The Story

As the story begins, the orphans are preparing for the holiday visit of Orphanage’s Governors. The entire Orphanage scene is in the tradition a musical where the feature production is a kind of gala performance for the Governors. In this performance of homely orphans, the Dross’ children Sugar and Fritz are the principle dancers for whom the orphans merely serve as an anonymous corps. However the Matron and Dr. Dross get their own moment of fame, a Cruella de Vil number for the Matron and a barbells and hoops for Drosss. However all too soon the performance is over and the Governors depart. Dross and his wife drop their festive marks and soon the toys and holiday decorations are rounded up and taken away including Clara’s beloved Nutcracker Doll.

**Note:** Perhaps Bourne is commenting on the fictive, performative nature of Christmas – that just as the holiday season passes, the good behaviour and kindness of the season also soon passes.

Night time at the Orphanage brings the Nutcracker Doll to life as a somewhat creepy manikin. Instead of the battle of the mice and toy soldiers, Bourne gives us ‘The Revolt’ of the orphans who bundle the whole Dross family from the stage. Soon the Nutcracker transforms from a life sized puppet into the object of young Clara’s daytime infatuation, a fellow orphan but now a pumped up muscle god, bare chested, strapping and studly. Instead of the traditional choreography, Bourne crates a ‘Mr Universe – rejecting familiar models of balletic masculine.

In the next section, Bourne continues to re-work cultural material changing the Waltz of the Snowflakes into an ice skating wonderland. Bourne uses the falling snow to show the childlike pleasure everyone feels when it begins to snow. The Dross children re-appear as Princess Sugar and Prince Bon-Bon, who scheme to romance the Nutcracker away from Clara, and as the curtain falls, the Nutcracker and Princess Sugar are the stars of their own ice follies while the abandoned Clara retreats to an enormous pillow at the back of the stage.

**ACT TWO**

After a quick ‘mini-extreme Makeover’ with the help of the obliging Cupids, Clara sheds her drab, formless orphan dress for a bright blue, summer dress with polka dots and proceeds to Sweetieland in search for love. Will she get into Sweetieland in time to prevent the marriage of the Nutcracker and Princess Sugar?

To get past the Humbug Bouncer, Clara tries to sneak in with the wedding guests. Liquorice Allsorts – Brill cream and butt slapping

Knickerbocker Glory – puffing away at a cigarette holder, thrusting pelvic actions over the floor.

Marshmellow girls – ditzy girls that resembling clipped poodles in fluffy pink.

Gobstoppers – bounding madly about like monkey’s in a mosh pit

Sweeiteland presided over by King Sherbert and Queen Candy has a Willy Wonka feel.

At one time or another (but mostly continuously) Sweetieland’s inhabitants indulge in licking, kissing, tasting, mouthing, lapping, slurping and other orally erotic behaviours. Sugar and Nutcracker taste each other, King Sherbert and Queen Candy taste the Nutcracker, the Knickerbocker Glory tastes Clara, the Gobstopper’s taste the Marshmellow girls, everybody tastes everybody else and even themselves. It becomes a rollicking, sugar shack lip smacking orgy.

**Everything is edible in Sweetieland and its inhabitants are judged not on how they look but how they taste!!**

Clara emerges from behind the Wedding cake and briefly distracts the Nutcracker but id hustled out of Sweetieland by the Humbug Bouncer. The wedding of the Nutcracker and Princess Sugar set to the Sugar Plum Fairy goes ahead creating the sense that the ‘wrong’ girl has gotten the guy. Fortunately for those weak hearted who insist on a happy ending, the evening ends with Clara’s awakening and eventual escape from the orphanage with the boy who is the real life model for the Nutcracker.

Differences between Bourne & Ballet

**Ballet / Original Version** **Bourne 2002**

Huge Victorian xmas party with large tree Orphanage with a twig

Party games, toys alive Games, keep fit

Guests Leave Governors leave

Toys V’s mice Dross family V’s Orphans pillow fight

Snowflake scene Frozen Lake

Celebration Wedding

Chocolate *Spanish Dance* Liquorice Allsorts

Coffee *Arabian Dance* Knickerbocker Glory

Tea *Chinese Dance* Marshmellow Girls

Trepak *Russian Dance* Gobstoppers Dance

Dance of the Flutes Mirlitons

Waltz of the Flowers Invitation to the party

Pas de deux and ensamble Wedding cake: licking dance: party