

Ransom

by J.A. Pak

The Snowman grinned malevolently as the Sugar Plum fairies shook in their tiny powdered boots.

"Santa has one more hour and then you're all marshmallow toasts!" the Snowman said. He laughed and he laughed. His evil plan? He wanted the key to time delivered to him personally by Santa or the death of all the Sugar Plum fairies and the eternal end of dreams. With the key he could hold winter forever in his arms—he was sick of melting, all his hopes and dreams sucked back into the indifferent earth. A genius of his caliber deserved so much more.

"So much more," he sighed.

The hour slowly ticked away. Maybe it was true. Maybe there was no such thing as Santa Claus. He would melt away yet again—but this time, he'd take the dreams of all the little children with him! A cry broke from his heart and he laughed and he laughed, the world trembling and shaking in sympathy—ah, his anguish was too much! With a bang the mountain side, so loaded with snow, exploded—a river of white came crashing down, capturing the luckless Snowman. Once again, all his cherished hopes and dreams buried alive.

