

The Nutcracker by P. Tchaikovsky

The story starts on Christmas Eve in the house of Clara and Fritz Stalbaum. The atmosphere is a festive one, with Christmas decorations hung up everywhere. The children and their parents are waiting for their family and friends to arrive as they will be having a party.

The guests start to arrive, among whom we find Drosselmeyer, the toymaker. He gives out toys to the children – dolls to the girls and bugles to the boys. He gives Clara a Nutcracker and Fritz a beautiful drum. Fritz gets jealous and steals the Nutcracker. He throws it to his friends and as it is thrown around the room, it breaks. Clara is upset, but the toy-maker repairs it for her. His nephew makes a bed for the Nutcracker to sleep under the Christmas Tree.

The party ends and Clara falls asleep under the tree, holding the Nutcracker in her arms. When she wakes up, everything around her has magically changed. She has shrunk in size and everything else has grown! She sees groups of mice led by the Mouse King fighting the toy soldiers, led by the Nutcracker. The soldiers win the battle, and as she returns to the bed, it is transformed into a sleigh. The Nutcracker also transforms himself magically into a handsome prince, looking very much like the toy-maker's nephew. He drives the sleigh high up into a snowy magical forest.

They travel through the forest and find themselves in the magical Land of Sweets. Clara sees an astonishing sight – mountains made out of biscuits topped with cream, flowers and a scenery made out of nothing but sweets and butter icing. The Sugar Plum Fairy meets them and bids them welcome. After Clara and the Nutcracker tell her all they have been through, the Sugar Plum Fairy holds a great party for them. It is a magical party, full of fantastic and out of the ordinary characters and things. Clara and the Nutcracker see beautiful dancing ending in a waltz by the Sugar Plum Fairy and a handsome prince. As the party reaches the end, they bid farewell to the Sugar Plum Fairy, and as they leave on their sleigh, Clara falls asleep.

When she wakes up it is Christmas, and she is still asleep under the Christmas tree holding her beloved Nutcracker.