

MADE WITH LITTLE STORYBOOK



The Clockwork Whale Beneath the Ice

Anika follows a ticking song into a city that has
forgotten how to listen





What's inside



1	The Ticking Under the Bay	4
2	The City Below Blue Glass	8
3	The Machine That Fought the Sea	12
4	A Heart That Learned the Tide	16



CHAPTER 1

The Ticking Under the Bay

Anika knew every sound in her auntie's repair shed: stove hiss, wrench clink, wind worrying the shutters. This sound came through the floor. Tick... groan... tick. Not the wild crack of sea ice. Not an engine she knew. A machine was calling beneath the bay.

The Amber Eye Below

At the safe marked ice hole, Anika clipped her harness to the rail and lowered a lamp. Thirty feet down, an amber eye opened. Brass plates moved under frost-blue water. A whale-shaped machine rose slowly—and a torn survey cable tightened around its tail.

WOW FACTS

Really true: working near sea ice requires trained adults, safety gear, and local knowledge.

IN THIS PICTURE

A giant brass visitor rises beneath blue ice.





One Careful Cut

Auntie worked the winch while Anika guided a long-handled cutter through the rail. Snip. The cable loosened. Neri could have fled. Instead, she surfaced her brass crown and released a fountain of golden bubbles that chimed against the ice like tiny bells.

IN THIS PICTURE

Adventure begins with a plan, a beacon, and permission.

The Invitation in Brass

A hatch opened behind Neri's head. Inside waited one dry saddle, a breathing hood, and a brass handle shaped exactly for a mitten. Auntie studied the storm gauge, then Neri's patient eye. "One hour," she said. "Tether beacon on. I follow above."





2

CHAPTER 2

The City Below Blue Glass

Neri slipped beneath the ice. The world turned blue. Seals twisted through sun shafts; bubbles flattened under the frozen ceiling; distant bowheads called notes Anika felt in her ribs. Neri's clockwork ticking tried to answer—but every fourth beat scraped.

IN THIS PICTURE

A luminous city waits around its silent heart.

Pelagos in the Dark

The seafloor fell away. Below floated Pelagos: glass domes joined by brass ribs, gardens of kelp, and walkways lit like honey. Yet whole streets flickered dark. At the city's center, a turbine larger than a house stood silent. The Tideheart had stopped.



IN THIS PICTURE

The city's failure matches Neri's hidden scrape.



A City Holding Its Breath

Keeper Sola met Anika at the dock. Pumps were rationing warm water. Kelp lamps were fading. “We rebuilt the gears twice,” Sola said. “The heart races whenever the tide turns.” Anika touched the casing. Tick-tick-SCRAPE. The same wounded fourth beat.

The Biggest Gear Was Innocent

Engineers rolled out a replacement gear taller than Anika. Its teeth were perfect. So were the worn gears inside. The damage marks all leaned the same direction, as if the heart had pushed against something stronger than brass. “What tells it when to turn?” Anika asked.

IN THIS PICTURE

Perfect gears point toward a problem somewhere else.





3

CHAPTER 3

The Machine That Fought the Sea

Sola wanted every outer plate removed. Anika asked for silence instead. Pelagos dimmed its pumps. Through the dome came ice groans, current hush, and bowhead song. The Tideheart twitched too early, then strained as the water moved the other way. It was fighting the tide.

IN THIS PICTURE

An old partnership returns in three steady beats.

Neri Knew the Old Rhythm

Neri tapped the dome: three even beats, a pause, then three more. The wild whales answered. In an old mural, clockwork whales circled the Tideheart, reading water pressure with fins along their jaws and sharing the rhythm. Neri was not a vehicle. She was a keeper.



IN THIS PICTURE

The scrape comes from one fin trapped halfway.



The Bent Listening Fin

Anika opened Neri's smallest cheek panel. Three pressure fins moved freely. The fourth was bent by the survey cable, stuck halfway. It sent the wrong timing to Neri, and Neri passed that rhythm to the Tideheart. A tiny listener had confused an enormous city.

IN THIS PICTURE

The smallest part restores the cleanest rhythm.

A Repair the Size of a Spoon

Anika heated no forge and replaced no giant heart. She removed the bent fin, pressed it true between her caliper jaws, polished its pivot, and set it back. Neri tested it once. Tick, tick, tick, pause. No scrape.





CHAPTER 4

A Heart That Learned the Tide

Neri swam one circle around the Tideheart. Three beats. Pause. The current turned. This time, the great turbine waited—then moved with the water. One gear caught the next. Amber light traveled outward through Pelagos like sunrise under glass.

The Garden Woke First

Warm water reached the kelp gardens. Fronds lifted, lamps brightened, and silver fish returned through the arches. Pelagos cheered, but Anika listened past the noise. The heart did not roar. It turned almost quietly, saving its strength by borrowing the sea's rhythm.

WOW FACTS

Really true: kelp is a large brown alga, not a rooted land plant.

IN THIS PICTURE

Kelp rises as gentle power returns to Pelagos.



IN THIS PICTURE

Anika chooses the tool that helps her notice first.



The Gift That Was a Question

Sola offered Anika a golden master wrench. Anika chose the old listening cup instead: a brass bowl that made faint vibrations easier to feel. “A tool that starts with a question,” she said. Neri chimed bubbles against the dome in agreement.

Home Above the Blue

Neri returned Anika before the storm reached the bay. Auntie pulled her into a hug, then listened to the whole impossible story. At dawn, a broken heater arrived. Anika set down her wrench, lifted the brass cup, and asked, “What changed just before it stopped?”

IN THIS PICTURE
A new repair begins with the quietest tool.



Check your wonder

1 What first connected Neri's problem to the Tideheart?

- A. The same scrape on every fourth beat
- B. They were both made from blue glass
- C. Sola had painted them the same color

2 Why were the giant replacement gears not the answer?

- A. The gears were sound; the timing signal was wrong
- B. The gears were too shiny to turn
- C. Pelagos had no tools large enough

3 What had bent Neri's sensing fin?

- A. The survey cable around her tail and body
- B. A wild whale's song
- C. Anika's brass caliper

4 What did Anika learn about fixing?

- A. Listen to the whole system before replacing its biggest part
- B. The largest tool always gives the best answer
- C. Quiet machines never need care

ANSWERS 1-A 2-A 3-A 4-A

1. Anika noticed a repeating symptom in both machines before she knew the cause. 2. Matching wear showed the heart was fighting an outside rhythm rather than suffering broken teeth. 3. Cable damage trapped one pressure fin halfway and created the scrape. 4. Evidence and rhythm led her to one small correct repair.

New words

caliper

A tool for checking or holding the distance between two sides of a small part.

governor

A mechanism that helps control a machine's speed or timing.

current

Water moving steadily in a particular direction.

synchronize

To make different motions or events happen in matching time.

turbine

A machine with turning parts that moving water, air, or steam can drive.

diagnose

To gather clues and identify the real cause of a problem.

rhythm

A pattern of beats, movements, or changes that repeats.

kelp

A large brown alga that grows in cool ocean water.

Where we looked

This original fantasy came straight from imagination; its polar ice, bowhead whale, underwater sound, and kelp details stay grounded in well-established nature.

Neri still circles Pelagos beneath the blue ice, keeping three beats and a pause with the tide. And Anika still fixes machines—but now the first tool she reaches for is a question.



THE END

*What quiet clue would you listen for inside a machine nobody
else could mend?*



Make this book about your child

Free to try. Scan the code or visit

littlestorybook.ai/books/the-clockwork-whale-beneath-the-ice

LITTLE STORYBOOK

littlestorybook.ai