

The Ice Castle Clock



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High on a snowy mountain stood a castle made all of ice. Its towers sparkled like diamonds, and its walls shone like glass. Princess Elsa lived there with a long platinum braid over her shoulder and a silver tiara on her head. Her ice blue gown had tiny snowflakes sewn across it, and her big blue eyes were always watching and thinking. Everybody in the castle felt happy and safe.



In the great hall hung a wonderful clock. It was tall as a doorway, with a round silver face and numbers that glowed soft blue. Around its middle it wore a scarf of frozen mist. Its pendulum was a long icicle that swung with a gentle tick, tick, tick. The clock did not tell the time. It told the temperature, and today the numbers were perfectly cold.



Elsa loved that clock. Every morning she stopped to say hello. "Good morning," she chimed, and the clock chimed back. Its tiny snowflake eyes twinkled as it spoke in soft bells. "All is cold and cozy today, Princess." Elsa smiled and pulled on her soft blue gloves. Then she skipped off to check the castle, humming as she went.



Down the hall lived Olaf, a small snowman with three round snowballs, twig arms, and a carrot nose. He loved warm hugs, even though he was made of snow. Beside him trotted Bruni, a little reindeer with fluffy brown fur, small antlers, and a blue ribbon around his neck. Bruni sniffed the air and wiggled his fuzzy tail. Together they followed Elsa everywhere.



That morning, the clock's hands began to move. Tick, tick, tick, they crept higher and higher, and the glowing numbers climbed too. The clock chimed, a little worried. "Princess, the temperature is rising. The castle is getting warm." Elsa looked up at the round silver face. She did not gasp or cry. She put one finger on her chin and started to think.



Elsa knew every corner of her ice castle. She knew which walls were thick and which were thin. She knew where the cold wind liked to hide. "If the castle gets too warm," she said slowly, "the ice could soften and drip." Olaf's coal eyes went wide. "Drip? Not drip!" Elsa patted his twig arm. "Don't worry. We can fix this, but we must make a plan."



Elsa sat down on a frosty bench and drew her plan in the snow with one blue glove. "First, we open every chilly window to let the cold wind in. Second, we move snow to the weak, sunny spots. Third, we check the clock often to see if our plan is working." Olaf bounced up and down. "A plan! I love plans!" Bruni stamped his little hooves and nodded.



They started right away. Elsa hurried from room to room, opening windows wide. A fresh, icy breeze whooshed inside, making the curtains flutter. "Brrr, that's chilly!" laughed Olaf, and his carrot nose wiggled. Bruni raced ahead, sniffing for warm drafts with his big dark eyes. Whenever he found one, he sneezed a tiny sneeze, and Elsa closed the window beside it.



Next came the snow. Olaf rolled big snowballs with his twig arms, and Bruni pulled a tiny sled piled high with white snow. Elsa carried armfuls to the sunny walls where the ice looked thin and shiny. "Right here," she said, patting a bright spot. "We pile snow here to keep this wall cool and strong." Together they worked, humming a happy working song.



The clock kept ticking, and everyone kept checking. "What do you say, friend?" Elsa asked. The clock's number glowed, still a little high. "Climbing slowly, Princess," it chimed. "Keep going." So Elsa opened one more window and Olaf rolled one more snowball. Bruni sniffed and sniffed until his ribbon wobbled. Nobody gave up, and nobody grumbled. They simply watched the clock and did their careful work.



Then the clock's hands stopped climbing. For a long moment, everything was quiet. Suddenly the numbers began to glow a cool, calm blue. Tick, tick, tick, the hands crept back down. The clock chimed a bright, happy note. "The temperature is falling! The castle is cooling!" Elsa clapped her gloved hands, and Olaf spun in a snowy circle. "We did it! We really did it!"



Elsa did not stop yet. She walked every hallway and checked every wall. With Bruni sniffing and Olaf carrying snow, she filled the last thin spots until the ice gleamed thick and strong. "Safety first," she said with a gentle smile. "A good plan is only finished when everyone is truly safe." The castle glowed bright and blue in the mountain sunshine.



That evening, the castle sparkled brighter than ever. The clock swung its icicle pendulum gently and spoke in soft bells. "Thank you, Princess. Your planning kept me cool and the castle strong." Elsa sat beside it with Olaf and Bruni. "Thank you for your readings," she said. "You warned us early, so we had time to fix things before they got big."



Olaf made a tiny snow crown for Brunu's little antlers, and Brunu did a happy hop. Everyone laughed, and the sound bounced off the shiny ice walls. Elsa looked around at her beautiful home, safe and cold and glittering. "Watching and planning ahead," she said, "can stop big problems before they ever start." The clock chimed softly, as if it agreed.



From that day on, Elsa checked the clock every single morning. Sometimes the numbers rose a little, and sometimes they stayed low. But Elsa was never worried, because she always had a plan. Open a window, move some snow, check again. Small steps, done carefully, kept the whole castle safe. Olaf and Brunni were always ready to help.



And when the sun was warm and the clock began to climb, Elsa would smile at her friends and say, "Ready, team?" Bruni stamped his hooves, and Olaf bounced high. Then the three of them would get to work, humming together. The ice castle stayed strong and sparkling, watched over by a clever princess and her helpful, friendly clock. The end.