

# Oliver and the Frozen Moment



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In a tiny shop filled with the rhythmic ticking of a thousand clocks, young Oliver polished a brass gear. Dust motes danced in the afternoon sun as he dreamed of adventures beyond the wooden walls. His master, an old man with silver hair, worked quietly on a giant grandfather clock nearby.



While cleaning a forgotten corner of the workshop, Oliver's fingers brushed against a cold, silver chain. He pulled out a heavy pocket watch that glowed with a soft, pulsing blue light from beneath its glass face. It was covered in intricate engravings of stars and moons that seemed to shift as he touched them.



Curiosity got the better of him, and Oliver pressed the tiny button at the top of the mysterious watch. Suddenly, the ticking stopped, and a wave of absolute silence washed over the room. A tea cup that had been slipping from a shelf hung perfectly still in mid-air, defying gravity.



Oliver stepped out into the village square and gasped at the sight before him. The bustling market had become a living painting, with people frozen mid-laugh and horses paused in mid-stride. The world was quiet and still, draped in a shimmering, magical frost that only Oliver could move through.



He walked through the silent crowd, marveling at the details he had never noticed before. He saw a butterfly suspended above a bright red rose and felt the strange chill of the wind held in place. It felt as though he was the only person left in the entire universe, a king of a quiet kingdom.



Oliver noticed a little girl who was about to trip over a loose cobblestone and gently moved her foot to safety. He went to the bakery and caught a tray of falling rolls, placing them gently back on the wooden counter. He spent the afternoon performing small acts of hidden kindness for his frozen neighbors.



As the sun hung unmoving in the orange sky, a sense of loneliness began to settle in Oliver's heart. He missed the sound of laughter, the barking of dogs, and the chaotic music of the busy street. He realized that a world without movement was a world without life and shared joy.



He took a deep breath and turned the small winding key on the side of the watch in the opposite direction. A warm, golden glow erupted from the face of the timepiece, spreading across the town like a gentle sunrise. The heavy silence was finally broken by the sudden return of a thousand different sounds.



The little girl skipped safely across the street, and the baker cheered as he found his rolls perfectly arranged. Oliver watched with a wide smile as the world burst back into vibrant, messy, and beautiful life. He felt a deep connection to every person and every second passing by in the square.



Oliver returned to the shop and carefully tucked the silver watch back into its hidden corner. He picked up his polishing cloth and began to work with a new sense of gratitude and purpose. He knew now that time wasn't something to be stopped, but a precious gift to be lived and cherished.