NEWS about Storm and Silence Publication! Read the important

news at the end of this chapter!;)

87. Nemesis

Instinctively, I tried to turn, but hard arms grabbed me from behind. "Keep going!" Mr Ambrose hissed. "They may be watching us from the ship, even if we cannot see them. Just keep going." "But you know that ship's name. I know you do. What is the matter?	a å¹ å²
What is so special about it?" "Keep going, I said! Or do you want us both to lose our heads tonight? Yes, I know the ship. Or at least, I have heard reports of it. If it is the one I think it is, it's the most modern and devastating warship of the world."	185 a
I stared at the slender, black silhouette of the two-master with mingled fear and incredulity. This The most devastating warship of the world? I didn't know much about ships, but most of the Royal Navy ships I had seen entering and leaving the port were much larger than this thing, with a great many more cannons and masts.	ã
He has to be joking. Then, my eyes fell once more on the threatening, black hull, and I	165 28 28 171
"It is the first warship made entirely out of steel. Where other ships shatter and crumble under cannon-fire, this thing will simply sail on. It's Lord Dalgliesh's latest contribution to our great British Empire. The flagship of his fleet. Everybody was so pleased when he announced the project. What a great triumph for Britain's naval	
superiority, etc. The Queen congratulated him." "Does anybody know what use he is putting his marvellous ship to? That he is using it to steal and smuggle?" "I don't think so. If they did, I think the queen might have refrained	æ5² a7
from her congratulation." We were almost directly underneath the large, red letters now. The Nemesidoomed over me like a spider in the centre of its web, ready to strike. "Lord Dalgliesh really means business this time," Mr Ambrose said,	å å
darkly. "Nobody would be stupid enough to get in his way while he is on this swimming fortress of steel." I shuddered. Mr Ambrose's nemesis travelling on the Nemesis it was fitting, in a poetic sort of way. How unfortunate that I had always detested poetry.	a 8°
I opened my mouth to ask another question, but quickly, Mr Ambrose grabbed my arm from behind and pressed. Thank God I understood the signal! He had to have heard something, for a moment later, a figure in a dark cloak appeared above us on the deck of the ship. Underneath the dark cloak, I could see a thin strip of bright red.	a
Another soldier of the presidency armies. The soldier made a quick upward motion with his outstretched hand. Mr Ambrose nodded. Non-verbal communication – this was one thing he was an expert in. A moment later, a ladder was lowered from the	
ship onto the deck. Blast!! would have to go up first. My heart hammering wildly, I reached out for the rungs of the ladder. Do you know the fairy tale about Jack and the beanstalk? You know, the one where this silly chap ends up in a land inhabited by giants by	a⁴ a⁴
climbing a mile-high beanstalk that leads all the way to the sky? Well, let me tell you, the fellow had it easy! Beanstalks are nothing! The ladder I had to climb to the deck of the Nemesiswas at least twice as high as the sky. And all the time while I was climbing, and climbing, and still climbing, I knew that something far worse than giants	
awaited me at the top. Giants were usually really stupid, and not armed with guns. Finally, I reached the last rung. My hand reached up to grasp the ship's railing – and another hand, large, coarse and hairy, gripped mine. I almost jerked back my arm, and remembered just in time that	5 °
this was supposed to be the hand of a comrade. Before I could think another thought, the powerful hand pulled upwards, and hauled me over the railing, onto the deck of the ship. Immediately, I was pressed down and forced to my knees. An angry red face appeared in front of me. Stinking breath full of garlic and alcohol hit my nose, and I	272
gagged. "What the hell are you thinking?" the soldier growled, his voice low but seething with rage. "What are you doing here in that getup?" I stared up at him, eyes wide. What the heck is happening? What have you done, Lilly? Have you	ਕੱ ਕੱ ਕੱ
given yourself away somehow, you silly idiot? The angry soldier grasped a piece of his black coat that was hanging over his shoulder and waved it in front of my face. "Completely in red and blue? People will be able to see you from the other side of the	a º
Suddenly, I understood. All the other soldiers on the deck, who stood around us in a semi-circle, sinister expressions on their faces, were wearing similar dark cloaks, so as not to be seen by people on the docks. And I didn't have one.	a' a'
Thud!	a a
Two feet landed on the deck beside me with an impact that resounded through my entire body. I could see the ends of familiar black trousers peeking out under the blue uniform trousers of the Bengal Army. Without looking up, I knew who it was. But I looked up anyway.	5 43
Mr Rikkard Ambrose towered over me, glaring down at the man who had his clenched fist just under my nose. I swallowed. He looked a lot more menacing from this angle. His granite aspects increased a thousand fold, he stood there like a true monumental statue, immovable and awe-inspiring.	a 55
The soldier beside me seemed to feel the same. Slowly, he drew back his fist. Mr Ambrose nodded, and gave the man a look that made him retreat a yard or two. Crouching down beside me, my employer looked at me. He didn't raise an eyebrow or otherwise disturb the perfect cool	a⊓'
smoothness of his face, but somehow I got the impression that his eyes were asking: are you all right? I nodded. He nodded back at me, and surreptitiously squeezed my shoulder. Warmth spread out from the spot his fingers had touched. Deep	²a ^{8K} å³
inside I knew he had just made the gesture to keep me calm, to prevent me from ruining his plans—but still, this small gesture sent an unfamiliar ache through my heart. An ache that was at once both soothing, and painful.	704 a
Mr Ambrose turned his eyes on the red-faced soldier again. And this hardened warrior, used to the glares of dozens of drill sergeants and the hate in the eyes of the enemy, drew back before the cold threat in those arctic eyes. I couldn't blame him.	ේ ජේ
The soldier hesitated. Mr Ambrose's eyes narrowed, and the cold force of his dark eyes	at at
Hurriedly, the soldier nodded. His thoughts were as obvious as if they had been painted on his blue hat: the sooner these two strange fellows were below deck, the sooner they would be out of his way. Grasping my arm, Mr Ambrose pulled me across the deck, towards	a'
the stern of the ship. There, I could just make out a wooden superstructure in the moonlight, with a small door in it. "Keep your head down," Mr Ambrose said in a low voice. "We wouldn't want to be spotted, now, would we?"	ਰੰ° ਰੰਾ
The double-meaning in his words was evident – and he was right. I didn't want to be spotted by people on the docks. And I definitely didn't want to be spotted by the people on the ship for what I really was. There was a guard at the door we were approaching. Mr Ambrose	a o
made a motion with his head, and he opened the door for us. Without saying "thank you" or even nodding, Mr Ambrose pushed me past him and down into the darkness. The door closed behind us. We stood in a narrow passageway, its walls made of dull grey steel. A lamp dangled from a hook in the wall, painting the steel with	å
flickering stains of red and yellow. Turning around, I jabbed at the insignias on Mr Ambrose's uniform. "Do you have a higher rank than those fellows out there?" I demanded. "Higher rank, Mr Linton?"	a a
"Yes! They keep doing what you tell them to do. Well, actually it's worse. They keep doing what you want without you having to tell them to. Are you a Lieutenant, or Colonel or something?" Mr Ambrose gave me a look. "It has nothing to do with rank, Mr Linton. In fact I am masquerading as a simple soldier. One simply has to act as if one has no doubt that people will do as one wishes. In most cases, that will take them by surprise so much that they forget to refuse. Now come."	25 55
He started down the corridor, and I had already taken the first two steps a er him before I realized what I was doing. One simply has to act as if one has no doubt that people will do as one wishes. In most cases, that will take them by surprise so much	ä [*]
that they forget to refuse. For a moment, I considered refusing, just for the fun of it. But then, I sighed, and shook my head. Now wasn't the time. We continued down the corridor. In more or less regular intervals, we came upon metal doors set into walls that seemed to serve no	3 55
particular purpose. "Bulkheads," Mr Ambrose said when I asked about them. "Walls separating the ship into smaller compartments. They normally just serve the purpose of giving the vessel more structure and stability. But these look to be watertight. In the event of a cannonball penetrating the outer hull, the door can be closed and the ship can fight on as if practically nothing happened. It's the first time I've seen something like this in a warship."	ਕੱ ਬੌਾ
His words sent a cold shiver down my spine. I bit my lip to contain my anxiety. "Where are we heading, exactly?" I asked. "Nowhere. The ship is not very large. To judge by eye, I would say a	•
length of eighty-four feet, and maybe a draught of six or seven feet. We are going to search it from top to bottom until we find the file. Then we are going to leave."	∄² ã² å⁵
through dark, dank corridors of steel, now and then opening a door to the le or the right to spy into a tiny steel compartment. They all held crates of di erent shapes and sizes. Apparently, Mr Ambrose's file wasn't the only thing Lord Dalgliesh was eager to get out of the country.	12 2
Finally, we came to a junction where the corridor split into two. "Should we split up?" I asked, keeping my voice down. I thought I could hear the faint mumbling of voices somewhere, and they had better not hear us.	a a
Mr Ambrose shook his head. "Smell that?" He pointed down one corridor. "That way smells of oil and smoke. The engine room will be down there. Lord Dalgliesh would never keep such sensitive papers anywhere near a burning fire. Let's go this way."	538 794
And he started down the other corridor. By now, I had long lost any sense of direction. I only hoped that Mr Ambrose would be able to find the way out again. He certainly seemed confident enough. But then, he always did. Even when, a er checking three more storage rooms, we ran smack into a dead end.	ď
Mr Ambrose stopped. He stood there for a moment. His le little finger twitched, once. "All right. Let's turn around. I think there was another junction not too far back. We can" He cut o, as voices came down the corridor.	a ⁴ aa°
"everything been stored down here?" "Yes, everything, apart from these last few sacks." Abruptly, Mr Ambrose leaned down to my ear. "Stay calm." His voice was quite, cool, assured. He must haves seen the fear on my face. "We	æ a⁴
will just walk past them. Remember, those are soldiers, just like us. We can simply walk past them." "And the men didn't open a single crate or sack?" the voice in the distance asked.	af³ af²
"Yes, Lord Dalgliesh," the other answered. Beside me, Mr Ambrose sti ened. " Just soldier?" I hissed, my voice trembling more than I would have liked. He moved more quickly than I could have believed possible. In a	256 245 245
moment, he had flung open the door to my le and pushed me into the dank little room. There was hardly enough space for me there, most of it was taken up by a giant wooden crate, over eight feet high. Slamming his cane between the lid and the walls, he heaved. The lid popped open. "What-" I began. But before I could finish my sentence or take a closer look at the contents of the crate, I was li ed up by a pair of	.863
hard, powerful arms and thrown not very ceremoniously into the wooden container. The fact that I landed face-first in wood wool mu led the string of unladylike curses that came from my lips, and probably saved my life. From outside, I could hear shu ling feet.	a ^k
"Over there."	ය සී ස්
The steps outside approached our little room. A moment later, something heavy landed on top of me, forcing the air out of my lungs, and the lid slammed shut above me. Gasping for breath, and getting only more wood wool, I reached up to shove aside whatever was su ocating me. But it was too hard and heavy to shi . Hell's whiskers, what was it? Was Lord Dalgliesh already in the room, and had his men thrown a sack on top of me, without bothering to look into the crate?	
My hands reached out, touching, and I felt something bulging under rough cloth. A sack of potatoes, maybe? My hand reached further up. There, the cloth ended, and my fingers touched something so er. It didn't feel like a potato. It was oval and seemed to have some sort of hole in the middle	4.5K
"Mr Linton," I heard a low voice from right above me, "kindly take your finger out of my ear!"	aో ark a
Greetings, my dear Lords, Ladies & Gentleman, I've got good & bad news for you. Which would you like to hear first? All rightlet's start with the bad news: NO PUBLISHER wants	a a
Storm and Silence! And do you know why? Because they say the story is too long and they think nobody would buy it Now, let's get to the good part of the news: you can help me proof them utterly wrong! A few among you, my marvelous fans, have already sent me	å° å⁴
messages, volunteering their precious free time to help with proofreading and editing this little story of mine, and they've already started working on getting rid of all the typos scattered during "Storm and Silence" to make sure this story is the best it possibly can be. That's already a big step towards the final goal of	
publication. But there's still quite a lot of work to be accomplished before we can start the actual publication process. For example, I shall most definitely need some help with the funding of this project, so it'll be possible for me to a ord things like professional formatting & publishing services. As a humble student, I'm afraid I cannot a ord things like these on my own.	å

eagerly waiting for your reply

Yours Truly

Sir Rob

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