

# PORTRAITS OF **PROMISE**



by Ellery Sadler,  
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How can a child dream when their stomach is growling with hunger? Or when they see their parents worry about keeping the family warm in winter?

Children in underserved communities bear burdens that are beyond poverty's harsh realities. It's hard to be a kid when you're worried about your family's survival. It's hard to think about the future beyond where tomorrow's meal will come from.

That's where Orphan's Promise and our partners come in. Join us in Ukraine and hear the story of how you're helping to transform Lotsy's life.

**These are the stories.**  
**These are the souls.**  
**These are the portraits of the lives we're changing.**



# **A bag of groceries and the beginning of hope**







## There's one room in Lotsy's family home.

One room and **seven** boys.

To say things are crowded and chaotic is an understatement. Yet living in a one-room, multigenerational home is not unusual in the Roma community, a nomadic Indo-Aryan ethnic minority group scattered across Europe. The Council of Europe has estimated that in Ukraine, where Lotsy and his family live, approximately 260,000 of that nation's 44-million population are Roma. Due to their nomadic heritage, Roma communities often live in temporary-style informal settlements or campsites, and experience extreme poverty.

For Lotsy's family, this meant his mom regularly worked long hours in the junkyard near the Mukachevo Roma camp in order to feed her family while their grandmother stayed home with the boys. **Unfortunately, even the hours their mother spent gathering and sorting through glass, plastic, and metal to exchange for cash barely made ends meet.** There were many days when the boys went to bed with sharp stabs of hunger in their stomachs, trying to sleep through the pain and hoping for something to fill their bellies the next day.

One day, when Lotsy did not know what else to do, he approached the manager from the Mukachevo Training Center, an Orphan's Promise program in his community. **Filled with shame—to the point where he was barely able to meet the older man's eyes—Lotsy asked the manager if he would be willing to buy his family some groceries.** As it turned out, the children had not eaten for two full days. The volunteers from Orphan's Promise quickly responded to the situation and brought bags of groceries to the boys' home.



When volunteers from the Mukachevo Training Center learned about the family's financial struggles, they invited Lotsy and his brothers to join the center's classes. None of the children had previously attended a public school, so they were thrilled at the opportunity to learn the alphabet. They wanted so badly to learn how to read and write!

Coming to class daily also meant that the boys were able to eat lunch in the center's soup kitchen, which often was their only chance to have a meal during the day. Additionally, the volunteers continue to check in on the family and meet their needs wherever possible. During the sub-zero Ukrainian



A young boy with dark hair, wearing a blue patterned shirt, is flexing his muscles with a confident smile. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with greenery.

## Automate Your Impact!

The most effective way to give and maximize your gift is to give a recurring monthly gift. If you'd like to become a monthly partner with Orphan's Promise, please fill out the enclosed "You Pledge, We Pledge" form and return it in the Business Reply Envelope. We'll count on you to ensure our commitment to these children is fulfilled!

**If you'd like to give a special gift to Orphan's Promise, there are four easy ways you can give:**

Give online by visiting **[OrphansPromise.org/Promise](https://OrphansPromise.org/Promise)**

**Text PROMISE to 71777** and give from your mobile phone

**Call 1-800-818-4016** to give by phone

You can **mail a check** made out to Orphan's Promise to:

Orphan's Promise  
977 Centerville Turnpike  
Virginia Beach, VA 23463

**Thanks for your generosity.  
We look forward to making a difference together.**



orphan's**promise**



winters, the Orphan's Promise team helped supply firewood, provide the children with warm clothes and shoes, and also brought

groceries and medication when needed. These aren't just tangible items. They are the seeds of hope.

## IMAGINING A DIFFERENT FUTURE

"I want to be just like my teacher when I grow up!" Lotsy says this often. He is so excited to attend class each day and learn new

letters. He loves being able to ask his teachers questions and is constantly fascinated by how much they know.

**IN UKRAINE, 24% OF ITS ROMA PEOPLE REPORTED HAVING NO EDUCATION AT ALL. THEY ARE HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED AND UNDERSERVED. FOR ORPHAN'S PROMISE PARTNERS, GETTING TO SERVE THIS COMMUNITY AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION IS A PRIVILEGE AND A JOY THAT WE DO NOT TAKE FOR GRANTED.**





In Roma communities, **63%** are unemployed while **22%** work part-time, which means many families suffer from severe hunger and food shortages. Gaining access to education and skills training, feeding their families, and keeping warm during the harsh Ukrainian winters are challenges that have only gotten worse during the coronavirus pandemic.

Everyone who knows Lotsy has something nice to say about him. His teachers talk about how respectful and attentive a student he is—he hasn't missed a single class! His friends say that he is humble and kind. As for Lotsy, he loves the atmosphere and the volunteers at the Mukachevo Training Center. "They love children," he explains. "They hug them and notice each and every one of them. If someone has a need, they all pray about it."

Not having to worry about food every single day has given Lotsy space back to be a child again. To laugh and

play. To focus on learning and growing. And most importantly, to begin to dream of a better future.

Before coming to the center, it was difficult for Lotsy to imagine anything different than the poverty and one-room home he had always known in the Roma camp. But now, as he learns and grows, Lotsy is beginning to imagine a better future for himself and his family. Right now, his first dream is to have a bed and room of his own one day.

When we asked him what he wanted to share with you, he responded immediately: "Thank you for allowing me to

attend the training center where I and my brothers could have delicious meals at the soup kitchen. Thanks to you, we can warm our house and clothe ourselves during the cold seasons. Thank you for your care and the atmosphere of love that we have received because of your help!”

That’s how tangible love is sometimes. It’s soup and it’s warm clothes. It’s knowing that you will have heat in your house. It is someone showing up and showing you that they care. It starts there. Then, when the stabbing pain of hunger leaves your stomach and the cold, pinched worry of where the next meal will come from or how you’ll keep your family warm at night subsides, you have time to notice the intangible. Your heart opens up to the kindness and care of those who tell you that you are worth it. You begin to feel hope—and to imagine that perhaps the future could look different. You begin to dream.

That is the transformative, life-giving power of what we get to do on the ground with our Orphan’s Promise partners in Ukraine and around the globe.

**Thank you for playing such a crucial role in powering that work. Every day, your compassion manifests itself as bags of groceries, warm blankets, and winter boots. It blesses others in the form of school supplies and teachers’ salaries. It’s revealed in Lotsy’s dream for a bed of his own one day. It shows up as hope.**

**giving hope.  
promising love.**







give us a call: 1-800-818-4016

**orphanspromise.org**

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