

# THE PRODIGAL SONS

## Part One

"Abe?" a loud voice came from outside the front door. The elderly man walked into the house, looking for his older brother.

"I'm in here, Michael, in the sitting room!" came the answer from another elderly man sitting in a sturdy chair with arm rests.

"They should be arriving today!" Michael said.

"I know," Abe confirmed. "Are you anxious?"

"Yes, a little," he said.

"There is nothing to worry about, Michael. God will watch over them!"

"You are right, like he watched over me...in the end. I am still a little worried," Michael said, his face showed it, but also a little excitement.

"I am sure they are having a great time. Besides, it was your idea."

"Yes, yes, but things can go wrong!" he said.

"And they can turn out great in the long run!" Abe countered.

"You are right, again."

"One would think that you are their father," Abe teased.

"In a way, I feel like it," Michael said lovingly. "If anything ever happened to them I could never forgive myself!" he said looking a little worried again.

"Maybe it is a good idea you never got married!" Abe teased, but with a serious undertone.

"And instead, you have two wonderful sons, enough for the both of us!" Michael said teasing back.

"Why didn't you get married, Michael," Abe asked.

"I guess there just was never a woman out there to put up with me," he said. "And besides, I am such a selfish old man that it wouldn't be fair to the lady!"

"You are not selfish! You are a wonderful man, generous, hard working and loving," his brother countered. "You would be a catch for any beautiful woman!"

"Abe, something happened to me that day," Michael almost interjected.

"What day," Abe said, interested now.

"The day I realized that my father's house is the best place in the world to be," Michael answered. "That day I realized how much our father's love for us had allowed me to make the choices that I was paying for then."

"Don't go there again," Abe said lovingly. "You need to leave all that behind. You know that we love you deeply, my wife and my sons," and he pauses before continuing, "and myself."

"Since we are on big questions," Michael interrupts, "why did you throw that big party for me after you married? It seemed such an extravagant a way to say you were sorry."

"When I met my wife and fell so madly in love with her, and still am, it seemed like a curtain fell from my heart and I realized how much my father did love me," Abe responded with emotion. "I felt so embarrassed by the way I had talked to my father

when you returned and he showered you with such love and attention after you had nearly bankrupted him!"

"I deserved what I happened to me," Michael started to say.

But Abe cuts him off, "Maybe, but who am I to judge. I probably would have done the same, Michael, since, to tell the truth, I really didn't care for the money or the property or anything, except to have Dad tell me that he loved me."

"And he did love you, Abe!" Michael tries to reaffirm.

"I know that now," Abe has to cut him off again. "I know that now, but it took the love of my wife to open my eyes to see it, right in front of me. Dad did love us both, but I was blinded by my jealousy of you, because it seemed to me that Dad loved you more, since you were the youngest."

"Oh," was all Michael could say.

"It was my loving wife's idea that we throw a party for you so that we would not become estranged from each other," Abe said a little tearful now. "And she was right! I could see us moving away from each other after our father died, and it was my fault. I needed to do something, but I did know what until my wife made the suggestion."

"You two have always loved me as family" Michael admitted, "and I always knew that, even without the party, but it was that kind act that made me decide to stay, even breathe a sigh of relief that things would turn out OK."

"You still didn't really say why you didn't marry?" Abe asks again.

"All right!" Michael says resignedly, "Since you insist. As you know, the money eventually ran out and all my friends left me. That was the moment when I realized that all the money in the world meant nothing to me and that it would only buy temporary friends, superficial friends. My true friends and family were those back home. But who would have me back now? Probably not even the servants! It was when I started to work on a pig farm just to survive, that God touched my heart with his loving presence. I realized that the only place I needed to be was home, no matter the consequences."

"I am sorry that I made it difficult for you brother," Abe says.

"I am sorry that I was such an ass," Michael counters. "I was so selfish going through money that wasn't even mine, but lawfully belonged to the family, to you, and to your sons, my nephews." He pauses, "And to our children and grandchildren and great grandchildren."

"You have more than made up for it brother," Abe interrupts. "We are blessed now, more than we have ever been in the history of our family! We are giving it away."

"And you keep giving," Michael said sincerely, "since you are the heart of the family and know who needs it better than me. It is because of you that the people around here practically worship us!"

"No! They give praise and glory to God because they know that God has blessed you and me, brother," Abe says proudly. "Don't sell yourself short!" Again Abe pauses and then continues, "The reason I asked you here is not only to join me on our usual walk, but I have something to give you." Abe gets a paper off the table nearby and hands it to his brother. "Here, look it over."

"It is a title deed with my name on it," Michael reads it and looks confused.

"I don't understand?" Michael asks.

"My wife and I are going on a trip and decided that the best thing to do is to put our fortune in your hands while we are gone in case anything happens to us."

"How long will you be gone?" Michael asks again.

"We don't know?" Abe says. "Maybe a year, or maybe two years!"

"Wow! That is a long time!" he says. "But not long enough to hand over your fortune! What about your sons? Don't you think they can handle the situation?" Michael asks.

"My worry is my wife's relatives," Abe answers honestly. "She doesn't trust them at all. If anything happens, at least our fortune would be in good hands."

"And if any misfortune happens, they will be very suspicious if it is all in my name and not in your sons," he said.

"If you have a better solution," Abe suggests.

At this point Michael starts to tear up. "I didn't realize that you trusted me that much!"

"Yes, we do, and here is the proof," Abe says reassuringly. "So stop worrying about whether we do and stop trying to prove anything!" By now Michael is crying loudly.

"Come on brother!" Abe says, comforting him. "I will always love you, brother, and I know that you will always love me and my family, especially my sons!"

Finally, Michael gets control of himself and removes a paper himself and hands it to his brother.

"What is this?" Abe now asks surprised. "It looks like title deeds with my sons' names on them."

"I thought that they would be needing their own property someday when they start their families," Michael starts to explain. "So I bought that property that you always admired, the one with the vineyard, and the property next to it, with the wheat mill. The wheat mill comes with extra land, for growing wheat, of course."

"I always loved that property, brother," Abe says, now tearing up himself. "Whatever possessed you to buy it?"

"Your sons are men now," Michael says with excitement, "if you haven't noticed! Soon they will be starting a family of their own."

"I have noticed," Abe answers proudly. "And I have noticed that this is the second time you have mentioned that, but what if they want to stay here?"

"That is fine," Michael concedes, "But this will give them a chance to test themselves in a business if they want. You didn't look at the other paper!"

"I saw it, but forgot," Abe looked puzzled. "This looks like the same paper I gave you, only turning your fortune over to my family!"

"I was thinking of going on a trip myself," he says. "That is why I was double surprised by your actions. You took me completely by surprise!"

"Michael," Abe says. "I think we both need to tear up these deeds...since we both are going on trips."

"I have a better idea," he offers, "Let us sign them over to your sons and travel together." They both start laughing outrageously!

"Are you ready," asks Michael.

"I am. Let's go for our walk and meet our sons!"