

# The Pigs Return

Megan Haines, highly-commended

The moon glittered high in the sky, palely lighting the streets of Bath . The city was silent, the rumble of car engines had died away and the hustle and bustle of commuters was gone. Street lights flickered and house lights disappeared one by one, darkening the city. Bath was going to sleep.

Deep in the heart of Bath , in the centre of the Circus, a flash of light broke the calmness. The city trembled and a collection of grunts was heard. A group of six pigs emerged followed by a man wearing a plain grey cloth loosely wrapped around his body. He had a mop of dark curly hair on his lost, shocked face and bare feet covered in layers of slimy mud.

You would expect the city to wake, people to look out of windows and open doors. But not a person awoke or moved. The city did not react, Bath was frozen.

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The sun was rising, but still no one had stirred. The unusual man and his six pigs were sat on a hill of long thick grass below the Royal Crescent . Each pig's face was puzzled, amused and shocked at the same time.

The unknown man gazed out across Bath sighing, before looking thoughtfully at his collection of pigs.

"Where are we?" he said, "We were in Sul, 863BC, now we're in...we do not know." His pigs grunted back at their master.

"This is rather odd and I do not understand," he mumbled standing to his feet, he lifted his head and took a deep breath.

"I am Bladud, I need guidance, please guide the way almighty goddess Sul," shouted Bladud very loudly. He fell to his feet in shock as his big booming voice echoed back to him.

Bladud, the unusual man got to his feet quickly he looked at his pigs it complete confusion before pronouncing "We need to return home but how shall we do it?" Each pig grunted a confused but short reply.

"I think we need to explore" said Bladud excitedly.

What Bladud imagined a pig's smile would look like if they could smile, appeared on each of the six pigs. He smiled in return and they set off down the steep bank into the city they had been mysteriously taken too.

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Bladud had a worried expression on his face, each of his six pigs were covered in dirt lying in the middle of a bed of once perfectly displayed flowers. They were grunting excited and were munching away at the fuchsias and primroses. They were ruining the display of what he had found out, from a sign post, was "Royal Victoria Park".

He looked around but could not see anybody who could be watching until he looked behind a large green bush. Here he looked straight into the frozen eyes of a

man wearing green overalls and holding a rake. He was startled and stepped back falling onto his bottom.

Bladud rose and brushed himself down and peered closer at the frozen man's face. The man had a look of frustration on his face. Bladud wondered what had upset him.

He was still wondering this when round the bush rushed the six pigs knocking the frozen man onto his back and coating him in mud. The man was still frozen, not reacting to the ordeal. The pigs grunted a sort of "Sorry" at the man before darting off out. They ran squealing out of the park gate with Bladud trailing behind them. Bladud followed the squealing pigs through several streets, before he caught them ramming a gate. He peered at the gate sign "T-H-E R-O-M-A-N B-A-T-H-S". What did this mean, he understood "The" and "Baths", but what did "Romans" mean? He could see his six little pigs were desperate to enter these "Baths" so he helped them push the gate open.

After another few minutes of pushing the gate it finally gave in to reveal a building of crumbling stone and a murky green bathing pool. Each pig ran into the water creating huge puddles surrounding the bath. Bladud signed before taking the plunge himself into the warm smelly water.

The pigs squealed kicking their little legs frantically. Bladud smiled at his accomplices and thought about the magical springs back in Sul. These waters reminded him of them an awful lot...

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King Bladud and the six pigs were sat on the side of the baths drying off and thinking about home. Each of the little pigs looked at each other and a cheeky smile seemed to appear on each little face.

They each rose abruptly and charged out of the gate running up Stall Street . They ran at the three stalls at the very top. Knocking numerous photographs, bunches of flowers and shoes everywhere. King Bladud ran after them shouting.

The pigs ran further away soon heading towards to where they had begun at the Circus. King Bladud followed in desperation. He chased them around the Circus, the pigs grunting and him shouting. They ran faster and faster until each pig started to fade away, King Bladud was the last to leave, waving goodbye to the city. As soon as the last hair on his head had left the city it awoke, with noise, light but most importantly with a model pig placed in the very centre of the circus. They may have left but their spirits never would.

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