CHAPTER ONE

Memory of Interrogations

I have a confession to make: I was once considered a national security threat. For months I was interrogated — not only about details of my own life but also for incriminating information about other people suspected of posing a threat to the state. No wonder, then, that the photos of mistreated Abu Ghraib detainees in Iraq shocked me to the core. I still remember where I was when I first saw the image of a person hooded and hooked to electrical wires standing helplessly with arms stretched out in what looked like a modern-day crucifixion. Terrible as these windows into mistreatment were in their own right, they also flooded my mind with scenes from my own — albeit less severe and humiliating — interrogations of more than twenty years ago.

Charges and Threats

It was the year of our Lord 1984, though to me it seemed more like the year of his archenemy. In the fall of 1983 I was summoned to compulsory service in the military of then-communist Yugoslavia. There was no way out of it. I had to leave behind my wife and a soon-to-be-born Ph.D. dissertation to spend one year on a military base in the town of Mostar,

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sharing a room with forty or so soldiers and eating stuff like cold goulash with overcooked meat for breakfast at 5:00 a.m. But as I stepped onto the base, I sensed that not just discomfort, but danger, awaited me.

My wife was an American citizen and therefore, in the eyes of my commanders, a potential CIA spy. I had been trained in the West in a "subversive" discipline that studies everything as it relates to God, who is above all worldly gods — including those of totalitarian regimes. I was writing a dissertation on Karl Marx, whose account of socialism and how to achieve it could only serve to de-legitimize the kind of socialism the Yugoslav military was defending. I was the son of a pastor whom the communists had almost killed as an enemy of the people after World War II and whom the secret police suspected of sedition and regularly harassed. I was innocent, but Big Brother would be watching me. I knew that. I just didn't know how very closely.

Unbeknownst to me, most of my unit was involved in spying on me. One soldier would give me a politically sensitive book to read, another a recent issue of *Newsweek* or *Time,* while a third would get his father, who worked for the Croatian magazine *Danas,* to give me a subscription. All this was designed to get me to talk about religion, ethnic belonging, politics, the military — anything that would expose my likely seditious proclivities. I had a Greek New Testament with me, and some soldiers pretended to be interested in discussing its contents, a topic prohibited on the base. I was named the administrative assistant to the captain, an otherwise attractive job, but given to me so that I would spend most of my time in a single room that was bugged. For a few months, almost every word I said was noted or recorded and every step I took, both on and off the base, was monitored.

My ordeal started not long after I stumbled onto a soldier translating to the security officer a letter my wife had written to me. I was summoned for a "conversation." "We know all about you," said Captain G., the security officer. He was flanked by two other officers, their faces expressionless and menacing at the same time. They had plenty of "proof" of my subversive intentions and activities. A foot-thick file lay on the Captain's desk — transcripts of conversations I'd had in my office, reports of what I'd said to this or that soldier elsewhere, photos of me entering buildings in town,

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sometimes taken from somewhere high above. Obviously, they knew a great deal about me. And they didn't seem to like any of it.

Like the court in Franz Kafka's *The Trial,* my interrogators were going to pull out "some profound guilt from somewhere where there was originally none at all."[1] I had engaged in religious propaganda on the base — I must therefore be against socialism, which in Yugoslavia was linked officially with atheism. I had praised a Nazarene conscientious objector for acting according to his principles — I was therefore undermining the defense of our country. I had said something unkind about Tito — I was therefore an enemy of the people. I was married to an American and had studied in the West — I was therefore a spy. The charges should have been embarrassing for the interrogators. Restricting freedom of speech, not engaging in it, should have been viewed as morally reprehensible. And some of the charges were just plain silly. Is every expatriot American a potential spy? But the officers were utterly serious: I must be out to overthrow the regime. The real issue, which they sensed rightly, was that the seams holding Yugoslavia together were at their breaking point. An enemy could be hiding under any rock, behind any bush.

Threats followed the charges against me. Eight years in prison for the crimes I'd committed! I knew what such threats meant. Had I been a civilian, I could have counted on the help of competent lawyers and public opinion, both within the country and abroad. But I was in the military, so there would be a closed military tribunal. I would have no independent lawyer. To be accused was to be condemned, and to be condemned was to be ruined . . . unless I confessed. And "confessed as quickly as possible and as completely as possible."[2] Unless I admitted everything they assured me they already knew, I was doomed. And so it went, session after session, week after week. I was force-fed large portions of terrifying threats with an occasional dessert of false hope. Except for Captain G., who was always present, new interrogators kept coming, their ranks reaching all the way up to that of general.

1. Franz Kafka, *The Trial,* trans. Breon Mitchell (New York: Schocken, 1998), 149.

2. Arthur London, *The Confession,* trans. Alastair Hamilton (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1970), 56.

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All this attention, to be sure, gave me a sense of importance — the kind of importance felt by a fox being hunted by a king and his entourage, with their fine horses, sleek hounds, and deadly weapons! But one overwhelming emotion drowned almost all others: fear. Sometimes paralyzing fear — fear that makes your body melt, not just your soul tremble. Though I was never physically tortured, I was firmly held in my interrogators' iron hand and completely dependent on their mercy. They could do with me anything they wanted; and their eyes, as they pummeled me with threats, told me they would relish seeing me suffer. I did not fear so much the threatened imprisonment — I feared the seeming omnipotence of these evildoers. It felt as though a ubiquitous evil eye was watching me, as though an evil mind was twisting for its own purposes what the evil eye saw, as though an evil will was bent on tormenting me, as though a powerful, far-reaching hand lay at the disposal of that will. I was trapped and helpless, with no ground of my own on which to stand. Or from which to resist. Trembling before the false gods of power, I was something, all right. But as a person, I was nothing.

Memory of Abuse

The "conversations" stopped as abruptly as they had begun — and without an explanation. After my term in the military was up, security officers made a lame attempt at enlisting me to work for them. "Considering what you've done, we have treated you well," an officer told me. "You know what you deserved. You can show your gratitude by working for us." Gratitude? For months of my life stolen by interrogations just because I am a Christian theologian and married to an American? For all the mental torment? For fear, helplessness, and humiliation? For colonizing my interior life even after I was discharged from the military? For causing me month after month to view the world through the lens of abuse and to mistrust everyone?

My interrogations might be categorized as a mid-level form of abuse — greater than an insult or a blow, but mild compared to the torture and suffering many others have undergone at the hands of tormentors, espe-

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cially those schooled in Red Army methods.[3] No prolonged isolation, no sleep deprivation, no starvation, no painful body positions, no physical assault or sexual mistreatment. Yet, even afterward, my mind was enslaved by the abuse I had suffered. It was as though Captain G. had moved into the very household of my mind, ensconced himself right in the middle of its living room, and I had to live with him.

I *wanted* him to get out of my mind on the spot and without a trace. But there was no way to keep him away, no way to forget him. He stayed in that living room and interrogated me again and again. I knew that it would not be wise to forget anyway, even if I could. At least not right away. Psychological as well as political reasons spoke against it. So gradually I pushed the Captain a bit to the side and arranged to live my life around him. When little else was going on, he would still catch my eye and make me listen for a while to his charges and threats. But mostly I had my back turned to him, and his voice was drowned in the bustle of everyday activities. The arrangement worked rather well. It still does — in fact, now he is confined to the far corner of my dark basement and reduced to a dim shadow of his former self.

My success at sidelining the Captain, however, left the main worry about my relationship to him almost untouched. That worry had surfaced as soon as the interrogations started: I was being mistreated, so how should I respond? The way I *felt* like responding was one thing. I wanted to scream and curse and return in kind. In his novel *The Shoes of the Fisherman,* Morris West reports the musings of the interrogator Kamenev: "Once you have taken a man to pieces under questioning, once you have laid out the bits on the table and put them together again, then a strange thing happens. Either you love him or you hate him for the rest of your life. He will either love you or hate you in return."[4] I don't know what my interrogator felt for me, but I felt absolutely no love for him. Only cold,

3. See, for instance, first-person accounts of internment and interrogations by Arthur London *(The Confession)* and Elena Constante (*The Silent Escape: Three Thousand Days in Romanian Prisons,* trans. Franklin Philip [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995]).

4. Morris L. West, *The Shoes of the Fisherman* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1963), 46.

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enduring anger that even vengeance, if it were possible, would not alter. But I sensed — maybe more subconsciously than consciously — that if I gave in to what I felt, I would not be responding as a free human being but reacting as a wounded animal. And it did not matter whether that reaction happened in the physical world (which was impossible) or in my imagination. To act as a human being is to honor feelings, even the thirst for revenge, but it is also to follow moral requirements stitched by God into the fabric of our humanity. Fear-ridden and humiliated as I was, I was determined not to lose what I believed was best in the human spirit — love of one's neighbors, even if they prove to be enemies.

The more severe the wrongdoing, the more likely we are to react rather than respond, to act toward wrongdoers the way we *feel* like acting rather than the way we *should* act. Would I have clung to the principle of loving one's enemies had I been as severely abused as the Abu Ghraib detainees — or worse? I might not have. The force of the abuse might have overwhelmed my capacity even to think of loving my abusers — of wishing them well, of seeking to do good for them, of working to establish a human bond with them. Would, however, my inability have canceled the requirement to love my enemy? I think not. It would simply have postponed its fulfillment until some power beyond my own had returned me to myself. Then I would be able to do what deep down I knew I should do. Then I would be able to echo in my own way the struggle and the victory given voice in the sermon by nineteenth-century abolitionist and women's rights activist Sojourner Truth titled "When I Found Jesus":

> Praise, praise, praise to the Lord! An' I begun to feel such a love in my soul as I never felt before — love of all creatures. An' then, all of a sudden, it stopped, an' I said, Dar's de White folks dat have abused you, an' beat you, an' abused your people — think o' them! But then there came another rush of Love through my soul, an' I cried out loud — "Lord, I can love even de White folks!"[5]

5. Sojourner Truth and Olive Gilbert, *Narrative of Sojourner Truth: A Bondswoman of Olden Time, with a History of Her Labors and Correspondence Drawn from Her Book of Life; also, A Memorial Chapter,* ed. Nell Irvin Painter (New York: Penguin, 1998), 107-8.

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Fortunately for me, it was only Captain G. that I had to love, not "de White folks," not people who hack others to death, not monsters out to exterminate entire ethnic groups.

To triumph fully, evil needs two victories, not one. The first victory happens when an evil deed is perpetrated; the second victory, when evil is returned. After the first victory, evil would die if the second victory did not infuse it with new life. In my own situation, I could do nothing about the first victory of evil, but I could prevent the second. Captain G. would not mold me into his image. Instead of returning evil for evil, I would heed the Apostle Paul and try to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21). After all, I myself had been redeemed by the God who in Christ died for the redemption of the ungodly. And so once again, now in relation to Captain G., I started walking — and stumbling — in the footsteps of the enemy-loving God.

How, then, should I relate to Captain G. in my imagination now that his wrongdoing was repeating itself only in my memory? How should I *remember* him and what he had done to me? Like the people of God throughout the ages, I had often prayed the words of the psalmist: "Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness' sake, O Lord" (25:7). What would it mean for me to remember Captain G. and his wrongdoing in the way I prayed to God to remember me and my own wrongdoing? How should the one who *loves* remember the wrongdoer and the wrongdoing?

That is the issue I have set out to explore in this book. My topic is the *memory of wrongdoing suffered by a person who desires neither to hate nor to disregard but to love the wrongdoer.* This may seem an unusual way of casting the problem of memory of wrongs suffered. Yet, to embrace the heart of the Christian faith is precisely to be pulled beyond the zone of comfort into the risky territory marked by the commitment to love one's enemies. There memory must be guided by the vow to be benevolent and beneficent, even to the wrongdoer.

Many victims believe that they have no obligation whatsoever to love the wrongdoer and are inclined to think that if they *were* in fact to love the wrongdoer, they would betray rather than fulfill their humanity.

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From this perspective, to the extent that perpetrators are truly guilty, they should be treated as they *deserve* to be treated — with the strict enforcement of retributive justice. I understand the force of that argument. But if I were to share this view, I would have to give up on a stance toward others that lies at the heart of the Christian faith — love of the enemy, love that does not exclude the concern for justice but goes beyond it. In this book, I do not make the argument for a love of the enemy that at the same time affirms justice and goes beyond it; I simply assume it to be a given of the Christian faith.[6]

In looking at the kinds of questions that arise when a victim seeks to remember in accordance with the commitment to love the wrongdoer, I will refer throughout the book to my own interrogations, since in large measure these have been the crucible for my exploration of this topic. For me they have also been a window into the experiences of countless others both today and in the past, especially the sufferings of people in the last century, the bloodiest of them all. In Chapter Two, I will join the larger ongoing conversation among psychologists, historians, and public intellectuals about the importance of memory, a conversation that started largely in response to the great catastrophes of the last century, such as two world wars, Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, purges by Stalin and Mao, and the Rwandan genocide. I will argue that it is important not merely to remember, but also to remember *rightly.* And in the rest of the book I will explore from a Christian standpoint what it means to remember rightly. But here, in the second part of this current chapter, I will register how the struggle to remember rightly looks from the inside, in the experience of a person who was wronged but who strives to love the wrongdoer. So now that I have sketched the memory of my interrogations, I turn to examine critically — even interrogate — that very memory.

6. For a more extensive treatment of the topic, see Miroslav Volf, *Free of Charge: Giving and Forgiving in a Culture Stripped of Grace* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005) and *Exclusion and Embrace: Theological Reflections on Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996).

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Remembering Rightly

The summons to remember, directed at victims and the wider populace alike, has in recent decades become almost ubiquitous in Western culture. When I first encountered this injunction after my ordeal in 1984, I took it to be superfluous to my own interior life. I remembered all too well — I didn't need anyone to prod me to do so. I deemed the injunction to remember perilously one-sided, however, if it was simply urging me to make public what happened to me in secret — which seemed to be the main intent of the injunction's proponents.

To remember a wrongdoing is to struggle against it. The great advocates of "memory" have rightly reminded us of that. But it seemed to me that there were so many ways in which I could remember wrongly that the injunction verged on being dangerous. I could remember masochistically, to use the phrase coined by Milan Kundera in his novel *Ignorance,* by remembering only those things from the incident that make me displeased with myself.[7] Or I could remember sadistically, guided by a vindictive desire to repay evil for evil. Then I would be committing a wrongdoing of my own as I was struggling, with the help of memory, against the wrongdoing committed against me. I would be granting evil its second victory, its full triumph.

So from the start, the central question for me was not *whether* to remember. I most assuredly would remember and most incontestably should remember. Instead, the central question was *how to remember rightly.* And given my Christian sensibilities, my question from the start was, How should I remember abuse as a person committed to loving the wrongdoer and overcoming evil with good?

What does "remembering rightly" actually involve? This book as a whole tries to answer that question. But note here that whatever "rightly" ends up meaning, it cannot refer just to what is right for the wronged person as an individual. It must mean also what is right for those who have wronged that individual and for the larger community. The reason is simple. Remembering rightly the abuse I suffered is not a

7. Milan Kundera, *Ignorance,* trans. Linda Asher (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 74.

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private affair even when it happens in the seclusion of my own mind. Since others are always implicated, remembering abuse is of public significance. Let me take in turn each of these three relations in which the one who has been wronged stands.

First, there are aspects of remembering rightly that concern primarily the wronged person. Their impact on others is indirect. I asked myself, for instance, could these months of abuse that live on in my memory be somehow rendered meaningful? Could my life be meaningful even if those experiences were remembered as meaningless? What place would the memory of abuse occupy in my interior life? Would Captain G. continue to sit in its living room, or could I succeed in moving him to a side room or locking him up in a basement?

Such questions about the relationship between the memory of abuse and the victim's own interior "space" are closely linked with questions about the relationship between the memory of abuse and the victim's interior "time." How much of my projected future would Captain G. colonize, given that the memory of abuse kept projecting itself into my anticipated future? Would he define the horizon of my possibilities, or would he and his dirty work shrink to just one dark dot on that horizon and possibly even disappear from it entirely? These kinds of questions about remembering rightly — which I explore further in Chapter Four — I would have to answer on my own. But the way I answered them would not only shape my relationship to Captain G. but also affect my relationship to every social setting in which I found myself.

Second, consider the relationship of the memory of abuse to the wider social setting out of which the abuse arose or to which it might be applied. From the beginning, I did not experience my interrogations simply as an isolated case of mistreatment. As with most persons who have been wronged, my experiences immediately became an *example,* and they continued to function as an example in my memory. But what were they an example of? I could see them as an example of a pervasive form of human interaction that is often hidden behind the veil of civility but is ready to show its ugly face as soon as the social peace is sufficiently disturbed. Or I could see them as socialism exhibiting its true nature, the way some people think of September 11 as showing the true nature of

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radical Islam. I could also see them as an example that I would be wise to emulate in some sense if indeed I live in a world of brute power, while of course making certain that I wound up in Captain G.'s shoes, not my own unlucky pair. If I remembered my interrogations as a window into the brute power that rules the world, would I have remembered rightly? Or would I have remembered wrongly by first focusing on the negative and then allowing it to color the whole surrounding landscape? Would I be allowing the abuse to whirl me down into the dark netherworld, the memory of abuse having darkened my world, and the darkened world having made me remember the abuse even more negatively?

Alternatively, maybe my interrogations were in a deep sense at odds with the way the world is essentially constituted, an example of our world gone awry. What framework would I need to bring to the memory of Captain G.'s misdeeds so that I remembered them as an evil anomaly in a good world, rather than as a symptom of a world beyond good and evil? In what overarching account of reality would I need to insert his misdeeds to remember them as something worth fighting against — and worth fighting against not primarily with reactive blows but with the power of goodness? In Chapter Five, I explore such questions touching the exemplary character of mistreatment suffered.

Mostly, however, the struggle to remember rightly my ordeal of 1984 was not about my own inner healing or about how I should act in the larger social environment. It was the struggle to do justice and show grace to Captain G. So third, what does it mean to remember rightly in regard to the wrongdoer? If we are tempted to interject, "Who cares about him?" the response is surely that it is the wrongdoer whom God calls me to love. Whether I remembered publicly or privately, *what* I remembered concerned him profoundly; after all, I was remembering *his* wrongdoing.

To help myself be fair, I imagined Captain G. observing and listening in as I narrated in my memory what happened between us — a difficult decision, given how unfair he had been toward me. In my imagination, I also gave him the right to speak — another difficult decision, given that his terrorizing had reduced my speech to a stammer. I did not give him the last word. But neither did I give it to myself! Knowing how faulty

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memories generally are, and being aware of victims' proclivities and blind spots, I could not fully trust even myself. The last word was to be spoken on the Last Day by the Judge who knows each of us better than we know ourselves. Before then, the Captain would be allowed to speak and I would listen — with ears attuned to detect any attempts to whitewash his crimes. Still, I would listen to his protests, corrections, and emendations about the way I remembered him and his wrongdoing as I continued to hold firmly the reins of my remembering. During interrogations, Captain G. had repeatedly twisted my truth and reduced me to nothing; in contrast, I should listen to his truth and honor his personhood as I sought to tell rightly the story of his mistreatment of me.

Did he in fact do to me what I remember his having done? If my wounded psyche passed on to my memory injuries that he did not inflict, or exaggerated those he did, *I* would be wronging *him,* irrespective of the fact that it was he who in the past had overwhelmingly wronged me. And then there was the complicated but important matter of intentions, not just of observable actions. I was sensitive to intentions. The most maddening aspect of my interrogations was the sinister spin my interrogators gave to my straightforward speech and actions; they read into my words and deeds intentions that I never had. The devil was not in "facts," large or small, but in their interpretation. It was as though a warped mind was reading a plain text and coming up with most bizarre interpretations that somehow managed to account for the facts.

Now, if I was not careful as I remembered the ordeal, I could take my turn by spinning what Captain G. had said and done to me. For instance, I could isolate his deeds from the political and military system in which he worked and attribute the whole extent of the abuse to his evil character. More charitably, but equally untruthfully, I could make him disappear in the system and relieve him of all responsibility. The system was tormenting me, not the Captain; he was merely its mechanical arm. Or I could suggest that, paradoxically, he was truly doing evil and enjoying it as evil precisely because the system legitimized it for him as part of a greater good. Perhaps he feared the revival of the animosities in Bosnia between people of different faiths that had led to atrocities during World War II — a revival that, arguably, did in fact materialize and generated

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the further atrocities of less than a decade after my interrogations. Many other ways of interpreting Captain G.'s actions are conceivable, and choosing among them should not proceed simply according to my preference. For to misconstrue a wrongdoing would be to commit a wrongdoing of my own — a theme I explore in Chapter Three.

But to remember wrongdoing *truthfully* is already justifiably to condemn. And condemn it I did! But what is the right way to condemn? That may seem like a strange question. If the condemnation is truthful, it seems right. Justifiable. End of story. But not for the one who loves the wrongdoer. How does one seeking to love the wrongdoer condemn *rightly?* In the Christian tradition, condemnation is an element of reconciliation, not an isolated independent judgment, even when reconciliation cannot be achieved. So we condemn most properly in the act of forgiving, in the act of separating the doer from the deed. That is how God in Christ condemned all wrongdoing. That is how I ought to condemn Captain G.'s wrongdoing.

"One died for all" — including me! Wrapped up with that piece of good news is a condemning accusation: I too am a wrongdoer. How does the history of my own wrongdoing figure in my condemning memory of Captain G.? Not at all? Then I would always stand radically outside the company of wrongdoers as I remember his wrongdoing; he would be in the darkness and I in the light. But would that be right? Moral judgments are not only absolute judgments; they are also comparative judgments. So to remember Captain G.'s abuse rightly, must I not remember it as the act of a self-confessed wrongdoer rather than that of a self-styled saint?

Should I not also try to remember his wrongdoing in the context of his whole life, which might exhibit a good deal of virtue? In memory, a wrongdoing often does not remain an isolated stain on the character of the one who committed it; it spreads over and colors his entire character. Must I not try to contain that spreading with regard to Captain G.'s wrongdoing? How could I do so, if I didn't remember his virtues along with his vices, his good deeds along with the evil ones? Occasionally during my interrogations I seemed to see a warm sparkle in his otherwise icy eyes. Was this some genuine goodness trying to find its way out from underneath the debris of his misdeeds or the warped political structure for

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which he worked? Should I not remember those moments of seeming goodness, however dubious they were?

Furthermore, what effect, if any, does the death of Jesus Christ to save the ungodly have on Captain G. as an abuser? Christ "died for all," says the Apostle Paul; therefore, in some sense "all have died," not just those who believe in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:14). Captain G. too? Then how should I remember his abuse, given that Christ atoned for it? Or does Christ's atonement have no impact on my memory of his wrongdoing?

If One died for the salvation of *all,* should we not *hope* for the salvation of all? Should I actively hope for Captain G.'s entry into the world to come? Moreover, Christ died to reconcile human beings to one another, not only to God. Were Captain G. and I then reconciled on that hill outside the gate of Jerusalem? Will we be reconciled in the New Jerusalem, or must I at least hope that we will be? If so, my memory of wrongdoing will be framed by the memory and hope of reconciliation between wrongdoers and the wronged. What consequences would this have for the way I should remember his wrongdoing? In Chapter Six, I explore the impact of Christ's death on remembering wrongdoing.

The banquet is an image the New Testament frequently uses to describe that reconciled world. Captain G. and I sitting together at the table and feasting with laughter and camaraderie? A very scary thought, but not an impossible scenario! What would it mean to remember his wrongdoing *now* in view of such a potential future? What would life in *that* world — the world of perfect love and perfect enjoyment in God and in one another — do with the memory of abuse? Will I still remember the wrongdoing then? If so, for how long? Why wouldn't I just let it slip out of my mind? What good would the memory of it do there? Would it not stand as an obstacle *between* us? Can I imagine a world — can I *desire* a world — in which I would no longer label Captain G. as an "abuser" every time I saw him? The entire last section of the book (Chapters Seven through Ten) explores the fate of the memory of wrongdoing in God's new world of love.

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Difficult Decision

In a sense, the most momentous decision in writing this book was to pose the original question, "How does one seeking to love the wrongdoer remember the wrongdoing rightly?" and let it guide the whole exploration. That decision was also the most difficult to make. It is not that I agonized about whether or not this was the *right* decision. I believe it was. The problem came in sticking with it. When I granted that I ought to love Captain G. — love not in the sense of warm feeling but in the sense of benevolence, beneficence, and the search for communion — much of what I wrote in the book followed, at least in rough outline if not in detail. But every time I wrote about "loving" Captain G. a small-scale rebellion erupted in my soul. "I love my parents and relatives, I love my wife and children, I love my friends, I love pets and wild geese. I might even love nosy neighbors and difficult colleagues, but I *don't love* abusers — I just don't and never will," screamed the leader of my internal insurrection. And at times as I wrote it would not have taken much to make me switch sides . . . except that loving those who do me harm was precisely the hard path on which Jesus called me to follow him — a path that reflects more than any other the nature of his God and mine. Not to follow on that path would be to betray the One who is the source of our life and miss the proper goal of all our desires. It would also be a reckless squandering of my own soul.

My soul was at stake in the way I remembered Captain G. But I was not left to remember him on my own. I was (and still am) part of a community of memory — a Christian church — that from the start framed my memories. (In Chapters Five and Six I will say more about the relationship between my memory of wrongdoing and the defining memories of the Christian church.) I also inhabited a larger cultural environment in which struggles for memory and debates about memory raged. Captain G. was one of thousands of small props of the communist ruling elite in the former Yugoslavia; he and they were paid to defend the regime that ruled it, but a false memory was enlisted to legitimize its rule. The servants of false memory — historians, journalists, public intellectuals — made some things disappear from the nation's past and others mate-

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rialize in it from out of thin air. And what the manipulators of memory neither erased nor invented, they warped and twisted to fit within the crooked lines of self-glorifying history. In Yugoslavia then, as in many countries in the world today, some thoughts could only be whispered in the intimate circle of family and friends — thoughts that were the stuff of submerged, "politically incorrect" memory. Telling the truth was a subversive act.

But the Yugoslavian communist elite was far from the worst manipulator of memory in the unhappy twentieth century. Other communist regimes treated the past with much less respect, just as they treated their citizens with more cruelty. And the Nazis, with their abhorrent and deadly racist ideology, were not only the most celebrated evildoers but also the most celebrated whitewashers of crimes. Remembering truthfully in such environments is an act of justice; and in order to expose crimes and fight political oppression, many writers, artists, and thinkers have become soldiers of memory.

So how does my struggle to remember rightly relate to this public remembering enlisted to serve the cause of justice? In the privacy of my interior life, the memory of Captain G.'s wrongdoing immediately showed itself Janus-faced, looking both in the direction of virtue and peace and in the direction of vice and war. And so it happens with public remembering: the protective shield of memory often morphs into a vicious sword, and the just sword of memory often severs the very good it seeks to defend. The next chapter explores this dangerous moral fickleness of memory.

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