

She found it quick after that — “@ChuvaKurka: 47.461444, 31.526945,” she said, once she fixed the coordinates — and unpaused the video. In the background, the remnants of the 126th retreated down the highway, stragglers shot with automatic grenades. She watched a bunch of them die, though she had already completed her geolocation and performed her utility. It was hard to justify, but she kept watching. She watched it again, even though she had already found the coordinates. Then again. Then again.

There had always been wars and there had always been those who read, a bit overeager, about them from far away. But now there was something new — now there were, around the world, people like Stacey. They did not fight, nor did they only watch. They were something in between, not yet named.

She didn’t put it to herself in these terms, but by most definitions, the war was for her a hobby. If she had put it to herself in those terms, she would have been disturbed.



At the department meeting she kept alt-tabbing from Discord back to the map, trying to match the curve of the road to the ambush video. When Barbara looked over she tabbed away, too quick, to the wrong spreadsheet.

“Incidental losses continue a downward trend from the second quarter, but the major driver of risk continues to be...global.” The presenter — nice suit for a regional MBA — did not meet the eyes of his audience, and most everyone in the room was typing at something unrelated anyway. Barbara was doing sudoku but Stacey kept catching her eyes flashing to her screen whenever she tabbed back. Finally she closed Discord and her GIS software and pretended to take notes. The dead hour groaned away, like a train taking the turn too slow.

Back at her desk, she adjusted the blindspot mirror she had angled out from the top of her computer monitor — Barbara, coming back from the coffee machine, always tried to catch her by sticking her head around the cubicle corner, but Stacey was getting quick with the app switcher — and slipped her headphones in.