

# The Beaver's Broken Clock



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Barnaby the Beaver lived in a cozy lodge by the river. Every morning, he put on his worn red work apron and his blue cap. He loved to build and fix things with the tools in his pocket. One sunny day, while looking for smooth stones, he spotted something shiny in the mud. It was an old clock, all rusty and broken!



Barnaby picked up the clock and turned it over in his paws. The glass was cracked, and the hands were bent. "Don't worry, little clock," he said. "I'll fix you up in no time!" He carried it home, his flat tail slapping the ground with each happy step. He couldn't wait to start working on it.



Back at his lodge, Barnaby set the clock on his workbench. He wiped off the mud with a soft cloth. He put on his tiny glasses and looked closely at the gears inside. "Hmm," he said. "This will take some work." He opened his apron pocket and took out his smallest screwdriver. The clock ticked once, then stopped.



Barnaby tried turning the little screws this way and that. He oiled the gears with a drop of fish oil. He tapped the bent hands gently with his hammer. But the clock stayed silent. "Come on," he said. "You can do it!" He tried again and again, but nothing worked. The clock just sat there, quiet and still.



Barnaby didn't give up. He tried using a feather to dust inside the gears. He tried shaking the clock very gently. He even tried singing to it, but the clock didn't care. "Maybe I need a bigger hammer," he thought. But deep down, he knew that wasn't the answer. He sat down and sighed, his whiskers drooping.



Just then, a tap-tap-tap sounded on his roof. Pip the Woodpecker poked her head in the window. Her bright red crest bobbed as she looked around. "Hello, Barnaby! What are you doing?" she asked. Barnaby pointed at the silent clock. "I'm trying to fix it, but nothing works," he said sadly.



Pip flew down and landed on the workbench. She pushed her tiny goggles up on her head and looked at the clock with her quick dark eyes. "Hmm," she said. "The gears are fine, but the spring is broken. You can't fix that with a hammer." Barnaby's shoulders slumped. "Then what can I do?" he asked. Pip tapped her long beak on the table, thinking.



Pip looked out the window at the rushing river. Her eyes sparkled. "Barnaby," she said, "what if we don't fix the spring at all? What if we use the river to power the clock instead?" Barnaby tilted his head. "The river?" he asked. "How?" Pip smiled. "I have an idea," she said. "But we'll need to work together."



Barnaby's hazel eyes grew wide. "I'll try anything!" he said. Pip explained her plan. They would build a small water wheel and connect it to the clock. The river would turn the wheel, and the wheel would turn the gears. Barnaby jumped up. "That's brilliant!" he shouted. He grabbed his tools and his blue cap, and they ran outside.



First, Barnaby used his strong teeth to cut small branches. Pip helped by finding flat stones. They worked side by side, chattering and laughing. Barnaby built a wooden frame, and Pip tied it together with vines. The sun was warm on their backs. "This is fun!" said Barnaby. "Much more fun than fixing a spring," agreed Pip.



They placed the water wheel in the river where the water flowed fast. The wheel began to spin! Barnaby connected it to the clock with a long, thin vine. The vine pulled tight, and the gears inside the clock started to turn. Tick, tick, tick! The hands moved around the face. "It's working!" cried Barnaby, dancing a little jig.



Pip flew up and down with joy. "We did it!" she chirped. The clock ticked steadily, powered by the rushing river. Barnaby looked at Pip. "I tried so hard to fix it myself," he said. "But I couldn't have done it without your clever idea." Pip smiled. "And I couldn't have built it without your strong teeth and hard work," she said.



They carried the clock to a flat rock by the river and set it up. The water wheel spun, and the clock ticked. It was the only clock in the forest, and it was powered by the river. Barnaby took off his blue cap and wiped his forehead. "From now on," he said, "I'll always ask for help when I need it." Pip nodded. "That's what friends are for."



Word spread through the forest about the wonderful river clock. Animals came to see it tick. Barnaby and Pip sat on the bank, watching the water wheel turn. "You know," said Barnaby, "I'm glad my first tries didn't work. Otherwise, we wouldn't have made something so special." Pip looked at him. "Persistence is great," she said, "especially with a friend."



Barnaby nodded. He thought about all the times he'd tried to fix the clock alone. He hadn't given up, but he'd been stuck. It was Pip's idea that made the difference. "Thank you, Pip," he said. "You're a true friend." Pip's red crest bobbed. "Anytime, Barnaby," she said. "Now let's watch the clock tick together."



So Barnaby and Pip sat by the river, their shoulders touching. The clock ticked, the water wheel spun, and the river rushed by. Barnaby wore his blue cap and his red apron with pride. He had learned that trying again and again is important, but so is listening to a friend. And that was the best lesson of all.