

The steadfast tin soldier

Once upon a time, in an old house, there was a box of toys filled with life and magic. Among them stood a little tin soldier who was special: he had only one leg. He had been the last soldier made, and there had not been enough tin for the second leg. But that made him no less brave or special.

Every night, when the children slept and the house grew quiet, the toys came to life. Standing firmly at his post, the soldier looked around with curiosity. In the middle of the toy box was a lovely paper ballerina, her white skirt shining in the moonlight. She turned and turned on one slender leg.

The soldier was captivated by her grace and beauty. From that moment, he knew he loved her. As the other toys played and laughed, he watched quietly, dreaming of going closer.

One day a gust of wind swept through the window and carried him out of the toy box. He rolled to the windowsill and fell outside. Bravely, he stood up and decided he must return to his beloved ballerina. And so his adventures began.

First he fell into a gutter, where rushing water swept him into the drain. There he met some spiteful rats who tried to catch him, but with courage and determination he escaped.

Later, some children found him, placed him in a paper boat and sent him down the river. He sailed through rough water, past curious fish and dangerous whirlpools. Eventually the boat fell apart, and the soldier sank. An enormous fish swallowed him, leaving him in the darkness of its belly.

As fate would have it, a fisherman caught the fish and took it to market. The soldier was discovered inside and returned to the very house where his journey had begun. He was dirty and exhausted, but his heart still beat for the ballerina.

With great effort, he made his way to the toy box. There she stood, as beautiful as ever. Seeing him, she stopped turning and hurried to his side. Although they were made of different materials, they shared a love that could overcome any obstacle.

The other toys, admiring his courage and devotion, organised a party in his honour. That night, beneath the moonlight, the soldier and ballerina danced together for the first time. They turned as though the whole world had vanished around them.

During the celebration, the toys shared stories of their own adventures and challenges, but none was as exciting as the soldier’s. The ballerina looked into his eyes.

“You’ve shown courage and love unlike anything I’ve seen. I love you, little soldier.”

His eyes shining with happiness, he replied:

“And I love you, ballerina. Nothing will ever part us again.”

From that day, they lived happily together, dancing in the moonlight every night. The other toys admired and respected them, knowing that love and courage could find a way through difficulties.

And so, in a magical toy box, the soldier and the paper ballerina found their happy ending, showing that true love was stronger than any obstacle.