

Part 2

RESTORATION

Lady Wilhelmina, fiancé to Sir Charles Payne, has begun her sponsorship of free economy in Merton village, spreading through to the town of Greensand, the larger town of Markhampton and on to the city of Westwich, all in the county of Worthshire.

The idea is she will support financially the change to moneylessness. All trade would be freely available and voluntarily provided by deliveries manufacture

Moneyless Worthshire

Everything seemed to be going well, after the initial rush for things people exercised at the beginning; but they soon settled down and usually took only what they needed to buy, and did not surplus themselves too much. It was all very encouraging for Lady Wilhelmina Ponsonby-Smythe who had hoped for such a good reaction. She had her critics of course, and her complainants who all said it could not work; they declared it was too idealistic, but she was resolute to give it, and human nature, a try, a chance for success, in what she called: “real civilised living”, in that voice she used of a high sing song, happy tone, defiant of any negative urgings. No, Lady Wilhelmina was indefatigable, irrepressible, unstoppable , ineluctable from her choices, and was an all round wonder of life. She was much admired, still a beauty, in her forties something or other, and her grace was always appreciated. It was grace born of love and trust.

But then someone stole all the goods from various stores in the night.

Inspector Rocket was called in to investigate.

Rocket calls on Lady Wilhelmina at her home, Boughton Hall, in the north of the county of Worthshire; several miles from the city of Westwich. She receives him in the drawing room: modest gilt, and upholstered armchairs, sofas, tables covered in photos and memorabilia, walls lined with shelves of learned books, and a fireplace with an Italian painting hung over it of a canal scene from Venice. She is tall and slim, dressed in peach coloured trousers and top. She sits upright and never wanders her look from the inspector, whom she already knows.

“My position is compromised,” Jason Rocket is saying to her, “because in a free economy, free state such as you have set up in Worthshire, I cannot act as a policeman because there is no crime. People are free to take what they wish, as there is no price, no constraint. Is this what you wish for? That goods can be allowed to be stolen?”

“Not stolen, Inspector, er, sorry, Jason. No, not stolen. Just taken for their own use, whatever that might be.”

“I strongly suspect they are taken to be sold outside Worthshire, and to make themselves an ill-gained profit. What is your reaction to that?”

“I will bear the cost. It is my duty to help Worthshire .”

“I can still investigate, keep watch and apprehend the villains, mayn’t I?”

“Be free to do as you wish.”

“Say I do; what would your reaction be?”

“I would chat to them and ask why they had done this injurious thing to the whole of the community. Your role is as a server to that community. It doesn't really matter Jason. We will bear it and work it out.”

“I hope you are right. I will press on with my surveillance. That's the best I can do to catch these guys.”

“Might be women.”

“I use the term gender freely.”

Wilhelmina smiles and laughs as she pours some more tea for her guest, and the door is opened as her cousin Edmund pops in.

“Hi Willy, I heard you had Inspector Rocket in here, so I thought I would call in to see if I could be of any help. I've heard of these shady goings on. It is so disappointing for you. You must be devastated.”

“Not that, it is after all only material goods. I can survive it. How nice to see you Edmund. Jason you know, you remember, my wandering cousin, Edmund .”

“Yes, of course, we have met some time ago, over some poaching problems,” Jason stands as he speaks.

“Continue with your tea, Jason,” urges Edmund.

The three of them sip tea, a little embarrassed by Edmund's arrival, until he says in his cheeky boisterous manner:

“So what is it to be? Catch the bounders and put them in the ducking stool on the village green pond. I would like to see them get a good soaking, that's for sure.”

Edmund slaps his thigh, spills his tea and laughs his head off.

Wilhelmina and Jason look at each other, grin and prepare to end the meeting by standing, offering hands to shake, and uttering suitable goodbyes and cheerios, and thanks for coming and promising to be in touch as soon as possible.

All over, all gone, Edmund sits back in the deep soft cushions, still clutching his cup of tea, and smiling at himself around the world he lives in as he visits his beautiful cousin.

Is she going to marry that MP chap, what's he called: Sir Charles Payne? I bet she doesn't, not her, too independent, that's our Willy, Wilhelmina. Ha-ha!

Edmund, Cousin Edmund, is a Smythe, not a true Ponsonby-Smythe like Lady Wilhelmina. He always claims to be a cadet branch of the family although it is likely he hasn't a clue as to what a cadet branch means. He is a bright bragging sort of fellow who doesn't care much for veracity or truth of any kind. He likes what he likes, and he does what he likes. He doesn't work, of course. He has never needed to, as the family is immensely wealthy from farming, from industry, and more recently from engineering and

computers, and all those modern things that have changed the world, in which he has not mutated.

Yes, Cousin Edmund is fun. He lives for fun and he knows it. He does all things for fun and amusement. His consideration for others is zero, probably minus zero if we knew.

Wilhelmina, as we do know, is all consideration and compassion for others. She lives with her comfort and ease, and wealth, by thinking of ways of giving it away to the needy and less fortunate. It has brought her into trouble, but she survives with her strong will and bright outlooks.

Returning to Slavonia

King Christof has taken to gardening and leaving his royal duties to others.

He likes the simple life in his private hideaway house. In fact that is what he calls his retreat: "Hideaway House."

It has guest rooms for visitors and all the comforts of home, and a large garden at the rear and at the fore of the house.

Charmian stays often there with their new born son: little Christopher George.

Some people try to persuade the king to return to duties and work but he does so only rarely, and on the condition he can leave off and return to Hideaway whenever he wishes,

Back in Worthshire

Edmund Smythe sat in his mind
listening to his self
urging him on to the
plan they had conceived
but which now Edmund
wished to reject

His self and he had thought to abduct
Lady Wilhelmina and hold her in their chamber
hidden away from everyone. Then Edmund was to
arrange a lookalike substitute Wilhelmina to
go to Worthshire and revoke the free economy
she had instigated. They were to reverse their
policy and return to money marketing. She was
to withdraw her financial support and claim the
venture a failure.

But Edmund was in disagreement with his self over this. He had wanted Wilhelmina to fail at first, as he wanted to retain money economy, so he could remain rich. But on consideration, he felt sorry for his cousin and her enterprise, and decided he wished it to be successful. He struggled with his self and failed, in that his self forced him against his will to carry out their sabotage plan.

Such was the pain and suffering of the mind of Edmund Smythe.

Fantastical Minds

Wilhelmina prepared for her evening. She is to dine at Merely Park with her cousin Edmund. He has invited her. She is to go alone. She lives alone in Boughton House in her equipped apartment at the rear on the west side of the house. She has no servants. Those days are gone. She likes to see to herself. She even does some shopping now, though she has regular deliveries to take the burden away from her. She is a very striking beautiful woman of about 40 years of age. She feels she is waiting to marry Sir Charles Payne and have a say in his political affairs, but she does not seem to be in much of a hurry. She has undertaken her free economy experiment in Worthshire without his full consent or approval, as he is obviously enamoured of the old school capitalist money market economy. But she has persuaded him to let her have a trial run for several months. She keeps a small staff to run Boughton, but sees little of them as they deal with the office affairs of the estate, and the opening days to the public, whom she prefers not to notice or interfere with, as she is a very solitary remote lady.

She drives herself to Merely Park. This is a private estate with forests and a lake around 10 miles from Boughton House.

“Willy, you look great and on time as always. Throw your rag on that chair and come straight through to the drawing room.”

The words instructions that greet Wilhelmina, as she moves through the fore door entrance to the house in MerelyPark.

They are uttered by a beaming energetic Edmund; he is dressed in casuals, as is Wilhelmina. They disdain formality.

“Everything looks very nice. Who cleans for you?”

asks the guest.

“Some bods or other. I don’t really know. Martin sees to that side of things, he will be here in a moment. I think he has an elderly couple hidden away somewhere in some lodge, and they pop up to clean and spin and shop and weave, and all sorts of things but I never see them.”

“Just like me at Boughton”

They flutter and chatter and take refreshment in the drawing room. This is a modest sized well windowed place with giant sofas and armchairs littering the floor, with some cabinets for drinks and food goods to be arranged. It is modest and bright.

Martin enters wearing sloppy jumper and trousers and rushes to Wilhelmina who stands and they hug. They are old pals. Martin is a friend parasite who lives with Edmund to take care of things, but they are just friends; not anything more personal as seems to be the fashion of today. Martin is far too fond of himself to want to bother with anybody other than himself. A super-modern theory.

Heads turned

Their arms flapped

Their eyes scored around the dining room

They had moved into the dining room where

Martin had set up for their evening meal

They talk

Wilhelmina

what I am doing in Worthshire

it will liberate the world

people power is no power

it will free people from

the need for power

freedom frees

and uttering that she collapsed

her arms drooped her body folded forwards

her face caressed the table in front of her

her legs jellied the men lifted her

from her chair

Georgian sobs

I feel I am standing in the
middle of an enormous
no ginormous ice floe
all white and bare
with no-one in sight
I feel vastly alone

Eva Goode

his second wife

responds

Georgian I am here
we are with each other
but I know I understand
what you mean

Georgian

You you are my
salvation my second life

the restrictions of the
world disease seem
worse than the thing itself
my ice floe is endless
leads nowhere and I am
adrift and lost

Eva

Stephen spoke to me
about it and has urged
we take up a suicide
watch on you
don't you see you
are our strength our
love we all need you
Merton falls without you
as you have created and guided
us for so long

you knew and remember
Biker Mike from so
long ago before my days
how he urged the multi-
universes to reflect the free
individual within each of us
you travelled to the Sage
in Venezuela and brought
his words home to us
how punishment and prisons
were not good for civilisations
you urged Professor Mike
around the world to
conduct his four
great conferences on
unity of policy
religion and identity
you have achieved

wondrous things do
not abandon us when
we're so near to completion
recall how Slavonia is
thriving for the future
of the planet
and here Worthshire is
making an effort
you
we
all of us
maybe we are all
lost on ice floes
but we can achieve integration
love and unity if we
hold on

Georgian

but here's the horror

how can you hold

on to an ice floe

Eva

maybe by standing still

waiting and hoping

freedom is responsibility

not an easy cheap ride

but a struggle worthwhile

Edmund and Martin carry Wilhelmina up to one of the bedrooms in Merely Park House. She remains unconscious. They lay her on the satin sheet covered bed and allow her to sleep.

I can watch her from my bedroom. She should be all right. Go to bed yourself now Martin if you wish.

Edmund had some inter house closed circuit television to watch the room where Wilhelmina rested.

It was only several days later when Lady Wilhelmina called an emergency council meeting at Merton to discuss the free economy.

Everyone was a little surprised at what she could be intending by the meeting. There had been no result in capturing the thieves of the goods stolen that had put the scheme in jeopardy. Was this to be the end? Or had Wilhelmina some new contingency to put into action?

Because of the lifting of travel restrictions during the world disease crisis, Billy Gilded Creator had been able to return to England and to Worthshire in time to attend the emergency meeting in Merton Village Hall.

There was scarcely an empty seat.

The dais stage had a table and chairs for the dignitaries to perch. The chairman rose and addressed everyone and introduced Lady Wilhelmina Ponsonby-Smythe.

She stood tall behind the table and looked very elegant in pullover and trousers and bright brilliant golden hair. She looked stressed and quite nervous. But she began

Thank you all for attending this meeting. I have struggled to come to a decision over the economy of our county. Certain thefts and inconveniences have been a setback. I have paid for the losses to the “outside” companies that provide us. But there is no other choice I can make than to disband the scheme and return us to a commercial market money economy. I am sorry to do this. I had big hopes for our success. But it doesn’t seem to be right just yet. There is always a chance in the future we can re-establish more successfully. But just for now, I am closing down my support after I have cleared any debts and moneys needed to balance the situation. That is all I have to say. My accountants are available for any questions over the weeks to come. It is a sad decision but there we are. My friends, I apologise, but for now it is close down and goodbye.

People sighed and turned round to each other and started quietly muttering comments and nodding heads, and shaking heads and shrugging shoulders as they clearly were prepared to accept Her Ladyship’s words.

Only Billy Gilded seemed amused and grinned as he watched the stage and noticed something about Lady Wilhelmina that fascinated him. He immediately formed his plan.

As Lady Wilhelmina climbed down the steps from the stage Inspector Rocket moved through the throng to approach her.

Rocket asked Lady Wilhelmina

Do you wish me to continue my investigation into the thefts. I am quite happy to, if you wish?

There seems little point

she replies

I would like to find out the miscreants, and have a word with them at least

She shrugs her shoulders, but before either of them can say anything else, Billy Gilded storms forward, also pressing through the crowd, and throws his overcoat over Wilhelmina's shoulders, and usher her, and pushes her with him through a side exit door as he utters

Lady Wilhelmina, come along with me, I want a word with you in private. My car is waiting. I will take you to dinner.

She feebly resists but to no use. She is hurried into a black waiting car with a driver already seated within.

Jason Rocket is left standing, looking on puzzled at the disappearance of the lady and the young man.

In the rear of the car Billy declares

Off you go

to the driver and they set off for Billy's home.

Billy has dined with Wilhelmina and they have chatted well about the state of Worthshire and its economy Billy arguing for the free economy to be continued

I would like you to stay with me

to spend the night with me

Wilhelmina is shocked

you can't say that

I just did

I want us to make love

but you can't I'm no use to you

why because you are a man

I'm not a man I'm a woman

nonsense you can't fool me

you are a man

I am Billy Gilded Creator

and I know the difference

but why when you know I'm a man

do you want me

I do nearly everything

except force

I love all and do all

so you will sleep with me

no I don't want to

who are you then and tell me where the real Wilhelmina
is or I have to report you to the police

I am Martin Boughton and Wilhelmina is safe at Merely Park
quite unharmed well fed and well slept

take me there then now

and in a state of rare ecstasy they moved from the house to the garage,
climbed into the car and Billy drove to Merely Park under Martin's guidance

At Merely Park Edmund Smythe was celebrating his triumph. He has achieved the reversal of the moneyless economy. There will be no more of this free dealing. He will continue in profit. He is in the drawing room, clutching a glass of whisky.

The door opens, and in bustles Martin, still dressed as the fake Wilhelmina, and Billy Gilded who hangs back by the door.

“It’s all up,” declares Martin “this chap has sussed us out. He knows everything.”

“I doubt that,” retorts Edmund, “but in any case, it doesn’t matter, the deed is done. We have won.”

“You’d better bring Wilhelmina down,” adds Martin.

“Certainly, I’ll go and fetch her now. She can meet this...who are you?” he addresses Billy.

“Someone you couldn’t fool. Billy Gilded is my name, and by the way, Inspector Rocket is on his way here to arrest you.”

“Charming. Excuse me a moment.”

The real Wilhelmina has returned to the drawing room with the disreputable cousin Edmund. She has always thought him to be a problem, a difficult self opinionated stick in the mud and the past, besotted with tradition and holding on to everything he has. What a twerp. How could she be related to such a person?

She looks well, not having been too inconvenienced. She has been well cared for, well fed and entertained in her guest suite, where she could pass the days quite happily, and seems to have benefited from the quiet and the opportunity to reflect on what she has done, is about to do, and what has happened to her great dream of liberty.

As the four settle into an embarrassed silence, the door is opened and in walks Inspector Jason Rocket.

“No need to arrest anyone Jason, I am not going to press charges against my idiotic cousin,” announces Wilhelmina.

“Well, that’s one issue cleared, but I haven’t come mainly for that purpose. I have come to tell you that all the stolen goods have been returned. Almost everything taken a few weeks ago has now been found in its rightful home,” declares the policeman.

“That is extraordinary,” comments Wilhelmina.

“So what do we do now?” asks Martin who has slipped out earlier to change into his men’s clothes, so as not to confuse everyone in the room with two Lady Wilhelminas.

“We could rescind the rescind,” puts in Jason.

“What do you think, young man, expo-ser of the plot?” asks Wilhelmina of Billy who has sat away from the group.

He smiles and shrugs his shoulders:

“Do as you like,” he says, “it makes no difference.”

“Well as it is done, I like to leave it as it is. Let my Edmund have his triumph. We can always change back again later. Maybe we need to take stock and consider what has happened, and why, and then put the issue to the people of Worthshire, in that great bed of theirs.”

Well said,” puts in Edmund, eager no doubt to save himself from complications with punishments and abuse. “I think you have made a good choice, cousin, and have shown great understanding. I only did what I felt I needed to do.”

“A pity,” is Wilhelmina’s immediate comment to that. “Let’s look to the future, and discuss things more openly before we start discomforting each other.”

“You speak with great kindness and awareness, lady,” Billy surprisingly adds to the discussion.

So the party concludes with relief and smiles and laughter, and the odd drink, till the time beckons them all to leave their separate ways.

