Good Memory

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GOOD MEMORY
BY JOE PINSKER
ONCE UPON A TIME,
IN A PRISON OF WAR

TWO BROTHERS! WHAT A CATCH! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE MY LUCK.

I HEAR THE WAR IS ALMOST OVER, AND MY GLORIOUS NATION IS WINNING. OUR IDEAS WILL PREVAIL!

YOUR IDEAS ARE EVIL!

WHEN WILL WE EVER GET OUT?

I DOUBT YOU'LL EVER LEAVE. YOUR COUNTRY IS WEAK!
The ideas your country espouses are foolish. You depend so much on the past, studying it all the time.

Our country has it the right way. We only look forward. The past is a regression!
YOUR COUNTRY'S IDEAS ARE BACKWARDS!

WHY DOES HE JUST REPEAT THAT, DAY IN AND DAY OUT?

JUST IGNORE HIM. WE'VE BEEN HERE FOR YEARS AND THERE'S NO USE GETTING FRUSTRATED.
I STILL THINK WE HAVE IT RIGHT...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I THINK OUR IDEAS ARE RIGHT AND THAT THE PAST MATTERS.

THIS IS A STUPID WAR OVER IDEAS AND HE’S SO STUBBORN.

I GUESS, BUT WHAT’S YOUR POINT?

IF THEY WIN THE WAR, THEY WILL ERASE THE PAST AS IF IT WERE USELESS. NO ONE WOULD REMEMBER ANYTHING IF THEY WIN. HISTORY WOULD CEASE TO EXIST.
WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT THAT FROM IN HERE.

IF MY COUNTRY HAS TAUGHT ME ANYTHING, I KNOW THAT THE PAST IS VALUABLE. I THINK THAT CAN GET US OUT OF HERE.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I JUST KNOW THAT THERE'S SOMETHING IN OUR PAST THAT WILL HELP US GET OUT OF HERE.
WHAT THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND IS THAT THE PAST CAN HAVE REAL EFFECTS.

I'M SURPRISED YOU'VE STAYED SO OPTIMISTIC THROUGH ALL OF THIS.

YOU SOUND LIKE A GOVERNMENT SPOKESPERSON SPOUTING THINGS LIKE THAT.

REGARDLESS, YOU HAVE TO STAND UP FOR YOUR COUNTRY’S IDEALS.

I AGREE, BUT HOW DOES THAT HELP US NOW?
WE CAN FIND A WAY OUT OF HERE IF WE IMMERSE OURSELVES IN THE PAST.

YOU'RE RIGHT. WE CAN.

WE SHOULD GO BACK TO MOM AND DAD'S.

YEAH, I'LL FOCUS ON A MEMORY OF THE DRIVEWAY.

PERFECT.

EXACTLY. AND THEN ONCE IT’S REALLY VIVID, YOU CAN TRY TO JUMP IN.
GREAT. IT WORKED. NOW LET'S FIND A WAY OUT.
It's easy to forget a place like this when you're in a jail all day.

Yeah, we should never forget it. Where should we start looking?

Let's take a look at that playground that was down the street.

Good idea. Let's go.
WOW! I HAVEN'T THOUGHT OF THIS IN YEARS. WE PRACTICALLY GREW UP ON THIS PLAYGROUND!

BUT WHY ARE THERE MONSTERS?

THEY'RE THE BULLIES FROM WHEN WE PLAYED HERE. I ALWAYS REMEMBER THEM AS MONSTERS.

THAT'S JUST HOW YOU REMEMBER THEM?

IT HELPS ME REMEMBER HOW AwFUL THEY WERE TO US, AND HOW I SHOULD ALWAYS BE KIND.
These monsters aren't giving me a good feeling. I don't think the playground is going to help us.

I think we should try the treehouse. That's what was most important to us.

Yeah, good idea! I bet something will be there.
WE LEARNED SO MUCH HERE.

YEAH, THIS DEFINES A LOT OF WHO WE ARE TODAY.

WAIT! WHERE'S THE LADDER?
I was wondering the same thing. Something's wrong.

We aren't remembering it thoroughly enough.

We won't be able to get up until we fully remember it.
OK, let's think about the treehouse.

Remember those silly clubs we made? Like the boys club and the magic club?

It's working! Look!

We had that "no girls allowed" sign too, remember?

Yeah, and we would have those fake wars with our toy swords and guns.
I think that's it! We remembered the essence of the treehouse.

Let's go up!
I love it up here.

What do you think is up here that could help us?

So much happened in this tree.

We should both take some time to think about the treehouse and what it meant to us.
THE SECRET COMPARTMENT!
OF COURSE!
WHERE DID WE HIDE IT?

IT WAS IN THE FLOORBOARD, RIGHT OVER HERE!

I'LL Pry IT OUT.
REMEMBER THIS STUFF?

YOUR TOY SWORD!

I REMEMBER NOW! IT'S WHAT I USED TO DEFEND THE TREEHOUSE FROM ALL THE MONSTERS!
LET'S BRING IT BACK WITH US!

GRAB ON TIGHT AND THINK OF THE JAIL!
IT WORKED!

GOOD MEMORY!

NOW LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
WHERE'D THE WOODS GO?

I THINK WE CHANGED THEM. THEY AREN'T EVIL ANYMORE.
IT'S AMAZING TO BE OUT OF THERE.

ARE YOU READY TO GO HOME?

YEAH, BUT HOW DO WE KNOW WHERE TO GO?

THIS SWORD WILL TELL US...

THE END