

ROMAN KARTASHEVSKY

Crawling Out of Hell

A Raw Story and Real Advice to Change Your Life



First published by Roman Crown Publishing 2025

Copyright © 2025 by Roman Kartashevsky

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise without written permission from the publisher. It is illegal to copy this book, post it to a website, or distribute it by any other means without permission.

Roman Kartashevsky asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

First edition

ISBN: 8397634118

*This book was professionally typeset on Reedsy.
Find out more at reedsy.com*

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	v
Introduction	1
1 Chapter 1. Too Lively	4
2 Chapter 2. The Village. The Dreamer	8
3 Chapter 3. The City. My Father	14
4 Chapter 4. Gymnasium. Mistakes	19
5 Chapter 5. Computer Club. Fights.	24
6 Chapter 6. Late Maturity. Thoughts about the Army	30
7 Chapter 7. Vocational School. Friends. Strength	36
8 Chapter 8. Brother. Family.	42
9 Chapter 9. Rap and Drinking.	44
10 Chapter 10. Our Neighborhood. Harsh Reality	50
11 Chapter 11. Monika. Love and Betrayal.	57
12 Chapter 12. A New Path: College and Kickboxing	66
13 Chapter 13. The Army: Fights and the School of Life	73
14 Chapter 14. My Wife	80
15 Chapter 15. Chase Your Dream	83
16 Chapter 16. Warsaw — My First Love in Europe	90
17 Chapter 17. The Polish People and My Jobs in Poland	96
18 Chapter 18. The Athlete	102
19 Chapter 19. University. Master's Degree. Believing in...	109
20 Chapter 20. Working at School in Warsaw	114
21 Chapter 21. Amazon KDP	120
22 Chapter 22. Cryptocurrency	125

23	Bonus Chapter 1. Nutrition and the Golden Middle	131
24	Bonus Chapter 2. Why I Hate Hostels	135
25	Final Chapter. The Law of Attraction	142
26	Life Advice Recap	147
	My 14 Most Important Lessons from Life	147

Preface

There was a time when I had no dreams and no direction.

No money. No education. No faith in myself.

I was trapped in a self-destructive lifestyle: drinking too much, smoking heavily, skipping school.

Every day felt like a sequel to a movie no one wanted to watch and I was the lead actor.

I truly believed my destiny was either construction or factory work with occasional smoke breaks and dreams of a better reincarnation.

In my mind, my future was already written: either sweating at a construction site or buried behind some factory machine. Nothing more. Nothing better.

But today...

Everything is different.

I'm writing this book to you from Europe.

I hold a master's degree in physical education from a European university.

I've been committed to sports for years now.

I don't drink. I don't smoke.

I've earned multiple qualifications, served in the military, improved my health, and even started my own online business.

In the coming years, I plan to leave behind all forms of employment I don't believe in and fully dedicate myself to doing what I love.

Soon, I'll become a citizen of a European country.

And just recently, I became the proud father of a beautiful son.

For me, this means *everything*.

For me, this is **victory**.

And if that guy from my past is reading this I've got one message for him: hang in there, man. It gets good.



Introduction

Well then... hello there.

I'm 35 years old and this is my first book.

Why did I decide to write it?

Simple. I believe my life has been intense, unpredictable, and maybe even inspiring enough to serve as an example.

Not just for young men but for anyone who's ever felt lost or stuck.

The purpose of this book is clear:

To **motivate**.

To help people improve their lives.

I'll take you deep inside the world I came from, a so-called "third-rate" country, and offer you real, practical advice.

Advice that helped *me* take the first steps forward.

Advice that might help *you*, too.

Now, maybe you're thinking:

"Who are you to give me advice? What have you even accomplished?"

Fair question.

And the truth is, I'm nobody special.

I'm not famous. I'm not rich. I'm not a motivational guru in a suit.

I'm just a regular guy, like you.

But maybe that's exactly *why* this story might speak to you.

Because it's real. And because I've lived through the pain, confusion, and darkness you might be going through now.

And somehow, I found a way out.

So I'm going to tell you everything, openly and honestly, even when it's not easy.

Let's begin.

If you're stuck in a spiral of problems,
If it feels like the world is against you,
If you've stopped believing in a better future,

This book is for you.

Who am I?

Who am I?

I was born in Chișinău, the capital of a small Eastern European country. My parents kept moving, always searching for a better life. My background is mixed, with roots in several cultures across the region.

Today, I don't feel tied to any single nationality. I see myself as part of a bigger, global community.

And I *feel* connected to Europe.

My family?

They're educated people. Everyone has a university degree. But that didn't mean life was easy.

Despite their education, I still had to walk the hard road, the road of an ordinary kid starting from nothing.

Now, I'll tell you how it all unfolded...

INTRODUCTION



1

Chapter 1. Too Lively



From early childhood, I was a ball of energy, constantly moving and constantly pushing boundaries.

Today, in Europe or the U.S., people would probably say I had ADHD.

Back then? I was just considered *a handful*.

I couldn't sit still.

I ran, jumped, poked, prodded, and caused all kinds of mischief.

Why? I don't know.

But I was definitely a difficult child.

Let me tell you about a few pranks I still remember and trust me, there were plenty.

Once, when I was out walking with my grandfather, I would twist his finger constantly trying to hurt him.

He always bore it bravely. Of course, I was tiny and probably couldn't do much damage... but I tried anyway.

At the time, I lived in **Moldova**, with my grandparents. I must've been there for about two years.

I still have warm, sun-soaked memories of that place:

Golden sunlight.

Peaches and apricots on the trees.

Grapes growing everywhere.

Once, my grandmother took me to the market. That's where I saw chewing gum for the first time. **Juicy Fruit**, I think.

It was lying right there on an open counter.

So what did I do?

I tried to steal it.

Crazy, right?

I was born into an educated family... and I'm trying to snatch a piece of gum like some street punk.

But I didn't get away with it. The vendor saw me and started shouting.

My grandmother? Furious. I got punished, of course. And I deserved it.

That was my debut in the criminal underworld — Juicy Fruit gum and absolutely no escape plan.

I also remember fighting with a local Moldovan boy. We argued over something, and I punched him right in the face.

I was five years old. Five!

Another day, my grandfather was in the garage, working on his old **Moskvich**.

For some reason, I started fiddling with the door lock... and I accidentally **locked him inside**.

He didn't have the keys.

We had to call a specialist to come unlock it.

Luckily, no one got hurt — just some frayed nerves.

In that moment, I became the youngest kidnapper in Moldova's history.

Then there was the time I found a weird pair of crooked scissors at home. What did I do?

I cut a big, beautiful **living room carpet**.

Not just that. I also shredded the cover of the armchair.

Why? I have no idea.

I just... did it. Carpet? Shredded. Armchair? Destroyed. Grandma's pride? In pieces.

But the worst and most dangerous thing I did?

We were visiting some relatives, and outside their house was a **gas cylinder**.

Somehow, I found a piece of paper, threw it near the cylinder, and **set it on fire**.

Plan B? Didn't exist. Plan A was: 'Let's see what happens if I light something next to gas.' Genius move.

To this day, I don't understand what I was thinking.

Thankfully, the adults noticed quickly and put out the fire.

No one was hurt by pure luck.

You can imagine what life was like for my grandparents.

At some point, they even wrote to my parents, begging them to come get me sooner.

By then, my mom, dad, and younger brother were already living in

CHAPTER 1. TOO LIVELY

another country.

And yet, despite all the chaos, my grandmother never gave up on me.

When I was just 4 or 5, she was already teaching me how to **read, write, and count.**

She did everything she could to set me on the right path.

I'll never forget that.

I'm endlessly grateful to my grandparents for their patience, their strength, and their love.

Maybe it's thanks to them that I'm sitting here today, typing this story somewhere in Europe...

Chapter 2. The Village. The Dreamer



Okay, hold on.
I know I promised you motivation and advice and it's

coming.

But first, I want you to truly **know** me.

This journey begins in childhood with the raw, uncomfortable parts.

I'll show you how I messed up my life... and then how I fixed it.

So remember one thing:

Never give up. Keep moving forward.

As Rocky Balboa once said:

“It’s not about how hard you hit. It’s about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward.”

After about two years in Moldova, my parents took me to a new country.

They were probably hoping for a quieter, safer life.

Back then, there was a growing hostility toward people of my father's nationality in Moldova, similar to the global tension today.

We moved to a small **village**, settling in an apartment.

My younger brother and I attended the local school. He was two years younger than me.

He was calm, thoughtful, my mother's favorite.

I was the opposite: wild, rebellious, impossible to manage.

Still... I was the best student in class.

But let's be honest, competition wasn't exactly fierce. Sometimes I think the neighbor's goat had a shot at second place.

There were only a few of us — typical village kids from poor families.

Their parents were **collective farmers**.

Alcohol was everywhere: cheap vodka, homemade wine, toxic surrogates.

It was part of the culture.

I'll talk more about **alcohol** later. It's a key part of this story.

The place I grew up in was ruled by one man.

And drunk, broken people are easier to control.

Some of what I'm going to tell you may shock you.

But that was my reality.

Try to imagine it.

Our school was four kilometers away.

There were no buses.

We walked. Every day, in every season.

Eight kilometers round trip, In every weather: rain, snow, hurricane, or just a regular Monday. Sometimes the wind almost knocked me over.

But I kept walking.

What helped me survive it all?

My imagination.

As a kid, I was a dreamer.

I invented stories in my head.

I imagined I had electric powers.

Or that I could control fire.

Dinosaurs, robots, battles... I lived in those fantasies.

So much so that the real world often disappeared.

I'd walk to school talking to myself.

Sometimes a kind farmer would give us a ride on his cart.

Halfway to school, there was a **farm**.

Not a neat, modern one — no.

It was full of collapsing barns and mud.

Hungry, dirty animals.

You could smell **manure from a kilometer away**.

We wore **knee-high rubber boots** just to survive the path.

One day, a friend of mine got **stuck in the manure**.

The more he struggled, the deeper he sank.

Our PE teacher, who rode a tiny bicycle, saved him.

He huffed and puffed up the hill like a locomotive.

My friend's boot stayed buried in the muck.

CHAPTER 2. THE VILLAGE. THE DREAMER

Near the school, there was a sweet old lady with an **apple orchard**.
Sometimes she gave us fruit.

I also remember strange green balls near the stream... Weird plants
we'd pop just for fun.

We played simple games.

We'd dig a hole, place a stick inside, then hit it with another stick.

Whoever sent it flying the farthest won.

Or we'd just run around. That was fun enough.

We lived close to a forest. People said **wolves** lived there.

Sometimes, my parents and I went mushroom picking.

My dad, back then, was still a good man.

But my parents fought constantly.

From a young age, I was drawn to **bad company**.

There was a boy in the village, let's call him **Billy**.

His father was a violent alcoholic.

At six years old, Billy was already **drinking vodka and smoking cigarettes**.

I remember once, his father carried him in his arms.

Billy had drunk too much and nearly died.

Somehow, he survived.

He taught me to smoke.

My parents kept cigarettes in a cabinet to repel moths.

Billy convinced me to steal a few.

We smoked on the balcony.

But I don't blame him.

He was just copying the adults around him.

Billy and I were close.

We had another friend, let's call him **Joe**.

He lived in a grimy railroad city and only visited his grandma occa-

sionally.

Joe had the first **gaming console** I ever saw, an 8-bit. That was the moment I started believing in miracles. Those pixels looked like the future.

We played **Battletoads**.

It was magic.

He also told **scary stories** about his hometown.

Places where you could get beaten just for being a stranger.

Alcohol. Violence. Fights. That was normal.

Even as a child, I was surrounded by **aggression**.

Billy often hung out with older kids — cruel ones.

I remember swimming in a muddy pond and getting **shot at with slingshots**.

They used twisted V-shaped wires. It was terrifying.

Sometimes, I used **acting** to survive.

If someone tried to hit me, I'd pretend it hurt badly, just to stop them.

I was peaceful.

But when I got angry, I didn't care about anything.

Our class had **lice**.

Yes, lice.

That's how poor we were.

There was no real work. Just the collective farm.

Communism, poverty, and the only real joy for adults?

Alcohol.

There was one man in the village — like a dirty, drunk **Robinson Crusoe**.

Huge beard. Always shouting. Always drunk.

We stole fruit sometimes.

Once, I was sitting in an apple tree when the owner yelled, grabbed an

CHAPTER 2. THE VILLAGE. THE DREAMER

axe, and **chased my friend**. He was riding a bike with an axe in his hand!

I hid up in the tree.

Would he have actually hurt us? I still wonder.

I was small, skinny, and always hungry.

I craved sweets so badly, I **stole money** from my parents to buy candy and lemonade.

We hid candies in the forest, under rocks, like buried treasure. Today they'd call it a survival cache. Back then we were just poor kids with wild imaginations.

I didn't help my parents.

I just ran through the streets.

One game?

Sneaking up on drunk men, kicking them from behind, and running.

They'd yell and chase us, but never caught us.

It felt hilarious.

Adrenaline.

We'd argue about who hit harder:

“If I punch you, you'll fly to heaven!”

That was my world.

That was the **village life** I knew.

I lived there for about four years.

And I dreamed, always dreamed, of escaping. And I didn't mean vacation. I wanted a teleporter, a rocket, or at least a one-way bus ticket.

