



ALEXANDER NEVZOROV

# MY BAM

DUSSE-ALIN, 1980-1982

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### **Аннотация**

Somehow, scolding me on the parade ground before the whole system, the commander of the battalion said: “You, Nevzorov, then you’ll talk everywhere – I served in the BAM, I built BAM, I’m a hero. In fact, you slobber and g... And the medal “For the construction of BAM” you will not get. You are not worthy of it. Completely agree with him. Alexander Nevzorov.

# **My BAM**

## **Dusse-Alin, 1980—1982**

### **Alexander Nevzorov**

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Leningrad-Khabarovsk, seven hours of summer or seven days by train. I did this way and so and so. From Khabarovsk to Chegdomyn, the secret capital of the Eastern section of the BAM, on the train for another day. In Chegdomyn was in 1980 the headquarters of the First Corps of Railway Troops, where I was sent after the institute for military service. I went to serve as an officer for two years.

Chegdomyn stands slightly apart from the BAM, it is a district center, a well-off mining town. Here there is no dry law, like at BAM, and here they go for vodka and wine. But alcohol here is ugly of poor quality, even for that time. The corps in Chegdomyn manages the brigades of the railway troops scattered around the BAM itself. I fell out a brigade with a dislocation in Urgal.

Today in Chegdomyn there will be dances

Dances of the Yakuts and the Northerners

They get up there in a circle, they beat the ground with  
their feet

And they sing something in a wild voice

They sing about severe frosts

About how water carries water carriers

About — — — —, about long rubles

How people die of longing

Urgal – a large (by the standards of BAM) junction. It connects the BAM and the Chegdomyn-Khabarovsk branch. Urgal consists entirely of wooden barracks, in the main, these are military buildings. The whole Eastern section of the Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM) is built by soldiers of the railway troops. The western section of the BAM was mastered by the Komsomol members.

But I will not serve in Urgal. I will serve in a place called Dusse-Alin. There is a separate battalion zheldorvoysk. Dusse-Alin is known for being located at one of the longest tunnels of the BAM, its length is almost 2 kilometers. Actually, the battalion is also engaged in the tunnel, its restoration.

So, from Leningrad I flew to Khabarovsk. From Khabarovsk I came to Chegdomyn. From Chegdomyn I headed for the bus to Urgal. From there, take the train to Dusse-Alin. The case was in the summer of 1980, in August. The smell of burning was clearly heard in the air. The taiga was burning.

Taiga here burns every summer. This is explained simply, the climate on the BAM is continental. The sun shines all year round. Precipitation is only two months a year, a month in spring and a month in autumn. Summer heat, winter frost. And despite the relatively low latitude (51 degrees north latitude versus 60 degrees latitude of Leningrad), here is the permafrost zone. Winter is difficult to survive. Frosts over 50 degrees, I personally testify about 54. One careless movement and you are frostbitten. Going to the toilet on the street (and others are not here), you manage, of course, to unbutton your pants on your trousers. You will not be able to fasten it to you (on the street).

The train at the BAM (then called the “bichevoz”) went once a day, arriving in Dusse-Alin at night. I’m in a civilian, with a suitcase, got out of the car and went to the part, at the checkpoint (checkpoint). The whole of Dusse-Alin consisted of two parts, the territory of the military unit, located in the lowland and the officer town, located higher, across the road. At the checkpoint I was met by ensign Smal. Maybe now he reads these lines. Greetings to you, my first colleague!

At the checkpoint there is a small room with a bed, where I stopped for the night. And in the morning I went to the part, to be introduced on the occasion of my arrival. The deputy commander for the rear, Major Voznyuk, met me. It turned out that the battalion is almost in its entirety now on a business trip, in the city of Artem, Primorsky Krai. The second way is laid there on the railway line. And for the senior there is a deputy at the rear. The part is almost empty, only a platoon of security and some rear services.

Voznyuk determined me to stay (temporarily) in the medical unit. For several days I lived there. Forms of military I did not have, to serve until I could not. The post, to which I was appointed back in the Corps, was called “deputy company commander for the technical part.” And the company was technical, the fourth. That is, I was the deputy engineer of the technical company. In the company (about which I learned later) there were up to 100 personnel members, three platoons. Behind the company there is a fixed technique – electrical stations, cranes, bulldozers, various equipment. Here, at the BAM, we were on full technical self-sufficiency. In our battalion there are only 5 companies. The first three – track, the fourth – the technical, the fifth – the car. Still there were different services, I will not list them all, so as not to bore the reader.

In every company for fun  
There are zamptones

So, a few days I lived in the medical unit. They fed well, the linen was clean, I was not offered pills or injections. And then Petya, I do not remember the name, zampolit my company, also an officer, a two-year-old, offered to occupy an empty apartment in his house. I took it. In this apartment I lived the first year of my service. Small house, of course, wooden, for 4 apartments. A room of 15 meters, a tiny kitchenette and a big real oven, it was my apartment. And a couple of days later I went to Urgal in the brigade, behind the uniform.

Every morning, a so-called “divorce” is made in the military unit. The whole personnel of the battalion is built on the parade ground in a certain order. The command is “submissive” and the commander appears. More precisely, on the contrary, first the commander appears, and then the command is “approached” by the senior officer. The commander greeted the personnel: “Hello, comrades!”. Then he listens to the reports of the commanders of the mouth, sets tasks, scolds someone and so on. At the first divorce in my life, I also came in new uniform. Ensign of our company Shubin showed my place in the ranks. I looked at the officers standing next to him, ensigns and soldiers and tried to do the same. That is, what it considered necessary to do. Of course, now I understand this, from the outside I looked

completely foreign body. But the main embarrassment happened later. When all went on the parade ground, I also went. Maybe not in step, maybe somehow wrong. But when the whole company suddenly turned and went left, I went on alone straight ahead, breaking the whole system. Everyone laughed and I had to catch up with my ranks.

Looked only that “Dusse-Alin” on the Internet. The village of such and such a station is not today. There is Soloni, there is Suluk, and Dusse-Alin, who should be between them, he is not. The military unit, when it came to unfreeze and restore the tunnel in the seventies, also did not find anyone here. But there was a camp here. And not even one. From our side (closer to Suluk) was the male “zone”. And from the opposite side, the tunnel was pierced by female prisoners. And somewhere in the middle (so they say) they met. Indirect evidence of this are two bas-reliefs above the entrance to the tunnel, Lenin and Stalin. The date is also broken out – in 1953.

It is said that “Dusse-Alin” in translation from the Evenki (local indigenous population) means “White Mountain”. An interesting coincidence. I was born in the city of Karaganda. That in translation from local, Kazakh, means “Black Mountain”. But this is so, by the way. In fact, according to Wikipedia, Dusse-Alin is a mountain range, a watershed of three districts. That is, here the rivers begin flowing in different directions. It turns

out that Mount Dusse-Alin is the highest point of the whole neighborhood, about two thousand meters above sea level.

Of course, the species in Dusse-Alin are very beautiful. It is a pity that I did not specially photograph them then. And what was filmed, somewhere hurt. Maybe it's worth to drive now, after almost 40 years, to those places. To resemble, admire, live for a while or permanently... Do not believe me, but I still sometimes dream about an army.

A stream ran past the part. What was it called? Now I'll look on the Internet. No, I can not find it. It was said that gold was washed here before the camps. Indeed, here and there you can see the remains of wooden footbridges. But I did not see the gold itself. Maybe I looked badly for him?

After serving a couple of weeks at the BAM, I was seconded to the main battalion, to the city of Artem. Here, our glorious fourth company served, that is, worked, together with the technology entrusted to it. The battalion occupied the building of the school, where the school itself had gone, I do not know. In the classrooms stood in 2 tiers of bed. The officers lived in a dormitory or rented a house in the private sector.

I forgot to write about one more, another Dousse-Alin episode. When I just arrived to serve, I especially did not hide

that I was engaged in karate. Then it was extremely fashionable. I brought a kimono to my BAM, my yellow belt and was going to intensively continue my studies. Although he visited the sports section only a few months before the army. So, one evening, I was summoned to me by the acting battalion commander, Major Voznyuk. In his office there were already officers of the unit, those who did not leave for Artem. About ten people. Voznyuk held a meeting, he was addressed by some important current issues. Suddenly, at the very end of the working meeting, the deputy announced that I, a newly-minted lieutenant, deputy customs officer of the fourth company, are a karate. And now, right now, at the moment, I will show them all my art. With a mysterious grin, the major climbed under a chair at the entrance and pulled out three bricks from there. Two of them he put on the edge, and tritium laid on top of them.

“Come on,” he said to me. – Demonstrate.

For six months of training, I never broke bricks. Of course, I saw how the masters broke them. But to see, this is one thing, but to be able to do it, is quite another. The bricks were red, hardened, where I took them to the bum, I do not know. It could well be that they did not break at all, under any circumstances. What was to be done? Say I never hit bricks? Refuse to “speak”? Probably, it was necessary to do so. But I decided to hit. To beat or not to beat? Beat. And come what may.

By the way, in 2 years, at the very end of the service, I decided

to tell my friends about that incident. And they brought bricks from somewhere too. And everyone began to break them in turn. Only Zhenya Kuzmenko, a dentist, managed to do this, he was the most healthy and engaged in athleticism, as they say now. But I did not break my brick, no matter how hard I tried.

And then, only having arrived at the BAM, in the company of strangers unknown to me, I stood in front of a brick on my knee. I closed my eyes and called for help all conceivable and unthinkable forces. I swung and struck the red brick with all the urine from the unknown. And he split. Everyone applauded. And I started gaining authority. It was, probably, the only brick in my life that I had broken.

Artem in the eyes of the soldiers who came from Dusse-Alin, and even the officers, is a fabulous place. Alcohol in shops, young ladies in light dresses on the street. It was summer. On one of the days off (in the Soviet army there was one day off for most of the officers – a resurrection) we went in an organized way to swim. On the Gulf of Peter the Great. Peter the Great Bay in the Pacific Ocean. Have you ever bathed in the Pacific Ocean? But for some reason it was not very warm. The sea was slightly “cool”, although until the fall it still seemed far away. And the sun was somehow not Black Sea, not resort.

In Artem, I introduced myself to my immediate commander,

the commander of the fourth company, Captain Alexei Silushkin, by the way, my fellow countryman from Leningrad. He was a bachelor, short, but very mobile and energetic. I introduced myself to my chief commander, the battalion commander, Major Kurguzov. He was of medium height, stocky and wearing glasses in a large square frame. It was said that our battalion commander, Pope, was the head of the whole Union's railway troops. So it or not, there was nowhere to check.

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