

## **The ship upon the mantelpiece**

I see the whitewashed walls of the cottage, out of the car window. It shines brightly in the sun, and it glistens like a pearl. Ivy is surrounding the house and flowers are growing on it as well. On the poach, I see my grandparents together sitting down and watching happily as we run down the cobblestone path. The best part of visiting them is the fact that there is a gate leading down to the beach. Now that's one thing that London doesn't have for sure. Soon, my sister and I started swimming around in the cool and refreshing water. Everywhere I can see miles of sandy goodness, and all around me is the most tranquil and serene liquid I have ever seen. I knew this is going to be the sight I would see when I wake up to in the morning. I couldn't wait for the holidays to really kick off. Alas, the weather decided to change its minds, and I woke up to an incredibly dull day. The beach which had captured my eyes now looked like a vicious monster, fiercely rushing up to the shore and back. Everywhere the epitome of dark and grey echo throughout the place. Now stuck inside and nothing, to my little sister and I settle in for day full of boredom.

My sister and I run to the cupboard to look for some games, and while we are running, I spot a very realistic replica of a British battleship. With a close investigation, I went in closer and so that it was a miniature of the British battleship called the HMS Vanguard. I obviously didn't know why it was there, so I go and ask my grandfather. He just says that he has a story for us. After rounding up my sister, we went to the living room where my grandpa was waiting for us. Then he started his tale, which would take us on a journey to the past.

“It was the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 1939 when I saw in the newspaper that England had declared war on Germany. Knowing that my country was now in a war, that very newspaper article was a very terrifying ordeal, for me and my wife as newlyweds. However, I wasn't prepared to go and fight until, I heard that a new ship the HMS Vanguard was being built. I knew that I had to go and fight in that new ship, so I applied. When I got the news that I got a position as a soldier, I knew that it was going to be one of the trickiest decisions of my life. After thinking it over many times, I decided to leave my wife and fight aboard the Vanguard for my country. It was very heart-wrenching, but I knew it was for my future, so I left London for training in tears. Training was super hard, but I coped through it. When the admirals thought that that we were prepared, we went to see the ship and what a beauty she was. It has to be one of the most superior ships that I had ever seen, with sweeping and swift lines making a statement. I was very proud that I got to serve on a British made ship. The Vanguard was the

terror and the speed king of the sea. All its soldiers were really proud to serve aboard it. I had the pleasure of manning to guns, and throughout my time serving on the Vanguard I have shot down many enemy ships along with planes. That made me swiftly move through many ranks from sub-lieutenant to commander. With my high ranking status, I was highly respected by my colleagues and so I was awarded many medals. When I retired from the Navy my role was a captain. After the war, we settled down near the seaside and started our own family. Your mother became our child. Since then I always looked up at the mantel piece and saw that there was a bare patch, so I decided to buy a model ship of the HMS Vanguard. Now it stands centrepiece in the living room.”

After my grandpas’ story, I was mesmerised, and my eyes flicked back and forth from the model back to him. It is almost unreal, to know that a simple model has a very touching story behind it.