Traditional Values

By Randall Austin

**PART TWENTY-EIGHT**  
  
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One week after Martin Forestman’s sons began their  
social service at Maple Valley Resort and Casino,  
Martin’s brother Steven left on holiday, with his  
wife, to the Azores.  When he returned three weeks  
later, he received a call from the head of the  
Governor’s Commission on Overseers’ Affairs.  He  
immediately called Martin, told him he was dying to  
see him, and that he had received some very good news.  
  
Martin made a dinner for them and brought out several  
bottles of his best wine.  Over a leisurely dinner  
Steven told Martin that his son Jason was being freed.  
Martin asked how that could be possible since Jason  
was sentenced to a minimum of six years social  
service, and could only be considered being released  
for ‘good behavior and faithful service’ after his  
initial six years were up, and he hasn’t yet been in  
service for even six weeks.  
  
Steven admitted to being as surprised as Martin was,  
“But apparently the ‘pending good behavior and  
faithful service’ clause is subject to varying  
interpretations when you’re dealing with convicted  
state overseers.  If there’s a ‘good old boy’ network  
at work among police and overseers here in Vermont,  
I’m not going to argue with it, certainly not in this  
case.”  
  
“When is he being released?”  
  
“Next week.”  
  
“What will he do?”  
  
“Probably celebrate for at least a month!”  Martin and  
Steven laughed and toasted.  The dinner over, Martin  
took a new bottle of wine, told Steven to bring his  
glass, and to join him on the couch in the living  
room.  
  
Settled next to each other on the couch, Martin asked  
Steven about his vacation.  “It was an important time  
for Claire and me.  We have decided to split up.   
We’re not sure yet if we will get divorced.  Ever  
since Jason was indentured we have been being brutally  
honest with each other, and we have now come to  
realize that it’s best if we separate.  We really  
cleared the air between us out in the Azores.  We have  
become, now, the greatest of friends, and ended up  
having the best time together in all our years of  
marriage.”  
  
“The days ahead will be difficult, but for the best.   
How are you and Barbara getting on?”  
  
“Not well at all.  She’s accusing me of all kinds of  
nasty things, and I don’t have the energy to deal with  
her.  With her, along with my concern for the boys,  
I’ve been frazzled.”  
  
“How are the boys doing?”  
  
“I don’t know.  I haven’t seen or spoken with them for  
the last four weeks on the advice of Damian  
Appomattox, my Social Service’s contact person.”  
  
“Why is that?” asked a very surprised Steven.  
  
“The boys, as you knew before you left on your trip,  
were constantly calling me and telling me how horrible  
things were at Maple Valley.  And you, as well as  
everyone else, told me that such complaining coming  
from servants in a new environment was common, and to  
just ignore it and that they would soon adjust.”  
  
“But on the day you left for your trip Alban called  
me, crying as I had never heard him, saying he wanted  
to come home.  It was very hard.  Then, on the  
following day, Bradley called, also crying, with a  
whole list of complaints.  He told me that the  
overseers and hospitality workers are on their cases  
constantly, 24 hours a day; that when he complained  
that his snout rings and nipple rings hurt, they  
refused to make adjustments; the food is awful; he was  
promised that if he signed up for the mandatory  
spankings, he would earn special privileges, but that  
so far he hasn’t seen any; that the hospitality  
workers are all basically just a bunch of thugs and  
pigs, who constantly talk down to and demean the  
rollerboys at every turn.  And when he told me he was  
scheduled to be bullwhipped in four days, I was  
furious and told him I would see what was going on and  
get right back to him.”  
  
“I immediately got in touch with Damian.  He said it  
was common to use the bullwhip for doing fine tuning  
on servants in new positions; that for initial  
offenses Maple Valley uses the carbon filament whip,  
which, although it hurts like hell, does not abrade  
flesh; and that Bradley would only be getting four  
strokes of the whip.  While that information calmed me  
down, I was still very upset that my boys were having  
such a hard time of it.  Damian told me the best thing  
I could do was to just have no contact whatsoever with  
the boys for at least a couple of months.  He said  
that that would help the boys ease out of any  
sentimental attachments they may be holding on to.  He  
said I was actually doing the boys a disservice by  
being a shoulder for them to cry on.  He told me,  
basically, to just let go and to let Maple Valley do  
what they do so well; make any necessary adjustments  
in servants’ dispositions and attitudes by dealing  
with each rollerboy on an individual, special needs,  
basis.”  
  
“Damian also reminded me that Bradley really was  
something of a complainer.  He reminded me of the  
awful fuss Bradley made whenever he was faced with  
having to get nude, say, in front of his mother or  
sister.  I mean, if he made such a big fuss over such  
a minor thing as a family member seeing his winkle, it  
stands to reason that he’s probably the type that  
would raise a ruckus over anything.  Damian told me  
that Bradley is basically a complainer by nature, and  
that I would do well to ignore his complaints.  He  
told me that Bradley probably takes pleasure in  
pulling my ropes, and I needed to realize he’s playing  
games.  Bradley is, after all, a servant, and servants  
tend to try and pull the wool over their overseer’s  
eyes.”  
  
“He also reminded me that all social servants get  
punished on a pretty regular basis for their own good,  
and that if I simply would get more into the culture  
of social service by hanging out with other owners and  
overseer more frequently, I would soon get over my  
misplaced free-person sensitivities.”   
  
“So I called Bradley back and told him to hang in  
there.  I reminded him that he’s a servant now, and  
that everything he mentioned sounded like pretty  
standard orientation difficulties, and that I was sure  
that things would be mellowing out for him and his  
brothers.”  
  
Steven nodded, “So do you know if things have mellowed  
for them?”  
  
“I can only assume that they have.  Damian told me not  
to answer the phone and to turn off the voice mail.   
He said servants complain, especially during  
orientation periods, and that it would be safe for me  
to assume that everything was progressing on par for  
the course.”  
  
Driving home with her mother and her Aunt Karen after  
a visit with Timothy Witherspoon, Flora asked her mom  
if she could marry Timothy.  Barbara smiled, “I  
wouldn’t mind if that was what you really wanted.  I  
assume you know that Timothy would not be able to  
provide you with any kind of shareable income.  But  
more than that, I think it would be difficult to work  
out living arrangements with a servant.”  
  
Karen’s gaze steeled over, “You can bet it would be,  
thanks to the current administration in Washington!   
President ‘Knucklehead’ has made us the world’s  
laughing stock on slave/servant rights.  In just a bit  
over three years in office he has brought our country  
back to the middle ages with regard to slavery.   
Thanks to him and his letting states have almost total  
authority on slave matters, things have never looked  
worse for slaves.  Already in Texas and Kentucky if an  
owner kills a slave it isn’t even considered murder.   
In most southern states, slave offenses are also  
registered as civil offenses.  So if an owner writes  
up a slave for sloppy work, before the slave could  
ever be freed, he would have to pay the civil penalty  
for any and all accrued slave infractions, and that  
usually means extended terms of slavery.  Slavery and  
our president are both obscene!”  
  
Flora admired her strong willed aunt, and wanted to be  
just like her someday in most ways.  Flora differed in  
only that she would support slavery if there were  
humane laws in place.  But Flora was glad,  
nevertheless, that some boys were social servants; it  
made them so soft, pliant, and kissable.  
  
Martin, not much of a church-going man, couldn’t  
understand why he sought counseling with Father Peter  
Lucarelli.  He figured it was probably because he was  
attracted to him when he met with him regarding the  
Jay and Rasby situation.  But whatever the reason, he  
needed to hear some confirmation from a spiritual  
authority that indenturing one’s children was not a  
wrong thing to do.  
  
Since Father Lucarelli was the chief overseer of the  
parish’s social servants, Martin figured he would be  
just the man to give him some comfort in his turmoil.  
  
The two men hit it off rather well, and it was only  
after at least 15 minutes of small talk in the office  
of Father Lucarelli that Father Lucarelli realized  
just what Martin was after, “So just what do you want  
to hear from me?”  
  
Martin answered that he assumed that Father Lucarelli  
supported the social servant system.  Father answered  
him, “Why assume that?  Because a physician hangs out  
in hospitals where there is illness, does that mean he  
supports illness.  On the contrary; he is there in an  
attempt to improve the lot of the ill, and hopefully to  
destroy the illness and the cause of illness.”  
  
Martin sank in his seat, embarrassed.  Father  
Lucarelli thought how handsome Martin looked.  
He looked deeply into Martin’s eyes, “Look, Martin.   
You’ve told me you love your sons.  You’ve said that  
that love has grown since they became servants.  If  
that is true, why don’t you act on your feelings?”  
  
“But society has said that social service is  
acceptable.  One doesn’t act on feelings.  One follows  
society’s values.  Traditional values.”  
  
Father Lucarelli knew Martin wanted some kind of  
affirmation for placing his sons in social servitude.   
“Traditional values.  Let’s see, what are traditional  
values?”  Father Lucarelli rubbed his chin.  “The  
first value the traditionalists are always talking  
about is family.  Family love.  Sounds good.  If you  
really loved your family, would you put them into  
social service for your own profit?”  
  
The conversation went on for almost two hours.  Martin  
left feeling more conflicted than ever.  He had also  
wanted to discuss a few other things with Father  
Lucarelli.  But after feeling like he must look like a  
slimeball to Father Lucarelli, he no longer wanted to  
bring up with the good priest that he was having sex  
with his own brother, and that he was now, as well,  
lusting after his own sons.  
  
Several days later, Bradley, unable to reach his  
father, called his Aunt Karen and was able to get in  
touch with his mother through her.  Barbara conveyed  
to Martin that Bradley was scheduled to receive ten  
strokes of the rawhide bullwhip in one week.  While  
Barbara had little sympathy with Martin, she was  
pleased to see that her husband was as upset as she  
was over the scheduled punishment.  She wanted the  
punishment stopped at all costs, and she told Martin  
so.  
  
Martin got in touch with Damian Appomattox as soon as  
Barbara left the house.  Damian once again attempted  
to calm Martin down, “Bullwhip, schmullwhip!  It’s not  
a big deal; at least not the way they do it at Maple  
Valley.  The whole purpose of announcing a punishment  
and scheduling it for several days ahead is to gain  
the psychological advantage over the servant.  Making  
a servant live in dread for several days of an  
upcoming punishment is part of the punishment and adds  
to its effectiveness.  The hide whip they’ll be using  
on him isn’t going to hurt any more than the carbon  
filament bullwhipping he’s already received.  The only  
difference is that this time Bradley could end up with  
a permanent scar or two.  That’s why they’re making  
him anticipate it for a week.  Knowing that your back  
could be torn up and scarred for life adds greatly to  
the punishment’s effectiveness, and it may well prove  
to be the thing that finally gets Bradley’s ass in  
line. And so what if he ends up with a few battle  
scars?  It’ll just be something he can show his grand  
kids.  No big deal!”  
  
“But there’s more than likely a chance that Bradley  
won’t end up with any permanent scars.  The average is  
that every eight strokes of the bullwhip results in  
approximately a one-inch permanent scar.”    
  
Martin took in all of what Damian had to say in  
silence.  Damian knew he was making headway, and  
continued, “But what is really going on here is that  
Bradley is finally going to get a real man’s  
punishment.  Isn’t it about time?  He’s a social  
servant and social servants get punished, and once in  
awhile they get severe punishment.  To me, this all  
has a good feeling about it.  Bradley simply has to be  
brought up to servant speed, and if it’s going to take  
a few hard knocks to get him there, so what?  Why is  
this such a big concern of yours?  Are you his  
overseer?  On top of everything else, please remember  
that Bradley agreed to his own indenturement.  It’s  
not like he was enslaved against his will.  Bradley is  
an adult now and you need to let him follow his own  
chosen path.  Stop meddling in his affairs!”  
  
“And you, Martin, rather than worrying non-stop about  
your sons, you need to finally sit back, relax, and  
take pride in your three beautiful sons and all that  
you have done for them.  By your concern for your sons  
you have proven that you have nothing but their best  
interest at heart.  You’ve done so much for your boys  
by giving them such a wonderful upbringing and  
education.  And now, by unselfishly turning your boys  
over to Social Services where they can serve and be a  
delight to the entire community, and not just  
yourself, you have, so to speak, put icing on the  
cake.  Icing in the form of complete obedience.   
Obedience, after all, is the primary object of all  
sound education.  Obedience is the mother of success,  
and success the parent of salvation.  And the reason  
social servants are such special people in our eyes is  
because it is usually only servants who can get to  
that exalted level of obedience towards which we all  
strive.”  
  
“You have done good not only for your sons, but for  
all of society.  Remember that every time a new person  
joins the ranks of social servitude, everyone  
benefits, both free and servant.  Servants basically  
generate ‘free’ money into the economy thereby  
improving the overall financial well-being of all the  
citizens of Vermont.”  
  
Martin attempted to get back to the matter of Bradley,  
“Since servants do add so much to the quality of life  
for all of us, maybe it would be good if I showed  
Bradley how much I appreciate what he is doing and  
intervene for him, just this once.”  
  
Damian was quick to retort, “What you need to do  
Martin is to keep your nose out of it, and let the  
overseers over at Maple Valley do what they have to  
do.  The overseers at Maple Valley are some of the  
highest paid in the state, so you can be sure they  
know their stuff.  And, also, one of Bradley’s best  
friends is one of Maple Valley’s lead overseers,  
Andrew Ricker’s son.  You can be sure nothing untoward  
is going to happen to Bradley.  Just relax.  Bradley  
is a servant now, doing servant stuff, learning the  
ropes.  He’s young, smart, and resilient.  He’ll be  
fine!  Just keep your nose out of it.  After all,  
Bradley wasn’t forced to sign the papers of  
indenturement.  I’m sure he knew what he was getting  
into.  Give him some credit.  He was an ‘A’ student  
after all!”  
  
“And it’s time that you, Martin, face reality, as  
well.  If you thought your sons could get through  
service without a bullwhipping or two, then you’ve had  
your head in the sand.”  
  
Damian saw the conflicted look on Martin’s face, “If  
you were to stick your nose in there and do a parental  
objection to a scheduled punishment, you would be  
setting up a real bad vibe between Bradley and the  
overseers.  Just stay out of it!  Overseers respect  
servants who submit to a bullwhipping without trying  
to get out of it through family intervention.   
Overseers can’t stand that.”  
  
“But overseers don’t mind servants doing a little bit  
of last minute pleading once they’re getting strapped  
to the whipping frame.  In fact, they’re amused by it.  
I can assure that once they strip Bradley and start  
securing him to the whipping frame he’ll be doing some  
pretty serious pleading, just like they all do.  I’ve  
seen it often enough.  Bradley will be bawling and  
promising this and that, breathing heavy, and heaving.  
It’s actually a satisfying spectacle to observe; a  
servant coming face to face with the consequences of  
disobedience.”  
  
“In fact it might do you good to witness it for  
yourself.  As you may know, as a parent you have a  
right to witness any and all punishments on your  
child.  I think it would give you a whole new respect  
for the work that the overseers do out there.  And  
they treat family members out there very well and, not  
to downplay the seriousness of Bradley’s punishment,  
but you’d probably have a very good time.  You’d get  
to meet other parents of rollerboys, get to talk to  
the hospitality workers and overseers, and see their  
side of things.  And maybe you could even give Bradley  
a good old-fashioned pep talk while you’re out there.   
And your presence at his whipping would give Bradley a  
nice dose of humiliation that could add dramatically  
to the bullwhipping’s effectiveness.”  
  
Damian saw that the idea interested Martin, “Martin,  
it’s time that you, as a person who has indentured his  
own sons, start taking comfort in the fact that  
servants are disciplined on a regular basis, rather  
than worrying about it.  Punishments in general help  
the social service system run smoothly.  Watching  
social servants get punished always feels good to me  
because when you punish a servant you are, so to  
speak, oiling the wheels of social servitude.  It  
never ceases to amaze me, watching servants hop around  
like little monkeys after their spankings, how  
discipline really is a good, life-improving,  
experience for a servant.  It really does change them  
for the better.  Punishments help ensure that the  
system runs smoothly.  Remember our adage out here at  
the County. “If a servant gets punished, it’s because  
he deserves it.”  Bradley is no different than the  
thousands of other servants out there.  Most of them  
do not have their parents stepping in and stopping  
deserved correction.”  
  
“Martin, you’ve told me yourself how much comfort it  
gave you when your boys were at home and being so  
super obedient.  Well just imagine what they’ll be  
like if you just let the highly trained overseers over  
at Maple Valley do their thing.  When Bradley gets out  
in 13 years you won’t be able to stop him from licking  
your shoes clean!”  
  
“Martin, this whole bullwhipping thing is another  
non-issue Bradley is trying to use to pull your ropes.  
Servants complain about the smallest things all the  
time.  It’s what they do, and I see it every day.  Just  
ignore it, Martin, please!”   
  
“I think Bradley is a pretty typical garden variety  
worker boy, and this whipping will do him a world of  
good.  Once he realizes that if he keeps up his  
stubborn ways his pretty little body is at risk of  
getting torn up by the whip, he’ll get with the  
program in no time, and very soon he’ll be scurrying  
around, shuffling to please, just like any other  
little corporate janitor slave.”  
  
“Martin, my advice; relax, pour yourself a scotch, and  
be grateful that your sons are in such a protective  
environment.”   
  
Martin took the advice, and was able to relax and  
enjoy a very good night’s sleep after his chat with  
Damian Appomatox.