

The Nutcracker



Illustrated by Fran Mangiacasale



It's Christmas Eve and the Stahlbaum family are preparing for their guests.



Clara decorates the tree with her brother Fritz, their parents bring out delicious food and drink, and everyone is very excited.

Suddenly, Uncle Drosselmeyer arrives, much to the delight of the whole family. He entertains them all with some magic tricks and then it's time to swap gifts. Fritz receives a toy gun but Clara's present, a beautiful Nutcracker doll, is the best of all. She instantly falls in love with it and dances happily.



Fritz starts to become jealous. He tries to grab the Nutcracker from Clara and breaks the arm. Clara is distraught but Uncle Drosselmeyer fixes the doll and calm is restored.

The children grow sleepy and Mother takes them to bed. Uncle Drosselmeyer says goodnight and leaves, and the parents also retire. When the household is settled, Clara creeps back into the living room and finds her beloved Nutcracker amongst her other toys. She lies down and falls asleep next to her lovely present.



At the stroke of midnight, Uncle Drosselmeyer appears and creates a magic spell in the room. Clara suddenly awakes; her Nutcracker doll has disappeared and she is confronted by a life-size King Rat and his allies.



Clara's Nutcracker doll has grown to the size of a man. He fights and defeats King Rat but he is injured.

Clara is very upset but the Nutcracker soon recovers and becomes a handsome young Prince. The couple dance a romantic duet.



The house becomes a magical place, snow starts to fall and the Snow Queen welcomes Clara and the Nutcracker Prince to a beautiful new land.



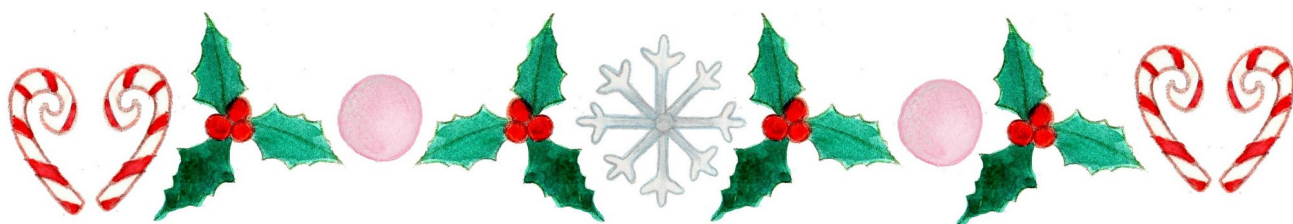
Clara's toys come to life.....



Her Porcelain Doll, Jumping Jack, Candy King and the beautiful Sugar Plum Fairy all celebrate the couple's love with magical dances.



For the grand finale they all dance the gorgeous Waltz of the Flowers together.



The magical dream is over and Uncle Drosselmeyer appears once again bringing everything back to normal. He carries Clara in his arms and gently places her under the Christmas tree. She wakes up still holding her beloved Nutcracker doll.





