65. Fighting Spirit

One of the men stepped forward. Or maybe two, or three. It was all kind of blurry to me. But there was something sharp glinting in his/their hand(s), I could see that much—and that sent a cold chill through me which, for now, brought me back to earth. For the first time I realized these men might, possibly, not be here to join the little yellow piggies in their dance routine. But what else could they be here for?	2.2K
The man with the knife smiled at Mr Ambrose, who was still wearing Warren's dirty jacket and cap.	ď
'Hm. Can't say I can see what's so special about you. Can you, men?"	109 d
There was a round of gu aws from the other dark shapes. Even my befuddled brain realized – the man who had spoken was the leader. The others were his henchmen. And they were all carrying knives. Bloody heck! They hadn't come to slaughter the dancing yellow piggies, had they? If so, I would defend them with my last breath!	Ък
"You look like something that's crawled out of the gutter, apart from that pretty face of yours," the man spat. "Well, pretty boy, I think you've stepped on the toes of some high and mighty people hereabouts. We was told by some posh bloke you needed a reminder of who was the in charge."	,50 5
Mr Ambrose regarded the other man as if he were a cockroach not	
worth stepping on. Ha! He apparently wasn't pleased that they had come to kill the dancing piggies either. My heart went out to him with a warmth that I didn't know it possessed for any man. He would save the cute little yellow ones, I was sure!	Ч ^к
'Indeed?" His voice was as cold as ever, and I revelled in it. "And what	
was the name of that gentlemen who thought I required such a reminder, if I may inquire?"	151 C
'My, you talk mighty fine." The piggy-murderer smirked. "Well, as I sees it, you won't have no need to know his name. You'll be dead soon enough."	A10
Laughing again, the men came closer. On some level I knew that should worry me. But the dancing yellow piggies, completely unaware of the danger, had suddenly appeared on the wall of the house opposite me, and I couldn't stand for them to be so near the danger! Anger boiled up inside me. Who cared about some men with thingies knives! Yes, that's what they were called. Who cared about some men with knives, anyway, while artistically talented, cute little animals were in danger?	589
The men stepped closer again. The knives glinted.	a a
'Karim?"	a ⁸
Mr Ambrose's voice was so low I hardly heard it.	ສໍ
'Yes, Sahib''	a
'On my command."	627 C
'Yes, Sahib."	a
Mr Ambrose concentrated on the leader, wielding his voice like a whip.	ð
'So this 'rich bloke', as you choose to call him did he give you any information about me besides my description? Any indication who he was sending you o to attack?"	කී
The man's step faltered for a second.	20
"No. Why?" His voice was suspicious.	ď
'Ah." Mr Ambrose nodded curtly. "That explains it."	a ⁵
"That explains what?" the leader spat.	a
"Why you came with so few men," Mr Ambrose told him. " Toofew." He brought his hands up and together, and a sharp clap echoed through the alley. "Now!"	8 79
More shapes appeared out of the darkness all around us, behind the thugs. At first I thought they might be Napoleon or Alexander the Great coming to help me conquer the world, but they were men in	a
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thugs. At first I thought they might be Napoleon or Alexander the Great coming to help me conquer the world, but they were men in workmen's and sailors' gear, with grim, determined looks on their faces and knives in their hands. Several of them held glinting objects that weren't knives. I didn't realize what they were until one of the men raised his weapon and a thunderclap tore the air between the

dirty East End houses.	161 d
Yay! The cavalry of piggy-protectors had arrived!	16К С
Light flashed as the gun went o , and I stumbled backwards against Mr Ambrose, startled by the light. Two hard arms gripped me around the waist and swung me around, depositing me behind somebody's back, as more gunshots went o .	2.6K
"Who" I mumbled.	å
"Warren's men!" A familiar, cold voice hissed next to my ear. "Now be quiet! You don't want to draw attention yourself!"	377
Mr Ambrose? It was Mr Ambrose who had shoved me behind his back? Was he protecting me? Surely, that was not an e icient use of his time and resources. A er all, a disgustingly rich financier was surely worth more pounds sterling than a rebellious little female such as myself. And anyway, there were others who needed protection more than me! I looked around searchingly for any of the yellow	1
piggies, but they seemed to have gone for now. Very wise.	885 C
"Warren's men?" I mumbled drowsily, trying to make sense of what was going on. I had thought this was the o icial piggy protection squad arrived just in time. "But you sent them away."	193 C
"I sent Warren away. The men stayed. Standard security procedure. Now belt up!"	å
He was half-dragging, half-pushing me, away from the fight and towards the chaise. I dug my heels into the ground, looking around for my piggy dance troop. Maybe there were some stragglers we had to bring with us.	181 0
"What are you doing? We have to get out of here!"	a a
"I'm looking for the yellow piggies," I explained, my voice a little	G
slurred for some reason. "Have you seen the yellow piggies?"	1,2K
"What?	362 0
Suddenly, a figure appeared in front of us. I grinned broadly, thinking it was one of my little yellow dancers—but it was just a thug with a revolver in his hand. Dang!	
"Look what we 'ave here," he leered. "I think-"	190 0
Without pausing, Mr Ambrose brought up his knee and drove it	ໍຄື
between the man's legs. Gasping, he doubled over and dropped the revolver	2.1K
Throwing him aside like a dirty dish rag, Mr Ambrose pulled me behind a dysfunctional lamp post that stood halfway between the entrance to the pub and the waiting chaise that he seemed to be	
intent on getting to for some reason. I wondered why. We had to stay here and fight and die bravely in defence of the piggies, didn't we? That's what Alexander and Napoleon were doing. And from what I'd just seen, Mr Ambrose could give those two a run for their money.	243 C
Interestedly, I looked back and forth between Mr Ambrose, intent on the chaise, and the man who lay a few feet behind us, groaning on the ground.	ືສ
"You just kicked those men in the in the" I hesitated. To be honest	
I wasn't absolutely sure what parts of male anatomy lay in this particular spot. I just knew that kicking them was generally a very good idea.	1.6K
"Yes, I did." Mr Ambrose voice was unconcerned. He didn't take his eyes o the chaise for a moment, waiting for his opportunity.	ď
"But but you're a gentleman!"	ď
"Yes. In allparts, Mr Linton."	5.6K
"Um I see."	324 Cl
I didn't really. But I would never have admitted that.	124 C
"When I tell you to run," Mr Ambrose hissed, "you run." His eyes roamed the darkness, as if they could pierce it by sheer force of will. "Three two one Rud"	424 Cl
We darted from behind the lamp post, racing across the street towards the dark silhouette of the chaise. The beast of a grey horse was still standing where we had le it, apparently completely	
unconcerned by the fact that bullets were flying around its ears.	213 d
Around us, men were fighting and dying. The chaise came nearer and nearer. Twenty yards. Fi een. Ten	å
Another man appeared in front of us, and I sprang forward immediately. I wasn't about to be outdone by Mr Ambrose! Quickly, I raised my foot and kicked out.	588 0
The figure ducked away, and I heard Karim's deep voice, cursing. "Kī naraka!What are you doing, Ifri?"	4.7K
"Oh. It's you. I'm s-"	221 C
Before I could finish he pushed me aside, and reached for the sabre at his belt. I saw a glint of metal and heard a scream out of the darkness Something wet sprayed my face.	
StrangeJ mused. It isn't raining, is it?	947 0
Then another flash of gunfire illuminated the alley and I saw that it was raining red stu . How funny. That meant the	

wasraining. It was raining red stu . How funny. That meant the yellow piggies would have red spots at the end of the evening. That would look really spi ing!	ďĸ
"Quickly, Sahib!" Karim had drawn his own gun now – a longish thing of glinting metal and dark wood, and he was firing quickly and precisely. "Go! There are more coming!"	
"Then let us face them!" I yelled, waving a fist in the air. "My strength is as the strength of ten because my heart is pure!"	з.2К С
Somebody grabbed me again and dragged me away.	133 d
"Let go of me!" I yelled and struggled.	a
"Have you gone completely insane?" I heard Mr Ambrose burning cold voice in my ear. "Be quiet and we may get out of this alive!"	247 C
Ignoring my protest, he dragged me further towards the coach. Behind me, I heard Karim shouting war cries in a language I don't know. Well, at least he would stay behind to protect the piggies. That	
might be enough.	459 d
We had almost reached the chaise when the gang leader jumped out from behind the horse and raised his gun to point directly at Mr Ambrose's chest.	295
"Who the 'ell are you?" He snarled. "Where did these buggers come	
from?" There was fear flickering in his wild eyes, and they didn't stay trained on his target like they should have. His men were more numerous, but Warren's so-called 'associates' were fighting like trained soldiers. Maybe that's what they were. A private army trained	
for the defence of dancing animals! I was so proud of them. "I see your employer failed to inform you who you're dealing with."	,338 C
The cold in Mr Ambrose voice was so intense that I was surprised not to see the gang leader freeze on the spot.	പ്പ
The leader cocked his gun. "Tell your men to stop fighting, or I'll put a bullet through your chest!" He snarled. "Now!"	<u> </u>
Mr Ambrose shrugged. "Very well. I'll give the signal."	a
He raised a hand, and gave a short, sharp wave. The gang leader smiled.	å
Suddenly, the giant grey horse behind him reared up on its hind legs,	
kicking out wildly. With strangled scream, the gang leader was thrown forward onto the cobblestones. A red puddle formed around	1 21/
his head.	
"Just not the signal you want," Mr Ambrose told the corpse.	1 6K
In a flash, he had dragged me past the dead man and to the chaise and pushed me inside. "Good boy." He patted the horse on the neck, and for a moment I though I saw a smile on his face. But no that couldn't be.	1_4K
"You there!" He yelled. "On the box! Now!"	a a²
One of Warren's men, who had just finished o another of the thugs, rushed to do his master's bidding and swung himself onto the box. Quickly, he grabbed the whip and cracked it over the horses head.	188
"Gee up!"	112 d
Mr Ambrose managed to jump into the chaise just in time. It took o down the street at an alarming speed. Dark houses rushed past us, and the screams behind us grew fainter and fainter. Slowly, I sank back into the old upholstery. Through the dreamy haze that surrounds my brain, I start to realize something.	۲۵ ۲۵
"I've just been in a gunfight," I said, lazily. It was getting really hard to	
keep my eyes open.	273 d
"You certainly have," a cool voice said next to me. There was a short silence. Then the cool voice continued: "I suppose you now understand what kind of situation you signed up for. I shall of course understand that you wish to leave your post. I shall have all the necessary resignation papers prepared for you in the morning. You will have to come to sign. "	743
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"My hero," I drawled, leaning against him. "You rescued me." A frown spread over my face. "Although, now that I think about it, I actually didn't want to be rescued. I wanted to stay there and join the fight."	a
"Exactly why you needed rescuing," he responded, drily. Suddenly, I noticed that his arm, which had been around my shoulders the whole time he dragged me towards the chaise, was around my shoulders still. Why? And why was it suddenly gripping me so tightly?	
"You are incorrigible, Mr Linton," he told me, his voice low, tight, controlled. "Why didn't you do as I told you to? Why, once in your life didn't you do the sensible thing and run?"	37
My frown deepened into a scowl. "The men didn't run. Theyfought."	a
"Because that's they're paid to do! You're paid to stay alive! To stay safe!"	ď
"I'm no coward!" I growled. "I'm as good as any man! And the little piggies needed me!"	403
"Excuse me the what Vhat pigs?"	,66 (
I rolled my eyes. He was incapable of grasping the simplest, most logical concepts. He didn't even understand dancing yellow pigs. Typical man!	14
But for some reason, leaning against this annoying man also felt comforting. Somehow, I had slipped sideways, and my head had come to rest against his chest. It felt firm, and oh so warm. But that couldn't be, could it? It was Mr Ambrose. Mr Ambrose was as cold as ice. Surely he would feel icy and hard, not so warm and reassuring.	10
"Do you think the little piggies will be all right?" I murmured, my eyes dri ing closed. I felt very drowsy all of a sudden, and so comfortable	33
"I'm sure they will," he whispered, reassuring, his hand squeezing my shoulder. "I'm sure they will."	4 7
The last thing I felt before darkness swallowed me up was a hand on my cheek, stroking gently.	16.5 d
	å
My dear Lords, Ladies & Gentlemen,	đ
Today, I would like to give a big wagonload of thanks to all my marvelous Punjabi fans who were kind enough to send me all kinds of expletives & curses in their native language for Karim to use in my story. Never before in my life have I received so many	
fascinating messages, each & every one of which were marked as "o ensive" by the automatic Wattpad spam filter - and I loved every single one of them! ;-) Your suggestions might not have been implemented in this particular chapter, but I shall definitely be keeping a long list, and I'm certain that they will soon come in quite useful in my future writing! A er all, it's quite probable that it shall not be long before Lilly gets Karim riled up enough for him to put them to good use. ;-) So thank you very much once more,	
my dear readers!	25 d
And now that the fight is finished, it's time for some Lilly & Ambrose time, don't you agree? The only question which remains is: snuggling or headbutting-or both? ;-)	45 :
Yours Truly	ď
Sir Rob	349

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