

THE FISHY'S TALE

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - DAY

Earth. It looms closer and closer till clouds fill the whole screen. TWO WIND GODS appear and blow the clouds apart revealing an antique map of Northern Europe. The words "Baltic Sea" materialize on the map. Everything fades to white. Then...

EXT. BALTIC SEA - DAY

The tiny islands of the Finnish Archipelago rise like granite pebbles in the brisk waters of the Baltic. The WIND BLOWS over the billowing waves. A SEAGULL CRIES.

NARRATOR

Long, long ago. In a land far
north...

The waves ripple and foam in the crisp sea air as we sink beneath them.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

In a cold, cold sea...

UNDERWATER - SHALLOWS - DAY

The dark waters lighten and we begin to make out shapes within this watery world: Rocks, eel grass meadows and various underwater plants.

A SNAIL clings to a long stem of eel grass munching idly. The Title fades in "The Fishy's Tale".

A SCHOOL of PERCH flash silver as they dart through the title. The title dissolves into the water.

NARRATOR

There lived a fishy.

Yards behind them, One FISHY, a chubby, juvenile HUFFING and PUFFING struggles to catch up.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Who was very curious.

The School of Perch dart away -- disappearing into the deep blue. Fishy, spies a CURIOUS OBJECT (THE WICKER TRAP) wedged between two rocks in the shallows near the shoreline.

Curious, Fishy creeps nearer for a closer look. The object is made of branches woven together into a long cone shape. Fishy inches closer towards the opening when...

PIKE FISH O.S.
(a low, growling voice)
Stay back! Back, I say!

Two yellow menacing eyes materialize out of the darkness.

Fishy GASPS and shrinks back in fear.

FISHY
(stuttering)
Wh-who are you?

PIKE FISH slithers out from the shadows. He fixes Fishy with a stern, disapproving look.

PIKE
Foolish little Fishy!

SPRAT, his squeaky sidekick, sneaks into view, hovering just under PIKE'S shadow.

PIKE FISH
(singing)
Hear my tale and heed it well.
Beware the beast that on land
dwell!

Pike's eyes roll upward and Fishy's gaze follows suit. Moving up through the water till...

EXT. BALTIC SEA - ISLAND SHORE - SAME

We break the surface and spy the island above.

PIKE (O.S.)
The two-legged one...

A DOG BARKS. PANTING, a dog's legs bound into view - followed by A PAIR OF LEGS in "IRON AGE BOOTS" (the FISHERMAN) stomp across the rocky shore to the water's edge.

PIKE FISH (O.S.)
Is the one to shun.

THE FISHERMAN'S HANDS lower the WICKER TRAP into the water.

PIKE FISH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You can go in!

The Wicker trap sinks in slow motion below the billows trailing a string.

PIKE FISH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
but you can't come out!

Fishy's eyes widen in dismay.

UNDERWATER SHALLOWS

PIKE FISH
(shaking his head)
Sad!

Fishy cowers before Pike's stern look.

SNAIL
(mournfully)
Sad.

SPRAT
(shaking her head in
disapproval)
Very, very sad!

ALL THREE
A fishy's life is not so glad!

PIKE FISH (O.S)
You can go in...

Fishy gazes at dark and menacing opening of the Wicker Trap as it bobs gently in the current.

PIKE FISH (O.S) (CONT'D)
But you can't come out!

The Wicker Trap's cruel spikes gleam and flash a warning. Fishy shivers.

Meanwhile, Pike continues his tale of woe.

PIKE FISH (CONT'D)
They ride with oar upon the sea.

The Water shimmers and the scene dissolves as Pike flashes back in time to...

EXT. BALTIC SEA - DEEP WATER - PIKE'S FLASHBACK

WATER'S SURFACE

A long boat glides across the surface of the water. Three oars move in mechanical tandem propelling the boat forward.

PIKE FISH (O.S.)
Bringing fishies mi-se-ry.

BABY PIKE looks up and cowers in horror as the shadow of the boat covers him.

A net hauls a group of caught perch up towards the surface and the hull of the boat.

INSIDE THE BOAT

A pile of dead fish with crossed out eyes lies in the hull. Another fish lands SPLAT on top of the pile. It lies still-eyes crossed out - "tongue" hanging out.

PIKE FISH (O.S) (CONT'D)
Don't be a fool, but stay in
school!

A net hauls a group of caught perch up towards the surface and the hull of the boat.

INSIDE THE BOAT

A pile of dead fish with crossed out eyes lies in the hull.

PIKE FISH (O.S) (CONT'D)
You can go in, but you can't come
out!

Another fish lands SPLAT on top of the pile. It lies still-eyes crossed out - "tongue" hanging out.

BACK TO PRESENT - BALTIC SEA SHALLOWS

PIKE FISH
Sad.

Fishy cowers before Pike's stern look.

SNAIL
(mournfully)
Sad.

SPRAT
(shaking her head in
disapproval)
Very, very sad!

ALL THREE
A fishy's life is not so glad!

PIKE FISH (O.S)
You can go in...

Fishy gazes at dark and menacing opening of the Wicker Trap as it bobs gently in the current.

PIKE FISH (O.S) (CONT'D)
But you can't come out!

The Wicker Trap's cruel spikes gleam and flash a warning. Fishy shivers.

Pike takes a deep breath and continues his cautionary tale.

PIKE FISH (CONT'D)
The gaping maw of Fishy's fate--

The opening of the Wicker Trap looms large and menacing filling every inch of space.

PIKE FISH (O.S) (CONT'D)
Is fashioned like wicker gate...

Fishy gawks at the dimensions of the Wicker trap with it's intricate woven design.

PIKE FISH (O.S) (CONT'D)
Luring you in to it's woven lair...

The opening of the wicker trap spirals slowly, alluringly as if daring Fishy to enter.

SPRAT
(Seizing the limelight for
a solo moment)
If a fishy -- had a wishy, then it
wouldn't be there!

Fishy's eyes begin to swirl in the same rhythm as the Wicker Trap.

PIKE FISH (O.S)
You can go in...But you can't come
out!

Fishy shakes her head to break the spell. She turns away.

PIKE, SNAIL, AND SPRAT
Sad. Sad. Very, very sad. A fishy's
life is not so glad.

Pike's eyes begin to swirl to the rhythm of the spiraling Wicker Trap.

PIKE, SNAIL AND SPRAT
You can go in, but you can't come
out!

Fishy's eyes bulge in dismay as she realizes that Pike has fallen under the spell of the Wicker Trap. Sprat and Snail chime in on the chorus oblivious to the fact that Pike has stopped singing.

SPRAT AND SNAIL
(with gusto, poco
accelerando)
Sad. Sad.

Entranced, Pike floats toward the wicker trap.

SPRAT AND SNAIL (CONT'D)
Very, very sad! A fishy's life is
not so glad!

Fishy bites down as hard as she can on Pike's tail. Pike's eyes stop twirling and he YOWLS in pain!

SPRAT AND SNAIL (CONT'D)
You can go in--

The Wicker Trap "licks its lips" in anticipation of devouring Pike. Pike's eyes bulge in terror at the site.

SPRAT AND SNAIL (CONT'D)
But you can't come out!!!!

Sprat and Snail heroically sustain the ending chord as Pike scrambles backwards frantically to avoid being devoured by the Wicker Trap. He bowls over Fishy. They tumble.

Pike and Fishy exchange looks.

The string attached to the Wicker Trap snaps taut with a TWANG! -- Snail and Sprat stop singing.

Snail and Sprat exchange looks of "Uh Oh." In a flash, Snail sucks his head back into his shell. POP!

Pike and Sprat split in opposite directions in a wake of bubbles leaving Fishy all alone.

Fishy GASPS in awe and fear as the Wicker Trap rises jerkily up to the water's surface.

EXT. BALTIC SEA - ISLAND - DAY

The Wicker Trap breaks the water's surface. The Fisherman's rough hands reach for it, turn the trap upside down.

INSERT- INVERTED WICKER TRAP OPENING

A couple of drops of water fall out-- nothing more! The trap is empty!

The Fisherman GRUMBLES INCOHERENTLY -- clearly cussing his bad luck. The dog BARKS. The Fisherman's feet STOMP AWAY with the dog's paws prancing after him-- leaving the scene empty.

The WIND BLOWS over the billowy waves and a SEAGULL CRIES.
ROLL CREDITS.

FADE OUT.