



# The Nutcracker and the Mouse King

*E. T. A. Hoffmann*

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## **The Nutcracker and the Mouse King** E. T. A. Hoffmann

*Marie kept gazing at the dear little man, whom she had loved at first sight, and she saw what a kind face he had. His pale-green, slightly protuberant eyes expressed nothing but friendliness and goodwill. And the neat white cotton-wool beard on his chin suited the little man very well, setting off the sweet smile of his bright-red mouth.*

*The Nutcracker and the Mouse King* is well-loved by many as the inspiration for Tchaikovsky's famous ballet, performed as a Christmas spectacle the world over. The ballet was based on a French retelling of the story, and Hoffmann's German original is rarely translated in its entirety. In addition to telling the familiar tale of the gentle young girl and her love for the enchanted Nutcracker, who leads the toy soldiers in a battle against the wicked Mouse King and whisks her away to the Land of Toys, the original text also includes the story of the cursed Princess Pirlipat and the hard nut, which explains the background of how the poor Nutcracker came to be. This sumptuous volume, published to celebrate the bicentenary of the tale's first publication, brings together the complete, unabridged German classic in a new translation by the eminent translator Anthea Bell, with more than 70 breathtaking illustrations by the award-winning artist Robert Ingpen.

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