

# Beethoven Bear and Mozart Mouse and the Nutcracker

It was a quiet day in December. Outside, snow was drifting gently to the ground. Inside, the music friends had just finished decorating the play-room Christmas tree. Mozart Mouse adjusted one more ornament, and then he stepped back from the tree to admire their work. Beethoven Bear flipped the switch, and twinkling lights began to glow on every branch. The tree was perfect!

After looking at the tree for a few moments, Beethoven Bear asked, "What should we do next?" He could feel his tummy rumbling and hoped that someone would suggest that perhaps they could eat a little snack.

"Do you want to read a story?" Mozart Mouse suggested.

"Oh, I don't know," Beethoven Bear hesitated.

"Do you want to play with some toys?" J. S. Bunny asked shyly.

"Not really," he said, sadly.

"We could wrap some presents," Elgar E. Elephant offered.

Just as Beethoven Bear let out a long sigh, Nannerl Mouse called from across the room. "Hey, everybody! Come here! I just found some new costumes in the trunk!"

Beethoven Bear's eyes lit up. "Let's go!" he cried.

The music friends ran across the room and skidded to a stop in front of the trunk. Nannerl began to pull out one costume after another. "Look! Here's a flower costume. And here is one that looks like it's from China." She began to lay them out on the floor around the trunk.

"These look like soldier's uniforms," J. S. Bunny said, joining in. Soon, other costumes were piled on the floor—ones from Russia, Arabia, and even one for a beautiful ballerina. From the bottom of the trunk, Nannerl pulled out a wooden Nutcracker.

"What do you think all of this is?" she asked.

Nina Ballerina had been looking at each costume, deep in thought. When she saw the Nutcracker, she let out a little cry of delight. "Oh, I know exactly what these are!"

The music friends crowded around, everyone talking at once.

"What?"

"Tell us, Nina."

Nina smiled and answered, "These costumes look like they are from a famous ballet by Peter Tchaikovsky. It's called *The Nutcracker*, and I remember seeing my parents dance in it when we lived in Russia. It's performed at Christmas time in cities all over the world."

"Can you tell us the story?" Mozart Mouse asked.

"Yes, but I have a better idea. I'll tell the story, and then all of you can dress up in the costumes and act it out."

Beethoven Bear suddenly forgot

All the music friends giggled to see Elgar E. Elephant dance the Trépak. Soon, however, they cheered loudly as he crossed his arms and kicked his feet out, just like a true Russian Cossack! He really was quite limber for his size. Professor Haydn Hippo and Puccini Pooch couldn't resist joining in with him. The three made an impressive dancing trio, leaping through the air. For a moment, it almost looked like they were flying!



## Russian Dance (Trépak)

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Arr. by Barden, Kowalchyk and Lancaster

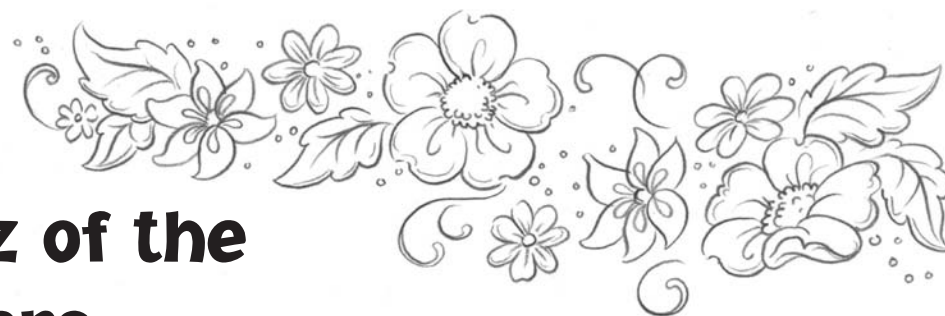
**Fast**

Student plays one octave higher with duet part.

**Fast (in 2)**

Teacher or Parent

There were flower costumes for everyone! Clara and the Prince watched from their throne as their music friends all joined in this last dance. They swayed to the music of the waltz, spinning gracefully across the playroom floor. When the dance was over, they turned and bowed to Clara and the Prince, who gave them a standing ovation.



## Waltz of the Flowers

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Arr. by Barden, Kowalchyk and Lancaster

Moderate waltz tempo

Student plays one octave higher with duet part.

Moderate waltz tempo