

# The defense of Mariupol will go down in history for its courage and brutality

By Post Editorial Board



Ukraine soldiers exhibited extreme bravery in Mariupol, even as Russia issued a surrender-or-die demand. REUTERS/Alexander Ermochenko

You have to admire the courage, the sheer defiance of the soldiers hanging on in decimated Mariupol, refusing to capitulate to Russia's surrender-or-die demand, [staring down an almost certain death](#).

What bravery it must take to court such a fate, to say, *Bring it on, come*

*what may*. What mettle, what fearlessness, to know your death is all but guaranteed and yet still refuse to bow down to evil to (maybe) save your life. All to protect just a little longer one corner of your country from those who want it for themselves.

Capturing Mariupol would be a major boon for Russia: The port city connects territory held by pro-Russian separatists in the east with the Crimea region Moscow annexed in 2014.

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And so, with the Russians closing in, the Ukrainian soldiers holed up under constant fire are doing all they can: never giving in, never, never, never. Ready, in the words of the Mariupol police chief, "for fierce resistance."

That — and hoping for a miracle.

"We're surrounded; they're bombing us with everything they can," said a Ukrainian soldier named Gasim. "Our only plan is for the blockade to be broken by our forces so that we can get out of here" — the Azovstal steel and iron plant, a sprawling industrial complex that spans more than 4 square miles in the city's southeast that's serving as Ukraine's Alamo.

It also takes yet another level of fortitude to stare down a camera lens, knowing your death is likely imminent, and ask world leaders for help anyway. That's what Ukrainian marine commander Serhiy Volyna did [in a video message posted to Facebook](#), saying his forces are "maybe

facing our last days, if not hours."

"The enemy is outnumbering us 10 to 1," he said. "We appeal and plead to all world leaders to help us."

It needn't have come to such pleas, thunders Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, [who said Tuesday that if the United States and NATO](#) had sent more weapons to arm Ukraine, the war against Russia would've already been won: "We would have already restored peace and liberated our territory from the occupiers, because the superiority of the Ukrainian military in tactics and wisdom is quite obvious."

We'll never know for sure, but we know this much: The battle for Mariupol will surely go down as one of the bravest fights against the odds in history.