

Along the Way

Adapted from the book, *In God's Underground*, by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand.

Pastor Wurmbrand and his wife Sabina founded Voice of the Martyrs in 1967.

Today, their legacy lives on as VOM offices around the world continue their work in remembering and serving the persecuted church.

When Romania aligned with Nazi Germany during World War II, Sabina felt the world collapse around her as a wave of anti-Jewish violence swept through the country. In the capital of Bucharest alone, 11,000 Jews were slaughtered in a single day.

Her heart broke as her parents, siblings and extended family were torn from their home in Bucovina and deported to Transnistria – a desolate borderland where death came either by bullet or starvation. None of them survived. Sabina carried that grief quietly, the weight of loss etched into her soul. Life moved forward, but the memories never faded.

One evening, her husband Richard returned home with unsettling news. Their landlord had spoken of a man staying with him in their building – a soldier on leave named Borila. Once known for his kindness, Borila had become boastful and cruel. He claimed to have volunteered to kill Jews in Transnistria and bragged about murdering hundreds.

Richard met Borila in his landlord's apartment later that night. The soldier, towering and cold, spoke of his wartime "adventures" with disturbing pride. Yet, beneath the bravado, Richard noticed something unexpected: Borila had a deep love for music, especially Ukrainian folk songs. With a plan in mind, Richard invited the group back to his apartment where he played the piano for them.

While Richard played, Sabina slept peacefully in another room, unaware of the chilling company. As the melodies filled the apartment, something shifted in Borila. The music stirred a part of him long buried. When the final note faded, Richard turned to him and said, "There's something important I must tell you."

He gestured toward the curtain. "Behind there is my wife. Her family was taken to Transnistria, where you said you killed hundreds. You may have murdered her family." Borila erupted in fury, but Richard raised a calming hand. "Let's try an experiment. I'll wake my wife and tell her who you are and what you've done. She won't blame you. She'll embrace you as a brother and offer you the

best food we have. If she, a sinner like us, can forgive, imagine how Jesus – who is perfect love – can forgive you.”

The soldier broke. His pride crumbled, revealing the guilt he had long masked. He tore at his shirt, sobbing, “What shall I do? I’ve killed many people!” He fell to his knees, pleading with God for forgiveness. Richard prayed with him and when they rose, he embraced Borila.

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Then Richard gently woke Sabina. “There’s a man here who killed your family,” he said softly. “But he has repented. He is now our brother.” Sabina’s breath caught. The pain of her loss surged, but so did something deeper: compassion. Without hesitation, she stepped forward and embraced Borila. Their tears mingled – those of a killer and a survivor. And then, just as Richard had said, she went to the kitchen and prepared him a meal.



Investigating the Story

1. What is the main point of the story?

- a) An unexpected man gives his life to Jesus.
- b) Sabina forgives generously – showing Jesus’ love in action.
- c) A social experiment.

2. What was the outcome of Richard’s experiment?

- a) Sabina resented the man for murdering her family and quickly kicked him out of her home.
- b) Borila didn’t believe Richard and stormed off, angry at his attempt to convert him.
- c) Richard was right; Sabina forgave the man and even cooked him a meal, treating him just like family.

3. How does Sabina’s forgiveness demonstrate God’s work in her heart?

Circle all that are true.

- a) She didn’t hold onto bitterness and unforgiveness in her heart.
- b) She didn’t want to forgive but knew she had to because it’s the Christian thing to do.
- c) She allowed Christ to heal her heart so that she could love those who hurt her.
- d) She didn’t want to forgive, but her husband told her to in order to win a soul for Christ.