

A Dreamy Pier

by Katy Wise

A pier is a disappointed bridge; yet stare at it for long enough and you can dream it to the other side of the channel.

And how it would thank me, this pier in particular was beyond disappointed. A burnt-out shell, a skeleton, stained and deteriorated yet still stood firm against the grey crashing waves.

I first wrote beneath this same pier, not on paper, but in my head. I couldn't tell you how old I was, but young, young enough to have all of life ahead of me, old enough to be stood solitary beneath a worn out, tacky pier. The same grey waves crashed then as they do now and I imagined the pier, bright white and blue, sparkling in the sunshine flowing over the channel on the back of a thousand white horses to an equally sparkling golden beach the other side, with equally golden skinned smiling bodies, fresh faced and care free greeting it with open arms. Themselves flowing along its wooden slated floor, bare foot so no high heels got wedged in the gaps between the boards.

A memory of Mary Poppins and a magic carousel tapped at the periphery of my mind at this image and so I shook it away, focusing once more on the barnacle blemished pier that now crouched above me. It must be so sad and lonely with its police tape preventing anyone stepping foot on it, a bridge has a purpose. An important one. It carries beings safely from one place to another, a pier's meaning in life is to entertain, and it could no longer do that. I felt sorry for it, but it impressed me, how in spite of being stripped of its dignity, its purpose in life, it still stood strong against the relentless winds and rain and the cravings of a turbulent sea.

'Well done, Pier,' I told it.

It sighed.

'Things will look up, stand firm, stand tall, and remember who you are. It can't stay like this forever. I'm proud of you, and I thank you, when bridges burn, they crumble, you did not, anyway they are merely a product of the journey. You are the destination.'

It didn't sigh this time, instead it rattled in the wind and a few gulls flew up.

'There, feel better? I asked it. 'I'll pass by again tomorrow and check in on you. But for now, I must be off, the rain is setting in and I have a dilapidated bird table which needs a talking to.'

I laughed, and dreamt myself to a far-off exotic land as I stumbled across slippery pebbles back to my car, a bedraggled dog looking over her shoulder urging me to catch up. Funny where you can find meaning in life I thought.