

## **Karic Mini #13 — The Lantern Tree**

On the far edge of Edriithae stood a strange tree no one dared to touch. Its branches glowed at night, as if tiny lanterns hung from every leaf.

One quiet evening, a small girl named Liora wandered too close. She didn't mean to — she simply followed a firefly drifting lazily through the field. When the firefly landed on the tree, the branches bent down gently, like they recognized her.

Liora reached out.

Instead of fear, she felt warmth — soft, like sunlight through winter glass. The tree pulsed with ancient Stardust magic and whispered images into her mind: dragons soaring, oceans glittering, futures unfolding like maps.

The lanterns weren't lanterns at all.

They were wishes.

Every dream ever whispered into the night had taken root there, patiently glowing, waiting for someone brave enough to believe again.

Liora pressed her forehead to the bark.  
"I'll protect you," she promised.

The tree brightened, and far away — unknown to Liora — someone else felt the light awaken and started walking toward it.

Because some promises echo — and they always attract those who fear them.

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## **Karic Mini #14 — Milo and the Clockwork Meadow**

Milo loved exploring.

Barns, creeks, haylofts — he thought he had discovered everything.

Until the meadow changed.

Where wildflowers once grew, gears now ticked softly in the grass. Silver petals opened and closed like clock hands. A gentle *hum* filled the air, steady as breathing.

Milo crouched beside a metallic daisy.

“Who built you?”

The flower chirped — actually chirped — and its stem twisted, pointing toward the old windmill hill.

So Milo climbed.

At the top, he found something unbelievable: an ancient machine half-buried beneath roots and soil. Pipes curled like vines. Brass wheels turned with patient, thoughtful rhythm. In its center pulsed a quiet blue heart.

A voice — not loud, but clear — spoke inside his chest.

### **KEEP THE WORLD TURNING.**

Milo swallowed. “How?”

The machine showed him images: storms guided gently away, crops timed to bloom, nights stretched or softened so families had one more moment together.

It wasn't meant to control time.

It guarded hope.

Milo placed his hand on the warm metal. “Then I'll help guard it, too.”

The gears sang — brighter, lighter — and the meadow bloomed again, half-wild and half-wonder, ticking softly beneath the sun.