

The nutcracker and the mouse king

A German Christmas tale

Once upon a time, in a beautiful city covered in snow, there lived a girl named Clara. It was Christmas Eve, and her family was holding a wonderful party, with music, crowds of guests and an enormous Christmas tree covered in lights and decorations.

Her uncle Drosselmeyer was a mysterious man who seemed to know a little magic. He gave her a very special toy: a nutcracker shaped like a soldier. The little soldier looked strong and elegant, with a broad smile and a brightly coloured uniform. Clara was delighted. This would be her new treasure.

That night, after the guests had left and the house had grown quiet, Clara placed the nutcracker beside the tree and went to sleep. But at midnight something extraordinary happened. The Christmas tree began to grow! It grew taller and taller, until it seemed to reach the ceiling. Suddenly, all the toys beneath it began to move, as if by magic.

The nutcracker, now as tall as a boy, had come to life!

“Clara! Clara! I need your help!” he called.

Clara opened her eyes in astonishment. “What is it?”

The nutcracker explained that the wicked mouse king was planning to steal all the toys and the magic of Christmas.

Just then, the mouse king appeared, wearing seven crowns, with an army of enormous mice behind him. But the nutcracker was not afraid. He drew a sword and, with Clara and an army of toy soldiers to help him, bravely fought the mice. Clara flung a shoe at the mouse king. He landed on his bottom and scurried away, followed by his entire army.

When it was over, the nutcracker turned to Clara and smiled.

“You have saved Christmas!” he said.

At that moment, another magical thing happened: the nutcracker turned into a real prince! He took Clara’s hand.

“Now come with me to my kingdom!”

Together they climbed into a sleigh made of sweets and flew to the Kingdom of Sweets. There were sugar castles, chocolate flowers and lakes of jelly. Clara met the queen of Sweets, who arranged a splendid show of dancing to honour her courage.

When the celebration ended, Clara drifted gently off to sleep. The next morning she woke at home beneath the Christmas tree, holding her nutcracker. Had it all been a dream? She could not be sure… But when she looked at the little soldier, he seemed to be smiling more than ever.