

Sovereign Embrace

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How could this have happened?

Two years my senior, my sister was my idol. I struggled that I was not as good as her. She was beautiful, talented, and she had settled into married life, was buying a home, had an active church life. I was mustering all the strength I could to not be jealous.

We were close, but I had no idea that such a fall was on its way. Despite the trauma and confusion and inward explosion that my sister was going through, when I found out about her affair, it was all about me. I was so angry. How could the pair of them do that to all of us? Our family, our crew, our church community...her husband? Where had that line been crossed? How could they let it go so far?

I think I was angry at God too. I was twenty, still opinionated, still trying to figure out what it looked like where the sovereign hand of God intersected with humanity's free-will. I determined that the best course of action would be for me to punch this cheating man, who had enticed my sister away from everything good, in the face. I knew I was not strong, I knew I would probably get laughed at, but I thought that at least then my stance would be made known. I would have said what I needed to say, and I had every right.

I downed a can of something from the bottle shop, a declaration of my anger as well. I saw the perpetrator drive by and I motioned to him to park and come over. My breath was short, my rage was growing. I clenched my teeth as he approached and let all the bitterness and resentment build, as I hoped to deliver the best punch I could. Maybe I should have practised on something first. What would happen after it? I was prepared for ridicule, but nothing mattered anymore.

What happened next was not something I chose. I did not cry out to God to help me, I did not reason with myself that this was not the best decision, I did not change my mind. I just wanted to hit him but instead I watched, like an out of body experience, as he approached and I wrapped my arms around him in embrace, saying, 'God loves you.'

I remember having my head over his shoulder and with wide eyes thinking, '*What on earth is happening?*' It is the only time in my life I have felt like God said, 'No,' and overrode my will.

I can say that my sister has experienced redemption in the years that followed. I do not know what else may have been the outcome of that day, but God showed that his love is more powerful than anything. There is no one and nothing that is beyond his reach and redemption, and I am forever grateful that he showed me that he is in control, no matter what.