

The Nutcracker

An LAB Original Production Christensen/Neary DECEMBER 2015

ACT I OVERTURE: LOS ANGELES

SCENE ONE: ARRIVAL | THE HALLWAY

IT IS CHRISTMAS EVE in Los Angeles, 1912. On this clear winter night, everyone is hustling and busting to get to their holiday parties. The Staulbaum Family is preparing for its annual celebration. The Staulbaums have two children: Clara and Fritz. This year, Clara and Fritz are especially excited because their Uncle Drosselmeyer is joining the festivities. Uncle Drosselmeyer is loving and eccentric, and he makes wonderful, magical clocks and dolls. This Christmas, Uncle Drosselmeyer has a special gift for his favorite niece, Clara.

Clara and Fritz are in their home's hallway getting ready for the party. Clara is putting on her pointe shoes, as she dreams of becoming a ballerina one day. She plays with her favorite dolls, including Marie the Ballerina, Marie's Prince, and many other dolls from countries around the world. Fritz is annoying Clara and is trying to ruin her fun. Clara's girlfriends arrive and the girls play together. Mama and Papa are rushing to make sure all is ready for the party.

SCENE TWO: THE PARTY

This Christmas Eve party is a joy for Clara, but Fritz is ruining everything! Uncle Drosselmeyer arrives fashionably late, making a grand entrance with many surprises. He and Clara have a special bond, as he understands her love of dancing and she understands his love of dolls, clocks, and magic. Uncle Drosselmeyer gives a grandfather clock to Mama and Papa, and he presents beautiful dancing dolls to the children. There is a Russian Cossack, a Harlequin, and a lovely Columbine. He has brought another magical gift for Clara: a life-sized Nutcracker! It really does seem to be alive! Is it? Could it be? Clara believes that she hears the Nutcracker speak to her but thinks that she must be dreaming. Fritz makes fun of the Nutcracker, which upsets Clara. Suddenly, the Nutcracker seems to knock Fritz over! Clara is so concerned about the Nutcracker that her friends cannot get her attention. Finally, Papa calls everyone to dance, even the butlers and maids, and the party finishes with a special dance.

SCENE THREE: CLARA'S DREAM

After the party, Clara falls asleep holding her favorite doll, Marie. Her new Nutcracker sits at her bedside. Clara suddenly awakens! Is she dreaming? Where is her Nutcracker? And now her bed is moving! Uncle Drosselmeyer appears. Huge, frightening mice surround her. Fritz's collection of soldiers has grown tall, and the dolls that Uncle Drosselmeyer brought are dancing. The mice have a monstrous King who wants to capture Clara! Uncle Drosselmeyer calls in the Soldiers as the Nutcracker leads them into battle. The Mouse King tries to catch Clara, but the Nutcracker saves her, kills the Mouse King, and wins the battle.

Uncle Drosselmeyer leads Clara and her Nutcracker to the beautiful Land of Snow. Sparkling snowflakes appear and seem to dance just for them. Uncle Drosselmeyer leads Clara and the Nutcracker deeper into the Land of Snow, and then beyond, where Clara's dream continues...

ACT II SCENE ONE: CLARA'S DREAM CONTINUES | THE PALACE OF THE DOLLS

It is evening at the romantic Palace by the Sea. Attendants are preparing for the arrival of Clara and her Nutcracker. All of Clara's dolls are coming to life! Here at the palace are Marie; Marie's Prince; the Spanish, Arabian, and Russian Dolls; Clara's Harlequin and Columbine; and many beautiful Sunflowers.

Uncle Drosselmeyer, Clara, and the Nutcracker arrive by sled and are greeted by all the dolls. Clara is thrilled! Marie, the Prince, and all the living dolls from different lands dance for Clara and the Nutcracker. Her delight multiplies when Mother Ginger arrives with her little Hansels and Gretels. The highlights of the evening are a beautiful dance performed by Marie and her Prince and a grand finale where everyone dances together.

This wonderful Christmas Eve has been long, and Clara is becoming very sleepy. She falls asleep while her Nutcracker watches over her.

SCENE TWO: CLARA'S ROOM

Clara's parents find her fast asleep on her bedroom floor and they gently put her back into bed. Clara awakens, remembers, and wonders... THE END