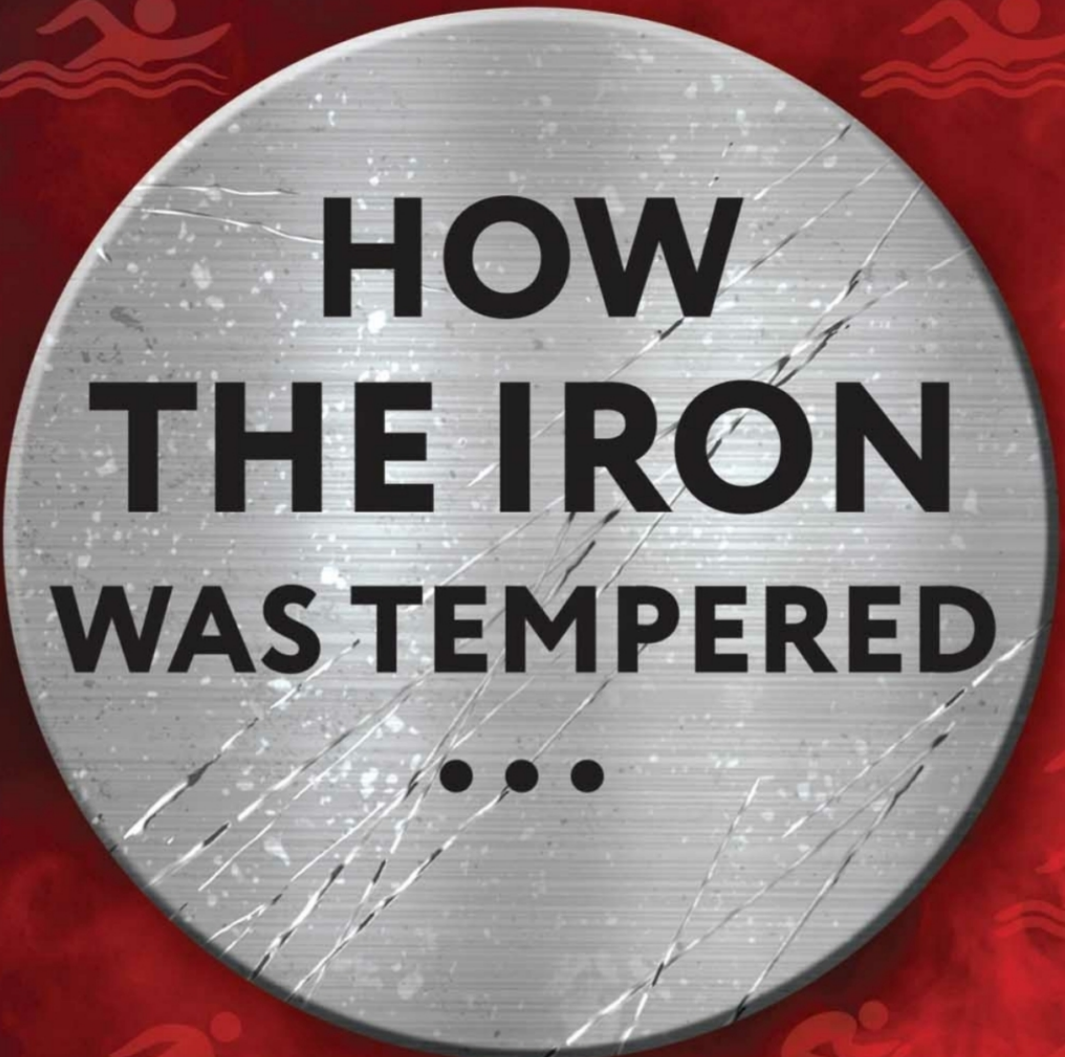




Vladimir RIABUSHKIN



**HOW
THE IRON
WAS TEMPERED**
...

16+

Владимир Рябушкин

How the Iron was tempered

«ЛитРес: Самиздат»

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Book by Vladimir Ryabushkin, President of the Samara region triathlon Federation, is dedicated to the Ironman “Iron distance”. In it, he talks about his childhood, youth, how he came to play sports without being a professional athlete, about his experience of passing this distance, about failures and victories. The book also provides practical tips and recommendations for those who are ready to test their strength by going the Ironman distance. The book is addressed to everyone who loves sports and wants to become an “iron man”.

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Владимир Рябушкин

How the Iron was tempered

Vladimir Ryabushkin

How the iron was tempered

translation from Russian by V.Y. Lymarev

Childhood

Logically, this book should have been the first one. It would tell you the story from the very beginning and move smoothly to the continuation (and I hope there will be a continuation and not an end), but, as is often the case, it turned out the other way around.

This book was the second I decided to write. There may be a lot of questions: how am I different from other people, how am I better than other people, do I have any extraordinary abilities, and so on and so on?

Why am I writing a book about myself?

I'm not a celebrity, I didn't steal a billion, and didn't make a billion, and hadn't become president or at least a minister, and I'm not a genius.

I'm a humble man, an ordinary middle manager, doing generally well, as they say, I can't complain. And I actually become president by chance, though not president of a country but a regional triathlon federation.

That was a recent one. If you read my first book, you already know that this is my favorite sport. So, it makes sense here.

And I thought, why not, who said that creative work is a privilege for some special people?

After all, I have the opportunity, the desire and at the very least the right to write a book and tell about myself, and you always have the choice to read it or not.

And in the end, after all of my internal conflicts and disputes with myself, I won.

I will start from the very beginning, I mean, with what I remember from my very early childhood.

I was born (pay some attention) on April 22, 1969. Do you recognize the date? Does it have any importance for you?

For any Soviet citizen, it had. Each and every one of us knew it as the birthday of our first leader, Vladimir Lenin.

And now guess why they called me Vladimir? That's right, after Lenin.

At those times, it was very exciting and honorable to be associated with Lenin in any way.

I'll tell you more, I was a very curly sweet little boy, a little angel of a child, as people often called me, at least those who saw me for the first time and were not familiar with my personality and temper.

I used to get special affection in adults with my disarming smile, I knew it and used to take advantage of it as hard as I could.

The most interesting thing is that I was a spitting image of Lenin as a child, as he was depicted on our Little Octobrist badges.

By the way, could be it the reason for me being treated like a special person? According to the logic of the adults around me, I had to be as smart as Lenin was, and it put an additional psychological pressure on me, because I definitely wasn't up to the challenge.

I also understood it very well, but for some reason the adults didn't.

I had to work hard and brazen it out over and over again so as not to disappoint the adults.

Soon I realized that to feed their illusions, it is enough to make an angelic expression, and it'll never get to an actual comparison between Lenin's mental abilities and my own.

An additional mark on my image was made by my parents, or rather, their profession.

Although they are both retired now, but the profession of teacher is in their blood, and therefore they were, are and will be teachers.

In this case, we can draw an analogy with the police. They say there are no "former" cops, and in case of my parents, there are no "former" teachers.

Back then, when I was very young, I did not understand fully the phrase “abandoned child”, but I heard it a lot of times. Guess from whom? From my grandmother. Why? Yes, because in fact, my parents were away at work day and night, fostering and teaching other children, and, of course, they didn’t have enough time for me.

To be honest, it didn’t bother me much, because my parents were very strict. Sometimes I was very okay with the fact that they couldn’t find time for some proper spanking.

I fared well with my grandmother. She was one of a kind, as they say. She loved me madly, naturally, as I was the only grandson, endlessly pampered me and indulged my every whim.

I had virtually a toy store at home. My grandmother worked at a hotel called “House of a Collective Farmer”, which was located near famous “Children’s World” toy store on Leningradskaya Street. Every day after my classes I raided the store and every time I came back with a new trophy, a toy.

The only thing that upset me a little now is that, to my regret, there were no such high-tech toys as they have now.

I got a little distracted now and skipped the preschool years. I don’t remember much from that time, except for some stories that somehow remained in my memory.

So, let me tell this in order.

I’ll tell you right away that I might be wrong about the timeline, but you can’t catch me in a lie.

Only my parents can do that.

According to my parents, I had an obsession with technology from my early childhood, but then I was breaking everything I could break.

I especially liked to take apart an old record-player or the radio set that my dad used to secretly leave in my bed so I wouldn’t disturb him working at home.

I’d sit in bed for hours, sniffing and tinkering with the appliance until I took it apart. The interesting thing is, I have no idea now how I did it. Then my dad would take it away from me, assemble it back to the pristine state, leave it on my bed, and everything would repeat again.

Later they started buying toys that matched my age, and I began to take them apart, but unfortunately, my parents were not able to put them back together.

One of my favorite activities at the time was riding a motorcycle.

Dad wasn’t quite that excited and didn’t support me in my addiction because, unfortunately, he played the role of a motorcycle himself.

For me, it looked simple enough.

I asked my dad to lie on his back (and not necessarily on the bed, it could have been on the floor), his stomach was my saddle, his hands were the exhaust pipes. The thing I liked the most was starting the engine, so it kept dying down.

Unfortunately for my dad, I imagined the starter being on his side ribs.

Yeah, I forgot, I had to turn on the ignition beforehand, you’ll never guess, but it was dad’s nose.

My extreme motorcycle racing looked like this: I’d put dad lying in a motorcycle position, straddle on top of him on his stomach, twisted his nose, and (that was the culmination) I’d get up a little bit and kicked with my heel on his ribs and try to “start him up”.

Around the fifth attempt (sometimes there were more attempts, but never less, as I enjoyed with this process), I still started the motorcycle.

Next, there were two ways to continue.

The first scenario was that it died down at once and everything was happening again, and the second scenario was that I rode it, but not for long.

And it could not be called just “riding”, it was a crazy race on a very, very rough road. It was really tense for Dad because I was actually hopping on his stomach.

Unexpectedly, not for me, but for dad, it stopped, the engine was dead. But there was no relief for him. Everything started over. I loved riding.

That's how I had fun. Dad, being a wise man and having thought that any technology would wear out quickly with such ruthless exploitation, decided to find a replacement.

One day dad bought me a kids' pedal car. I all but lived in it and even used to fall asleep behind the wheel. It was from that time on that I fell in love with car racing and I still love it.

I even wanted to become a driver when I was a kid, and when I was a little bit older, I wanted to become a car tester and work at AvtoVAZ. Thank God, not all childhood dreams come true.

In general, the situation with gifts from my father was very interesting. Well, how interesting, he was very serious and the exact opposite of grandmother. Dad never spoiled me and did not give me any toys. And he was proud of it, and he always telling me things like: "I've only given you two gifts in your whole life that you'll remember for the rest of your life." That's basically what happened.

He gave me two cars over the years: one kids' pedal car and one real car.

Really, there was another toy that my dad brought home unexpectedly and took away just as quickly. It was a radio-controlled moon rover, the Lunokhod. It was something out of science fiction at the time. But only now, becoming a father in my turn, I realize that moon rover was a toy not for me, but for dad himself. All men are big kids who want to play with toys that weren't there when we were little. Daddy, having played a little and realizing that these are not the times for such expensive toys, returned the toy moon rover to where it came from.

Adult reason took over childish dreams and emotions.

Truth be told, I sometimes actually find myself trying to trick my son into choosing a toy I like the most, to have a little play with it as well.

I'm lucky my son and I have the same interests, and he likes cars too. That passion for cars hasn't gone away so far.

I started driving very early on my life. At first, sitting on my dad's lap, all I did was steering the wheel and changing gears. Then, when my legs became long enough to reach the foot pedals, I was already pushing the accelerator, and a little later, I was actually driving the car.

Driving was a reward for my good work, and it was usually on country road where we drove to plant bakhcha gardens (places for growing watermelons and sweet melons). Despite the fact that the garden work took several hours and the trip behind the wheel lasted 5-10 minutes top, I was still looking forward to the trip.

The first hours of training were very hard for me, and I got out of the wheel sweating and wet like a drowned rat because of stress. There were moments when I was ready to give up and get out of the steering wheel, but my dad, as a professional teacher, was pushing me into continuing the ride. He took a big risk, and I'm sure it wasn't easy for him to teach me, because we had a lot of moments when I could crash the car. To make it clear how he felt about the car, I'm going to tell another anecdote from those years.

A car used to be not a necessity but a luxury those times. We lived in a district called simply "116 km", and this is such a small, as if separate, part of the city, where everyone knows each other. And everybody knew dad very well, because he was the school principal at that time.

And then one day, coming out into the yard, dad noticed some boys circling around our car and licking it. Dad got confused and came up to the boys, and asked them what they were doing. What they told him was that they often hear from their parents that the principal licks his car into shape, and they wanted to know how it is and what it tastes like.

He cared about it a lot: washed it, waxed it, in winter we put it on bricks in the garage so the springs wouldn't deform.

In the evenings, we used to go to the garage with him, get in the car and smell it. We really liked the way her plastic smelled.

Can you imagine what dad felt when he saw his treasure heading into some roadside post?

After many years, I felt it all on me, teaching my wife and son how to drive.

So much worrying, screaming, tears...

In spite of my cherubic appearance, I was no angel, and my weakest point was my behavior, or rather, being bad.

I don't use the word "hooliganism" because it feels too harsh for that young age.

Now, remembering things I can still remember, I wonder and ask myself a question: how did I do it and how was I even capable of it back then, being so young?

It's even a bit scary to tell.

I messed around a lot, some antics were forgotten for good and ended without much destruction, but there were those who left a mark on my body for a long time, and some – for life.

One day, I was fooling with a pillow on my bed again, as many times before, trying to hit the head of either of my parents,

badly missed and smashed my forehead into the back of the bed.

I cut my eyebrow open. What can I say, there wasn't enough blood and screaming! The scar will be here forever.

I must say that my brain did not work then at all, or I had no brain at all, because any adequate human capable to do even the least bit of thinking would never have thought of what came to my head.

Now, when I think back to my antics, I'm just baffled. It confirms to me once again that I had no brain at all. And neither then nor now do I understand or can answer a simple question: why did I do it?

Another time I did such a thing that I'm ashamed to admit I found a little piece of wood, and I can't remember if it already had a nail sticking from it, or I put that nail there... So, what I did:

I'd catch a moment to put the piece of wood with a nail under my mother's foot for her to step on, naturally with the nail facing upward.

In my misfortune, but more of course my mother's, this wrongdoing was a success, and my mother stepped on the nail that pierced her foot through.

What was my reaction? The only thing I was afraid of at that moment was that the parents would report me to the police.

I misbehaved a lot, but the rest of my antics were erased from my memory. However, I think they are probably well remembered by my parents.

Once I had a fight with my aunt, when we still were living together. I don't remember which one of us won, apparently my aunt, because I went for a couple of weeks with a big bump on my forehead and complained to everyone, saying only two words: "Irka bump" (Irina was my aunt's name).

At that time, I still wasn't good at speaking and didn't know any more words that would be stronger and more colorful.

Well, what else do I remember from kindergarten? At that time, we still lived on Stepan Razin Street, and we had a steep uphill road called Pionersky Spusk near our home. There were no cars driving past in winter, and my dad and I used to go there for sledding.

I remember my first day in kindergarten, how I bawling my eyes out, when my mother brought me in and left.

I remember one time I had a fight with my best friend and I wanted to strangle him.

I remember peeping in the bathroom for the girls, and the kindergarten teacher put me in front of the whole group and said: "Take off your pants."

I remember not liking to sleep in the daytime. How I remembered it later, kicking myself for not understanding how sweet it was to sleep during the day.

I remember how they wouldn't let us go to the bathroom during the lunchtime nap, and I'd stick my peepee out in between the beds and pissed on the floor, for which I was punished later, but I slept in a dry bed, unlike some of the other kids.

I remember doves shitting on my head and having to wash it, crying bitterly.

Like I said, we lived in 116 km settlement. We had an almost abandoned military airfield nearby. My father not only taught me how to drive a car, but also instilled a love of sports.

He was a Candidate Master of Sports in skiing and occasionally took me out for cross country skiing. One of the trips I remember very well.

Of course, there was always a sense of competition. Once again, we went out to the ski track and raced towards the forest. From time to time my father asked if I was tired. I didn't want to look weak and continued to act tough. And we skied further and further away from home.

I ended up being a hero, and I returned home in tow.

We tied up our ski sticks together, and my dad towed me like a snowmobile.

School

The choice of school was very simple, or rather there wasn't any choice. Naturally, I went to the school where my mother worked, so to speak, to be in sight and under her supervision.

I wouldn't wish anyone such a presence. You give an inch here or there, the slightest blunder, and everything becomes known to my mother in no time.

I only saw my mother when I was being punished. It was like a consistent pattern: every time if I am kicked out by teacher during class, my mom walks by and catches me.

She was very strict, and everyone was afraid of her, but respected her even more, of course.

My school diary was riddled with misbehavior marks. The scariest thing for me was, of course, my father's being called to school, but it went fine. Even so, dad knew my situation thoroughly, even though mom often felt sorry for me and protected me, but occasionally I would get beaten with belt or wire.

The wire was more painful, it stung so hard that you could piss in your pants.

So I used to hide all the wires in our home prior to punishment. Dad didn't beat me very often, and at some happy moment he told me that I am an adult already and that it is not nice to punish me with the belt anymore.

Since then, I've been using my self-awareness to control myself and not let my parents down.

It was the authority of my parents that was the main focus of my education.

That's what started my hardening at school.

I must say that my school wasn't an ordinary one, it had advanced French classes.

And for some reason, students from other schools considered it to be for milksops and mamma's boys.

This is why we were regularly visited by uninvited guests from neighboring schools to rob us of our lunch money or simply beat us.

Fights took place almost every day and every break between classes and, as a rule, ended with our side losing.

I can proudly say that it was our class to make it to the turning point in this war. Of course, it didn't work out by itself and it wasn't easy.

For a long time, we were showing up with bruises, but we still stopped bullies from neighboring schools from raiding our territory.

I even had to join a boxing class. For a long time, I wasn't even able to punch my opponent in the face.

But after a while, the problem was solved.

We broke the stereotypes that had developed over the years and made ourselves respected.

I didn't do boxing for long, but it was enough to knock our guests down a peg and make the school grounds safe.

Naturally, I wasn't alone, we had a whole squad, and we went out to fight despite being outnumbered by our enemies, which later won their respect.

Well, rumors about me getting into boxing played an important role in that too. I can't say that we were not afraid.

We were. Sometimes it was white-knuckled panic with our arms and legs trembling. But we'd go out into the street to fight, no matter what.

I want to say that there were other times back then, and the worst thing that could have happen was an unfair fight with several people beating one, and even that was rare.

There was fist-fighting only, no knives or firearms. Which you can't say about today. All notions of honor got blurred, and you don't know where and what can hit you.

The times are different, and you don't have to prove anything to anyone. It's better to avoid unnecessary conflict.

Here's a helpful hint: get away before you get cornered, the best weapon available today is running fast.

As I said, I did not do boxing for long, I was prohibited by doctors after a routine medical examination,

But it just so happens that I had to participate in a competition after I quit boxing.

I don't remember the reason exactly, but my coach told me that I had to stand up for our boxing class, and there is no one else in my weight division.

And I agreed, because I don't like to let down people I respect. By that time I hadn't been training for several months, which was very embarrassing for me, and I told the coach about my doubts.

To which he responded: «You'll get there and hop a bit, winning is not important, it's the taking part that counts, and the opponent is weak, maybe, you'll win» His words cheered me up, of course, but it turned out differently.

The opponent turned out to be a well-trained hulk of a guy, and I wasn't even fit for the fight.

To keep it simple, he beat the crap out of me.

I wasn't thinking clearly and I remember one moment between rounds.

I'm sitting down, I feel sick, my face hurts, I'm out of strength, out of air, my head is cloudy, and the coach tells me: «Put your hands up, keep your hands up,» and I raise them up in the air, and he tells me: «Not now, put them up during the fight.»

I lost, but the most valuable thing for me was that the coach made an example out of me and told everyone that they're got to learn courage from me, despite the fact that I looked deplorable.

And after the fight, being all courageous, I was sitting in the shower and throwing up, but throwing up proudly, as a hero should.

Boxing helped me beyond the school years.

The most important thing is that boxing gives you not only the ability to fight and to defend yourself.

Boxing gives you inner confidence and peace of mind, which is felt from a distance and very well felt by the attackers.

That's why most of conflicts didn't come to an actual fight.

Army: the school for men

After school I, like everyone else I knew, went to university to become an engineer: this career was deemed prestigious back then.

My father didn't pull any strings to get me exempted, and after my first year at the university I was drafted.

Of course, I didn't want to join the army and didn't understand why I should join.

But here, as in the saying goes, what does not kill you makes you stronger.

I've already said that I was a sickly child, I had flat feet, I had some bumps on my knees. Anyway, I was very hopeful that I wouldn't be enlisted due to my health condition. I underwent a medical examination and all my conditions were confirmed, which gave me even more hope for an exempt.

What a surprise it was to me when I was not just enlisted, but also assigned to the border troops and sent to serve in the Far East on the border with China.

I was shocked, and my whole family as well, except for my dad. I had to leave for 2 years for 9,000 km from home, and I had never been to a youth camp or gone from my parents to my grandmother's village for more than a week.

The situation was worsened by the fact that at that time the USSR waged a war in Afghanistan. Even our town saw some coffins returning home instead of lads sent to war.

Before going to the transit terminal in Syzran, I got a short haircut, cutting my curls for the first time in my life. They shaved me with a hair clipper in Syzran. And we started waiting for a «buyer», as they called them.

It was interesting to look at the process.

An officer would come out into the middle of the square and shouts out some conscripts' names.

They would come out, and the officer would take them to the unit. There was a real chance to change your initial assignment by simply not responding to the call.

That's what many did if the «buyer» was a navy officer (since the service in the navy took 3 years instead of 2).

But then the «buyers» got wiser, and some random officer came out at first, and then, when the group was formed, the real «buyer» revealed himself, and until the last moment you didn't know where you are going to end up.

In general, I was «bought» by the border guards, packed into an aircraft and sent flying with warning that 90 percent of will be sent to the Afghanistan. We were terrified.

And then we arrived to the destination.

We got out of the plane and found ourselves into a completely different climate, the humidity was so high that there were droplets of water in the air, something I had never seen before.

They drove us into the barracks and told us to wait. There were wooden mattressless beds in the barracks, after 15 minutes of lying down the whole body was aching.

We were taken to a boot camp in Blagoveshchensk. As we were drafted after the first year of higher education, we were assigned to the communications unit, and based on the complexity and specifics of training, it had to last 9 months instead of normal 6.

Those were hard times. We were drilled like... I don't know who, there was nothing to compare with.

I naturally like being clean and tidy, and there you were sleep, eat, run, train wearing the same field uniform, and it is supposed to dry on you. You can only wash in a washbasin with cold water only. Linen and clothes are changed once a week after the bath.

What I didn't like most was the «political information» sessions, because they put it right after forced foot marches, and we had to sit down, listening and drying out slowly.

Meals... I'd hardly call that food.

Most days it was «wallpaper paste». I don't know how to explain what it was, but believe me, it was some inedible shit.

At least we had bread to eat our fill. There were state holidays, of course, when we were allowed to go to the store and buy crackers and candy.

The most delicious food was a «sandwich»: two crackers put together and a candy in between.

And it could only be eaten at night, and if you don't get caught by the sergeants. In this case they'd take all the sweets, and you had to wash the toilets until morning.

All recruits have lost a lot of weight from that poor nutrition. Generally, when you arrive to the boot camp, everyone would know everything about you, and senior soldiers would know the most.

Boxing helped me out here again.

I was respected, never been beaten and even showed the highest degree of respect: they called me to work out with them at night.

The rest were less lucky: be a wimp, and the seniors would harass the shit out of you.

At that time dedovshchina hazing practices were still present in the army.

They were too afraid to beat me, but doing what our superiors tell us to do was an inviolable. So they trained me by giving me extra duty.

As I was a soldier with an attitude and not particularly pliable, I was given extra duty assignments over and over again.

Duty assignments was a whole separate matter.

Sometimes you got a daily detail, or a kitchen duty. At daily detail, you were supposed to stay up all night and clean your daily detail post in the barracks until it shines, and doing kitchen duty meant peeling about five buckets of potatoes (not alone, though) for about three hours, and then washing the dishes after breakfast, lunch and dinner, and also scrubbing the floors.

As we were assigned to communications, we had to master Morse code.

I'll tell you that was some hell to learn.

For a long time, I wasn't able to learn it at all, and I actually thought I would be transferred to another unit, but I was kept in the communications because of my general physical fitness.

As the saying goes, diligence is the mother of success, and the Soviet military had another saying, "if you can't do it, we'll teach you, if you don't want to, we'll force you". In the end, they made a decent comms man out of me.

The funny thing is, Morse code never came in handy for me afterwards.

After a long nine months of training I got my deployment to an outpost, and not an ordinary one but bearing some famous name.

It was very honorable.

The outpost was named after a border guard hero.

The outpost was an entirely different world. It was like a close-knit family, though a very strict one.

At first, they try you for strength.

Put it that way, you are put to the test with cold, difficulties, work and insomnia. One big improvement that I immediately felt was food. It was a huge, dramatic difference. It was like coming home. Village bread, milk fresh from the cow, meat, sour cream, etc. But first things first.

I was deployed to the outpost in winter. The weather in Russia's Far East is hardcore.

It's as cold -40°, and the wind's so strong it's able to knock you off your feet. Naturally, I was wearing the same field dress that was given to me in the boot camp.

It was only afterwards that they sent me warm socks, underpants, mittens, etc.

But at that time, I didn't even have a winter uniform yet.

I had only summer uniform and summer footwraps (the boot camp did not have time to switch to winter uniform).

I was brought in, introduced to the outpost commander and immediately assigned to sentry duty for 8 hours! I was shocked and did not know what to do not to freeze.

True, I was given a sheepskin coat, winter felt boots (valenki), and I found some warmer footwraps. I put everything on, and my senior and I, together with a dog (a huge black shepherd dog), went to the sentry duty.

The worst thing was that being unable to warm yourself up by moving, because, firstly, you can't make noise as a sentry, and secondly, with the slightest hint of jogging, this huge dog charges and tries to bite you.

I can't remember how I was able to endure it.

I remember when I got back from sentry duty, I was sitting on the heating pipes for two hours.

What's strange is, I've never been sick at the boot camp or at the outpost. Apparently, my body realized that there nobody would have any pity for it, and it get its stuff together.

Because our seniors had the same cure for all ills, as the saying goes, fight fire with fire. If someone got sick, they were assigned to sentry duty for 8 hours in the cold, and the sickness, apparently, froze and retreated.

I had another misadventure with the canine.

All rookie soldiers had to play the role an intruder in a drill at least once, acting as bait for the guard dog. And I wasn't spared by this tradition.

What was it look like?

There was a special thick suit that covers your body almost completely and protects you from bites.

As it happens, the suit was in use for years, it was pretty worn out and wasn't thick enough.

And I wasn't very lucky with the dog either. It had a very peculiar manner of restraining intruders.

An ordinary dog would snap the intruder and hold him with a dead grip. And that dog used to loose its grip and snap over and over again, resulting in many bites instead of one.

From the point of view of detaining a real intruder, this would be even better, probably, but it wasn't for me.

In general, I was successfully caught, successfully for the squad with the dog. When I came back and removed my clothes, all my legs and back were in blue bruises.

Being extremely distressed and disturbed, with a bit of indignation, I went to the outpost commander and showed him my bruises, for which I immediately got another twenty-four-hour service duty and three hours of exercising on the drill ground.

There were, of course, positive aspects, as I had been thinking at first, before it turned against me.

I'm talking about food. After all the training, I munched on village food so much that my friends at home stopped recognizing me in photos.

But the worst thing was different. We had a lot of physical training, pretty much being running.

There was a lot of running, and a lot of different types of it. It wasn't enough that all the running was done in heavy kirzaboos, there were different variations of it.

Cross-country running in the morning with us wearing only breeches and boots, then the midday march in so-called full service marching order, namely: fully clothed, complete with a cap, with backpack, assault rifle, ammo, OZK (chemical protective gear) and, nearly forgot to mention, the entrenching tool.

The last one is a pain. No matter how reliably you fasten it, the tool starts hitting you in between your legs after a ten steps. There could be another cross-country running in the evening, if the outpost commander was in a bad mood.

When the outpost commander was in a very bad mood, we had to wear OZK protective gear during the entire midday march.

For someone who doesn't know it, it's a rubber hazmat suit that covers you from head to toe, plus a gas mask.

It feels like you're running in a steam bath. There have been times when some guys have passed out for a while.

This was in summer, and it was the same in winter, but on skis. The skis, though, were not of the modern types what we are used to see now, with boots, fastenings, etc.

It was wooden planks with front ends bending upwards and bindings for winter felt boots.

So, that's how we had our fun and games. And since I gained a lot of weight, judging by my face, running was not that hard, but just unbearable, and each time I was feeling like throwing out.

I realized that I was close to breaking down. I had to take it seriously.

I started getting up at 5:00 in the morning and went to a run. In the evening, or rather, at night, I went to work out.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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