



0. Drosselmeier Continues - Story Preface

1. Christmas Eve

2. The Presents

3. Marie's Pet

4. Wonderful Events

5. The Battle

6. The Invalid

7. The Story of Pirlipat

8. Drosselmeier Continues

9. Crackatook

10. Uncle and Nephew

11. Victory

12. Land of Sweets

13. The Metropolis

14. Conclusion

Illustration, of "The Nutcracker," by Maxim Mitrofanov, a prolific Russian artist who illustrates children's books (among other things). Copyright, Maxim Mitrofanov, all rights reserved. Image of the sleeping women and sleeping cats—leaving Princess Pirlipat very vulnerable to an attack by Dame Mouserink—provided here as fair use for educational purposes. Mitrofanov's illustrations appear in a version of Hoffman's tale—"The Nutcracker and the Mouse King"—translated into Russian by I. Tatarinov and published by Rosmen-Press in 2011.

As Marie (Clara) hears her godfather's story, she starts to wonder if Drosselmeier is more than just a storyteller. When she asks him if he was involved, he gives her a mysterious smile.

Sometimes a mysterious smile is actually the answer to a question. Is Drosselmeier's smile an answer to Marie's question?

"And now you know why Pirlipat's nursery was full of cats," said Godpapa Drosselmeier. Marie looked at him and asked:

Was it really you who invented mousetraps?

Drosselmeier smiled mysteriously, then continued with his story.

"One dark night, soon after Pirlipat was born, one of her head nurses woke-up from a very deep sleep. Everything was very quiet. There was not a purr to be heard. Imagine the nurse's total shock when she saw - in Pirlipat's cradle - an enormous mouse with her head on the Princess' face!

"Her screams woke-up all the other nurses and the cats, who chased Dame Mouserink off through a hole in the skirting. Then Pirlipat started to cry. Thanks goodness - she was still alive! The nurses looked into her cradle and - horror of horrors! What had Pirlipat turned into??"

"Her beautiful face was now a bloated head wobbling on top of a horrid, crumpled body. Her lovely blue eyes were now ghastly green orbs staring back above a mouth that stretched from ear to ear!

"When her parents saw Pirlipat, the queen was inconsolable. She sobbed and sobbed and sobbed. The king banged his head against the palace walls. But instead of knocking some sense into him, and making him see that perhaps he should have eaten his sausages without bacon and forgiven the greedy mice, the king ... blamed the clockmaker.

"His Majesty issued an edict saying that if Drosselmeier didn't restore Princess Pirlipat within four weeks, the court executioner would chop-off his head.

"Drosselmeier didn't have much time. He took Princess Pirlipat carefully to pieces, unscrewing her hands and feet and examining her insides. But when he had finished, and put her back together, he

shook his head, dejectedly, and ... gave up.

“Wednesday of the fourth week arrived:

‘Drosselmeier, restore Pirlipat or prepare to die!’

“The clockmaker started to weep. Little Pirlipat sat staring at him, a large nut in her mouth. Through his tears, Drosselmeier looked at the ugly child. He realized that ever since her transformation, the only thing that stopped her crying was when a nurse gave her a nut to crack.

“Drosselmeier suddenly realized something. He called for his old friend, the court astrologer.

“After they greeted each other, they locked themselves away for three days and nights to consult the stars. They pored over many mysterious books. They peered through a telescope. They drew-up the Princess’ horoscope. At last - joy of joys - they found the solution.

“At dinner on Saturday, Drosselmeier told the king what he had discovered. The one thing that could lift the spell cast upon Pirlipat was if she ate the kernel of the great nut Crackatook.

“Crackatook’s shell was so hard that a forty-eight pound cannon couldn’t smash it. Crackatook had to be cracked, in front of the princess, by a man who’d never shaven and never worn any boots. What’s more, the man had to hand her the kernel with his eyes shut and take seven steps backwards without tripping-up.

“When he heard the news, the king hugged Drosselmeier and said:

Well then, my friend. What are you waiting for?

“But now the clockmaker trembled and stammered out that he had not yet found the great nut Crackatook or the man to crack it. The King was quick to respond:

What?? Then off with your head!

“It was lucky for Drosselmeier that the king ate a particularly good dinner that evening, and for once he listened to the queen’s advice. Feeling sorry for the clockmaker, she persuaded the king to let Drosselmeier search for the nut. Meanwhile, she suggested, His Majesty should advertise in the local and foreign newspapers and gazettes for the right man to crack Crakatook.

“Before the king could change his mind, Drosselmeier and the astrologer set off, vowing not to return until they had found the nut.

“The companions traveled for fifteen long years. They spent two years at the court of the King of Dates. Then they searched the realm of the King of Almonds - but were soon expelled from there. They even asked at the Natural History Society in Squirreltown. But they couldn’t find the great Crackatook anywhere.

“At last they sat down in the middle of a great forest in Asia, smoking their pipes, when Drosselmeier had a sudden desire to see his hometown of Nuremberg.

*Nuremberg, oh Nuremberg, my beautiful town.
Your houses have windows both upstairs and down.*

“The astrologer felt so sorry for his friend, and his friend’s homesickness, that they both burst into tears. Their loud sobs startled all the radiant birds and roaring beasts who lived in the vast, shady forest.

“Then the astrologer had an idea:

Why not Nuremberg? Let’s look there!

“Drosselmeier totally agreed:

Why not indeed? Let’s look there!

“Off the two men went to Nuremberg.”

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

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Drosselmeier-Continues>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Drosselmeier-Continues>