

After the sirens finally stopped, the old man rose from his crouch and called out:

"Does anyone have a light?"

A match was struck in the other corner of the carriage, revealing a young woman visibly pregnant and holding a toddler. She swore as the match burned her shaking fingers and went out. But by then several other people had rooted around in pockets and bags, lighting several more. The old man accepted one and - to the delighted oohs and aahs from other passengers - used it to light a small storm lantern he pulled out of an unwieldy canvas bag. A little boy discovered a candle stump in the pocket of his school blazer, and a young plumber pulled a kerosene torch out of his toolbox; the subway carriage was eventually lit well enough that the toddlers stopped crying and started looking around with curiosity.

Three years into the bombings, everyone knew what was expected. A pile of coats was laid down on the floor up at the front for the expectant mother; at the opposite end a lower window was opened so that people could slip out and relieve themselves between carriages. In the middle row of seats, a small pile of food stuff grew a little each time someone added an apple or stale biscuit. A middle-aged man whose pompous manner first drew giggles from the gaggle of school children wearing Kensington Grammar uniforms then turned into their reluctant hero when he pulled out a large bottle of lemonade along with two dozen sausage rolls from a battered rucksack.

"That was my dinner *and* breakfast," he said plaintively as the children cheered.

"Just don't ask what's in the meat," a young teacher muttered to the old man as they helped to distribute these treasures to grubby little hands. "I saw my neighbour kill a squirrel yesterday, and he had pies for dinner."