

Epilogue

Lucia and Georgie were seated in the garden room, recovering from a splendid dinner. She was buried in some paperwork, while he was busily applying a very pretty piece of needlework to the back of a pair of white kid gloves. Having originally embroidered the borough arms of Tilling in celebration of Lucia's ascendancy to mayor, he had finally decided that the device on the left glove had not been applied absolutely straight. It would never do, after all, for the new King to think that the inhabitants of Tilling thought so little of him that they would allow their mayor to wear such a thing. Why, it was tantamount to treason. Georgie couldn't imagine the ramifications: perhaps the Court would be offended enough to rescind the town's charter, or perhaps even cut off supplies for a time. Whatever the punishment might have been, Georgie was convinced and quite pleased with himself that he had got it right this time around, thus saving the town from any imaginable disgrace.

He paused in his labours, and reminisced about the extensive research he had performed into Mayoral matters when selecting the elements he desired for the Town Hall's stained glass window, especially Lucia's book on the Ancient Duties and Privileges of the Mayors of Tilling, and had found out quite a bit about the rules and regulations of Mayors.

If Lucia attended a crown event, that would make her eligible for a title. This was the only reason Georgie could conceive of as to why she would wish to go, as anything which occurred outside Tilling was typically not considered a fit subject for discussion.

"Lucia, wouldn't attending the coronation make you a Baroness?"

"Really? It never occurred to me, caro," Lucia said, quietly slipped into her desk drawer some idle sketching she had been doing of a coronet in the shape of the arms of the borough.

Georgie paused in his petit point. "Won't Mapp be absolutely furious."

"Poor soul. It must be a difficult life, being so wretched all the time." Lucia sighed pleasantly and looked out the window. "By the way, when I become Baroness I may call myself either Baroness Tilling or Baroness Pillson."

"So you have thought about it," Georgie exclaimed, smiling. "Does that mean you get a seat in the House of Lords?"

"Heavens! Why should I be forced to travel to London just because parliament is in session? There is so much for me still to do in Tilling, I have no time for such foolishness. No, Mayor for three years was enough."

"So women don't get seats, then," Georgie said, more to himself than to Lucia. She ignored the comment, seated herself on the piano bench, and

patted the place next to her. Georgie slid into his customary place, and ruefully reflected that, once again, Lucia's new position would not confer anything upon him. It would be Baroness Tilling (or Pillson) and Mr. Pillson. But he really didn't mind. She was pushy and pompous and self-centred, but she was also wonderful and faced challenges head-on with so much brazen energy and bravado that he really couldn't begrudge her this latest accolade. She had earned it. She was so wonderful and was, after all, his wife, and had a right to all the glory she could engender for herself. And surely some of her glory would reflect upon him. His desires were, after all, rather modest and this indirect light was quite sufficient for him to bask in with no fear of becoming burnt.

He removed his rings, placing them in the candle bracket, and poised to begin playing the new Schubert duet that each had secretly been practising while the other one had been absent. They smiled at each other and in that moment they both felt completely comfortable, happy, and quite — even after all these years — yes, quite content.