

The Night the Pugilist Learned How to Dance

Sting

In the streets around here there was nobody tougher than me,
I was quick with me fists and fast with me footwork as you can plainly see,
But while fighting was useful for getting your way,
Among the toughs of the town where you could hold sway,
There had to be something that was better than this,
I was fifteen years old and I'd never been kissed.

Well of course she'd ignore me, her friends would all sneer,
At me bloody nose dripping and me cauliflower ear,
For it's hard to convince in a romantic pose,
With a lovely black eye and a broken nose,
Where a girl is attracted to skills more refined,
Than the pugilist's art, and so I inclined,
To take meself serious as a modern romancer,
And I secretly learnt all the moves of a dancer.

Ye swing to the left, ye swing to the right,
Keep your eyes on your partner, more or less like a fight,
Ye just follow the rhythm, and ye keep to the beat,
The important thing's never to look at your feet,
Then a miracle happens, your mind's in a trance,
Though the strategy's subtle, retreat and advance,
It's all about attitude, all in your stance,
Attention to detail, leaving nothing to chance,
Which explains how the pugilist finally learned how to dance.

Well, I'd waltz with a broomstick and if I was caught,
I'd pretend I was sweeping or practicing sport,
But I really had eyes for your mother ye see,
Wanting her to acknowledge this new version of me,
But now everyone's watching, expecting I'll fail,
But there's fire in me belly, there's wind in me sails,
I knew it was risky and I was taking a chance,
I couldn't retreat now, I had to advance.

So I swing to the left, I swing to the right,
Keep me eyes on me partner, like I would in a fight,
I just keep to the rhythm and follow the beat,
The important thing's never to look at yr feet,
But a miracle's happened, and your mind's in a trance,
They're all laughing and cheering and looking askance,
On the night that the pugilist finally learned how to dance.

It's a three-minute round and you're back in yr corner,
You're licking yr wounds just like little Jack Horner,
Don't let your guard down try a jab with your right,
Or you're losing on points by the end of the night,
Then a miracle happens, and everyone's screaming,
You're pinching yourself just in case you're still dreaming,
You've taken the initiative, you've taken your chance,
It's the night when this pugilist finally learned how to dance.

In a bout where the strategist's bridges were burned,
Where it seemed that his fortune had suddenly turned,
'Twas the night that this scrapper was suddenly dapper,
And this poor fellow's heart was still going like the clappers,
The night that the pugilist finally learned how to dance.