Traditional Values

By Randall Austin

**PART ONE**

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Martin Forestman, a devoted husband to his wife,
Barbara, of 23 years, and a loving father of his three
sons, Alban (16), Quince (18), and Bradley (22), and
his daughter, Flora (14), looked at his watch, closed
the book he was reading, and rubbed his forehead.  It
was almost time.  Not such a big deal really, he
thought.

Bradley entered his father's office ahead of the
appointed time, punctual and considerate as usual.
"How do you like my haircut Dad?"  He beamed as he
turned his head so his father could see the careful
work his girlfriend, Ginger, had done to his head.
Sides neatly trimmed and shaved clean, and the hairs
on top of his head luxuriously gelled and shining.

"You sure are looking good, son."  Martin briefly
pondered how to proceed, and then asked, "How long has
Ginger been your girlfriend, Brad?"

"I met her my sophomore year in college.  So that's
three years, Dad."

"Well, she has been a lucky girl to have you for a
boyfriend.  Not only are you smart and caring, but you
are a damn handsome young man, son."

Bradley blushed, his rose-colored cheeks betraying his
shyness.  "And son, it's your good looks which are the
chief reason we have to have the conversation we are
about to have."

Martin pointed to a chair for Brad to sit in, and
Martin took a seat on the couch immediately across
from him.  "Bradley, as you know I was quite
embarrassed having to tell you at the start of summer
that because of the financial situation I found myself
in I wouldn't be able to pay for your graduate school
tuition, and that if you wanted to continue on you
would have to find some means of financing it
yourself."

"Dad, don't worry about it.  You know I was happy to
arrange for a student loan, and I was able to arrange
to start the job I got in the school library for my
first year in graduate school immediately.  That's why
I was happy to pay you and mom room and board this
summer.

"Son, it is your attitude towards life that makes you
so precious to me."  Martin shifted and cleared his
throat.  "As you may not know, my financial advisor
suggested to me some time ago that the best option for
us, in our current financial crisis, would be to have
Quince set up for a short term of indenturement with
Social Services.  This would then have kept me not
only able to provide for my family in the way in which
you have all been accustomed, but when Quince was
released after the 5 years suggested time, the portion
of the transaction which would have been invested in
his name would have provided him with much more money
than he could ever have been able to save had he been
working in a full time job during those five years and
paying for the cost of living.  So I saw it as a
perfectly reasonable and healthy solution, especially
since Quince will not be going on to college, and the
job market is rather slender right now."

Bradley shook his head quietly. "But Dad!  A social
servant?  Vermont is the most liberal of the slave
states, and the term slavery is never used in polite
society.  ‘Social servant’ is the word for slave, and
folks who used to be referred to as service industry
personnel, such as restaurant and janitorial
employees, are now referred to as the ‘hospitality
industry’.”

Martin continued, "Bradley, you know that such an
arrangement is not uncommon in these times."  Martin
was right.  Not only were such indentured arrangements
not uncommon, but also the government of Vermont did
all it could do to put a positive spin on the
institution of ‘Social Servitude’.  Television ad
campaigns conveyed the arrangement as dignified and
respectable for both social servants and their owners.
The entire idea of social servitude was creeping into
the social consciousness as being both a traditional
and a cherished institution.

"So I discussed this with your uncle, my brother
Steven, and he asked me why, of all my sons I would
select Quince.  So I told him because he was the most
athletic of my sons, was not a scholar, didn't do too
well in school, and doesn't have quite the grace of
his siblings.  But Steven then explained to me that if
I were going to go ahead with such a process, Quince
would be the worst choice for social servitude of all
of my sons for the very reasons that I have named."

"Steven has quite a bit of experience as an occasional
broker in the social service industry, and as you may
know, his oldest son, your cousin Jason, is now a
trainer for neighboring Addison County Social
Services.  Steven has a lot of connections in the
industry and is up to date on most issues regarding
social servants, and he told me that what is sought
after in the modern social servant is intelligence,
grace, charm, and good looks.  And you, Bradley, excel
in all of these.  Simply put, if I am going to set up
one of my sons as indentured, then you would bring in,
by far, the most money."  Bradley swallowed.  Dad was
about to continue, but reached out his arm and put it
on his son's leg.  He spoke quietly.  "Bradley, let’s
do this for your mother, your brothers, and little
Flora."

Bradley sighed slightly, and with a worried look
asked, "Dad, what about Ginger, school, you,
mom…"

"Son, the beauty of this arrangement is that not much
will change.  This is a traditional arrangement in
these times; children helping families.  I have
arranged it so that you will remain in the area, near
all of us.  You have always been so generous and
understanding.  I know you'll do this for all of us."
He rubbed his son's leg.  "Listen, here's what's up.
We're going to have you, right now, put on a pair of
service fatigues, I'm going to drive you out to the
County Social Services Administration Center, they'll
have you sign a few papers, they'll put a lightweight
collar on you, fit you with a small ring, take a few
pictures of you, and then you and I are going to get
back in the car, come home, and you can get back in
your own clothes and go and see Ginger or go and do
whatever you want to do."

Bradley, good son that he was, sat and listened.
Martin kept rubbing his leg, "Folks who are in the
market for a social servant check out the Social
Services website, and the county sets up appointments
with prospective buyers.  When we are notified of an
appointment, we will both attend the interview, and I
have set it up so that I have the final word on who
takes your services.  I will insist that it be local,
so you can maintain contact with all of your family
and friends, and that your service duty be primarily
of a domestic or clerical nature, as suits your
breeding and intelligence."  After a short pause, "And
remember.  It's just for five years and eight months!
And after that time the investment I will have made
for you in your name from a portion of the proceeds
from your sale will probably cover all of your future
graduate school expenses.  It takes most folks fifteen
years or more to pay off their student loans, and
yours will be out of the way before you even begin
school!"

Martin stopped rubbing and rested his hand on his
son's firm leg.  Bradley breathed slightly heavier
than usual, but knowing the way things were, tried to
quickly resign himself to the matter, though his mind
rushed about with questions.

"Dad, what kind of ring are they going to put on me?"

"Son, I actually don't know.  The official I spoke
with simply said that the collaring and ringing go
very quickly, and that we would be out of there in no
time."  Seeing that knowing the matter wouldn't take
too long relaxed Bradley somewhat, Martin thought it
best to proceed without undue delay.  He reached for a
shopping bag behind the couch and set it on the floor.
"Let's get you into these duds!"  He stood up and
indicated for his son to stand up also.  "You can just
leave all of your clothes in my office, and then when we
get back here you can quickly change back into them."

Dad took out the slave fatigues and opened them up as
Bradley started unbuttoning his shirt.  Martin's
handsome son was undressing in front of him for the
first time since he was a boy.  He took his shirt off,
folded it, as good boys do, laid it over the couch,
and sat down to take off his shoes and socks.  Martin
looked down at his son's glistening hair and thought
how confident and mature his son was and wondered if
he would remain a confident and mature man for long.
Would this ordeal change him?  Was he still a normal
boy now, or was he a social servant.  Would he be less
of a man from this day forward?

Brad stood, unbuckled his belt, unzipped, and let his
trousers fall.  He stepped out of them and folded them
and placed them next to his shirt.  As he removed his
tee shirt and his chest came into view, Martin
realized his boy was indeed now a man.  Brad placed
the tee on the couch, and looked to his dad to hand
him the green fatigues.  "Son, County Services wants
all service persons in for processing to be wearing
only these regulation fatigues, so the undies have to
come off."

Brad turned and dropped his shorts.  He bent over to
pick them up, placed them on the couch, and turned to
face his dad.  His dad handed him the fatigues, a
one-piece green jumpsuit with the distinguishing
buttons along the sides.  Service fatigues could be
put on the traditional way, or the buttons along the
entire left side of the garment could be opened, the
two halves put in front and behind the person, and
then buttoned up along the entire side and inner legs.
The buttons were to accommodate some of the most
common forms of restraints used on social servants in
Vermont.  The green jumpsuit with the buttons along
the side, and pant legs that stopped eight inches
above the ankle to allow for ankle cuffs was the
traditional garb of the Vermont social servant.

Martin watched his son get into the jumpsuit, and
noticed that Bradley's foreskin was especially long
and tapered in a pleasing manner, hanging gracefully
over his still not too hairy scrotum.

As a father he occasionally worried if his sons were
using their endowments responsibly.  One comfort for
Martin in entering his son Bradley into a term of
indenturement was in knowing that Bradley would no
longer, at least for five years, be able to give into
the temptation of all those girls who were constantly
batting their eyes at him.  Social servants could only
enter into sexual unions approved by their owners.

When Bradley had buttoned up his jumpsuit, and stood
up, his father said, "It's a good thing you just had a
haircut.  You'll look stunning in your Social Services
website photos!"  Martin handed the brand new social
servant his brown social servant sandals.  As Bradley
sat to put them on, his father rested his hand on his
son's shoulder.  The cotton jumpsuit was rather
coarse.  "Let's hurry and get this over with so we can
get back here and go to the beach one last time before
the summer ends!"

The County Social Services Administration Building was
not busy when Martin Forestman and his son Bradley
entered the front doors.  There was just two people ahead of
them in the receiving line.  When Martin and Bradley
stepped up to the young female receptionist, she took
the legal documents from Martin, checked them, called
a fellow coworker over as a witness, and had Bradley
and Mr. Forestman sign their names on three different
pages.  Bradley, eager to get out of there, and
trusting of his dad, didn't bother to read them.  When
the signing was finished the receptionist pushed a
button, and in no time a trim, dark-haired, man of
about 30 wearing hospital-like scrubs came from in
back of her desk area.  The receptionist handed the
agent in scrubs the documents, told Bradley to follow
the gentleman, and told Mr. Forestman to have a seat
in the waiting area.  The agent told Mr. Forestman
that his son would be brought back out within 30
minutes.

The entire ordeal did go quickly, but because Bradley
was treated more like a commodity than a human being,
and because a few things were done to him that he
neither expected or understood, he was teary-eyed and
quite dazed by the time the processing agent brought
him back out to the reception area to his father.

When Martin saw his son he was even more embarrassed
for his son than Bradley was for himself.  The
receptionist did tell Martin what was being done to
Bradley, and gave Martin materials to help the
Forestman family ease into Bradley's change of status.
As dad threw out his arms to hug his son, walking
towards him having to take slow steps with legs spread
wide apart because of the humiliating ankle
hobble-cuffs he had been fitted with, Bradley stopped
short when he saw the large glossy soft cover
publication his dad held, which Vermont Social
Services had given him, ‘Guidelines: Dealing
Effectively with Social servants’.  Bradley's father
had no idea at first how the booklet was embarrassing
Bradley.  When he realized, he shook his head with
‘what a silly book’ gesture, and his son and he then
embraced.

As they embraced Bradley started doing a heaving
cry, but said nothing.  As his dad patted him
silently on the back to offer comfort, a large manila
envelope he was holding filled with placards and
posters given to him by the receptionist, meant to be
posted around the house to inspire social servants,
spilled their contents.  Martin paid no heed and
continued to hug his son.  When his son had collected
himself, Martin knelt down to pick up the scattered
contents of the manila envelope.  Bradley knelt down
to assist, and together they gathered and read the
placards with their large lettered messages: ‘Have you
checked in with your overseer at least once in the
last hour to see if there is any extra assistance they
need?’,  ‘Are you groomed to your owner's
specifications?’, ‘Masturbation is selfish!’,
‘Obedience breeds happiness!’.  Bradley blushed red
through his tears as he helped his dad pick up all the
posters.

His Dad had set the large glossy covered book,
‘Guidelines: Dealing Effectively with Social
servants’, on the floor as he stooped to pick up the
posters.  Noticing the cover was glaringly in front of
them he grabbed it and hastily flipped it over.  It
was only after he had picked up two more posters that
he saw his son frozen, reading what was on the back
cover in large bold lettering; ‘10 Principles of
Effective Discipline’.  It was followed by ten
bulleted points which Bradley was reading, his mouth
open, and his eyes squinting with tears.

As they made their way back to the car Martin walked
slowly to help his son accommodate himself to walking
with his new ankle hobbles.  Around each of Bradley's
ankles was a four-inch wide cuff woven from state of
the art plasti-filaments.  Extending outward from the
inside ankle of each cuff was an eight by four inch
rectangular paddle of firm molded plastic.  If one's
legs were not stretched wide apart as one walked, the
paddles would hit each other and cause the wearer to
lose balance.  They were called ‘training paddles’,
and were a humiliating thing to be seen wearing.  Dad
tried to comfort his hobbled and awkward walking son
by telling him what the receptionist had told him.
"The hobbles are just until you get sold.  She told me
it discourages and prevents a lot of newly indentured
folks from considering running away.  She did say that
while they were really intended for the criminally
indentured, it has become standard to put them on all
new social servants, just as a matter of accepted
protocol.  My broker with the Social Services
Administration Center told me you should sell quickly,
so you probably won't be wearing those things for more
than two or three weeks, if even that long."

As Bradley was about to get into the front seat of the
car he noticed on the backseat a large cardboard box
with carrying handles decorated with the County Social
Services Administration Building logo.  He asked his
father what was in the box, and his father answered
that it just contained a few items the agency gave to
him while he was getting processed, "Just some
standard social servant accoutrements that are given
out to all new owners."

When Martin and Bradley were finally seated in the car
and just as Martin was about to start the engine,
Bradley broke down and started crying uncontrollably:
"These hobbles and this collar aren't the only thing
they did to me, Dad."  Dad leaned over and hugged his
son again, "I know, son.  I know."

"Dad, why didn't you tell me they were going to put a
bar and a ring through my foreskin so I couldn't be a
man?"

"Son, your uncle Steven told me not to tell you
beforehand because it's a temporary thing, and it is
most likely going to be removed by your owner once you
are sold.  Steve felt that by telling you ahead of
time it would have panicked you, clouded your
judgment.  Also, the receptionist told me newly
processed servants are infibulated because it has
become a standard marketing gimmick.  It is nothing
more than that.  For some reason a lot of folks like
the idea of knowing that their new purchase is
‘clean’, so to speak.  A lot of persons just feel good
removing it from their servants, just as a way of
letting them know that they are benign owners, and
that they control all such things.  It's just until
you're sold son.  Then I'm quite sure it will be
removed."

Seeing that Bradley was still crying and in shock, Mr.
Forestman continued, "Bradley, I am going to make sure
that whoever buys you intends to remove it.  I promise
you!"

That stopped Bradley's crying.  Martin patted his son
on the shoulder one more time, started the engine, and
they drove off for home.  Bradley, humiliated to the
core of his being, wasn't sure any more if he could
face going home, and having his mother and siblings
see him hobbled and collared.  "Dad, would you please
not tell anyone about what they did to me down there?"

"Son, you got my word on that.  It's our secret!"