

# Beauty and the Gears: A Reimagined Children of Gears Short Story

Once upon a time, in a small town on the edge of a great forest, there lived a beautiful young woman named Belle. Belle was different from the other girls in her town. She was intelligent, curious, and always had her nose in a book. She dreamed of escaping her small town and exploring the world.



## Among the Thorns: A Beauty and the Beast Retelling (Children of Gears Short Story #1) by Ren Ellis

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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One day, Belle's father, a clockmaker, went into the forest to collect wood for his clocks. He never returned. Belle was distraught. She searched for her father for days, but she could not find him.

One day, Belle was walking through the forest when she came across a strange and beautiful castle. The castle was hidden away in a clearing, and it was surrounded by a moat of gears. Belle was curious, so she cautiously approached the castle.

As she drew closer, Belle could see that the castle was in disrepair. The walls were crumbling, and the windows were boarded up. But there was something about the castle that drew Belle in.

Belle walked up to the front door of the castle and knocked. The door opened slowly, as if it had not been opened in years. Belle stepped inside the castle and found herself in a grand hallway. The hallway was lit by a single candle, and the walls were covered in tapestries depicting scenes from fairy tales.

Belle walked down the hallway and came to a large room. The room was filled with clocks of all shapes and sizes. There was a clock with a face that looked just like Belle's father. Belle reached out and touched the clock, and it started to tick.

Suddenly, the room began to shake. The clocks on the walls started to spin, and the gears on the moat outside began to turn. Belle looked around in confusion, not knowing what was happening.

Then, she heard a voice.

"Who is there?" the voice asked.

"It's just me," Belle said. "My name is Belle."

"What are you ng here?" the voice asked.

"I'm looking for my father," Belle said. "He disappeared a few days ago."

"I know where your father is," the voice said. "But you must not come any further. This castle is dangerous."

"I don't care if it's dangerous," Belle said. "I have to know what happened to my father."

"Very well," the voice said. "But be warned, you may not like what you find."

The voice led Belle through a hidden passageway and into a dark and dusty room. In the middle of the room was a large bed, and on the bed lay Belle's father.

Belle ran to her father's side and hugged him tightly.

"Father!" she cried. "I'm so glad I found you."

Belle's father opened his eyes and smiled.

"Belle," he said. "I'm so glad you're here. But you must leave now. This place is not safe."

"I'm not leaving without you," Belle said.

"You must," her father said. "He's coming. You must run."

Before Belle could ask who was coming, her father pushed her out of the room and locked the door behind her.

Belle ran through the castle and out into the forest. She didn't know where she was going, but she knew she had to get away from the castle.

She ran and ran until she came to a clearing. In the middle of the clearing was a large fountain. Belle collapsed on the ground next to the fountain and burst into tears.

As she wept, Belle heard a sound behind her. She turned around and saw a large, shadowy figure standing in the trees.

The figure stepped out of the shadows and into the moonlight. Belle gasped in horror. It was the Beast.

The Beast was a monstrous creature. He had the body of a lion, the head of a bull, and the wings of an eagle. His eyes were red, and his teeth were sharp.

Belle stared at the Beast in terror. She had never seen anything so terrifying in her life.

The Beast looked at Belle and growled.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"My name is Belle," she said. "I'm looking for my father."

"Your father is here," the Beast said. "He is my prisoner."

"Please let him go," Belle said. "He's all I have."

The Beast laughed.

"Why should I let him go?" he asked. "He trespassed on my property. He stole from me."

"He didn't mean to," Belle said. "He was just trying to find food for his family."

The Beast snorted.

"I don't care," he said. "He broke the law. And for that, he must pay."

"Please," Belle said. "Don't hurt him. Take me instead."

The Beast looked at Belle in surprise.

"Why would I take you?" he asked.

"Because I'm young and healthy," Belle said. "I can work for you. I can do anything you want me to do."

The Beast considered Belle's offer for a moment.

"Very well," he said. "I will take you instead of your father. But know this, Beauty, you are now my prisoner. And you will never leave this castle again."

Belle sighed. She knew that she had no choice but to accept the Beast's offer. She would do anything to save her father.

The Beast led Belle back to the castle and locked her in a tower room. Belle looked out the window of the tower and saw that the castle was surrounded by a moat of gears. She knew that she was trapped.

Belle spent the next few days in the tower room, waiting for the Beast to come and get her. She was scared, but she also felt a strange sense of

curiosity about the Beast. She had never met anyone like him before.

One day, the Beast came to the tower room and opened the door. Belle looked up at him in surprise.

"What do you want?" she asked.

"I want to talk to you," the Beast said.

Belle hesitated for a moment, but then she nodded.

"Very well," she said. "What do you want to talk about?"

The Beast sat down next to Belle on the bed.

"I want to know why you offered to take my place," he said.

"Because I love my father," Belle said. "I would do anything to save him."

The Beast looked at Belle in surprise.

"You love him?" he asked.

"Yes," Belle said. "He's all I have."

The Beast nodded.

"I understand," he said. "I love my father too."

Belle looked at the Beast in surprise.

"You do?" she asked.

"Yes," the Beast said. "He was a good man. He loved me very much."

The Beast paused for a moment and then continued.

"I miss him very much," he said. "Every day."

Belle felt sorry for the Beast. She could see the pain in his eyes.

"I'm sorry," she said. "I didn't know."

The Beast smiled sadly.

"That's okay," he said. "It's not your fault."

The Beast and Belle talked for hours that day. They talked about their lives, their hopes, and their dreams. Belle learned that the Beast was not as bad as she had thought. He was lonely and misunderstood.

As the days turned into weeks, Belle and the Beast spent more and more time together. They talked, they laughed, and they shared their secrets. Belle began to see the real Beast behind the monstrous exterior. He was kind, gentle, and intelligent. He was also lonely and in pain.

Belle began to fall in love with the Beast. She loved his kindness, his intelligence, and his vulnerability. She loved the way he made her laugh. She loved the way he looked at her.

One day, the Beast asked Belle to marry him. Belle was surprised, but she also knew that she loved him. She said yes.

The Beast and Belle were married in a small ceremony in the forest. The animals of the forest were their guests. They danced and sang and celebrated the happy couple.

After the wedding, the Beast and Belle returned to the castle. They lived happily ever after.

The End.



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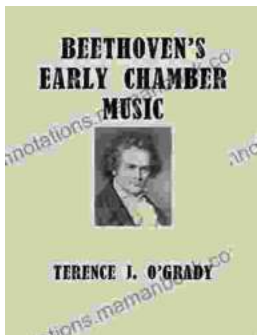






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