

# best served cold joe abercrombie

Best Served Cold Joe Abercrombie: A Dark Fantasy Masterpiece Explored

**best served cold joe abercrombie** is a phrase that immediately brings to mind the gritty, brutal world of one of modern fantasy's most acclaimed authors. Joe Abercrombie's novel *\*Best Served Cold\** stands as a powerful testament to his skill in crafting morally complex characters and narratives soaked in revenge, violence, and dark humor. For fans of grimdark fantasy, this book is often seen as a must-read, showcasing Abercrombie's distinct voice and unique storytelling style.

If you're curious about what makes *\*Best Served Cold\** stand out in the crowded world of fantasy literature, or if you're hunting for insights into its themes, characters, and impact, this article dives deep into everything you need to know about the novel.

## Setting the Stage: The World of *\*Best Served Cold\**

Joe Abercrombie's fantasy universe, often referred to as the First Law world, is infamous for its harshness and moral ambiguity. *\*Best Served Cold\** takes place in the same setting as his First Law trilogy but shifts focus to a new set of characters and conflicts. The story unfolds in the city-state of Styria, a place rife with political intrigue, brutal mercenaries, and shifting alliances.

Unlike traditional epic fantasies that lean heavily on clear-cut heroes and villains, Abercrombie's world is painted in shades of gray. Characters are flawed, motivations are complex, and the line between good and evil is blurred. This setting provides fertile ground for a narrative centered around revenge and betrayal, themes that are at the heart of *\*Best Served Cold\**.

## The Gritty and Realistic Tone

One of the defining features of *\*Best Served Cold\** is its gritty realism. Abercrombie doesn't shy away from depicting the brutal consequences of violence and political machinations. The novel's tone is often dark, laced with sardonic humor that serves to highlight the absurdity and cruelty of the characters' world.

This realism extends to the way the story treats its characters—not as archetypes, but as complex individuals struggling with their own demons. You'll find no glamorous heroes here; instead, Abercrombie offers antiheroes who are as likely to make mistakes as they are to exact ruthless vengeance.

## Plot and Themes: Revenge Takes Center Stage

At its core, *\*Best Served Cold\** is a revenge story like no other. The narrative follows Monza Murcatto, a mercenary betrayed and left for dead by her employer and former friend, Duke Orso. What follows is a relentless quest for vengeance, fueled by anger, grief, and a fierce determination

to make those who wronged her pay.

## **Why Revenge Works So Well in This Story**

Revenge is a common theme in literature, but Abercrombie's treatment of it in *\*Best Served Cold\** is distinct because of the complexity he brings to the motivations and consequences of such a quest. The story explores not just the satisfaction of retribution but also its cost—both physical and emotional.

The novel raises questions about justice and morality, making readers ponder whether revenge truly brings closure or simply perpetuates a cycle of violence. Through Monza and the diverse cast of characters she interacts with, the book examines how personal vendettas intersect with larger political games.

## **Complex Characters Driving a Compelling Narrative**

*\*Best Served Cold\** excels at character development, giving life to a memorable ensemble cast. Aside from Monza, characters like Shivers, Friendly, and Morveer each add different perspectives and motivations that enrich the story.

Their interactions are unpredictable, filled with tension and shifting loyalties that keep readers hooked. Abercrombie's skill lies in making each character's journey feel authentic and impactful, contributing to the overall depth of the narrative.

## **Joe Abercrombie's Writing Style: What Sets Him Apart?**

If you're new to Joe Abercrombie's work, understanding his writing style can help explain why *\*Best Served Cold\** resonates so strongly with readers.

## **Blending Dark Humor with Brutality**

While the book's subject matter is often grim, Abercrombie's use of dark humor provides a much-needed balance. His witty dialogue and ironic observations inject levity without undermining the seriousness of the plot. This blend of humor and harshness creates a reading experience that is both entertaining and thought-provoking.

## **Vivid Descriptions and Fast-Paced Action**

Abercrombie's prose is known for its sharpness and clarity. He paints vivid scenes of battle and political intrigue with a pace that keeps the momentum going. Readers often praise how his descriptive writing immerses them fully in the world, making every confrontation and twist feel

immediate and impactful.

## Where *\*Best Served Cold\** Fits in the First Law Universe

For fans of the First Law trilogy—*\*The Blade Itself\**, *\*Before They Are Hanged\**, and *\*Last Argument of Kings\**—*\*Best Served Cold\** offers a fresh perspective on the same universe. It's considered a standalone novel, meaning you don't need prior knowledge of the original trilogy to enjoy it, but reading them can enrich the experience.

This book expands on the world-building, revealing new regions, factions, and histories that add layers to Abercrombie's already detailed universe. It also shares thematic ties with the trilogy, such as exploring power, corruption, and the moral ambiguity of its characters.

## Sequels and Spin-Offs

Following *\*Best Served Cold\**, Joe Abercrombie continued to explore this universe with other novels like *\*The Heroes\** and *\*Red Country\**. These books maintain the same grimdark tone and complex storytelling, making them great picks for readers who loved the style and substance of *\*Best Served Cold\**.

## Why *\*Best Served Cold\** Resonates With Readers

The novel's enduring popularity can be attributed to several factors that resonate deeply with its audience:

- **Relatable Flaws:** Characters are imperfect and often morally questionable, which feels realistic and relatable.
- **Unexpected Twists:** The story avoids typical fantasy tropes, delivering surprises that keep readers guessing.
- **Emotional Depth:** Beyond the action, the book explores themes of loss, loyalty, and the human cost of vengeance.
- **Rich World-Building:** The detailed setting immerses readers in a believable and immersive fantasy realm.

Readers who appreciate stories that challenge conventional notions of heroism and explore the darker side of ambition and revenge often find *\*Best Served Cold\** deeply satisfying.

# Tips for Reading *\*Best Served Cold\**

If you're planning to dive into *\*Best Served Cold\**, here are some tips to enhance your reading experience:

1. **Take Your Time With Characters:** The novel introduces a large cast with intertwined backstories. Giving attention to each character helps appreciate their motivations.
2. **Expect a Dark Ride:** Prepare for a story that doesn't shy away from violence and moral complexity.
3. **Enjoy the Dialogue:** Abercrombie's witty and sharp dialogue is a highlight; savoring these moments adds to the overall enjoyment.
4. **Consider Reading the First Law Trilogy:** While not necessary, reading the original trilogy can provide extra context and depth.

## Impact of *\*Best Served Cold\** on the Fantasy Genre

Joe Abercrombie's *\*Best Served Cold\** has had a significant influence on the grimdark subgenre of fantasy. Its success helped cement the appeal of darker, more morally ambiguous storytelling in a market once dominated by traditional heroic fantasy tales.

Writers and readers alike have praised Abercrombie for pushing boundaries and redefining what fantasy protagonists can be. The novel's blend of action, character-driven drama, and philosophical questions about justice and revenge has inspired a new wave of fantasy literature that embraces complexity over simplicity.

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Exploring *\*Best Served Cold\** by Joe Abercrombie opens the door to a world where revenge is never straightforward, and every character walks a fine line between villain and hero. This novel's compelling storytelling and richly developed universe continue to captivate readers looking for fantasy with teeth—stories that leave a lasting impression long after the final page is turned.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is 'Best Served Cold' by Joe Abercrombie about?

'Best Served Cold' is a standalone fantasy novel by Joe Abercrombie that follows Monza Murcatto, a mercenary betrayed and left for dead, as she seeks revenge in a brutal and morally complex world.

## Is 'Best Served Cold' part of a series by Joe Abercrombie?

While 'Best Served Cold' is a standalone novel, it is set in the same world as Joe Abercrombie's First Law trilogy and shares some characters and themes.

## What genre does 'Best Served Cold' belong to?

'Best Served Cold' is a grimdark fantasy novel, characterized by its dark tone, morally ambiguous characters, and gritty realism.

## Who is the main character in 'Best Served Cold'?

The main character is Monza Murcatto, a ruthless mercenary leader who embarks on a quest for vengeance after being betrayed and left for dead.

## How does 'Best Served Cold' compare to Joe Abercrombie's First Law trilogy?

'Best Served Cold' maintains the dark, gritty style of the First Law trilogy but focuses more on a revenge-driven plot and introduces new characters while expanding the world.

## What themes are explored in 'Best Served Cold'?

The novel explores themes of revenge, betrayal, morality, and the consequences of violence in a harsh and unforgiving world.

## Additional Resources

Best Served Cold Joe Abercrombie: A Dark Fantasy Masterpiece Explored

**best served cold joe abercrombie** has become a phrase synonymous with gritty storytelling and complex character development in the realm of dark fantasy literature. Joe Abercrombie, a prominent British author, carved a unique niche for himself with this novel, which is often hailed as a standout work within his broader "First Law" universe. This article delves into the intricate layers of Best Served Cold, examining its thematic depth, narrative structure, and its place within contemporary fantasy literature, while integrating relevant insights about Abercrombie's style and the book's reception.

## Exploring the Narrative: A Tale of Revenge and Moral Ambiguity

Best Served Cold Joe Abercrombie is fundamentally a revenge story, but it distinguishes itself through its unflinching portrayal of moral complexity. The plot follows Monza Murcatto, a mercenary betrayed and left for dead by her employer and former lover, Duke Orso. What unfolds is a relentless quest for vengeance that takes readers across the grim and violent landscape of the Union.

Unlike traditional revenge tales that often hinge on clear distinctions between hero and villain, Abercrombie's narrative thrives in shades of grey. Characters frequently blur the lines between protagonist and antagonist, which enhances the story's unpredictability and emotional resonance. This approach aligns with Abercrombie's trademark style—often described as "grimdark fantasy"—characterized by brutal realism, cynical humor, and flawed, deeply human characters.

## Characterization and Development

One of the most praised aspects of *Best Served Cold* is its rich and diverse cast. Monza Murcatto is a compelling anti-heroine, whose ruthlessness is tempered by moments of vulnerability and ethical conflict. Alongside her, a motley crew of allies and enemies join the fray, each with distinct motivations and backstories that enrich the narrative tapestry. Abercrombie excels at creating multi-dimensional characters who evolve in response to the brutal world around them.

The ensemble dynamic adds layers to the story, with shifting alliances and betrayals that keep the tension high. This character-driven approach is a hallmark of Abercrombie's writing and is a significant factor in why *Best Served Cold* resonates so strongly with readers seeking more than just action-packed fantasy.

## Stylistic Elements and World-Building

Abercrombie's prose in *Best Served Cold* is notable for its sharp wit and vivid descriptions. The author balances intense action sequences with introspective passages that explore themes of loyalty, justice, and the cost of revenge. The pacing is deliberate yet engaging, ensuring that readers are absorbed in both the external conflicts and the internal struggles of the characters.

The world-building in *Best Served Cold* expands upon the "First Law" universe, offering a rich, immersive setting that is as brutal as it is believable. The political intrigue within the Union, the diverse geography, and the cultural tensions provide a textured backdrop that complements the personal vendettas driving the plot. Abercrombie's attention to detail in crafting this environment adds to the novel's authenticity and appeal.

## Comparison with Other Works in the First Law Series

*Best Served Cold* is often compared to Abercrombie's original "First Law" trilogy, which includes *The Blade Itself*, *Before They Are Hanged*, and *Last Argument of Kings*. While the trilogy introduces a broad spectrum of characters and a sprawling narrative, *Best Served Cold* functions as a standalone novel focusing more tightly on the theme of revenge.

Readers and critics note that *Best Served Cold* maintains the grimdark tone of the trilogy but adopts a slightly different narrative focus, emphasizing a tighter, more focused revenge plot over epic-scale warfare. This makes it an accessible entry point for new readers unfamiliar with Abercrombie's world while still satisfying longtime fans with its depth and complexity.

# Critical Reception and Cultural Impact

Since its release, *Best Served Cold* Joe Abercrombie has garnered widespread acclaim for its original take on dark fantasy tropes. Critics have lauded its narrative ingenuity, character depth, and the subversion of genre conventions. The book frequently appears on recommended reading lists for fans of fantasy seeking morally complex storytelling.

From an SEO perspective, the novel's reputation has been bolstered by discussions on platforms such as Goodreads and fantasy literature forums, where keywords like "grimdark fantasy," "revenge fantasy," and "Joe Abercrombie best works" often appear alongside *Best Served Cold*. These organic conversations contribute to the book's sustained visibility and relevance in the genre.

## Strengths and Limitations

- **Strengths:** Complex characters, morally ambiguous themes, immersive world-building, and a gripping, tightly woven revenge plot.
- **Limitations:** The novel's dark and often brutal tone may not appeal to readers looking for traditional high fantasy or lighter narratives. Some may find the violence and cynicism overwhelming.

## Why *Best Served Cold* Remains a Must-Read for Fantasy Enthusiasts

*Best Served Cold* Joe Abercrombie represents a compelling evolution in modern fantasy literature. It challenges conventional storytelling by presenting characters whose motivations and ethics are not easily categorized. The novel's balance between character-driven narrative and richly detailed world-building makes it a standout title that has influenced many contemporary fantasy authors.

Moreover, its exploration of themes such as betrayal, the cyclical nature of violence, and the personal cost of vengeance provides readers with a thought-provoking experience. The book's ability to blend entertainment with philosophical musings cements its place as a significant work within the grimdark subgenre.

Readers searching for a fantasy novel that combines intense action with psychological depth and ethical complexity will find *Best Served Cold* a rewarding journey. Its continuing popularity underscores Joe Abercrombie's talent for crafting stories that are both engaging and intellectually stimulating.

In sum, *Best Served Cold* Joe Abercrombie is not just a tale of revenge—it is a sophisticated exploration of human nature set against a vividly realized fantasy backdrop. This novel remains a testament to Abercrombie's skill and a benchmark for quality in the evolving landscape of dark

fantasy fiction.

## **Best Served Cold Joe Abercrombie**

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**best served cold joe abercrombie: Best Served Cold** Joe Abercrombie, 2009-07-29 Springtime in Styria. And that means war. There have been nineteen years of blood. The ruthless Grand Duke Orso is locked in a vicious struggle with the squabbling League of Eight, and between them they have bled the land white. While armies march, heads roll and cities burn, and behind the scenes bankers, priests and older, darker powers play a deadly game to choose who will be king. War may be hell but for Monza Murcatto, the Snake of Talins, the most feared and famous mercenary in Duke Orso's employ, it's a damn good way of making money too. Her victories have made her popular -- a shade too popular for her employer's taste. Betrayed, thrown down a mountain and left for dead, Murcatto's reward is a broken body and a burning hunger for vengeance. Whatever the cost, seven men must die. Her allies include Styria's least reliable drunkard, Styria's most treacherous poisoner, a mass-murderer obsessed with numbers and a Northman who just wants to do the right thing. Her enemies number the better half of the nation. And that's all before the most dangerous man in the world is dispatched to hunt her down and finish the job Duke Orso started. . .

**best served cold joe abercrombie: The Great Leveller** Joe Abercrombie, 2015-04-23 Collected together for the first time, here are the three hard-hitting standalone novels set in the world of Joe Abercrombie's bestselling FIRST LAW trilogy. BEST SERVED COLD: War may be hell but for Monza Murcatto, the Snake of Talins, the most feared and famous mercenary in Duke Orso's employ, it's a damn good way of making money too. Her victories have made her popular - a shade too popular for her employer's taste. Betrayed, thrown down a mountain and left for dead, Murcatto's reward is a broken body and a burning hunger for vengeance. Whatever the cost, seven men must die. THE HEROES: Over three bloody days of battle, the fate of the North will be decided. But with both sides riddled by intrigues, follies, feuds and petty jealousies, it is unlikely to be the noblest hearts, or even the strongest arms that prevail. Three men. One battle. No Heroes. RED COUNTRY: Shy South hoped to bury her bloody past and ride away smiling, but she'll have to sharpen up some bad old ways to get her family back, and she's not a woman to flinch from what needs doing. She sets off in pursuit of her family's killers with only a pair of oxen and her cowardly old stepfather Lamb for company. But it turns out Lamb's buried a bloody past of his own, and out in the lawless Far Country, the past never stays buried.

**best served cold joe abercrombie: The Heroes** Joe Abercrombie, 2011-02-07 They say Black Dow's killed more men than winter, and clawed his way to the throne of the North up a hill of skulls. The King of the Union, ever a jealous neighbor, is not about to stand smiling by while he claws his way any higher. The orders have been given and the armies are toiling through the northern mud. Thousands of men are converging on a forgotten ring of stones, on a worthless hill, in an unimportant valley, and they've brought a lot of sharpened metal with them. THE HEROES For glory, for victory, for staying alive.



**best served cold joe abercrombie:** *Sharp Ends* Joe Abercrombie, 2016-04-26 *Sharp Ends* is the ultimate collection of award winning tales and exclusive new short stories from the master of grimdark fantasy, Joe Abercrombie. Violence explodes, treachery abounds, and the words are as deadly as the weapons in this rogue's gallery of side-shows, back-stories, and sharp endings from the world of the First Law. The Union army may be full of bastards, but there's only one who thinks he can save the day single-handed when the Gurkish come calling: the incomparable Colonel Sand dan Glokta. Curnden Craw and his dozen are out to recover a mysterious item from beyond the Crinna. Only one small problem: no one seems to know what the item is. Shevedieh, the self-styled best thief in Styria, lurches from disaster to catastrophe alongside her best friend and greatest enemy, Javre, Lioness of Hoskopp. And after years of bloodshed, the idealistic chieftain Bethod is desperate to bring peace to the North. There's only one obstacle left -- his own lunatic champion, the most feared man in the North: the Bloody-Nine . . .

**best served cold joe abercrombie:** *Report on Digital Asset Financial Stability Risks and Regulation 2022* Financial Stability Oversight Council, 2023-02-21 The FSOC Report on Digital Asset Financial Stability Risks and Regulation outlines the Council's findings on crypto-assets and recommends Congress pass legislation for a federal framework for stablecoin issuers to address market integrity, [...]

**best served cold joe abercrombie: Before They Are Hanged** Joe Abercrombie, 2009-06-18 'As brilliant as its predecessor' SF REVU Bitter and merciless war is coming to the frozen north. It's bloody and dangerous and the Union army, split by politics and hamstrung by incompetence, is utterly unprepared for the slaughter that's coming. Lacking experience, training, and in some cases even weapons the army is scarcely equipped to repel Bethod's scouts, let alone the cream of his forces. In the heat-ravaged south the Gurkish are massing to assault the city of Dagoska, defended by Inquisitor Glokta. The city is braced for the inevitable defeat and massacre to come, preparations are made to make the Gurkish pay for every inch of land ... but a plot is festering to hand the city to its beseigers without a fight, and the previous Inquisitor of Dagoska vanished without trace. Threatened from within and without the city, Glokta needs answers, and he needs them soon. And to the east a small band of malefactors travel to the edge of the world to reclaim a device from history - a Seed, hidden for generations - with tremendous destructive potential. A device which could put a end to war, to the army of Eaters in the South, to the invasion of Shanka from the North - but only if it can be found, and only if its power can be controlled ...

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**best served cold joe abercrombie: The Heroes** Joe Abercrombie, 2012-05-10 This enhanced eBook contains: # An introduction from Joe Abercrombie # The full text of THE HEROES # THE HEROES Audio edition # A critical afterword from the editor Plus: # THE FOOL JOBS short story, featuring characters from THE HEROES # A 20,000 word 'planning' document which contains all of Joe's behind-the-scenes notes, plans and timeline for THE HEROES # A before-and-after chapter showing the first draft, the last draft, and many stages in between of one of the most critical chapters of the book # A full behind-the-scenes interview with Joe Abercrombie covering the writing process, the importance of maps, the genesis of and influences on the novel, the six main characters and their story arcs, and the cover . . . amongst other things! # 'Blog archive' - all of Joe's blog posts from the period when he was writing THE HEROES. This is half-diary, half book progress updates, and includes illustrations, links to interviews, events, award ceremonies and reviews of games and books from Joe as well as incidents from his life # Cover file: view the several elements of the cover in all their final and rough stages, plus the different stages the cover itself went through during the design process. Comes with commentary from Joe Abercrombie, Dave Senior, Didier Graffet and Laura Brett - the design team that won a publically-voted design award for the cover of BEST SERVED COLD # A full author biography, and an author photo gallery

**best served cold joe abercrombie: Time**, 2009

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**best served cold joe abercrombie: The First Law Trilogy Boxed Set** Joe Abercrombie, 2012-08-30 THE FIRST LAW trilogy is a fantasy masterpiece, now available in a stunning box set. It's a perfect gift for fans of A GAME OF THRONES; a must-have for fans of Joe Abercrombie; and a great way for new readers to discover one of the most highly acclaimed fantasy trilogies of the past decade.

**best served cold joe abercrombie: Last Argument Of Kings** Joe Abercrombie, 2009-06-18 The end is coming. Logen Ninefingers might only have one more fight in him - but it's going to be a big one. Battle rages across the North, the King of the Northmen still stands firm, and there's only one man who can stop him. His oldest friend, and his oldest enemy. It's past time for the Bloody-Nine to come home. With too many masters and too little time, Superior Glokta is fighting a different kind of war. A secret struggle in which no-one is safe, and no-one can be trusted. His days with a sword are far behind him. It's a good thing blackmail, threats and torture still work well enough. Jezal dan Luthar has decided that winning glory is far too painful, and turned his back on soldiering for a

simple life with the woman he loves. But love can be painful too, and glory has a nasty habit of creeping up on a man when he least expects it. While the King of the Union lies on his deathbed, the peasants revolt and the nobles scramble to steal his crown. No-one believes that the shadow of war is falling across the very heart of the Union. The First of the Magi has a plan to save the world, as he always does. But there are risks. There is no risk more terrible, after all, than to break the First Law...

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**best served cold joe abercrombie: The Blade Itself** Joe Abercrombie, 2009-06-18

'Delightfully twisted and evil' GUARDIAN 'Highly recommended ... seek it out' Joe Hill Inquisitor Glotka, a crippled and increasingly bitter relic of the last war, former fencing champion turned torturer extraordinaire, is trapped in a twisted and broken body - not that he allows it to distract him from his daily routine of torturing smugglers. Nobleman, dashing officer and would-be fencing champion Captain Jezal dan Luthar is living a life of ease by cheating his friends at cards. Vain, shallow, selfish and self-obsessed, the biggest blot on his horizon is having to get out of bed in the morning to train with obsessive and boring old men. And Logen Ninefingers, an infamous warrior with a bloody past, is about to wake up in a hole in the snow with plans to settle a blood feud with Bethod, the new King of the Northmen, once and for all - ideally by running away from it. But as he's discovering, old habits die really, really hard indeed... ..especially when Bayaz gets involved. A bald old man with a terrible temper and a pathetic assistant, he could be the First of the Magi, he could be a spectacular fraud, but whatever he is, he's about to make the lives of Glotka, Jezal and Logen a whole lot more difficult...

**best served cold joe abercrombie: The First Law Trilogy** Joe Abercrombie, 2017-01-03 The complete First Law trilogy from New York Times bestseller and master of grimdark fantasy, Joe Abercrombie. The finest epic fantasy trilogy in recent memory. - Junot Diaz Murderous conspiracies rise to the surface, old scores are ready to be settled, and the line between hero and villain is sharp enough to draw blood. Unpredictable, compelling, wickedly funny, and packed with unforgettable characters, the First Law trilogy is noir fantasy with a real cutting edge. This boxed set includes: THE BLADE ITSELF, BEFORE THEY ARE HANGED, THE LAST ARGUMENT OF KINGS. For more from Joe Abercrombie, check out: Novels in the First Law world Best Served Cold The Heroes Red Country Sharp Ends: Stories From the World of the First Law

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**best served cold joe abercrombie: The Collected Joe Abercrombie** Joe Abercrombie, 2013-11-28 'Joe Abercrombie is doing some terrific work' George R. R. Martin, author of GAME OF THRONES. Here are the first six books set in the world of THE FIRST LAW, Joe Abercrombie's hugely successful fantasy creation. Join Logen Ninefingers, Jezal dan luthar and Inquisitor Glotka as war rages across the North in the first trilogy, and then enjoy three self-contained novels and discover more of the remarkable imagination of the UK's most prominent fantasy author. Contains THE BLADE ITSELF, BEFORE THEY ARE HANGED, LAST ARGUMENT OF KINGS, BEST SERVED COLD, THE HEROES and RED COUNTRY

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