Returning to Another World
Honey, playtime is over.

It's time for bed. Tomorrow you need to go to school, and Daddy and I need to work.

Darling, I'll finish late, I have four lectures. I can't pick you up from work.

Ok, then I'll pick up Oleg from school and we can go for a walk. And grab a piece of cake somewhere.

What do you think? Yay!
Good morning!

I hope you rested well during the weekend. Today, cirrhosis of the liver needs your full concentration.

Today at noon all male lecturers must undertake a medical examination at the recruitment office.
Come here please and register. Who's next?

This bone fracture has not healed properly. Lucky you. You are unfit for military service.

Please write that I am fit. I don't want to shirk my duty.

And now?

*Medical Examination

**Fit for military service
Nothing.
I decided to go to the East. Many of us will go.

The soldiers at the frontline are coming straight from school.
They need support. I can't shirk my duty.

So few?
Where are the others?

Tryokhizbenka*

ТРЕХИЗБЕНКА

You have angina, Grandpa. You need to dress warmer.

Thank God they finally sent a doctor. It makes it a bit easier to endure this situation.

*See glossary

**January
Have you talked to him on the phone?

Yes.

If only the war was over. I'm sure they'd let him go then.

...and then they took my son. I haven't seen him since.

Keep a stiff upper lip!

It's almost as if I was talking to my son...

Thank you, doctor. It feels good to be able to talk to someone.

Who are you? Are you all by yourself?

Ok, come here. You can warm my feet a little.

* February
I need to check if everyone’s ok.
You wait here until
the shelling is over, Kitty.

Someone seems
to be outside.

Again everyone
gathered here.

Near the doctor is
the safest place.

At least he can help immediately
if anyone gets hurt.

This is one of my last nights with you.
Next week I will be transferred
to Shastya*, the lucky town.

Please take care of my cat.

Dearest, how are you?
Is everything ok?

Of course, don’t worry.
The frontline is far away.
Everything’s calm...

Better tell me how you are.
I miss you so much!

I love you and Oleg so much.
I want you to know that...

**Darling

*See glossary
At university, we had this training for reservists. However, war is a completely different thing.

...Most importantly, don't panic. You'll learn everything as you go.

Don't worry. After all, this isn’t your first day in the East.

Well, it's only a graze shot but it could have killed you. How did it happen?

I was standing in front of the checkpoint, and there it came. They are constantly targeting the Ukrainian flag. So far, they haven’t been able to shoot it down. However, they hit me.

Mikhailovich hoisted this flag when he came, a year ago.

He is good at motivating people, very unusual for a doctor.

Medics, come in. This is Owl. Shelling at the frontline. KIAs, WIAs*, over.

* Killed in action, wounded in action
Victor, please prepare a compress and keep close to me.

And watch out.

Hold on...

Mikhailovich...

Hold on, just a little bit!!

Mikhailovich!

My dear friend...
Hey guys, take down the fucking flag! Listen! We won’t shoot you on the Pentecost holiday.

Ok, we will take the flag down. But — as agreed — no shooting!

Those bloody Ukrainian nationalists.

Welcome! We haven’t seen you for months! What are you bringing this time?

We have everything you ordered, even a little more.

What medicine did you bring? We ran out of antipyretics last week. Responses to our official requests usually take time, and people are dying here. What would we do without you volunteers?

The kids are sending these.

This is the most beautiful present I’ve ever received.

They painted them for the doctors, as a present for the Day of Medical Personnel**.

It reminds me of why I am here. And whom we need to protect...

*June **See glossary ***Thank you for protecting us!*
It was an honour to serve with you. I can't believe that the year is already over.

It was an honour for us. Thank you for saving all these lives.

We've got a present for you, Doc...

Mikhailovich's flag.

Thank you.

Shall I invite a couple of friends? You've been back for weeks already but you haven't seen anyone yet. Everyone is asking for you.

No, I don't want to see anyone.
Our hero! Welcome back.

Everything alright with you?

We tried to call you but you didn't answer.

We're so proud of you!

How are you?

Everything's ok.

It's not easy to get used to civilian life. Supposedly, this is one country. But in the East, there is shelling every day, people are dying. And here people live as if nothing was going on. They go out, the bars are full, everyone looks happy.

Here, the youngsters are dancing. Over there, they are doing very different things...

By the way, you will be promoted.

You'll be a professor.

We need to throw you a welcome back party!

And you'll get a raise.

Thank you, but I'd prefer to spend the money for something more important than a party.

At the frontline, they are short of everything.

And you can't buy anything there, there are no shops anymore.

Sometimes we waited a month for medicine.

The volunteers were our only salvation.
Here you go, the chair of surgery sends this.

And this is from paediatrics. Everyone wants to contribute.

Are you sure that this is how you want to spend your Christmas holidays?

I'm positive. The day after tomorrow we'll already be there.

Victor, thank you for organizing this transport.

The boys are waiting. They will be so happy.

Definitely.