



## **'Fish Pie Hope'**

**by Sophia Theophilou | Year 7**

**1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up 2023**

I come back to the piece, the wind lashing my face as I wait for him to return again...

It was a warm and balmy day. Finn had come home with a beaming smile on his face. He tells us eagerly that he had been promoted to being a skipper at the harbour. Mama and I were so pleased. Mama even cooked her famous fish pie to celebrate. Every day from then, on that summer, I went down to the harbour with him at dusk, waved him goodbye and then returned to the pier in the evening to greet him again.

Finn would show me what he managed to catch that day; showing me a variety of different cod and some lucky finds like crabs or mackerel. It had felt as if our household was happier than ever after Finn's promotion, providing us with not only a larger income but also a larger share of fish to take home at the end of the day. It was as if nothing could possibly go wrong, like everything corrupt with the word came to a halt as now the biggest established concern in that moment was what we would eat for supper.

Suddenly, Mama's cough began to worsen. Her occasional expectorating of phlegm became more apparent and she started to look paler. Finn had to take days off work to take care of Mama too. He even arranged for Mama to be diagnosed by a doctor, only to be told that she could only recover if she had doses of an expensive medication that we could only afford if we dedicated all of our money to it. Mama said she would pay for it and deal with the financial burden afterwards but Finn insisted that he would raise the money himself, through his fishing wages.

As the summer began to end, the weather grew harsher. Calm breezes and comforting sun evolved to relentless gusts of wind and grew skies. Every time I stood at the pier, I could see the tide gradually becoming more turbulent and forgiving. More and more sailors and skippers stopped going out to sea, waiting for the ocean to become more merciful, whilst my brother still went out every day, in order to afford the medication Mama so desperately needed.

Residents even began warning Finn of upcoming storms, though he remained persistent. That day, I begged Finn not to go, not to leave Mama and I, and stay at home instead and wait until tomorrow came... But he still went. That day, I waited for him at the pier, looking for his small boat, just to see nothing. I called out for his name just to hear a response of crashing waves against the jagged rocks in return. A Sea Rescue boat then went to search for him, only to come back and conclude that Finn was lost at sea. Despite what everyone says, I know that he'll return one day. He's most likely just trying to find the best fish for us so Mama can cook the greatest fish pie possible.

... And so, I still come back to the pier, with the wind lashing my face as I wait for him to return.