

## The Forest Compass

Ella had always been fascinated by the forest that bordered her small town. One foggy morning, she ventured deeper than ever before. Birds chirped overhead, and dewdrops clung to the leaves like tiny jewels.

Suddenly, she stumbled upon a moss-covered compass lying at the base of an ancient oak. Oddly, the needle didn't point north. It spun and settled toward a dense thicket of trees.

Curious, Ella followed its direction. She crossed a brook, climbed over gnarled roots, and finally arrived at a glade lit with strange golden light.

In the center stood a stone pedestal. The compass began to vibrate in her hand. She placed it on the pedestal, and with a low rumble, the ground shifted to reveal a spiral staircase descending into the earth.

Ella smiled. Her quiet town had just become the start of an extraordinary journey.