

Snowman Spicy and the Perfect Christmas Present

Once upon a time in a faraway land—a very cold land—there lived a snowman named Spicy. He was a special snowman, because he could walk, and talk, and sing! And sometimes ... he could even jump!

Spicy loved to sing songs in the moonlight. When the moon was full and round in the dark night sky, he would throw his head back and sing happy snowman songs.

One special holiday season, Spicy found a friend—a snow lady named Lala. She was a beautiful snow lady, and special like Spicy was. She had big glittering eyes. She loved to sing, too.

Spicy decided he wanted to give Lala a special present for Christmas. *Oh, what, oh what, can I give to Lala for Christmas?* he wondered, as he trudged through the snow. It has to be something special ... something different ... something big! Something she has never received before.



“Ouch!” Spicy yelped, as his big snowy body tumbled into a heap. “Oh no, I forgot about the frozen lake again.” He mumbled as he picked himself up from the ground.

“Hey, wait a minute ...”—he paused as an idea popped into his head. “Spicy, you’re brilliant! Yes, that’s what you’ll do for Lala. You’ll learn to ice skate to her favorite Christmas carol, and you’ll be the greatest ice skater ever. She will be so pleased. It will be her best Christmas present ever!”

Spicy laughed a happy snowman laugh. He took a big step out onto the ice. But his great big snowy body slipped, and he fell down hard on the ice.

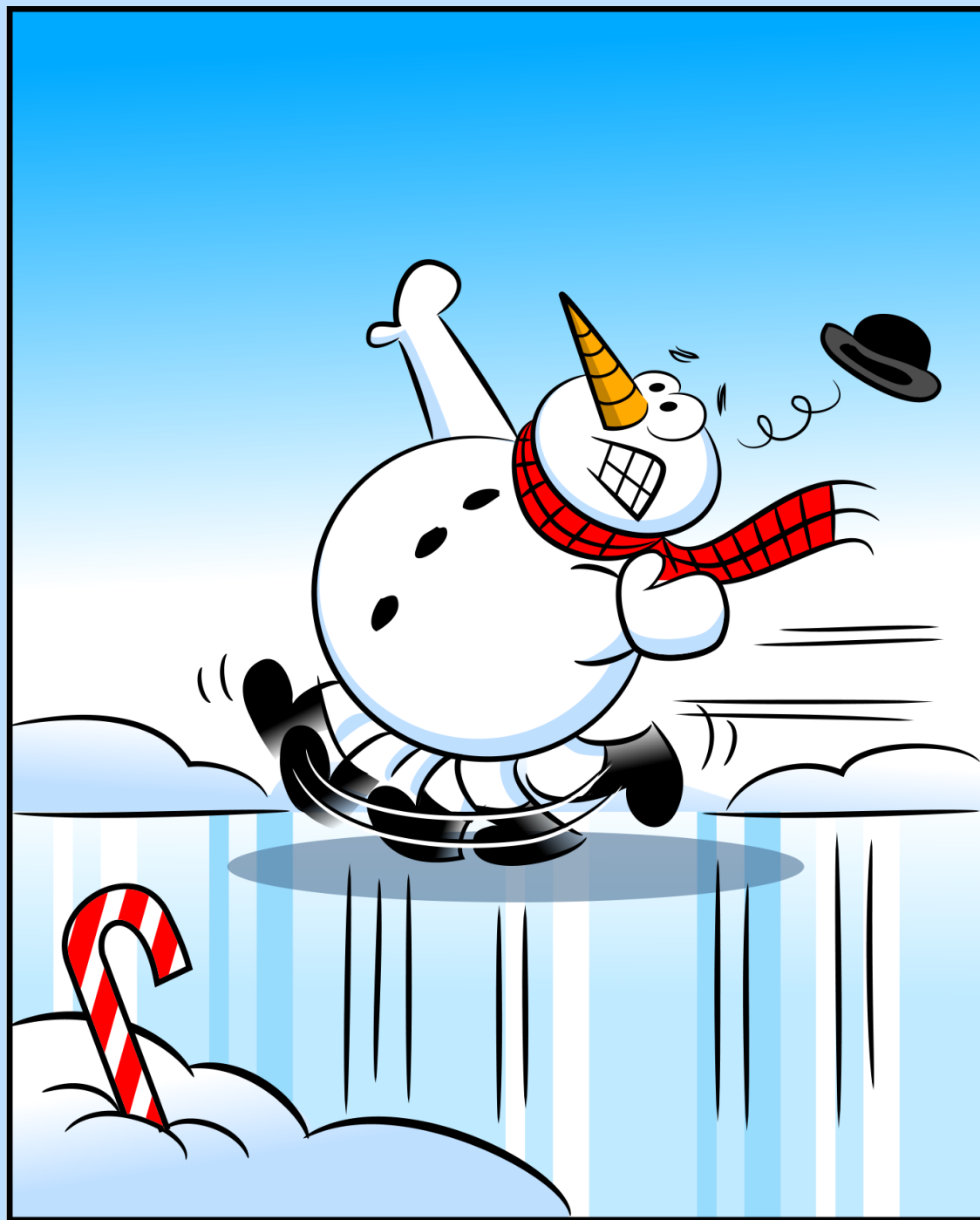
“Oh dear, this is going to take some serious practicing,” he realized.



All day, Spicy tried his hardest to balance on the ice. And at last, he found himself standing up long enough to manage one big slide across the ice. "I'm doing it!" he exclaimed as he slid quickly across the lake. "I'm skaaaaa ... UH-OH!!"

SPLAT! Spicy went headfirst into the snow on the other side of the lake. "Oh my, in learning to skate I forgot I also needed to learn to stop," he groaned, as he picked himself out of the snow. "I don't think ice skating is for me. Besides, Lala probably wouldn't like that kind of a gift anyway."

He was rearranging the buttons on his snowy chest when something half-buried in the snow caught his eye—something bright and red and shaped like a "J". A candy cane!



Spicy was delighted. Holding the cane in his snow-packed hands, he thought what a great gift a big bag full of candy canes would be for someone special like Lala. "I will make the fullest bag of candy canes anyone ever had—and surely Lala will love it."

Spicy searched high. Spicy searched low. But search as he did, there were no more candy canes to be found. Finally, tired from his long search, Spicy slumped down against a tree. By now, the sun was setting, and the beautiful moon was beginning to glow brighter and brighter.

"Perhaps the candy canes weren't such a good idea after all," Spicy concluded. "Anyway, it is almost time for my moonlight song."



Just as Spicy was taking a big breath to sing his song, a little firefly landed on his long carrot nose, making it shine a bright orange. Instead of singing his song, Spicy blew on the firefly to make him fly away. “Shoo, shoo, little fellow,” he said, a little impatiently.

Then another idea came to him. “Yes, yes, that would do! That would definitely do!” Quickly Spicy took off his black hat and scooped the little firefly inside, covering the top with his cold snowy hands.

“I will catch a whole hat full of you little fellows and then set you on the tallest, prettiest evergreen tree. I will make the best Christmas tree anyone ever saw!—And that will be the perfect present for Lala.”



Another flicker of light caught Spicy's eye and he ran after the next little firefly, scooping it up in his hat. Spicy ran for a long time, chasing one firefly, then another. But what poor Spicy didn't realize was that whenever one firefly was caught, one firefly would escape. When Spicy finally stopped running to check how full his hat had become, he was very disappointed to find only one firefly inside.

Sadly, Spicy sat in the snow putting his hat beside him. One icy tear trickled down his cheek. "I only wanted to give Lala the best Christmas present ever," he moaned. "But tomorrow is Christmas and I still haven't found the perfect gift."

Spicy covered his black beady eyes with his big snowy hands and let out a sob.



A pipsqueak voice broke the silence. "The perfect gift doesn't need to be the biggest, or the best, or the most amazing ever."

Surprised, Spicy looked up to see the firefly slowly fluttering away from the hat. "Wait a minute! What did you say?" he asked.

The firefly replied, "Sometimes the best of presents are the smallest of presents, if they come with love."

Spicy thought about that for a moment. Then he did what he should have remembered to do all along. Spicy folded his great big snowy hands, and looked up into the night sky. "Dear God," he prayed, "I really like this snow lady, Lala, and I really want to give her a special Christmas present. It doesn't have to be big, but I do want it to be special. Will You please show me what I can give her?"



As he opened his eyes, he saw the snow start to melt away in a little spot on the ground in front of him. Then, a beautiful blue flower blossomed right before his eyes.

Wonderful! Spicy thought. He reached down his snowy hand and picked the pretty flower. "Thank You, God, for showing me this wonderful gift for Lala."

Spicy was one happy snowman on Christmas morning when he gave Lala her special Christmas gift.

"Spicy, this is the best present ever!" Lala exclaimed. Then she gave Spicy a cheery snow lady hug and said, "And you are my best friend ever!"

Then Spicy and Lala linked hands, threw their heads back, and sang great, ringing snowpeople songs as they danced in the snow. As they sang, big round snowflakes fell from the sky, covering the land in another blanket of snow. For Spicy and Lala, it was the perfect Christmas.



Authored by Jasmine St.Clair and Kie Poole.

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Illustrations by Zeb. Design by Stefan Merour.

Published on My Wonder Studio.

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