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Peter Carl Geissler, a German artist who lived between 1802-1872, created this illustration of Dr. Wendelstern visiting Marie. The image is maintained at the Bamberg State Library.

After such a wild night observing fighting toys and battling mice, Marie (Clara) sleeps hard. Awaking, the next morning, she's surprised to see a visiting doctor. Why is he here?

As Marie relates what occurred, during the night-time war, no one believes her. Everyone thinks that her arm-cut must have caused a fever. No one, besides Marie, believes in the "other world."

Then ... Drosselmeier stops by.

When Marie woke up she was in bed and the sun was streaming through the windows. The first thing she noticed was the pattern of frost-flowers on the window panes. She turned her head and saw a man sitting by her bed.

She recognized this man—it was Dr. Wendelstern. Mama stood beside him, looking anxious.

“Oh, Mama,” whispered Marie. “Have all the mice gone?”

Dr. Wendelstern looked at Marie’s mother and raised his eyebrows.

“What are you talking about?” answered her mother. “You were playing so late last night that you must have fallen fast asleep against the cabinet, broken the glass and cut your arm. I found you on the floor surrounded by broken toys, gingerbread men and Fritz’s soldiers. Nutcracker was lying on your injured arm and your shoe was on the floor nearby.”

“But, Mama,” protested Marie, “there was a terrible battle and the mice nearly took Nutcracker prisoner!”

At this, Marie’s father came in. Marie heard him whispering to Dr. Wendelstern something about “wound fever.”

Unfortunately for Marie, she had to stay in bed for several days after that, although she didn’t even feel sick. She knew that Nutcracker was safe, for she could clearly remember that he had thanked her. Strangely, he had added: “But dearest lady, you have the power to do even more for me.”

Try as she might, Marie could not think what this could be.

One day Mama had just finished telling her a story when Godpapa Drosselmeier came by to check how the invalid was doing. Marie looked at him crossly and cried, “Godpapa, why didn’t you help Nutcracker last night?”

Drosselmeier made an extraordinary face and, jerking his arms up and down like a jumping jack, started to snarl:

*Click, clack
Snickety snack,
Clocks whirr,
Dolls crack!*

Fritz, who had just come in, burst out laughing. Mama, however, looked gravely serious at Drosselmeier and asked: “What can you mean by this behavior?”

“Haven’t you heard my watchmaker’s song,” smiled Drosselmeier. Now don’t be cross with me, Marie. Look ... I have something that will please you.”

Drosselmeier reached into his pocket and took out ... Nutcracker! His teeth were back. His jaw was fixed.

“But he’s still very ugly,” said Drosselmeier, “and if you like, I’ll tell you why. It’s because of Princess Pirlipat, the witch Mouserink and the clever clockmaker.”

“Where’s Nutcracker’s sword,” asked Fritz suddenly.

“Don’t interrupt, boy!” snapped Drosselmeier. He’ll just have to find another sword for himself. Now, Marie, would you like to hear the story of Pirlipat?”

“Yes, please!” cried Marie.

So Drosselmeier began his story, like this.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/The-Invalid>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/The-Invalid>