible to carry it out dawned on Russians sometime on March 20. And on March 23, the bridge was blown up by an air raid.

**47:32**

After the car bridge, the Russians began to target the pedestrian bridge - the only one through which it was now possible to deliver at least some goods to Chernihiv.

**47:42**

Look at these video of the destruction - Russian shells destroy not only the bridge, but also everything around it.

**47:51**

On March 25, traffic on the pedestrian bridge was closed due to its emergency condition after shelling. According to the city authorities, about 120,000 residents remain in Chernihiv from the 290 thousand who lived here before the invasion. The city is on the verge of a humanitarian disaster.

**48:07**

In the most critical days of the blockade of Chernihiv, the only way to the territories under the control of the Ukrainian government lay along such field roads on the right bank of the Desna.

**48:16**

People were evacuated from the city along the “road of life”, while in the opposite direction humanitarian aid, fuel and weapons were delivered to the city by buses and cars, and then by boats across the Desna River.

**48:29**

You understand that the loss of the bridge is not the loss of communications. Communication lines become thinner, less effective. But, I think, that Chernihiv could have easily made it through another month of heavy and intense battles.

**48:47**

Oleksandr Vasylenko, code name “Kuba”, leader of one of the Resistance Movement groups: These small arms - NLAWs, Stingers, Javelins - they were delivered to the city in sufficient numbers, even when there was no bridge.

**49:00**

At the same time, the “road of life” was constantly shelled by Russian troops. These images were taken on March 26, when a convoy of civilians, Ukrainian and foreign journalists came under fire near Chernihiv.

**49:12**

Russian troops planned to complete the encirclement of the city. They planned to do this by crossing the Desna in the Kyselivka area. The troops from this direction were to unite with the units that were in Lukashivka and cut the “road of life”.

**49:27**

Nikoliuk: The unit that entered Lukashivka... later on we counted about 70 units of armored vehicles, and among these there were tanks, armored personnel carriers, and “Solntsepyok” (TOS-1A, 28-barrel heavy flamethrower system). The main idea is to surely to surround Chernihiv, cut the “road of life” and take it into a ring.

**49:45**

“Gesture of goodwill” March 29, Deputy Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation Oleksandr Fomin: In order to increase mutual trust and create the necessary conditions for further negotiations, and to achieve the

ultimate goal - approval and signing of the above-mentioned agreement, a decision was made to drastically reduce military activity on the Kyiv and Chernihiv directions.

**50:10**

This statement was made by the Deputy Minister of Defense of the aggressor country following the results of the Russian-Ukrainian negotiations in Istanbul on March 29.

**50:19**

On the same day, Russian troops will begin withdrawing from Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Sumy regions. On April 6, the press secretary of the Russian dictator Dmytro Peskov called this maneuver a “gesture of goodwill” - at that time this phrase had not yet become a meme.

**50:32**

However, was this gesture dictated by “good will”? To understand this, let’s recall the events that preceded the departure of the Russians.

**50:41**

On March 24, the British Ministry of Defense issues a report in which it states that the Armed Forces may surround the Russian group near Irpen and Bucha.

**50:49**

In the Brovary direction, after a series of defeats - just look at these shots taken by the Ukrainian military - the Russian army is no longer able to advance.

**50:58**

The strategic situation during their offensive was such that they suffered heavy losses in the direction of Bucha-Irpin and suffered losses of about 60 percent in the direction of Brovary. A few thousand units of equipment also came there, so 4-5 thousand units. And going back were no more than 1,500.

**51:27**

So, just as at the beginning of the invasion Chernihiv saved Kyiv from encirclement, so a month later the situation around the capital helps Chernihiv to withstand.

**51:36**

In addition, the Ukrainian military is planning an operation to unblock the city. To do this, they are destroying all of the Russians’ logistics: under our constant strikes were Shestovytsia - where the main crossing over the Desna was, Yahidne - here were located the control points of the 55th and 74th brigades, and Vyshneve - here was the advanced control point of the “Center” troop group.

**51:58**

This video shows the results of one such Ukrainian attack. Destroyed armored vehicles and yet another “one of its kind” of the Russian military industry, the anti-aircraft missile gun complex Pantsir-S.

**52:09**

Nikoliuk: They moved through the Shestovytska river crossing, and all the ammunition, fuel, everything that was going, food, we were destroying it.

**52:20**

Damage was inflicted, everything was destroyed to the maximum. And it got to the point that they could no longer deliver fuel to Lukashivka, and they were removing one vehicle at a time. And these point strikes, which our units inflicted, they kept them in good form. During the night, our troops would come out, do damage, and burn one or even two armors.

**52:42**

Khoda: We were destroying their logistics routes. They were left without fuel, ammunition, and food. Well, you will not fight for too long if you are left without food and ammunition.

**52:54**

In the rear of the enemy, a resistance movement was operating. Oleksandr Vasylenko, a veteran of the war in the East of Ukraine, headed one of these groups. These images were taken at the beginning of March near the old railway branch near Sosnytsia.

**53:07**

Ukrainian partisans burned 7 Russian gas stations with Molotov cocktails.

**53:13**

Oleksandr Vasylenko, code name “Kuba”, leader of one of the Resistance Movement groups: There is an embankment there, and the Molotov cocktails were thrown from that embankment. Our guys threw them onto the first and the last one directly from the embankment, then the guys ran away, and came back the next day. There was no one there, and they completely burned the whole convoy.

**53:37**

Weapons and explosives for the preparation of the sabotage operations were delivered even to the very deep rear of the Russians. Oleksandr accompanied one such cargo from Kyiv to Semenivka, where the Russian FSB officers were stationed.

**53:49**

Mines were brought, grenades were brought, so that the guys could set up land mines. To Semenivka and back is 2 days. If coming from Mena.

**53:54**

Hunters and smugglers were engaged for this work. These were the people who agreed to do it during the war. Those whom everyone harassed in time of peace. Smugglers, poachers, hunters. These are the people who know every path, every bush.

**54:11**

On March 30, an ammunition depot, which the Russians had set up in a local church, blows up in Lukashivka. The group in this village, which blocked Chernihiv from the south, is left without most of its ammunition.

**54:24**

Nikoliuk: Locals told us that on The Warm Oleksa (St. Olexis) Day, they prayed to God that something would strike the ammunition depot and something really did. Later on, we counted about 12 armored vehicles there, the mortar battery was destroyed there too. There were a lot of shells there and the church was ruined of course.

**54:37**

On March 30, Ukrainian Armed Forces engage in combat and liberate the village of Sloboda.

**54:44**

They are planning to encircle two Russian battalions in Lukashivka. The occupying army manages to escape. It would have been be the “Lukashivka cauldron (pocket)”. I think they also understood this, because when the 58th had already entered Sloboda, we practically had to block just one road to Ivanivka. And through Kolychivka, two platoons wanted to inflict damage and simply block this road. That would have created such a small pocket.

**55:06**

Emotions were bad. Because the commander and I planned one “pocket” and we practically closed 2 battalion tactical groups in that “pocket”.

**55:20**

We have already almost finished the crossing and then, when we cut the umbilical cord, destroyed the crossing, we practically encircled the 2 battalion tactical groups.

**55:33**

We miscalculated a bit, because they managed to get out that night, they just ran away. So, we cursed a bit in our anger that we did not fully succeed.

**55:48**

Even while fleeing, the Russian army will continue shelling Chernihiv and its suburbs. Especially terrible days were the last 3 days, when the Moskals had already decided that they would retreat and decided to shoot out their ammunition sets. Everything was thundering here then.

**56:04**

On March 30, the center of the city - the market and the Korolenko library – will come under fire. On the same day, on the “road of life”, evacuation buses will come under mortar fire - three volunteers will die.

**56:16**

ESCAPE OF Russian troops are fleeing from the Chernihiv region very quickly.

**56:22**

In military terms, that's when everything you have, everything lying around is just thrown into the vehicles and within 15 minutes you are on the road.

**56:30**

So, it was not a planned departure, which takes a few weeks. The departure from the Chernihiv direction was lightning speed. So, in one day the whole group was already near Horodnia.

**56:47**

The Shestovytska crossing was used to retreat from Lukashivka, they fled 2-3 vehicles at a time, so that we would not destroy them, but in fact 70% of the equipment remained at the crossing. We destroyed them.

**56:57**

Almost all of them. All that was. Units escaped there, maybe a few armors, and maybe a few tanks. All other equipment was destroyed, and there it stayed.

**57:08**

Here is Yahidne. If we look at Yahidne, a lot of the Russians' equipment was destroyed in the forest, a lot of it was found later, and we saw that they took off their uniforms and changed into civilian clothes. They fled in panic.

**57:24**

“The most invincible army of the world” fled. Of course it's “invincible”, because you can't catch them fleeing.

**57:32**

Fleeing, the Russian army leaves trophies to Ukraine's Armed Forces. This abandoned self-propelled gun will be found in Ivanovka, and this howitzer will be left behind near Yahidne.

**57:42**

Nikoliuk: In general, we took good trophies. Trophies starting with weapons and ending with the “Tor” missile system. We too Hurricanes, tanks, BMPs, BTR-82 - practically the entire line of weapons that is in the Russian army, we have almost all samples at the moment.

**58:04**

Including the one with the 2022 year of release. Armored Kamaz trucks were taken, new equipment, everything was taken.

**58:14**

On April 3, the Russian army will complete its escape from Chernihiv Oblast.

**58:23**

I couldn't believe it. We couldn't believe it, because we were ready for the worst. Invasion, and everyone having to go out and defend their native city.

**58:46**

During the hostilities, the Russian military group on the Chernihiv direction would lose up to 40 percent of people and equipment that entered on February 24.

**58:54**

This is about one and a half thousand units of equipment and from 3 to 4 thousand soldiers and officers.

**59:00**

And dozens of bodies of murdered and tortured local residents and soldiers of Ukrainian Armed Forces would be found on the territories liberated from the Russians.

**59:08**

HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO KEEP CHERNIHIV? There was a will. In war, it all depends on the will, first and foremost, and not on stockpiles. Everyone wanted very much to hold the city, and no one wanted to retreat.

**59:22**

We had Volodya here. He was just a month away after a heart attack. He was here. Really, if the Katsaps (Russians) knew who was repelling them here, they would be ashamed. Although, what shame could they have?

**59:40**

Hans: Even at the beginning of March, I was already absolutely sure that they would never take Chernihiv.

**59:46**

So well was the defense of Chernihiv organized. It is one thing to be on the outskirts, and quite another thing to enter the city, which is also full of territorial defense groups. And all the people, the whole city was ready to fight.

**1:00:03**

All our soldiers who defended Chernihiv helped. Proper work of the artillery, proper support of the local population, proper organization of the work of the resistance movement. Chernihiv was united and it withstood.

**1:00:25**

People. Ordinary people. We were there on May 1 and, when you walk into any yard, there are Molotov cocktails there.

**1:00:34**

Where we lived, there was this auntie Alla. If one of us was killed, or if the enemy would break through, or we killed a Moskal (Russian), she would run, take that machine gun and start shooting at them.

**1:00:48**

If she would have found an RPG, she would have been with an RPG. If there was a tank, she would have sat in the tank and simply crushed those Moskals. And almost all of our people are like that.

**1:00:59**

When Chernihiv was given the title of “The Hero City”, I don’t really like this name. Because what is a city? Glass, concrete, asphalt, infrastructure. People are the main thing. Chernihiv is the city of heroes.

**1:01:13**

Thousands of people rose up for defense, surrounded the city with barricades, tires, and concrete blocks, and the enemies realized that it was not worth taking the city.

**1:01:24**

THE PRICE OF VICTORY The defense of Chernihiv against the Russians cost the city a destroyed infrastructure, almost 3 thousand destroyed and damaged houses and hundreds of dead.

**1:01:35**

According to the city authorities, about 700 civilians and military personnel died during active hostilities in Chernihiv. They were buried here - in trenches at the old cemetery in Yalivshchyna.

**1:01:47**

In order to understand the true price of the defense of Chernihiv, you should just come here, leave flowers and thank the soldiers who gave their most precious, in fact, everything they had, so that Chernihiv would start to come back to life already in April.



**1:02:01**

So that flowers would be planted, and houses would be rebuilt, so that people would go to the cafes and new Ukrainians would be born.