

# Coppélia



## Act I

Many years ago in a small village in the middle of Europe, there lived a doll maker named Dr. Coppélius. Our story begins one fine summer morning as Dr. Coppélius emerges from his workshop to admire his latest creation, Coppélia. There she sits in his window – his masterpiece, so lifelike, so beautiful. No one would ever suspect she's only a doll. She sits motionless with her book on the balcony of Dr. Coppélius's toyshop, attracting the attention of passersby.

Swanhilda and Franz, young lovers about to be married, are each fascinated by Coppélia, but for very different reasons! In fact, the entire village is curious about Dr. Coppélius and what goes on in his mysterious workshop. They mock the eccentric old man, but they are also somewhat afraid of him. Does he have magical powers?

The mayor of the village proclaims the next day the Festival of the Bells. Any couple married on that day would be given a bag of gold. If a young woman is unsure of her lover, tradition proclaims she can listen to a stalk of wheat. Only if her lover is true will she hear a reply. Swanhilda does not hear a reply, so she flees from Franz and the villagers in her disappointment.

Later that evening, old Dr. Coppélius decides to walk around the village square. He locks his workshop door and begins his walk, not noticing he has dropped his key. Swanhilda and her friends find the key and secretly let themselves into his toyshop.

## Act II

Once inside Dr. Coppélius' toyshop, Swanhilda and her friends are delighted to find mechanical wind-up figurines and Coppélia, still sitting with her book in the window. When Swanhilda tries to greet Coppélia and gets no response, she sees that Coppélia is only a doll! Returning from his walk, Dr. Coppélius furiously chases the girls away, not realizing, however, that Swanhilda has disguised herself as Coppélia.

Following love as well as curiosity, Franz climbs through the window to look for Coppélia. Dr. Coppélius decides to take advantage of Franz's belief that Coppélia is a real girl. In mock hospitality, he pours Franz a drink, but secretly adds a magic sleeping potion to it. Franz is soon overwhelmed by Dr. Coppélius's magic potion and falls into a deep sleep.

Consulting his book of magic, the doll maker believes he has brought Coppélia to life by drawing energy from the sleeping Franz. Swanhilda, dressed in Coppélia's clothes, dances as Dr. Coppélius directs but soon tires of the charade. Coppélius is plunged into despair when he finds out that Coppélia is really Swanhilda. Franz awakes just in time to save Swanhilda from the angry toymaker. The two lovers reconcile and escape together.

## Act III

The day of the Festival of Bells begins. Village couples unite in holiday dress and dance before the Mayor.

The bells are rung for Dawn, Prayer, Work, War, Peace, Desire and other golden hours. It is a day of celebration. Swanhilda and Franz are to be married.

Dr. Coppélius arrives on the scene upset about the damages to his workshop. Swanhilda offers to give him her bag of gold, but the mayor gives the old doll maker a bag of gold to make amends and all is forgiven.