



At the Stahlbaum home in Shadyside it is Christmas Eve in the early 20th century. Outside, on the street, Godfather Drosselmeyer and his nephew arrive, and unload parcels from their carriage. As the guests arrive, they are greeted and introduced to the nephew, but they only see his deformed face, and are disgusted by his deformity, instead of seeing who he really was. Drosselmeyer shows his nephew the Nutcracker, as he tries to comfort him. He reveals the role the Nutcracker is to play on this magical night. The Stahlbaum's daughter, Marie is in her bedroom, reading, when her parents come in to give her her coming of age presents - a scarf and a pair of shoes. She admires her new image in the mirror and dreams of her future. The Christmas party has begun, and everyone is trimming the tree, exchanging gifts and dancing. Godfather Drosselmeyer presents Marie with the Nutcracker, and she loves it. He introduces his nephew to her, and she is charmed by him - she sees him for who he really is, and not only his deformed face. Marie is however upset by the last magic trick Godfather Drosselmeyer does, and flees to her bedroom. All the guests go home, and the family goes to bed for the night.

Act 1

Drosselmeyer sets the stage for the magic to come, by reappearing centre stage with a swirl of his cape. Close to midnight, Marie slips downstairs again to find her beloved nutcracker. She is not alone however, and she is overwhelmed by mice and enormous -human-sized rats. She faints, and when she comes around, she is under a spell, and the whole house with her. Everything comes to life and grows. Also the Nutcracker is now alive and life - sized. The rats and mice come back to attack Marie, but under the guidance of the Nutcracker, toy soldiers and storybook characters come to her rescue. The battle reaches its climax, and the compassion for the Nutcracker ensures them of victory over the rat king and his minions. The Nutcracker is transformed into a handsome prince. He sets off with Marie on a journey into the land of Enchantment, accompanied in this glittery, snowy world, by the Snow King and Queen.

Act 1 cont.

Godfather Drosselmeyer makes everything ready for Marie and her prince's return from the Land of Enchantment. The Sugar Plum Fairy and her cavalier greet Marie and the prince. The prince tells the tale of the Rat King's defeat, and how Marie saved his life by defeating the rat king. The Sugar Plum Fairy gives Marie a gift to show how grateful she is, and Marie dances with the flowers in saying thank you. A great feast begins, with dancers from many lands entertaining the couple. Each dance is a treasure for Marie to remember. The feast ends with a beautiful dance by the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier. A Christmas Day breaks on the street outside the Stahlbaum home, Marie's compassion has broken the Rat King's curse and the Nephew's face is handsome once again, but Marie wakes up in her bedroom. As she looks at the scarf, a souvenir of her visit to the Land of Enchantment, she wonders if it was all a dream. On her dressing table is her ever faithful friend, The Nutcracker.

Act 2

Instructions:

Fold page 1 in half. Cut out the booklet pages on pages 2 and 3, along the outside outlines. Fold the small top tab to the back, and open out again. Stack the pages on top of one another, with the title page on top. Glue the tabs to each other. Fold the tabs to the back, and glue the whole booklet onto the blank side of page 1. Let your child write the main ideas from the story onto the appropriate pages.