

Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with Shaun Pinner

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Speakers on this Episode:



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Chapter 1: Setting the Historical Stage



Samuel P.N. Cook [0:00]

Welcome back to another episode of the Ukraine Military History Podcast. My name is Sam Cooke. I'm the founder of the Ukraine Military History Institute, the co-host here of the Ukraine Military History Podcast, where we examine military history, its impact on the world, on, uh, the, the world that we live in today especially, all the way from the beginning to, uh, today's war in Russia. We're trying to connect the themes of military history and traditions, uh, from the ancient times all the way until what we're seeing in, in terms of their innovation and performance on the battlefield today because it has a huge impact on world history. And today's, uh, episode is back to our history of the current war. Uh, it is an examination of, uh, the, the beginning of the war, which is now four years, uh, later, is definitely part of the historical record. And specifically, uh, this is a special episode following on the three-part series that we've done with Yevgeniy Malik, myself, and Rob Lee interviewing him about his background and his, uh, his, uh, riveting story about serving in the 36th Marines at the Battle of Mariupol all the way through to the, uh, his time in captivity, where he spent two and a half years there. Now, this episode is where Yevgeniy actually gets together with his old colleague and friend, uh, Sean Pinner, who's a very famous, uh, Marine also, a British, uh, former British, uh, soldier who joined the Marines and, and became, uh, a, a Marine, got his, uh, actually, uh, his residence and, uh, citizenship here in Ukraine and fought for Ukraine, uh, in 2022 alongside, uh, Yevgeniy in a different unit in the same brigade, uh, at the Battle of Mariupol. And they got to know each other actually, uh, in captivity. There's some, uh, amazing and, and powerful and, and riveting stories about their time together, uh, in captivity and, uh, where they share their, their memories of that. And, and I think one of

Samuel P.N. Cook (continued)

the things that you'll get from this is, uh, military can have some incredibly challenging and tough moments, but also the camaraderie that it builds, uh, among those who share that, especially going through something as difficult as captivity, uh, really forms bonds that last a lifetime. And, and watching Yevgeniy and Sean share their experiences and, and what it's like for them to reconnect after that and, uh, remain friends, uh, is really an, an interesting story. Uh, so really hope that you enjoy this and, uh, and, and reflect on, on what it means to serve and sacrifice, uh, uh, for, uh, something that you believe in and for, for your comrades like Yevgeniy and Sean and, and all of those who served alongside them did. So this is a, a really powerful episode. I hope you enjoy it. And before you, you start watching this, I just want to remind you that this podcast is produced and sponsored by, uh, the Ukraine, uh... the, the Borderlands Foundation here in Ukraine, which, uh, has two main initiatives. The first one is the Ukraine, uh, Military History Institute, where we obviously host this podcast, but we're also, uh, building a Ukraine military history course that we're gonna teach, uh, to the world, uh, both for university, uh, graduate students, uh, but more broadly, anyone who wants to learn about and get familiar with and learn from military history traditions, 'cause I really believe it's a unique, uh, way of fighting, uh, that, that comes from this part of the world for very, uh, important reasons historically, geographically, culturally, uh, and, and just the, the sheer number of military, uh, conflicts that have happened in this part of the world creates a unique, uh, culture and, and military history tradition I think we all will benefit, uh, learning from. And, uh, also, another thing that we do is the Heroes of Ukraine tour. We show people the battlefields of Ukraine that have already passed, uh, the Battle of Kyiv, Kherson, and other regions, and we're, we're getting ready to, to develop that tour, uh, for when, uh, widespread travel is, uh, possible here in Ukraine in the future after some kind of ceasefire or the current, uh, war ends. So, um, the other center, uh, initiative we have is the Ukraine Center for Traumatic Stress, led by Major General Vladyslav Klykhov, a former commander of the Moral Psychological Support Forces of Ukraine under General Zaluzhnyi, uh, researching and, uh, developing, uh, education on breakthrough treatments for, uh, PTSD for veterans. And, uh, if you wanna support any of those initiatives, please go to our website and, and see where you can, uh, get involved to help us, because our mission at the Borderlands Foundation is making sure Ukraine's heroes are never forgotten. So with that, uh, please enjoy this episode where Yevgeniy Malik and Sean Pinner, uh, uh, reflect on their experiences, the Battle of Mariupol together, and also, uh, in captivity before both of them were finally and thankfully released back to us.

Chapter 2: Welcoming a Respected Brother



Ievgen Malik [4:57]

Hello, everyone. Uh, my name is, uh, Yevgeniy, and, uh, we are making another, uh, uh, podcast episode, uh, with, uh, another guest whom I truly respect so much because this is a veteran of, uh, and British Army together, uh, the truly align, uh, align of Ukraine-



Shaun Pinner [5:20]
[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [5:20]

... and, uh, my friend with whom I used to serve in one battalion. And, uh, we are making, uh, our podcast episodes, uh, about history of, uh, -War. And, uh, Sean, uh, you made a

levgen Malik (continued)

great job in our army. Uh, you, uh, you was, uh, one of the hero of Ukraine and, uh, Britain as well. And, uh, I would like to speak with you about all your experience. First of all, to find out, like, your story in Britain, uh, and, uh, how did you find yourself in Army-



Shaun Pinner [6:02]
[laughs]



levgen Malik [6:02]
... because this is like- [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [6:04]
How, how long we have. [laughs]



levgen Malik [6:06]
Yes. This, this is strange. Like-



Shaun Pinner [6:08]
Yeah



levgen Malik [6:09]
... I, uh, I'm sorry, I, I remember the f- well, okay, uh, I will tell, uh, m-my story about , uh, guys-

Chapter 3: Leaving London for Ukraine



Shaun Pinner [6:16]
[laughs]



levgen Malik [6:16]
... in, uh, our battalion from the Very first moment I've seen you guys [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [6:21]
Yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [6:21]

But we will come to this. Uh, please tell me about yourself. Uh, like where are you from? What is your native city? What is your favorite football club, uh, and et cetera?



Shaun Pinner [6:31]

Well-



Ievgen Malik [6:32]

And et cetera



Shaun Pinner [6:32]

... I'm from London originally, born, uh, born and bred i- in London. Um, uh, my favorite team's West Ham United. It always has been. Uh-



Ievgen Malik [6:40]

Oh.



Shaun Pinner [6:41]

I, I will talk about it later 'cause, uh, we had a, a, a situation in captivity where I was electrocuted because I didn't support Shakhtar Donetsk.



Ievgen Malik [6:49]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [6:49]

I, and I said West Ham, but I didn't say Ham, but you know, it's, uh, I was, "Ugh," you know, with these cattle prod things. Um-



Ievgen Malik [6:57]

Sorry, probably I would electrocute you as well 'cause I'm willing for Liverpool.



Shaun Pinner [7:01]

[laughs] Liverpool, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [7:02]
[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [7:02]

No. Oh, no, no, no, no. So I, a London team. Um, I originally came to Ukraine, uh, really, um, I, I was at a position in my life where my son went to university. Um, and I ran a successful business in the UK. Um, and I, I really didn't know if I wanted to spend the next 20 years of my working career doing the job I was doing. I was deeply unhappy. Uh, found myself on my own quite a bit, and some of the happiest times I had was with my military colleagues and, uh, I had friends still working, coming to Ukraine because o- of the, the, the problems with Russia. And when my friend sor- sort of asked me, "Do you want to come over to Ukraine?" I said, "Why? Why do I wanna fight Russians?" You know? Uh, and I sa- I knew exactly what they were capable of. I come from a nine-year background in the British military. Uh, I did covert operations platoon in Northern Ireland and counter-terrorism work.



Ievgen Malik [8:06]
Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [8:06]

I was with the United Nations in Bosnia, uh, twice in the early '90s. Um, uh, part of my training, I was reconnaissance. Uh, so I spent a lot of my Army career in surveillance, and my specialty was resistance training, SERE, uh, survival, evade-



Ievgen Malik [8:24]
Oh



Shaun Pinner [8:24]

... resist and escape. Uh, and I, on a second operation to Bosnia, I was given the opportunity to go to America and do SERE training, um, which I loved. Uh, and that taught me about how to, what it was like if you were captured by the enemy, um, how to resist interrogation, how to make things work for you to better adjust yourself into that environment and give you the best possible chance to survive. Um, I just didn't think I'd be using these skills [laughs] 30, 30 years later.



Ievgen Malik [8:57]
Just wondering, did it help you, like?



Shaun Pinner [8:59]

Yeah, absolutely.



Ievgen Malik [9:00]

Seriously?



Shaun Pinner [9:01]

Yeah, seriously.



Ievgen Malik [9:02]

Cool.



Shaun Pinner [9:02]

Uh, from the minute I was, we tried to get out of Mariupol. I, I'll go back because-



Ievgen Malik [9:08]

Mm-hmm



Shaun Pinner [9:08]

... first of all, I'll, uh, I don't wanna jump ahead. W- I, I was, uh, literally came over to Ukraine in 2018. And, uh, I didn't understand the political situation fully, but once I made the decision to come visit some friends, I didn't go home for maybe five years. So I literally initi- went to see my friends in Mariupol who said, uh, "We are looking for instructors to, to reform the military after the annexation of Crimea and the invasion," and I fell in love-

Chapter 4: Finding Home in Mariupol



Ievgen Malik [9:40]

And two of them, uh, from which, uh, was true?



Shaun Pinner [9:43]

Uh, I was National Guard and Azov. Uh, I was a sniper instructor with Azov for two years, working with Azov-



Ievgen Malik [9:49]

Great [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [9:49]

... uh, on the front lines. And then, uh, I only transferred to the Marines, where I met yourself, um, because National Guard at that time, you couldn't be a citizen of Ukraine. Uh-



Ievgen Malik [10:01]

Mm, yes



Shaun Pinner [10:01]

... you couldn't, you couldn't have a contract, sorry, because you weren't a citizen of Ukraine. So I me- I had to make a transition because by this time I'd met my wife in Mariupol. I'd been living there for two or three years. I learned Surzhyk mainly, um, because I had no formal education. I just listened to everybody, and most people, it's fair to say, spoke or former . So I learned , not first. Uh, so I am, uh, a, a, a soldier from East Ukraine who speaks [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [10:35]

As all Ukrainians-



Shaun Pinner [10:35]

Just born in London



Ievgen Malik [10:36]

... from, uh-



Shaun Pinner [10:37]

[laughs] Yeah



Ievgen Malik [10:38]

... eastern part. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [10:39]

Yeah, so when Putin gives his narrative about saving the speakers-



Ievgen Malik [10:43]

Yeah



Shaun Pinner [10:43]

... I was a speaker from East Ukraine. He didn't save me or my wife-



Ievgen Malik [10:46]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [10:46]

... or my friends.



Ievgen Malik [10:47]

Exactly.



Shaun Pinner [10:48]

He stole my house.



Ievgen Malik [10:48]

The same as me and all my family and all my friends.



Shaun Pinner [10:52]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [10:52]

Yes. But-



Shaun Pinner [10:52]
It's just, it's, it's, uh-



Ievgen Malik [10:54]
So much ridiculous



Shaun Pinner [10:55]
... rubbish, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [10:56]
Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [10:56]
It's garbage. Uh, and so I literally transferred to the Marines where by the time I got to the Marines, my language had got a little bit better. I wasn't fluent. I wasn't, uh, I can't read or essentially, uh, write or... But, but essentially I could get by on the front lines talking to the guys speaking . Um, and by the end of it, Rusglish, 'cause by the time I got to the unit and the Marines, not many people spoke . But by the time we did our first operation nine months on the front line and, and w- people, you know, uh, would, would come up to me and say, "Sean, what would you like for dinner?" [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [11:34]
[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [11:35]
"Would you like chicken? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight." You know, and we developed this language over time and, and when, when I first got to the Marines, uh, generally people were, "Why are these guys here?" You know? "Why are-



Ievgen Malik [11:48]
Exactly



Shaun Pinner [11:48]
... why are the guys turn up?"



Ievgen Malik [11:49]

I, I remember the situation when I was, uh, i- in, uh, barracks of our battalion, and my commander of my company was a duty officer-



Shaun Pinner [11:59]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [11:59]

... of the base. And that was, like, Friday, like, end of the working day. I was relaxed and then-



Shaun Pinner [12:07]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [12:07]

... my commander of my company just called me and said, like, "Come to the entrance fee of the base." And I was like, "What, what is going on? What happened?" I came and he said like, "You, you speak, right?"

Chapter 5: Enlisting in the Regular Army



Shaun Pinner [12:19]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [12:19]

I said, "Yes." "Okay, great. Here's the guy. He speaks. He wants something I don't understand. Like, speak to him." I was like, "Okay, no problems." And I've seen, uh, the, [laughs] the guy who is, who was like, mm, he, he represented himself, and I said like, "Yes, okay. Very good. So for that, what is going on?" And he said, "I came from England. I want to serve in the battalion." [laughs] And I was like, "What?"



Shaun Pinner [12:47]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [12:48]

Like, no one even in Ukraine wants to serve in this battalion. Like, man, just-



Shaun Pinner [12:52]

Yeah, yeah, yeah



Ievgen Malik [12:53]

... uh, and you from England. Well, you know, we, we knew that in Britain you got your own marine troops-



Shaun Pinner [13:00]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [13:00]

... and, uh, they are, like, super, super human.



Shaun Pinner [13:04]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [13:05]

And they, uh-



Shaun Pinner [13:05]

Very strong



Ievgen Malik [13:06]

Yeah, very strong. Strong operations, strong ammunition-



Shaun Pinner [13:10]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [13:10]

... strong salary, everything strong. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [13:13]
[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [13:13]
And n- now this guy is coming from England here, like, well, I was-



Shaun Pinner [13:17]
Okay



Ievgen Malik [13:17]
... so much surprised. Uh, and, uh, yeah. Well, we organize it, uh, because due to the law officially in Ukraine-



Shaun Pinner [13:26]
Yeah



Ievgen Malik [13:26]
... uh, foreigners can serve in army.



Shaun Pinner [13:29]
Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [13:29]
No problems. And, and then we, we've seen, like, more speakers-



Shaun Pinner [13:34]
[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [13:34]
... starting to come.



Shaun Pinner [13:34]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [13:34]

And we thought, like, with the guys, like, this is, like, you know, this is a special operation from- [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [13:40]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [13:41]

... . Th- they are coming not just... Well, they just make view that they are fat, that they are weak. But no, th- these are James Bonds, all of them-



Shaun Pinner [13:49]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [13:49]

... and they are super, uh, superhumans, 100%.



Shaun Pinner [13:52]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [13:52]

This is special operation, a recon operation, intelligence.



Shaun Pinner [13:56]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [13:56]

Yes. Uh, well, and I-



Shaun Pinner [13:59]
[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [13:59]
... as I remember, mm, the decision of, uh, battalion headquarters was to-



Shaun Pinner [14:05]
Yeah



Ievgen Malik [14:05]
... uh, organize y- all of you guys in one squad-



Shaun Pinner [14:08]
Yeah



Ievgen Malik [14:08]
... of airborne company, because commander of airborne, borne company spoke .



Shaun Pinner [14:13]
. And this-



Ievgen Malik [14:14]
Yeah



Shaun Pinner [14:14]
... this, the pinnacle of battalion, this, the top part of the battalion, they say, uh, "You will parachute."



Ievgen Malik [14:22]
Uh-huh.



Shaun Pinner [14:22]

I think, "Oh, I, I'm 45." [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [14:25]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [14:25]

"Will my hips and my knees just hold out?"



Ievgen Malik [14:28]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [14:29]

And as the king, a- a- Azov had made me really fit for my age.



Ievgen Malik [14:33]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [14:33]

So I was happy with my fitness. I needed to-



Ievgen Malik [14:35]

But y- you-



Shaun Pinner [14:36]

Yeah, but-



Ievgen Malik [14:36]

... still you didn't want to jump



Shaun Pinner [14:37]

... still didn't know how this was gonna go.



Ievgen Malik [14:40]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [14:40]

And once I do my f- f- parachute training and I do my first jump, you couldn't stop me from coming. Every time they say, "You wanna go parachute?" I say, "Yep, definitely. Yeah."



Ievgen Malik [14:49]

So it works like that.



Shaun Pinner [14:50]

"Can I do another one?"



Ievgen Malik [14:50]

That's true, yeah.



Shaun Pinner [14:51]

Yeah, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [14:51]

No, I, I was going, uh, 'cause I was a volunteer. I joined b- to the army by my own. And, uh, uh, first of all, I wanted to join to the airborne company because I heard that they are, like, the most strong and-



Shaun Pinner [15:04]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [15:05]

... crazy and, uh, d- the most disciplined guys in all army, like, you know. [laughs] Uh, but, uh, I don't know how that happened, but I joined to the second company-



Shaun Pinner [15:17]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [15:17]

... inventor, uh, company of our battalion. And I was really glad after I've seen, like- [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [15:23]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [15:23]

... the battalion. I've seen what is going on in that airborne company, and I thought like, "Oh, [laughs] thanks God."



Shaun Pinner [15:28]

I was like, "Good." [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [15:29]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [15:29]

"That's a tough shit." Uh-



Ievgen Malik [15:30]

"Thanks God I'm on the second company." [laughs]

Chapter 6: Adapting to Ukrainian Military Standards



Shaun Pinner [15:32]

Luthenko was a good commander, and, uh, he, like you said, spoke , took us in. Um, and, uh, we made very good friends. We, we, uh, did everything you asked us to do. You know, we knew, um, we w- even trying to learn how to march march and salute, and, uh-



Ievgen Malik [15:54]

Oh, it's great



Shaun Pinner [15:54]

... the etiquette, the protocol. On operations, we didn't have a problem. We knew tactics. We knew how to use hardware. I'd spent nine years in the British Army learning how to fight Russians.



Ievgen Malik [16:07]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [16:07]

This was easy.



Ievgen Malik [16:08]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [16:08]

Living in the barracks-



Ievgen Malik [16:10]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [16:10]

... in the base was very hard, because you have standards, writing, instruction. This was extremely hard. So I liked going to-



Ievgen Malik [16:19]

You liked more to war, uh-



Shaun Pinner [16:21]

... on operations and the war side of it.



Ievgen Malik [16:22]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [16:22]

I did. I wasn't so keen on, on, uh, you know, being in, uh, in the, in the base. You know, the base wasn't for me. And, uh, they made me starshiy matros very quickly, and then, uh, I was doing a section commander role. Uh, I, I, for an exercise, I ran a BTR. I was BTR commander, and I was thinking-



Ievgen Malik [16:42]

Mm-hmm



Shaun Pinner [16:43]

... "Oh, this is... I'm now a parachutist. I'm doing marine beret test." Not, uh, just like f- for 20-year-old, this gonna be easier than a 45-year-old doing the marine beret test.



Ievgen Malik [16:55]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [16:55]

I found I passed this. I think, "This is amazing. I'm now a marine. I'm now airborne marine."



Ievgen Malik [17:00]

Yes.



Shaun Pinner [17:01]

Uh, and now I'm fast-roping, parachuting. I, I, I loved it. I, I absolutely loved it.



Ievgen Malik [17:06]

This is the thing in, uh, Ukraine, uh, marine troops. Like, I think in marines, uh, all over the world, in case you're a mariner, you are everyone.



Shaun Pinner [17:15]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [17:15]

Uh, you, you have a fighting vehicle. You commanded. You have, uh, all the weapon, types of weapon. You are making these parachutes and, uh, w- everything what is possible. Uh, so this is, uh, probably one of the greatest experience in army. That's why, uh, so many people try to join marine infantry.



Shaun Pinner [17:33]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [17:34]

Uh-



Shaun Pinner [17:34]

In, in military, it's very hard to get parachute course.



Ievgen Malik [17:38]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [17:39]

So when they say, "You want to do in the marine?" I th- "Yeah, okay."



Ievgen Malik [17:41]

And you know about battalion, you do this yearly-



Shaun Pinner [17:44]
And you do this yearly



Ievgen Malik [17:44]
... minimum five times. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [17:45]
Minimum five, six times. Sometimes you do two jumps in one day, you know?



Ievgen Malik [17:49]
I, I know the situation because, uh, in airborne, uh, companies of, uh, Marine Infantry of Ukraine-



Shaun Pinner [17:55]
Yeah



Ievgen Malik [17:56]
... uh, people who are making this parachute jumping, uh, they are fans of it, and they try to make it as much as it possible-



Shaun Pinner [18:03]
Yeah



Ievgen Malik [18:04]
... yearly. And, uh, even they, uh, try to make jumps, uh, instead of, uh, helicopter pilots-



Shaun Pinner [18:11]
Mm



Ievgen Malik [18:11]
... because they have to do it as well.



Shaun Pinner [18:13]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [18:13]

So they make not just five jumps. They make just eight, nine jumps yearly.



Shaun Pinner [18:19]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [18:19]

And they serve during 15 years. And I know that even in United States, in case you have 15, 16 jumps- During all your, uh, military career, that means you are truly professional.



Shaun Pinner [18:31]

You're professional, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [18:32]

And when they ca- when they get to military trainings with our airborne company and they spoke to our guys, like, how many jumps do you have? And they were like, "Well, 120."



Shaun Pinner [18:43]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [18:43]

What? [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [18:44]

No, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [18:44]

But that is true. That is-



Shaun Pinner [18:45]

It's true



levgen Malik [18:46]

... yes, that how it works.

Chapter 7: Earning the Proud Marine Title



Shaun Pinner [18:47]

In, in my three years, I did nine jumps, one night jump, which, which I thought was amazing. I was the only-



levgen Malik [18:53]

Yeah



Shaun Pinner [18:53]

... British guy, uh, foreigner to, to complete a night jump. Um-



levgen Malik [18:57]

During one night-



Shaun Pinner [18:58]

And I was-



levgen Malik [18:58]

... can you imagine, like, uh [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [18:59]

So I got my, uh, wings, 'cause, uh, you have the white one for day jumps, and you have the black one for night jumps, and I was the only one to have the, the black canopy, uh, for the, for the night jumps. And I was, I was very proud to be a, a . Uh, even now, um, I, I argue with media, they say, "Oh, you foreign fighter." No, I'm marine.



Ievgen Malik [19:20]

Yeah, that's big-



Shaun Pinner [19:20]

I say, we don't say this Gurkhas, we don't say this-



Ievgen Malik [19:22]

... big difference



Shaun Pinner [19:23]

... uh, for, for, uh, the people from Nepal who fight for Britain, uh, the Gurkhas. We don't call them foreign fighters. They're British soldiers.



Ievgen Malik [19:30]

Exactly. That how it works.



Shaun Pinner [19:32]

They're called the Gurkhas.



Ievgen Malik [19:32]

Uh...



Shaun Pinner [19:33]

Why am I a foreign fighter? I'm not jihadi, you know?



Ievgen Malik [19:36]

Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [19:36]

And we still fight this narrative.



Ievgen Malik [19:37]

This is not a kind, some kind of an international legion or whatever. This is a regular troop.



Shaun Pinner [19:43]

Yeah, absolutely.



Ievgen Malik [19:44]

And you were a soldier of a regular troop.



Shaun Pinner [19:46]

Not PMC, not-



Ievgen Malik [19:47]

Yes



Shaun Pinner [19:47]

... paramilitary.



Ievgen Malik [19:48]

Exactly.



Shaun Pinner [19:48]

It's regular army.



Ievgen Malik [19:49]

Exactly.



Shaun Pinner [19:50]

Uh, m- navy, marines. [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [19:53]
[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [19:53]

So, um, uh, you know, I, I loved it, and I, I loved being on operations and, and, uh, loved working with the military. And then I had a... Really, I was back doing a job I loved, that I missed every day. So I, I'm immensely grateful that I had a second chance to, to be in the military, which is what I loved. Um, and I missed it so much, and I miss it now, um, since my exchange. So I've always loved it, so I'm, I'm deeply thankful for, for, you know, the first battalion for allowing me, training me, having a idiot guy who can't speak the language to now, you know, it's three years, um, being in Mariupol and, and, and fighting with you guys there, so...



Ievgen Malik [20:39]

As a , uh, soldier, uh, veteran, I would like to ask you, uh, th- this is the main question for all the soldiers, um, to the, uh, to someone who came abroad. What is the difference, what, maybe, I don't know, we say this caught your eye-



Shaun Pinner [21:00]
Yeah, yeah



Ievgen Malik [21:01]

... in army, uh, because you got an experience, you served in British Army.



Shaun Pinner [21:06]
Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [21:06]

And British Army is not the worst one in-



Shaun Pinner [21:08]
No



Ievgen Malik [21:08]
... NATO. Yes, I think.



Shaun Pinner [21:09]

Yeah, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [21:10]

So one of the best, and now you, you, you, you, you joined army, and you've been not just in military training, but, uh, in operations, in the true war. So what can you say, uh, what is your feeling about it? What is the main difference? Uh, what would you like to say about it?



Shaun Pinner [21:29]

It is different. Uh-



Ievgen Malik [21:31]

Definitely. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [21:31]

There's, there's two or three aspects to it. Um, one is, um, I joined the military at the right time because you were moving away from Soviet doctrine, and I'd spent two years in National Guard and Azov teaching, um, soldiers how to move away from this Soviet doctrine centralized command. Um, and I came to a unit where they were open to this. My commander, uh, Starochyuk-

Chapter 8: Bridging Western and Soviet Tactics



Ievgen Malik [21:59]

Mm-hmm



Shaun Pinner [21:59]

... uh, was a very good speaker, very American, understood NATO. Rudenko was the company commander. He'd been to Quantico and in- so I was with guys who understood other militaries.



Ievgen Malik [22:10]

The difference, uh, yeah.



Shaun Pinner [22:11]

They weren't, uh, guys that didn't understand, uh, you know, they were Soviet doctrine guys. They weren't guys that hadn't been out of Ukraine. They were guys that actually had worked and understood other militaries. So that made life extremely easy to, uh, to, to, to, to train, talk. I wouldn't say train, uh, but influence. Uh, I wasn't in a position to train people at the Marines. I was a starshyi matros. Um-



Ievgen Malik [22:38]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [22:38]

And over time, my experience in operations was where I could influence decisions, where my commander would come to me and ask me, what do I think about this, and what do I think about that, and, uh, what should we do about this? And we could bring training programs together and-



Ievgen Malik [22:54]

So that was in army.



Shaun Pinner [22:55]

That was in military, but that took time.



Ievgen Malik [22:57]

In Brit- in British Army, this, that the same way, or-



Shaun Pinner [23:00]

Yes.



Ievgen Malik [23:00]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [23:01]

Uh, there's more... When I first come to Ukraine, there was really no, uh, emphasis on, uh, NCOs, sergeants, corporals.



Ievgen Malik [23:10]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [23:10]

There was n- none of that. The, the platoon commander did everything. He was the guy that did the training. He looked after everything. He made sure everyone was okay. He was the guy that, you know, uh, organized the, the battlefield, the structure, the section attacks, the company attack. He did everything.



Ievgen Malik [23:25]

Yes.



Shaun Pinner [23:25]

By the time I, 2022, come, we had worked with Sea Breeze, the Brits, the, the Americans, the Swedes.



Ievgen Malik [23:34]

Yeah, and officers-



Shaun Pinner [23:35]

Things were changing



Ievgen Malik [23:36]

... saw that sergeants can make the great job as well.



Shaun Pinner [23:38]

Yeah. Corporals even could make section commanders. Uh, and so I was at a really good time where I watched this transition of this Soviet doctrine military, where they were looking on using electrical items to get from A to B, and there was too much reliance on this Google Maps and things like this, you know. And, and I was sent... By the time, you know, 2022 come, we'd moved away from this centralized command to other s- uh, more reliance on sergeants and corporals to be able to make those decisions, uh, and, you know, give a task. For example, in the Soviet doctrine, the commander would say, "We're gonna take this hill, but we're gonna do it my way." And this is what you are gonna do, and you're gonna go there, you're gonna go there. Now, it's m- it was more like, um, it was more like, uh, by 2022, it was like, tell the section commander or the sergeant what you want to do, and he makes it happen.



Ievgen Malik [24:37]

Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [24:37]

And they have, uh, their own, right, we're gonna take this bit, we'll do it this way. Uh, and, and that's where we were moving towards before the full-scale invasion. And, and the British Army is very much, um, y- very much like that, decentralized command. Yes, we have good equipment, but we're very small.



Ievgen Malik [24:55]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [24:55]

Um, you, you know, there was... The army's quite similar in a way, and I kept telling the, the Ukrainians. They were going, "Oh, your army must be so different." I said, "No, it's still the same in the front lines, and we still grumble, and we still say the food's crap, and, you know-

Chapter 9: Sharing Survival Skills in Platoon



Ievgen Malik [25:10]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [25:10]

... and we're digging holes and, you know, and we still moan and groan and, and we're still the same." And, uh, I-



Ievgen Malik [25:17]

I would say this is probably one good m-



Shaun Pinner [25:19]

It's identical



Ievgen Malik [25:20]

... to the reality of the world-



Shaun Pinner [25:22]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [25:23]

... the front line, that, that is better to be like that.



Shaun Pinner [25:26]

Everybody complain about digging until artillery come.



Ievgen Malik [25:29]

Exactly, yes.



Shaun Pinner [25:29]

And then they dig with their eyelids like this. [laughs] They are digging until the, the, the artillery comes. So there's lots of similarities between the British Army and the military. And if you're talking about bonding and building brotherhood, if you can cook, and you can look after yourself, and you can educate people, I learnt - I knew more about mines, MON-50s, MON-100s, TMH, P- PMM mines, I knew more than most of the guys in my platoon.



Ievgen Malik [26:01]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [26:01]

So, you know, I was teaching them about signal men, signal flares, how to lay rastashka. They did not know any of this.



Ievgen Malik [26:09]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [26:09]

So au- automatically, even though I'm British, I might be bad in base, and querere, and guard, and, and do-



Ievgen Malik [26:17]

But you're still good in war.



Shaun Pinner [26:19]

In the war, um, I can hold my own. Um, and that's the difference, and I think once we learn a language, we passed parachuting, we did the beret test, I think then we're, uh, we were not as such, because we have joke. I said, I cook a borscht to one of my friends. He said, "Sean-



Ievgen Malik [26:39]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [26:39]

... this is not borscht-



Ievgen Malik [26:41]

Borscht



Shaun Pinner [26:41]

... because you are British." [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [26:43]

It's, it can be British borscht. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [26:45]

It's British borscht. So, uh, we have this humor. Um-



Ievgen Malik [26:48]

Of course



Shaun Pinner [26:48]

... but I was, like, 50%, 60%, you know, uh, jumping and a soldier, which I was, uh, very proud of, you know?



Ievgen Malik [26:57]

Of course. Platoon is the family, uh-



Shaun Pinner [26:59]

Platoon is the family



Ievgen Malik [27:00]

... yeah.



Shaun Pinner [27:00]

Yes.



Ievgen Malik [27:02]

Uh, okay. Uh, speaking about artillery which comes for you, [laughs] or in case you're m-marine, uh, some- some- this day will happen.



Shaun Pinner [27:13]

Mm-hmm.



Ievgen Malik [27:13]

Yeah? So, um, uh, tell me please, because, uh, there is a big difference between the operations we did-



Shaun Pinner [27:20]

Mm



Ievgen Malik [27:20]

... with our battalion till the moment of 2022 and after. Uh, so Mariupol, uh, operation, uh, you made it from the very beginning till the very end, the same as me. Uh, tell me about your expressions, because, uh, uh, you, you've been to Bosnia-



Shaun Pinner [27:41]

Mm



Ievgen Malik [27:41]

... you've been, uh, to a lot, um, a great amount of military training, much more than me-



Shaun Pinner [27:48]

Mm



Ievgen Malik [27:48]

... than I did. Uh, but Mariupol operation-



Shaun Pinner [27:52]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [27:52]

... is something special, like... [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [27:55]

I mean, now, war now is, is changed, to be fair. It's even, uh, war now is not what it was in 2022-



Ievgen Malik [28:04]

Exactly



Shaun Pinner [28:04]

... because of drone advancements.



Ievgen Malik [28:06]

Oh, yeah.

Chapter 10: Facing a New Era of Warfare



Shaun Pinner [28:07]

Um, I mean, the war is, i- is changing immensely fast. Um, and drones are now the new everything. I mean, they're the sniper, they're the mortars, they're the artillery, um,

Shaun Pinner (continued)

they're the reconnaissance. They're, they're everything to do with the front line. When I first joined the army, we didn't even have mobile phones.



Ievgen Malik [28:26]
[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [28:27]
This is how long I was, [laughs] serving in.



Ievgen Malik [28:29]
You are a dinosaur. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [28:30]
So I was, we didn't have mobile phones when I joined the military. So it, it's very, um, it... I've watched this evolution over many years. Um, so when we got to, uh, I, I, I... When I fought with the British Army, we didn't fight the Russians, who have a very good military, very good air superiority as in Mariupol.



Ievgen Malik [28:50]
This is so big difference between Afghan Taliban and-



Shaun Pinner [28:54]
Absolutely



Ievgen Malik [28:54]
... army, isn't it?



Shaun Pinner [28:55]
Absolutely. [laughs] Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [28:56]
When you send just two mines to that side, uh, to Afghanis guys, and, uh, they send you a couple of shots from, I don't know, Desheka, like this-



Shaun Pinner [29:05]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [29:05]

... uh, machine gun, and in, in case with the Russians, you send two mines to them, and from their side they send some- [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [29:12]

Yes. [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [29:12]

... something little bit less-



Shaun Pinner [29:13]

Right. [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [29:13]

... than automatic bomb. Like, you know, you don't even know-



Shaun Pinner [29:17]

Yeah, yeah, yeah



Ievgen Malik [29:17]

... what, what, what war that-



Shaun Pinner [29:18]

And we're exchanging all this-



Ievgen Malik [29:19]

Yes



Shaun Pinner [29:19]

... and it, it's, it was so different, and the technology changed. Then the drones had thermal, and then, uh, you know, we see drones flying over, and you're thinking, "This not, this not," uh, and I use the word separatist, but, "This not, you know, separatist."



Ievgen Malik [29:34]

No. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [29:35]

"This now military." And, and, and the news come see me, say, "Sean, what do you think will happen?" Uh, everybody says, "Maybe three days."



Ievgen Malik [29:43]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [29:43]

And I say, "No, we will give them a bloody nose, that's for sure." And the journalist off the camera say, "Do you really think you're gonna give them a bloody nose?" I says, "I don't know, it's bloody Russia. It's not ISIS."



Ievgen Malik [29:54]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [29:54]

"It's not the Taliban. This is, this is Ru-



Ievgen Malik [29:56]

Yes



Shaun Pinner [29:56]

... Nobody knows how this is gonna go."



Ievgen Malik [29:58]

Exactly.



Shaun Pinner [29:59]

So, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [30:00]

I remember, uh, my friend, and you knows him, uh, you know him also, uh, Artur Kolesnik.



Shaun Pinner [30:06]

Mm.



Ievgen Malik [30:06]

Uh, Koleso.



Shaun Pinner [30:07]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [30:07]

Uh, he, he had such experience. He said, "I was in the field, uh, when, uh, w- another battle, fifth battle, uh, from the very beginning of full-scale invasion," something like that, the second day. And he was, uh, together, two of them, two mariners, in the field, and they were- Just holding the position, and they heard some zzz, and they saw this, uh, drone above their head. And he said, uh, "Hey, look, this is the drone. Maybe they will send some artillery here." And the, another guy said like, "Oh, come on, like, there are just two of us here [laughs] in the field."



Shaun Pinner [30:43]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [30:43]

"They will not spend the, uh, ammunition for that." And what do you think?



Shaun Pinner [30:48]

Yeah. [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [30:48]

In 30 seconds, like, Grad, two place, like, I don't know, uh, of how many, like, uh, f- 80 probably rockets-



Shaun Pinner [30:57]

Yeah. [laughs] Two guys



Ievgen Malik [30:58]

... to, to soldiers. Like, are you serious? [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [31:01]

This was, uh, really something I witnessed through Mariupol, how bad the Russians were at ammo, ammunition conservation, and how they would, uh, quite happily just fire mortars into Mariupol and not, uh, bracket change the... You know, they would fire 10 mortars, um, in the same place.

Chapter 11: Witnessing the Endless Russian Bombardment



Ievgen Malik [31:24]

Yes.



Shaun Pinner [31:24]

No adjusting or bracketing.



Ievgen Malik [31:27]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [31:27]

It was just like somebody was going-



Ievgen Malik [31:28]

Dead



Shaun Pinner [31:29]

... and that's it, can, "Oh, oh, we're gonna die here. We're gonna die here." And then next one hit the same place. Next one hit the same... They're not hitting anything. It's just... And I just think this is crazy.



Ievgen Malik [31:39]

Yes.



Shaun Pinner [31:39]

This is really crazy.



Ievgen Malik [31:39]

They don't count anything.



Shaun Pinner [31:40]

No.



Ievgen Malik [31:40]

They don't count their own ammunition. They don't count, uh, people. They don't count, uh, weapon. They don't count anything. In case they need something to destroy, [laughs] they will destroy it-



Shaun Pinner [31:49]

They'll just see it and just destroy a lot



Ievgen Malik [31:50]

... completely. Yeah. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [31:51]

Yeah. And they'll use, like, a Grad to, to hit, you know, two guys in a field.



Ievgen Malik [31:55]

Yes.



Shaun Pinner [31:55]

And you just go, "That's just crazy."



Ievgen Malik [31:57]

E- e- exactly. Like, two, two soldiers. Th- this is amazing. Like, uh, y- well, in case you know that th- these are two generals, that is acceptable. But two mariners-



Shaun Pinner [32:08]

No



Ievgen Malik [32:08]

... no, this is, uh, ridiculous. But still, they did it. And I wouldn't be surprised in case they [laughs] see that they are still alive, and they would send aircraft jet-



Shaun Pinner [32:17]

Yeah, yeah



Ievgen Malik [32:18]

... to bomb them.



Shaun Pinner [32:18]

Just to bomb it.



Ievgen Malik [32:19]

Yes, for sure.



Shaun Pinner [32:20]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [32:20]

Like, you know. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [32:20]

It was, uh, it was something. I, I, d- you know, they would do the same when they were trying to get into-



Ievgen Malik [32:26]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [32:26]

... the steelworks. You know, they would send eight guys, and then fail, and then send-



Ievgen Malik [32:31]

Another



Shaun Pinner [32:31]

... same route in. Send 20 guys, fail. Send 30 guys.



Ievgen Malik [32:35]

Okay, let's go. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [32:36]

Let's do the same thing again. And you're all just-



Ievgen Malik [32:38]

Yes



Shaun Pinner [32:38]

... sitting ready to go, and it's like they're coming in again, and you just-



Ievgen Malik [32:41]

And you cannot believe that they are coming. Like, seriously, guys-



Shaun Pinner [32:44]

Seriously, guys



Ievgen Malik [32:44]

... you're on these dead bodies.



Shaun Pinner [32:46]

Yeah. Why-



Ievgen Malik [32:46]

They didn't manage. Why do you think that you will? No, it's okay.



Shaun Pinner [32:49]

No, we're, it's okay. We'll just send the same men in.



Ievgen Malik [32:51]

20 is not enough, 40.



Shaun Pinner [32:53]

40, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [32:54]

Not 40, 80. Okay.



Shaun Pinner [32:55]

Crazy.



Ievgen Malik [32:56]

Yeah. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [32:56]

You know, it's like I, and I just... I, I couldn't... When I talk, uh, to militaries, 'cause I, I talk to NATO militaries about, uh, operating in Ukraine and about captivity and, and I talk to them now, and I talk to them about, you know, what was happening. Um, a- and it, it's so obvious why they haven't moved very far, lost in Kyiv, a- and still can't really make-- They make small gains at the expense of one million soldiers, uh, casualties now.



Ievgen Malik [33:26]

Yes. And-



Shaun Pinner [33:26]

It's so obvious why. Uh, because they're so badly trained. Centralized command. Don't understand the situation they're going in. They're just thrown at us-



Ievgen Malik [33:35]

They are not interested in the situation



Shaun Pinner [33:37]

... with no interest. No, no, no, no.



Ievgen Malik [33:37]

Yes. They don't even try to, uh, get in.



Shaun Pinner [33:40]

No. [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [33:40]

They just-



Shaun Pinner [33:41]
They just bomb everything-



levgen Malik [33:42]
Yes. And that's it



Shaun Pinner [33:43]
... within, uh, radius, and then send in a few troops.



levgen Malik [33:44]
Well, in case you see-



Shaun Pinner [33:46]
[laughs]



levgen Malik [33:46]
... this, uh, uh, the, the, the way from Mariupol to Pokrovsk, uh, all the cities, in, even in case you will try to find it in the Google Maps and try to make a research, you will see that everything is destroyed. So they don't just... This is the way they, uh-



Shaun Pinner [34:03]
Operate



levgen Malik [34:03]
... prep it.



Shaun Pinner [34:04]
Yeah. [laughs]



levgen Malik [34:04]
They just d- destroy everything.



Shaun Pinner [34:06]

Completely destroy.



Ievgen Malik [34:07]

And that's it. Yeah. The, they are fine. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [34:10]

That's, uh, that's, is, is okay. And then there was no pattern to the, the bombing in, in, uh, Mariupol either. I mean, they would hit, uh, you know, the, the steelworks, and then we had-- There was no power in, in Ilich. Uh, we had no, uh, all the electric lines were, were dead.



Ievgen Malik [34:26]

Yeah.

Chapter 12: Finding Humor in the Chaos



Shaun Pinner [34:27]

For some reason, the planes would come in and take out a, you know, a pylon, electric pylon, you know, the electric tower.



Ievgen Malik [34:34]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [34:34]

And you'd go, "Why did he just shoot that?" You know, there's no electric. He's just taken out with his missiles a, an electric-



Ievgen Malik [34:39]

Do you remember there was a, in Mariupol, monument of tank?



Shaun Pinner [34:45]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [34:46]

What did they do? They were bombing the- [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [34:48]

Bombing the monument. Yeah, yeah, yeah



Ievgen Malik [34:49]

... during the months, during the months. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [34:54]

[laughs] They, they're, I mean, we laughed.



Ievgen Malik [34:55]

They were mad. Uh-



Shaun Pinner [34:55]

I mean, it was very emotional, very dangerous, very, uh, chaotic. I can't... I use m- many a- adjectives, but it was, it was a time, I mean, it's very emotional. We lost so many people through the bombing, but some of the, the things we talk about now is, is a coping mechanism for, to deal with what we see, and some of it was just bizarre.



Ievgen Malik [35:19]

Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [35:19]

Some of it was crazy. Um, a- and I still, when I talk to NATO troops now, um, I s- tell some stories and it's, "Really?"



Ievgen Malik [35:29]

They don't under-



Shaun Pinner [35:30]

They, yeah



Ievgen Malik [35:30]
... they can't believe.



Shaun Pinner [35:30]
They just, they can't under- they can't believe it.



Ievgen Malik [35:32]
I remember the, uh, the, that barracks, uh, on the factory, uh, llich, uh, where we were, and, uh, where was this battalion headquarters, there was a clock, big clock.



Shaun Pinner [35:44]
Mm.



Ievgen Malik [35:44]
And each hour, some tank just came, the, uh, because he, he saw, [laughs] and he was shooting, like, each hour, just reminding us that it's 2:00 PM, like-



Shaun Pinner [35:56]
[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [35:56]
... or 3:00 PM.



Shaun Pinner [35:57]
This is crazy.



Ievgen Malik [35:58]
And there was no sense in it, but he didn't care. Well, okay, I will send, like, 24 shots, uh, during the day. Well, no problems.



Shaun Pinner [36:08]
And then reload.



Ievgen Malik [36:09]

Tomorrow, tomorrow I got 48.



Shaun Pinner [36:11]

And then... [laughs] yeah.



Ievgen Malik [36:11]

Because I'm run out. Okay, no problems. Twice more. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [36:14]

Yeah, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [36:15]

That how it works-



Shaun Pinner [36:16]

I mean-



Ievgen Malik [36:16]

... in case you fight with Russians



Shaun Pinner [36:18]

... it was my first experience with Grad too. So Grad was something I didn't particularly like. I'd not been Graded before, and I, I don't [laughs] particularly like Grad. Uh, AGS is another one I don't particularly like 'cause you, unless you hear the pop, you can't hear it come through.



Ievgen Malik [36:32]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [36:32]

All you hear is doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo as they come in-



Ievgen Malik [36:35]

Mini Grad



Shaun Pinner [36:35]

... and buh, buh, bum. Mini Grad. Um, so I didn't particularly like that. And the first time in my military career, uh, I now, uh, I'm now the Taliban.



Ievgen Malik [36:46]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [36:46]

I now ISIS. I now guy in flip-flops.



Ievgen Malik [36:49]

This is, uh, yes, this is the thing. Uh, as the, uh, professional military, I used to see all the military films, uh, in U- United States and Britain, in Russia, Ukraine, uh, everything about war. Uh, and, uh, I some day, at probably at the end of March in Mariupol, I recognized that I ha- I, I don't know. I have never seen such film, uh, where main actors, uh, some company would be d- bombed. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [37:19]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [37:19]

And try to execute, like, so hard, you know. Uh, even, uh, well, i- w- in case you watched some film, tank probably is the worst-



Shaun Pinner [37:31]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [37:32]

... what can happen to the main actors. But in our case, tank was the minimum what can happen. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [37:37]

It was minimum.

Chapter 13: Surviving on Pure Adrenaline



Ievgen Malik [37:38]

After you-



Shaun Pinner [37:38]

You have two, three hours of artillery-



Ievgen Malik [37:40]

Yeah



Shaun Pinner [37:40]

... aircraft, and then maybe infantry.



Ievgen Malik [37:42]

MLRS and, uh, every- everything. You got everything. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [37:45]

And you just sit there going, "Oh, oh, oh." And then suddenly your infantry, maybe 30 guys come in. You'd have a firefight maybe. In the end they stopped firefights. They just bombed.



Ievgen Malik [37:56]

Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [37:56]

They just, in the end they stopped coming in, and, and just started to-



Ievgen Malik [37:58]

This is like a break for a cup of tea or coffee. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [38:01]

Yeah. Oh, infantry come, so we will not get bombed now, so this is good.



Ievgen Malik [38:05]

Yes. Yeah. This is really-



Shaun Pinner [38:06]

We got, we got a break.



Ievgen Malik [38:07]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [38:08]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [38:08]

Uh-



Shaun Pinner [38:08]

It was just, but it was, like, I can't remember sleeping. For seven weeks I can't remember sleeping. From, from Pavlopil all the way back to, through Mariupol, I cannot remember where I, I slept at all. So it's-



Ievgen Malik [38:23]

I-



Shaun Pinner [38:23]

By the time I was captured, I was, I was thankful for the sl- sleep to be honest.



Ievgen Malik [38:28]

I remember, but, uh, I was sleeping like I, I sat in some DOT.



Shaun Pinner [38:36]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [38:36]

And, uh, that, that's it. I just, uh, I was run out of, uh, power, uh, energy, and I just got s-slept, and no matter about this Grads. I didn't re- react on it, uh, because-



Shaun Pinner [38:48]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [38:48]

... well, in case this, this is the 15th time they tried to bomb us by Grads and nothing happens, I don't think that something happened, will happen in-



Shaun Pinner [38:57]

Yeah. Yeah



Ievgen Malik [38:57]

... case they will make it again. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [38:59]

It's surprising what you get used to.



Ievgen Malik [39:01]

Yes. Exactly.



Shaun Pinner [39:02]

Um, and s- you do. You get used to, uh, which is, which is crazy. People don't understand that sometimes you just get used to the Grad and the artillery coming in, and it's, it's scary, scary stuff.



Ievgen Malik [39:14]

Yes. Okay. So going further, uh, after the Mariupol, [laughs] the greatest experience, uh, well, for me that was like that because I couldn't even believe that... Well, first year you say that Mariupol was worse, still worse than the captivity. But the s- second year, I said that, no, captivity is worse than the Mariupol, and I couldn't even b- imagined that something can be worse.



Shaun Pinner [39:43]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [39:43]

But still it happened. So, uh-



Shaun Pinner [39:46]

For me, uh, the Mariupol was worse because, uh, we were losing friends. People were injured. Uh, we were, we didn't know... I understood the, the, the, the encirclement was 200 kilometers deep. We were on our own.



Ievgen Malik [40:02]

Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [40:02]

So I could prep for, uh, to, to maybe that we would try and get out, break out of Mariupol. And I was sort of saying to people that, you know, we could, we're probably gonna leave soon. Um, and that was when my training sort of really kicked in. Um, and I thought any point now in April where somebody's gonna say, "That's it, it's over."



Ievgen Malik [40:24]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [40:24]

Uh, and now it's every man for himself. So I was ready to go by the time we, we did try and break out of Mariupol. I was never gonna surrender. I was always gonna try and break out because I'm British, for one thing. I didn't wanna get captured.



Ievgen Malik [40:40]

The, yes. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [40:41]

So I was never gonna surrender.



Ievgen Malik [40:43]

[laughs]

Chapter 14: Planning the Dangerous Breakout



Shaun Pinner [40:44]

Um, and then, um, essentially I'd had training, so I felt quite confident that I could get out. I knew my home was Mariupol. I had a house in the left bank. My wife and I lived in Mariupol. Was now defending my city that I'd lived in for five years before, uh, the full-scale invasion. So this was, like, uh, my home. Um, so I knew the area. I thought, you know, uh, I thought we could probably get out, break the first line, and then we would have a bit of, uh, space to, to maybe get moving towards friendly lines, and I felt quite confident that we could do that. Um, even me being 46, 47 with the Army chasing me, I thought-



Ievgen Malik [41:28]

[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [41:28]

... when we actually broke out, I felt quite good. I was like, "Thank God we're out of there." We, we, you know, we, we'd done all we could have done. We couldn't have done any more. There was just nothing left. No food, very little ammunition. Um, we'd been doing it for six weeks. It was just... You know, I was glad that when they said, "We're gonna go, we're gonna go," and I was thinking, "Great. Let's move. We can't do any more here." So I felt quite confident. Uh, and my training, uh, I would already prepared my equipment. Like, I'd started to, uh, get my deb- debit cards, my, my credit cards-



Ievgen Malik [42:06]

Yeah



Shaun Pinner [42:06]

... snapping them because I thought if I get captured, they're just gonna take me to an ATM.



Ievgen Malik [42:10]

Exactly.



Shaun Pinner [42:11]

Maybe-



Ievgen Malik [42:11]

We, we did the same. We broke all the mobile phones-



Shaun Pinner [42:14]

[coughs] Excuse me



Ievgen Malik [42:14]

... all the computers, all the radio stations, all, uh, Archers, uh-



Shaun Pinner [42:19]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [42:19]

... televisions, uh, everything what can be, could be broken. All the Javelins, everything we broke. Uh, and I even remember because Archer, you know this-



Shaun Pinner [42:29]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [42:29]

... uh, for the snipers, and w- when we, uh, surrendered and they started to, uh, make a research, like what, what we left for them, and so [laughs] some sniper item that he was the si- sniper, he found this broken Arch- Archer, and he came to us. There were 100 of,

levgen Malik (continued)

uh, us soldiers, and he was like, "Who broke it? Who did it?" [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [42:53]
[laughs]



levgen Malik [42:53]
He got... In their army they have never seen this, uh, and of he, he was hoping like-



Shaun Pinner [43:00]
That's good



levgen Malik [43:00]
... he can use it, but it was broken and he was so angry, like, "Who did it?"



Shaun Pinner [43:04]
[laughs]



levgen Malik [43:04]
And I thought, "Oh, my God, he is gonna kill us for this." [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [43:09]
The, the, uh, we got ambushed on the way out 'cause I was on the edge of Ilichiv.



levgen Malik [43:15]
Mm.



Shaun Pinner [43:15]
So I, uh, we, we actually got ambushed on the way out, and I lost, lost my platoon.
'Cause it was about 3:00 in the morning when we tried-



Ievgen Malik [43:24]

Oh, yeah



Shaun Pinner [43:24]

... to break out, and it was dark. And, uh, the day before was great 'cause there was tuman, fog, and, and, uh, and I thought-



Ievgen Malik [43:33]

Oh, I, I, I was watching this fog so-



Shaun Pinner [43:35]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [43:36]

... many times, and I thought, "Just leave it. Just take everything-



Shaun Pinner [43:39]

Let's just go



Ievgen Malik [43:40]

... and, and go right now. It's, this is your chance." But I, I couldn't. You know, uh, in case, uh, you are, uh, with, uh, some group, you stay with the group.



Shaun Pinner [43:49]

Yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [43:50]

Uh, and you cannot do anything with it. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [43:52]

Yeah, it's great. A- and then the next day, sun, blue sky.

Chapter 15: Falling into Enemy Hands



Ievgen Malik [43:56]
Yes.



Shaun Pinner [43:56]
And I was thinking, "Oh."



Ievgen Malik [43:57]
And the, and the order that- [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [43:59]
Yeah



Ievgen Malik [44:00]
... called you, "Go wherever you want," okay, thank you very much.



Shaun Pinner [44:04]
Thank you very much.



Ievgen Malik [44:05]
Really, yes.



Shaun Pinner [44:05]
Why didn't you say this yesterday? [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [44:07]
[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [44:08]
Yeah, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [44:08]

This is the question of, uh, the military orders-



Shaun Pinner [44:12]

Yeah, yeah



Ievgen Malik [44:12]

... from your commanders. Yeah, sometimes-



Shaun Pinner [44:13]

They've gotta wait for somebody-



Ievgen Malik [44:15]

Yeah



Shaun Pinner [44:15]

... to say, "Yep, go," and, and, uh ... But I mean, I, I got captured. Uh, I didn't want to get captured. I had a plan if I was captured that I would surrender to a officer. I didn't. I got captured by Donetsk People's Republic, DPR. And, um, and I was captured about two hours outside of Mariupol, um-



Ievgen Malik [44:37]

Mm



Shaun Pinner [44:37]

... which was ... I thought I'd, I'd got through that first line, and, and literally, um, I was working my way through buildings because, uh, the drones were, were a problem, so I didn't want ... I couldn't walk through the day outside because the drones would see me, so I tried to stay in the buildings. And then I was worried about what defenses were in the, in those buildings, so that's slow. I was looking through doors, looking for tripwires, looking for... And I was thinking, "I've gotta be really careful going through the buildings." I maybe do, it take me two hours to get maybe 200 meters, you know? It was like-



Ievgen Malik [45:13]

This is-



Shaun Pinner [45:13]

I was looking-



levgen Malik [45:14]

... the thing. Uh, that, uh, uh, I, I saw it, and I could understand the same that you cannot just, just walk. Even if you walk this, uh, 180 kilometers, it will takes you a week, more than a week.



Shaun Pinner [45:29]

Yeah.



levgen Malik [45:29]

Even just to walk-



Shaun Pinner [45:30]

You do the math



levgen Malik [45:31]

... without water, without food, without anything, injured guys. What would you do with that?



Shaun Pinner [45:36]

I was, I was working the math.



levgen Malik [45:38]

Yes.



Shaun Pinner [45:38]

I was going, "We're gonna do this this way, 200 kilometers. I'm probably doing one mile an hour-



levgen Malik [45:42]

Yeah



Shaun Pinner [45:42]

... if what, if that." And I said, "Oh, my God, that's gonna take, like, 15 days." [laughs] And I was thinking, I was like-



Ievgen Malik [45:49]

Life did not prepare me well.



Shaun Pinner [45:51]

Oh, my God.



Ievgen Malik [45:52]

Sea course was really good, but not so good, but-



Shaun Pinner [45:54]

Now I'm like, uh, Bravo to Zero special forces doing the escape and evasion, and it's like, oh, my God. It's like everything. I was thinking how am I, where... Water was the biggest problem. I had no-



Ievgen Malik [46:04]

Yes



Shaun Pinner [46:04]

... we had no water.



Ievgen Malik [46:05]

Where will you find it? Uh-



Shaun Pinner [46:07]

Thinking back to my training. Rivers, plastic bottles, evaporation. I was thinking, "Well, damn, I gotta, we, we gotta find some water."



Ievgen Malik [46:13]

This is the thing. A lot of guys, uh, relied on the river, but I know that a lot of guys were killed there-



Shaun Pinner [46:20]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [46:20]

... by Russians because Russians are not so s-



Shaun Pinner [46:22]

Much stupid



Ievgen Malik [46:23]

... much stupid.



Shaun Pinner [46:23]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [46:23]

Well, yeah, there are some questions to their IQ level, but not so-



Shaun Pinner [46:28]

No, no, they, they-



Ievgen Malik [46:28]

... big question



Shaun Pinner [46:29]

... yeah.



Ievgen Malik [46:29]

So yeah, they, they realized that, and I know that, uh, I've seen the photos. Uh, a lot of our guys were simply killed there.



Shaun Pinner [46:36]

Mm.



Ievgen Malik [46:36]

So we are pretty, uh, pretty much lucky that we surrendered. I found a, a officer, uh, and, uh, made the negotiations. Uh, that saved us because I've seen, uh, our guys who tried to, uh, surrender-



Shaun Pinner [46:50]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [46:50]

... to soldiers, uh, some machine gunners. They, they tried to kill them. They didn't manage that, but they-



Shaun Pinner [46:57]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [46:57]

... tried. They didn't even want to speak, uh, with them. And, uh, I was lucky to find a contact with the ... Because we got some, uh, um, guy, uh, captured-

Chapter 16: Negotiating the Final Surrender



Shaun Pinner [47:08]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [47:09]

... in, uh, our factory, Agrofirma-



Shaun Pinner [47:11]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [47:11]

... if you remember that.



Shaun Pinner [47:12]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [47:12]

And, uh, we found a contact with his commander, and I made the negotiations. But if not this guy, if not this officer, I don't know what would happen to us.



Shaun Pinner [47:23]

Yeah. Well, I, I didn't have that luck. I, uh ... They shot arou- uh, a bullet over my shoulder, and then I had to negotiate their, the surrender, and then I had to walk 30 meters to, to them and trust they weren't gonna shoot me. Um, and, and at that point, um, my war changed. Uh, I couldn't do... I couldn't run. I couldn't get round them. It was broad daylight. Um, and, uh, that's when they started to, uh, I realized that I'd been captured by Donetsk People's Republic 'cause they have this different color band, and they look, they look bad soldiers. They had-



Ievgen Malik [48:00]

[laughs] Cheap



Shaun Pinner [48:00]

... three different types of... Cheap soldiers. Three different types of camouflage. World War II camouflage.



Ievgen Malik [48:04]

Yeah, you remember this, our first mariners in the combat mission. We were like, like from the movie star.



Shaun Pinner [48:10]

Yeah, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [48:10]

Everyone multi-cam. And no one wear the pixel. If, if you are in the-



Shaun Pinner [48:15]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [48:15]

... pixel, that means, like, you, you have no money.



Shaun Pinner [48:18]

[laughs] You have no money.



Ievgen Malik [48:18]

Like play casino probably or something like that.



Shaun Pinner [48:21]

And I was like with my-



Ievgen Malik [48:22]

Yeah



Shaun Pinner [48:22]

... Caroline watch and, and lower boots and, and, and I think, "Oh, no."



Ievgen Malik [48:27]

Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [48:27]

"I look like special forces guy now-



Ievgen Malik [48:29]

Exactly



Shaun Pinner [48:30]

... and then I'm gonna get captured." And I think, "Oh, no." And then they, uh, beat me, and then, um, uh, they take me to com- commander, um, of the, of, uh, the position. And they put the bag over your head, and then they-



Ievgen Malik [48:44]

This is a good sign



Shaun Pinner [48:45]

...



Ievgen Malik [48:45]

Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [48:45]

This is... And then, uh, they tell me, "You're ?" "Yes, I'm ." Uh, I say, "Don't shoot," in my best . I'm- I say, "Don't shoot. I'm, I'm ." And then I say in , "Don't shoot. I'm ." Um, so they take me to this commander, and then once they tie me up, then they start to beat me and, and, uh, only for a small time. Um, it wasn't too bad, but then the Russians came Straight away they came. Um, and, uh, I was made- They took my hood off, checked my passport, my army ID against my face, and then suddenly this guy comes out with a knife and just stabs me right in the leg. And I think, I, I was, I was screaming. I, I just thought-



Ievgen Malik [49:25]

Of course



Shaun Pinner [49:25]

... that's it. I was like, "That's it. It's over." And then he, then he came along and got this T-shirt, this old dirty blue T-shirt, put it onto my legs-



Ievgen Malik [49:36]

Special, I would say



Shaun Pinner [49:38]

... and then Sellotaped it



Ievgen Malik [49:39]

On purpose just to me- m- make it lean, yeah?



Shaun Pinner [49:42]

Yeah, he didn't want me to run anywhere. So he-



Ievgen Malik [49:45]

[sighs]



Shaun Pinner [49:45]

... he just, pft, straight into the leg.



Ievgen Malik [49:46]

Can you just, uh, this is the thing even I've seen in, uh, Sartana when they, uh, get all, uh, captivities. They, uh, they were asking, like, who you are and et cetera. Uh, in Sartana they didn't beat us, but they already beat the, all the speakers-



Shaun Pinner [50:03]

Yeah. [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [50:03]

... they got. Yeah. And, uh, to Olenivka, when we got there, speaker were not there at all. I haven't seen them.

Chapter 17: Enduring Torture in Captivity



Shaun Pinner [50:11]

Yeah, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [50:11]

They were in some, uh, you were in some other place. So, uh, the, the thing is, in case they didn't beat us speakers, they already did.



Shaun Pinner [50:21]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [50:21]

In case they beat up us in some place, at the same time speaker were, they got something even worse, even much worse.



Shaun Pinner [50:29]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [50:29]

And this is the thing I try to explain all the foreigners, that, uh, speakers, like for Russians, th- you are not Englishman or American. They d- don't care. They are like Anglo-Saxony.



Shaun Pinner [50:42]

Oh, yeah. That's it.



Ievgen Malik [50:43]

Anglo-Saxons.



Shaun Pinner [50:43]

Yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [50:43]

You are Anglo-Saxons.



Shaun Pinner [50:44]

If I didn't hear Anglo-Saxon-



Ievgen Malik [50:45]

And you are natural enemy-



Shaun Pinner [50:47]

... nyomnik



Ievgen Malik [50:47]

... of Russians.



Shaun Pinner [50:48]

Yeah, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [50:49]

For them it's no matter Australian, American, Canadian-



Shaun Pinner [50:52]

Yeah, yeah, yeah



Ievgen Malik [50:53]

... British man, uh, t- I- Irishman, n- no man. Uh, y- you speaks , you're an enemy, and, uh, you, you have to be beaten and you have to be electrocuted, executed, and et cetera.



Shaun Pinner [51:04]

Yeah, yeah, yeah. And that, and, and that's pretty, you've nailed it. I mean, it was pretty much, uh, I was electrocuted next. Uh, they put little paddles on my fingers and then strapped me up.



Ievgen Malik [51:16]

Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [51:16]

And then electrocuted, and you hear that tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick as you get electrocuted. And then, uh, they would beat you, and then they would kick you where they s- stabbed me in the leg. They would kick and punch there.



Ievgen Malik [51:26]

With the, uh, batons and sticks.



Shaun Pinner [51:28]

Yeah, they, this, uh, we called it the Black Mamba.



Ievgen Malik [51:31]

Yeah. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [51:31]

There's this thing that they just spat on you with.



Ievgen Malik [51:33]

Exactly, yeah. Mm.



Shaun Pinner [51:34]

Uh, and then some guy had a-



Ievgen Malik [51:34]

But the plastic tube was even worse, I think, uh-



Shaun Pinner [51:36]

I didn't, I didn't have that. Yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [51:38]

Lucky. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [51:39]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [51:40]

But still you got, uh, a lot of bad things and, uh-



Shaun Pinner [51:43]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [51:43]

... all these tortures. Uh, and that is really horrible.



Shaun Pinner [51:46]

It is. Um, s- we have, uh, psychological torture a- as well as-



Ievgen Malik [51:50]

Of course



Shaun Pinner [51:50]

... physical torture, and it's-



Ievgen Malik [51:52]

Because they are so good at it.



Shaun Pinner [51:53]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [51:53]

I always says, uh, that, well, look, uh, we've been in a, a prison, prison, wh- which is, uh, it used to be, uh, made in, in times of Empire of Yekaterina.



Shaun Pinner [52:06]

Mm.



Ievgen Malik [52:07]

And the thing is that the history of some Russians prisons, uh, prisons, uh, are even longer than the history of some independent countries-



Shaun Pinner [52:19]

Yeah. [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [52:19]

... which exists nowadays.



Shaun Pinner [52:21]

It's, it's, it's systemic. It's institutionalized.



Ievgen Malik [52:21]

Can you imagine, like I- we've been in, uh, Mordva in a village, Udalne, and we got the prison there. Uh, prison and the village near to, next to the prison. And just think about it, like you got two choice. Or you are a farmer, or you want to work? You want to work? Go to the prison. So the guy i- who is guard, he is a guard. Uh, his father used to be guard in this prison.



Shaun Pinner [52:47]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [52:47]

His grandpa-



Shaun Pinner [52:48]

Yeah, yeah



levgen Malik [52:49]
... the, the grandpa-



Shaun Pinner [52:49]
Yeah



levgen Malik [52:49]
... or the grandpa and can you imagine, like he, how much professional is he?



Shaun Pinner [52:53]
Yeah. There was no, uh, I mean, the scariest part was the volatility of the guards. We didn't know. They had no training. So every guard want to be this FSB investigator-



levgen Malik [53:08]
Yes



Shaun Pinner [53:08]
... uh, de- interrogator. And it was just h- horrible. Uh, and it was just, uh, they were stupid. We call them, uh, the a- and the Americans, we call them, uh, uh, red monkeys.

Chapter 18: Exposing the Incompetent Guards



levgen Malik [53:19]
Yeah.



Shaun Pinner [53:19]
And that's 'cause they were just stupid, and we'd refer to-



levgen Malik [53:22]
Exactly



Shaun Pinner [53:22]
... as a bloody red monkey.



Ievgen Malik [53:23]

He made a view he's a special force, but-



Shaun Pinner [53:25]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [53:25]

... in case you speak with him about weapon, you can discover that he knows nothing about it. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [53:30]

He knows nothing at all. He doesn't even know how to-



Ievgen Malik [53:32]

But he says, "For Spetsnaz," and start-



Shaun Pinner [53:35]

Yeah, yeah, yeah



Ievgen Malik [53:35]

... to beat you up. We're our guys. And-



Shaun Pinner [53:37]

And he's like big guy, like-



Ievgen Malik [53:38]

Yes. And w- well, for the Spetsnaz, if you wanna make a revenge, here's the frontline-



Shaun Pinner [53:45]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [53:45]

... on the west side. Well, why you are not there? Why are you here?



Shaun Pinner [53:49]

Yeah. This is-



Ievgen Malik [53:49]

And he said like, uh, they said like, "They don't say, they don't let us to go there."



Shaun Pinner [53:53]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [53:53]

And I was like, "Oh, come on, man. You can say this-



Shaun Pinner [53:55]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [53:55]

... to your grandma probably, but not to me. I know how it works. In case you make a report, a- a- asking you to send the front, you to the front line, they will send you next day."



Shaun Pinner [54:05]

Yeah. [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [54:06]

Just make this letter.



Shaun Pinner [54:07]

Yeah, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [54:08]

And they were like, "They don't, they do not send us."



Shaun Pinner [54:10]

Yeah, yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [54:10]

You're lucky. In case they would send us, the war would be finished already. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [54:13]

Oh, yeah, yeah. Full of, full of, uh, yeah, we had all that. They kept saying, uh, "You're James Bond. You're, uh, SAS." And I said, "No, I, I'm, I am a, it's Doshi Matros in the, in the-



Ievgen Malik [54:23]

They, they truly probably-



Shaun Pinner [54:24]

... Marines



Ievgen Malik [54:24]

... they truly believe that you are the best friend of Boris Johnson-



Shaun Pinner [54:28]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [54:28]

... or something like that. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [54:28]

Pretty much. "So why are you in Mariupol?" "My wife's Mari- from Mariupol. I've lived here for..." "You don't live here. You're from England." "Yeah. I know, but I just..." And you repeat yourself. "My wife is, is . I've lived in Mariupol. I've, I've been a marine for,

Shaun Pinner (continued)
you know, three years." "No, no, you are a nyomnik. You are mercenary."



Ievgen Malik [54:49]
[laughs]



Shaun Pinner [54:49]
"You are James Bond. You are..." And I'd say, well, it was just, you just go around the same, same circle. Um, and then they do this in front of media. They pull you to the media and you have to sit there and-



Ievgen Malik [55:00]
Yes, of course. Like this monkey, you know?



Shaun Pinner [55:02]
Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [55:03]
Uh-



Shaun Pinner [55:03]
The guy who just electrocute you, beat you, is standing behind the camera.



Ievgen Malik [55:07]
Yes.



Shaun Pinner [55:07]
And-



Ievgen Malik [55:08]
And listening what I use-



Shaun Pinner [55:09]

What he say. And if you don't say the right things, you're going back to the prison, and you'll get...



Ievgen Malik [55:13]

Of course. When I got back to, uh, from the captivity, and I've seen this YouTube channel where, uh, some, uh, reporter, reporter speaks to this, uh, soldiers who are captured, and they are in Ukraine. I've seen some of interviews there, and I was shocked and angry. I sw- switch off, uh, that because I've, I listened what they said And, you know, in case I would speak with the journalist in prison such way, I wouldn't come back home.



Shaun Pinner [55:47]

[laughs] Yeah. Like, or-



Ievgen Malik [55:47]

Well, at least if, uh, in case I would come back, I would come back without teeth and tongue.



Shaun Pinner [55:51]

[laughs]



Ievgen Malik [55:52]

You know?



Shaun Pinner [55:52]

They would cut your ears off. Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [55:53]

Exactly, yes. And, uh, this is not a joke, uh, because they, they, they wouldn't let you be-



Shaun Pinner [55:58]

Yeah, absolutely



Ievgen Malik [55:59]

... so, like independent, you know?



Shaun Pinner [56:01]

No.



Ievgen Malik [56:02]

Too much. Uh, okay. Um, we are out of time unfortunately, but I have one question, last one.



Shaun Pinner [56:08]

Okay.



Ievgen Malik [56:08]

Um, you are British man, uh, uh, pr- basically, and from London, and you live, uh, in Ukraine so long, and you've seen the war here, and you've seen the reaction of people. I'm interested in because, um, we just, uh, in Ukraine, we, uh, consider that in Europe people are not ready psychologically-

Chapter 19: Reclaiming the True Story



Shaun Pinner [56:33]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [56:33]

... nor morally to have such war on their land, uh, against Russians also.



Shaun Pinner [56:40]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [56:41]

Like who, I don't know, against anyone, but, uh, Russia is the ba- uh, the biggest threat obviously. And, uh, what would you say, for example, uh, in Britain, in case that, that will happen to Great Britain, uh, someone will try to, uh, involve, for example, Federation.



Shaun Pinner [57:00]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [57:00]

And what would these people would, what would be the reaction of the society? Because you've seen the reaction of society from the-



Shaun Pinner [57:09]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [57:09]

... very full-scale invasion, and, uh, you, you can, maybe you got some feelings about it. Uh, you can make some comparison.



Shaun Pinner [57:18]

Well, the, the reason I wrote my book was because the Russians formed a narrative of me while I was in captivity.



Ievgen Malik [57:26]

Mm-hmm.



Shaun Pinner [57:26]

So I wanted to, to write a book to warn people about what Russia's like. I mean, I would... People say, "What were you feeling when you came home?" And I said, "I was, after some days, I was feeling angry." 'Cause you, you go through the footage, you look on your phone on YouTube, you see what people say-



Ievgen Malik [57:44]

And you can understand, yes



Shaun Pinner [57:44]

... and you just go, "That didn't happen like that. I'm not a Nazi and a mercenary and a terrorist. I did, I never left the country I had legal residency in." So I had to s- explain, and I felt obligated to, to really start warning countries what Russia's really like, what was really going on. I mean, I think I started that in Mariupol 'cause I was blogging and-



Ievgen Malik [58:08]

Mm-hmm



Shaun Pinner [58:08]

... talking to the media and telling them what was happening, that the Russians were bombing schools.



Ievgen Malik [58:12]

And Russians were thankful for that, I think. [laughs]



Shaun Pinner [58:14]

Yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I've got the scars to prove it. Yeah. I mean, I am thank- I'm lucky I'm home. I was lucky I was exchanged 'cause many of our guys, one British guy was beaten in prison to death, you know? So-



Ievgen Malik [58:25]

Yeah



Shaun Pinner [58:25]

... so, um, and he was with us.



Ievgen Malik [58:27]

That's, uh, not the only case in-



Shaun Pinner [58:28]

No



Ievgen Malik [58:29]

... captivity.



Shaun Pinner [58:30]

Lots of cases.



Ievgen Malik [58:31]

Uh, the guy from my position, uh, one of my friend from my platoon, unfortunately, the same. That, that is regular in captivity. Uh, some percentage are simply killed and not, they are not like, uh, shot, but they are, they are beaten so much that they just die.



Shaun Pinner [58:47]

Absolutely, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [58:47]

This is the reality.



Shaun Pinner [58:49]

And it's, it's, it's, um, it's m- I h- now have a really a platform to tell people about, um, you know, the, the atrocities that were committed. And I have a voice, and it stands... I, I didn't know, but my voice stands above the Ukrainians 'cause I'm from Britain, because I could s- talk to the British press and, and the Americans, and, and, uh, I'm a former British serviceman. And, and you know, I watched Russia come into Mariupol. And even now Russia are saying, "It's not, we didn't start this war. We're not doing these atrocities." Hold on a minute. You just came in. I was... You've stolen my house. You've tortured me. You've given me the death penalty. It's my job to tell people what actually happened i- in Mariupol. Um, and, you know-

Chapter 20: Warning the West of Danger



Ievgen Malik [59:35]

And I'm surprised that there are some people who-



Shaun Pinner [59:37]

Believe this



Ievgen Malik [59:38]

... you, you, you, you have to explain them something.



Shaun Pinner [59:40]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [59:40]

For them, this is not obvious or in, uh, th- that in case someone involves your territory and destroys your home and take you to the prison to some hole, I don't know, that that is illegal and that that is, uh, irrational, and, uh, that is a crime. Well, someone does- don't understand, doesn't understand, like, how that happens.



Shaun Pinner [1:00:01]

No, and they don't. And I, I, part of that is explaining to people through the book, through now a film that's being made, and documentaries and interviews, to really tell people, especially in America, who don't really understand what this is about, to tell them, uh, essentially there's a lot of support for Ukraine in, in Great Britain, uh, which I wish-



Ievgen Malik [1:00:23]

Yeah, we know this. We can feel it



Shaun Pinner [1:00:24]

... but more so in America, to, to be able to tell them and fight those narratives about, you know, their reasons, their principles for invading Ukraine. And, and, um, you know, to actually someone who's, who is married to a, who lived in Mariupol, who had his life in Ukraine, to be able to talk about those atrocities is to give Europe warning, to talk to them about what's actually like on the front lines, so, so that people can get ready for, for what's coming, 'cause Putin's not gonna stop. He's gonna keep going. He's gonna... And then if he wins in Ukraine, he's gonna forcibly conscript all the fighting age males, and you m- you will be fighting for Russia.



Ievgen Malik [1:01:05]

Well, I d- I will not because I know what I'm gonna do-



Shaun Pinner [1:01:08]

[laughs] Yeah



Ievgen Malik [1:01:09]

... in that case, but I know-



Shaun Pinner [1:01:11]

Partisans. [laughs]



Ievgen Malik [1:01:11]

... that, uh, the guy whom we captured in, uh, Mariupol was from Donetsk.



Shaun Pinner [1:01:17]

Yeah.



Ievgen Malik [1:01:17]

And I've seen his document. He was mobilized in two weeks before in Donetsk.



Shaun Pinner [1:01:21]

Yeah, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [1:01:22]

And, uh, yeah, I know how it works.



Shaun Pinner [1:01:26]

And they will turn this forcible conscripted fighting age males onto Europe if they succeeded. So this war needs to be-



Ievgen Malik [1:01:33]

Definitely



Shaun Pinner [1:01:33]

... finished here.



Ievgen Malik [1:01:34]

I, I would say that they, in the captivity, they were angry for us Ukrainians so-



Shaun Pinner [1:01:39]

Yeah



Ievgen Malik [1:01:39]

... much because w- They were angry indeed because we didn't let them to go further. They considered that they will finish-



Shaun Pinner [1:01:47]

Exactly



Ievgen Malik [1:01:48]

... in two weeks, and they, they will go further. Uh, and-



Shaun Pinner [1:01:51]

We'll kill you in the name of peace.



Ievgen Malik [1:01:53]

Yes, of course.



Shaun Pinner [1:01:53]

We take your house in the name of peace.



Ievgen Malik [1:01:55]

Of course, yes.



Shaun Pinner [1:01:56]

You are our brothers. [laughs] Yeah, yeah. I, I, I'm sure we are, yeah.



Ievgen Malik [1:02:00]

Yes.



Shaun Pinner [1:02:01]

Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, it's not. It's imperialism, and it needs to be stopped here. But, you know, w- we hope that, you know, uh, Trump's 50/50 with me. Um, I hope that, you know, America, there's a lot of support for Ukraine in America. Um, we speak to a lot through the media and, uh, uh, uh, and we hope that they're, they're, they, they will

Shaun Pinner (continued)
support Ukraine better than they are doing at the moment.



Ievgen Malik [1:02:28]
Of course.



Shaun Pinner [1:02:29]
Of course.



Ievgen Malik [1:02:29]
All of us.



Shaun Pinner [1:02:30]
[laughs] All of us are.



Ievgen Malik [1:02:32]
Okay. Thank you very much, Sean. Thanks, Sean. It's really good. My pleasure. Uh, thank you. A great experience for me, and, uh, finally I me- meet you again.



Shaun Pinner [1:02:41]
[laughs] Meet you again.



Ievgen Malik [1:02:41]
Thank you very much, and, uh, see you further.



Samuel P.N. Cook [1:02:44]
Hello, and thank you for listening to another episode of the Ukraine Military History Podcast. I hope that you enjoyed, uh, this episode today. And if you did, uh, please like, comment, and share on, uh, wherever you're viewing or listening to this podcast. Whether if you're on YouTube, please leave comments and share and subscribe to our channel. Uh, if you're listening to this on the podcast apps, please download us, subscribe to us so you're getting notified as every new episode when it comes out, it will go straight to your inbox. You can also go to our website, sign up for our email list to be notified of, uh, future initiatives of the Ukraine Military History Institute, future episodes as they come out, and, and also some events that we run here in Kyiv for the community. Uh, Borderlands, uh, Foundation, uh, has some community meetups. So if any of those things are, uh, interesting to you, please, uh, sign up for our email list. And then finally,

Samuel P.N. Cook (continued)

um, this is funded by the Borderlands Group. It's a consultancy, uh, that I run that helps , uh, foreign companies, military c- uh, companies, companies that are trying to grow, uh, their business, um, g- you know, get, uh, feedback from their products from frontline units and, uh, d- develop their products for the battlefield so that they're useful for both Ukraine but also, uh, other countries that, that, uh, want to use their military technology products. So, um, if you'd like to learn more about what we do, uh, whether it's getting in touch with Rob or other members of the podcast to, to write reports or advise you, whether you're a, a military, a government that wants to understand, uh, what's going on, uh, i- in the war in Ukraine for your own national security, or, uh, if you'd like to work as a military technology company inside Ukraine and learn from and develop your technology here, please go to the Borderlands Group website. Leave us a message. We'll be in touch and see how we can help you, uh, learn from and contribute to, uh, Ukraine's victory here in this war.

Quotes (58)

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Military can have some incredibly challenging and tough moments, but the camaraderie it builds among those who share that really forms bonds that last a lifetime.

— Samuel P.N. Cook, Founder
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



//

Reflect on what it means to serve and sacrifice for something that you believe in and for your comrades.

— Samuel P.N. Cook, Founder
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



//

Our mission is making sure Ukraine's heroes are never forgotten.

— **Samuel P.N. Cook, Founder**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

You made a great job in our army. You were one of the heroes of Ukraine and Britain as well.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

This is a veteran of the British Army and Ukraine, a true ally, and my friend with whom I used to serve in one battalion.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

In captivity, I was electrocuted because I didn't support Shakhtar Donetsk. I said my favorite team was West Ham, and they hit me with these cattle prod things.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

SERE training taught me how to resist interrogation and gave me the best possible chance to survive. I just didn't think I'd actually be using those skills 30 years later.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I originally came to Ukraine in 2018 just to visit some friends, and I didn't go home for five years. I fell in love.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I am a soldier from East Ukraine, just born in London.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

When Putin gives his narrative about saving the speakers, he didn't save me or my wife or my friends. He stole my house.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I was a sniper instructor with Azov for two years on the front lines. I transferred to the Marines because you couldn't have a contract in the National Guard if you weren't a citizen of Ukraine.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



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He said, 'I came from England. I want to serve in the battalion.' And I was like, 'What? No one even in Ukraine wants to serve in this battalion!'

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

They make out that they are fat, that they are weak. But no, these are James Bonds, all of them, and they are superhumans, 100%.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

They said, 'You will parachute.' I thought, 'I'm 45. Will my hips and my knees hold out?' But once I did my first jump, you couldn't stop me.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

On operations, we didn't have a problem. We knew tactics. We knew how to use hardware. I'd spent nine years in the British Army learning how to fight Russians. This was easy.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

Living in the barracks was very hard because of the standards and instructions. I preferred being on operations and the war side of it. The base wasn't for me.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

In the US, if you have 15 or 16 jumps during your military career, you are a professional. When they got to training with our Ukrainian airborne company and asked how many jumps they had, our guys were like, 'Well, 120.'

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I argue with media when they call me a 'foreign fighter.' No, I'm a marine. We don't call Gurkhas from Nepal foreign fighters, they're British soldiers. Why am I a foreign fighter?

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I'm immensely grateful that I had a second chance to be in the military, which is what I loved. I missed it so much, and I miss it now.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I joined the military at the right time because we were moving away from Soviet doctrine and centralized command, and I came to a unit where they were open to this.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

In the Soviet doctrine, the commander would say, 'We're gonna take this hill, but we're gonna do it my way.' Now, it is more like, tell the sergeant what you want to do, and he makes it happen.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I kept telling the Ukrainians, 'No, it's still the same in the front lines. We still grumble, and we still say the food's crap.'

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

Everybody complains about digging until the artillery comes. And then they dig with their eyelids.

— Shaun Pinner, Former
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

If you're talking about bonding and building brotherhood, if you can cook, look after yourself, and teach people, you can hold your own.

— Shaun Pinner, Former
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

War now has changed. It's not even what it was in 2022, because of drone advancements.

— Shaun Pinner, Former
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

War is changing immensely fast. Drones are now the new everything—they are the sniper, the mortars, the artillery, and the reconnaissance. They are everything to do with the front line.

— Shaun Pinner, Former
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

Everybody said, 'Maybe three days.' And I said, 'No, we will give them a bloody nose.' But it's bloody Russia. It's not ISIS. It's not the Taliban. Nobody knows how this is gonna go.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

We saw a drone and my friend said, 'There are just two of us here, they won't waste ammunition on us.' In thirty seconds, they fired eighty rockets at two soldiers.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

They don't count anything. They don't count their own ammunition. They don't count people. They don't count weapons. They don't count anything. If they need to destroy something, they will destroy it completely.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

They would send eight guys, and fail, then send the same route in. Send 20 guys, fail. Send 30 guys. Let's do the same thing again. You're just sitting ready, and it's like, they're coming in again.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

They make small gains at the expense of one million casualties. It's so obvious why: they're badly trained, have centralized command, and don't understand the situation they're going in. They're just thrown at us.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

We lost so many people through the bombing, but some of the things we talk about now is just a coping mechanism to deal with what we see. Some of it was just bizarre.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

For the first time in my military career, I am now the Taliban. I am now ISIS. I am now the guy in flip-flops.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

In movies, a tank is probably the worst thing that can happen to the main characters. But in our case, a tank was the minimum of what could happen.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

Oh, infantry come, so we will not get bombed now, so this is good. We got a break.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

For seven weeks I can't remember sleeping. By the time I was captured, I was thankful for the sleep to be honest.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

The first year, Mariupol was worse than captivity. But the second year, captivity was worse, and I couldn't even have imagined that something could be worse than Mariupol.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I started to get my debit cards, my credit cards, snapping them because I thought if I get captured, they're just gonna take me to an ATM.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

We'd done all we could have done. We couldn't have done any more. There was just nothing left. No food, very little ammunition. We can't do any more here.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I was watching the fog and I thought, 'Just take everything and go right now. This is your chance.' But I couldn't. If you are with a group, you stay with the group.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I got captured. I didn't want to get captured. I had a plan if I was captured that I would surrender to an officer. I didn't.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

We are pretty lucky that we surrendered. I found an officer and made negotiations. That saved us because I've seen our guys who tried to surrender to soldiers—they tried to kill them.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I couldn't walk outside during the day because the drones would see me. I was looking through doors, looking for tripwires. It took me two hours to get maybe 200 meters.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I had to walk 30 meters to them and trust they weren't gonna shoot me. And at that point, my war changed. I couldn't run. I couldn't get round them. It was broad daylight.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

I had a nice watch and good boots. I thought, 'Oh no, I look like a special forces guy, and now I'm going to get captured.'

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

This guy comes out with a knife and just stabs me right in the leg. I was screaming, thinking, 'That's it. It's over.' He did it so I couldn't run anywhere.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



//

The history of some Russian prisons is even longer than the history of some independent countries which exist nowadays.

— **Ievgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



//

For Russians, if you speak English, you are a natural enemy. It doesn't matter if you are American, British, or Irish—you have to be beaten and electrocuted.

— **Ievgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



//

The scariest part was the volatility of the guards. They had no training, so every guard wanted to be an FSB interrogator.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



//

The guy who just electrocuted you and beat you is standing behind the camera. If you don't say the right things, you're going back to prison.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



//

If I had spoken to journalists in prison that way, I wouldn't have come back home. Or at least, I would have come back without teeth and a tongue.

— **Ievgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



//

If you want to take revenge, there is the frontline on the west side. Why are you here instead of there?

— **Ievgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



//

The reason I wrote my book was because the Russians formed a narrative of me while I was in captivity. I wanted to write a book to warn people about what Russia's really like.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



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Some percentage in captivity are simply killed. They are not shot, but they are beaten so much that they just die. This is the reality.

— **Ievgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – Ievgen Malik with



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Russia is saying, 'We didn't start this war. We're not doing these atrocities.' Hold on a minute. You've stolen my house. You've tortured me. It's my job to tell people what actually happened.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



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Putin's not gonna stop. He's gonna keep going. If he wins in Ukraine, he's gonna forcibly conscript all the fighting age males, and they will turn them onto Europe. So this war needs to be finished here.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



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We'll kill you in the name of peace. We take your house in the name of peace. 'You are our brothers.' No, it's not. It's imperialism, and it needs to be stopped here.

— **Shaun Pinner, Former**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with



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They were angry because we didn't let them go further. They believed they would finish in two weeks, and then they would go further.

— **levgen Malik, Senior Sergeant**
Episode #12 – levgen Malik with

