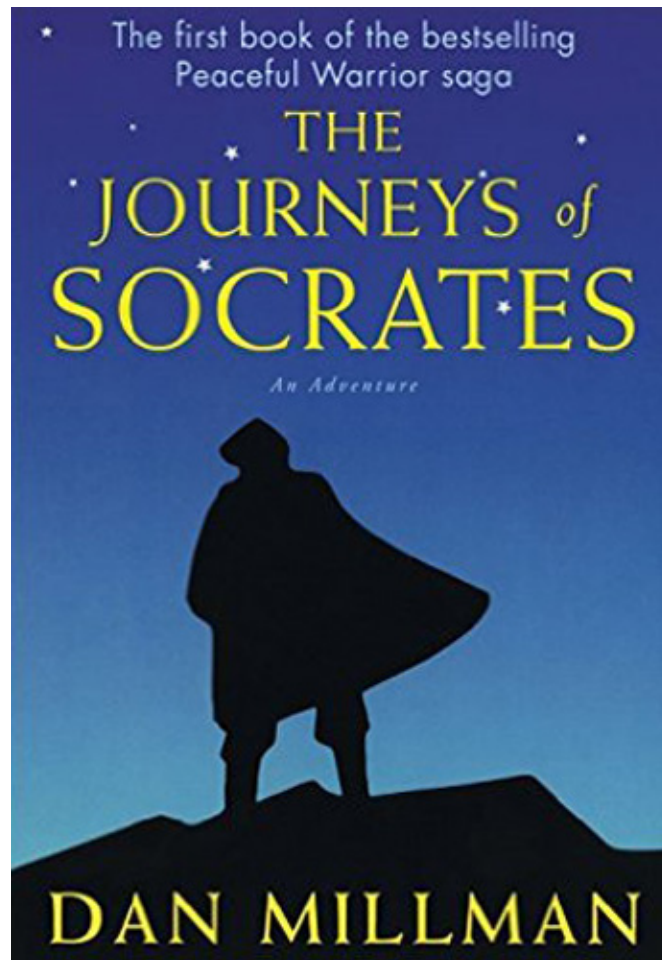




In the heart of nineteenth century Tsarist Russia an orphaned boy born of both Jewish and Cossack blood desperately seeks to find a place in a dangerous world. Sergei Ivanov's (Socrates') journey from a military academy to America is a spellbinding and tragic odyssey of courage and love. This riveting novel reveals how a boy became a man, how a man became a warrior, and how a warrior discovered peace. From his birth, this boy—Sergei Ivanov—is destined to become the peaceful warrior and sage who changed the life of Dan Millman and millions of readers worldwide.

THE JOURNEYS OF SOCRATES EXCERPT

SERGEI WAS WORRIED, that October day, when he was summoned to his uncle's office. Being summoned—a rare event for any young cadet—usually meant bad news or punishment. So, in no hurry to stand before the chief instructor's stern face and downturned brows, Sergei wandered across the school compound at a distinctly unmilitary pace. He was supposed to think of Vladimir Ivanov not as his uncle but as Chief Instructor. He also was not supposed to ask personal questions, though he had many—about his parents and about his past. The chief instructor had said little about either one, except on that day four years ago when he'd announced that Sergei's father had died.

Each spot Sergei passed in the inner courtyard held memories of earlier years: the first time he'd ridden a horse, bouncing wildly, clinging to the reins in a death grip . . . one of many fistfights he'd gotten into due to a quick temper, then lost due to his frail disposition. He passed the infirmary and the small apartment of Galina, the elderly school nurse, who had watched over him when he'd first arrived. She had wiped his nose when he was sick and brought him to meals until he found his own way. Too young to live in a barrack, he had slept on a cot just off the infirmary wing until he was five.

It was a lonely time, with no place of his own and nowhere he fit in. The cadets treated him like a mascot or pet dog—petted one day, beaten the next. Most of the other boys had mothers or fathers at home; Sergei had only his uncle, so he worked hard to please the chief instructor. His efforts, however, only earned the wrath of the older cadets, who called him "Uncle's Vlad's boy." They would trip, push, or punch him at every opportunity—a moment's inattention might mean bruises or worse. Older cadets routinely bullied the younger ones, and physical beatings were commonplace. The instructors knew about it but looked the other way unless someone was seriously injured. They tolerated the fights because it spurred the younger boys to toughen up and stay alert. It was, after all, a military school.

The first time Sergei was accosted by an older cadet, over in the corner of the compound, he started swinging wildly, sensing that if he backed down there would be no end to it. The older boy gave him a good beating, but Sergei managed to get in one or two good punches, and the boy never bothered him after that. Another time he had come upon two cadets beating a new boy. Sergei had attacked them with more rage than skill. They had backed off, treating the whole thing like a joke. But it was no

joke to the new boy, whose name was Andrei and who had been Sergei's only real friend ever since. Just after his fifth birthday, Sergei was moved into a barrack with the cadets aged seven to ten. Older boys lived upstairs, and anyone over sixteen lived in another building. The older boys ruled the barracks. Every cadet dreaded a move to the next floor, where he again would be the youngest and therefore the prey. Meanwhile, Sergei and Andrei watched each other's backs.

Of the years prior to his arrival, Sergei had only hazy impressions—as if he had been cocooned in another world, not yet awakened into this one. But sometimes, when he searched his memory, he glimpsed fleeting images of a large woman with arms as soft as bread dough and a man with a halo of white hair. Sergei wondered who they were; he wondered about a great many things. He had gazed at maps of Mother Russia and other countries on the classroom walls, and his finger had circled the globe on his teacher's desk, tracing lines across sky blue seas and lands colored orange, yellow, purple, and green. But he no more expected to visit such places than he thought to visit the moon or stars.

His world—until that day in October of 1880—was defined largely by the stone walls, blockhouses, barracks, classrooms, and training grounds of the Nevskiy Military School. Sergei had not chosen this place, but he accepted it, as children must, and passed his early years in orderly routines of class work and physical training: military history, strategy and geography, riding, running, swimming, and calisthenics. Whenever the cadets weren't in their classrooms or on work assignments, they practiced fighting skills. In the summer Sergei had to swim under the cold waters of Lake Krugloye while breathing through a hollow reed, and practice elementary skills with the saber, and shoot arrows with bows he could barely bend. When he was older he would shoot pistols and carbines.

It was not a bad life or a good life, but the only one he knew.

AS SERGEI DREW CLOSER to the main building, he tucked his dark blue shirt into his matching pants and gazed down at his boots to see if they were clean. For a moment he wondered whether he should have fetched his more formal coat or gloves but then decided against it. Most of the taller boys looked trim in their uniforms, but on Sergei everything looked baggy. When he finally grew out of one size uniform, they gave him another hand-me-down.

Still daydreaming, he shuffled down the long stone hallway toward his uncle's office, and thought about the last summons, four years ago. He could still recall his uncle's lean face and severe countenance as the chief instructor told him to sit. Sergei

had climbed into a chair with his legs dangling—he could barely see over the top of the desk—and his uncle had spoken the few words now imprinted in Sergei’s memory: “Your father, Sergei Borisovich Ivanov, has died. He was once an elite bodyguard to Tsar Aleksandr. He was good man and a Cossack. You must study and train hard to become like him.”

Sergei did not know what to feel or how to respond, so he only nodded.

“Do you have any questions?” the chief instructor had asked.

“How . . . how did he die?”

“Your father drank himself to death. A waste.” Sergei was dismissed, sad that his father had died, proud that he had a Cossack’s blood coursing through him. For the first time, Sergei thought that he might someday grow strong like the father he had never met.

WHEN SERGEI finally reached the door of his uncle’s office and was about to knock, he heard his uncle’s muffled voice inside. “I will allow this visit, but several others disagree . They have no love for Jews, the killers of Christ.”

“I have no use for soldiers, killers of Jews,” said an older voice.

“Not all soldiers hate Jews,” his uncle replied.

“And you?” said the other voice.

“I hate only weakness.”

“As I hate ignorance.”

“I’m not so ignorant to be tricked by your Jewish intellect,” said Sergei’s uncle.

“I’m not so weak to be intimidated by your Cossack bravado,” said the older voice.

In the silence that followed, Sergei found the courage to tap three times on the heavy oak door. It opened to reveal his uncle and an old man. Sergei’s uncle spoke curtly: “Cadet Ivanov. This is your grandfather.” The elderly white-haired man rose from his chair. He seemed happy to see Sergei. Then he spoke softly, almost in a whisper—it sounded like a name: Sokrat . . . Socrates.

Continued in *The Journeys of Socrates* available in print, audio and digital editions.
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Dan Millman, a former world-champion athlete and college professor, is the author of numerous books, including *Way of the Peaceful Warrior*, *Wisdom of the Peaceful Warrior*, *The Life You Were Born to Live*, *The Laws of Spirit*, and *The Journeys of Socrates*. His writings have inspired millions of readers in more than thirty languages.

Dan teaches worldwide, sharing realistic ways to live with a peaceful heart and warrior spirit, transforming everyday life into a path of personal and spiritual growth. His work has influenced men and women from all walks of life, including leaders in the fields of health, psychology, education, business, politics, entertainment, sports, and the arts.

You can explore more of Dan Millman's work, read interviews about the 4 Purposes of Life and the revised 24th edition of *The Life You Were Born to Live*, along with other interviews about and excerpts from more of his books at <https://bit.ly/356FCCN>