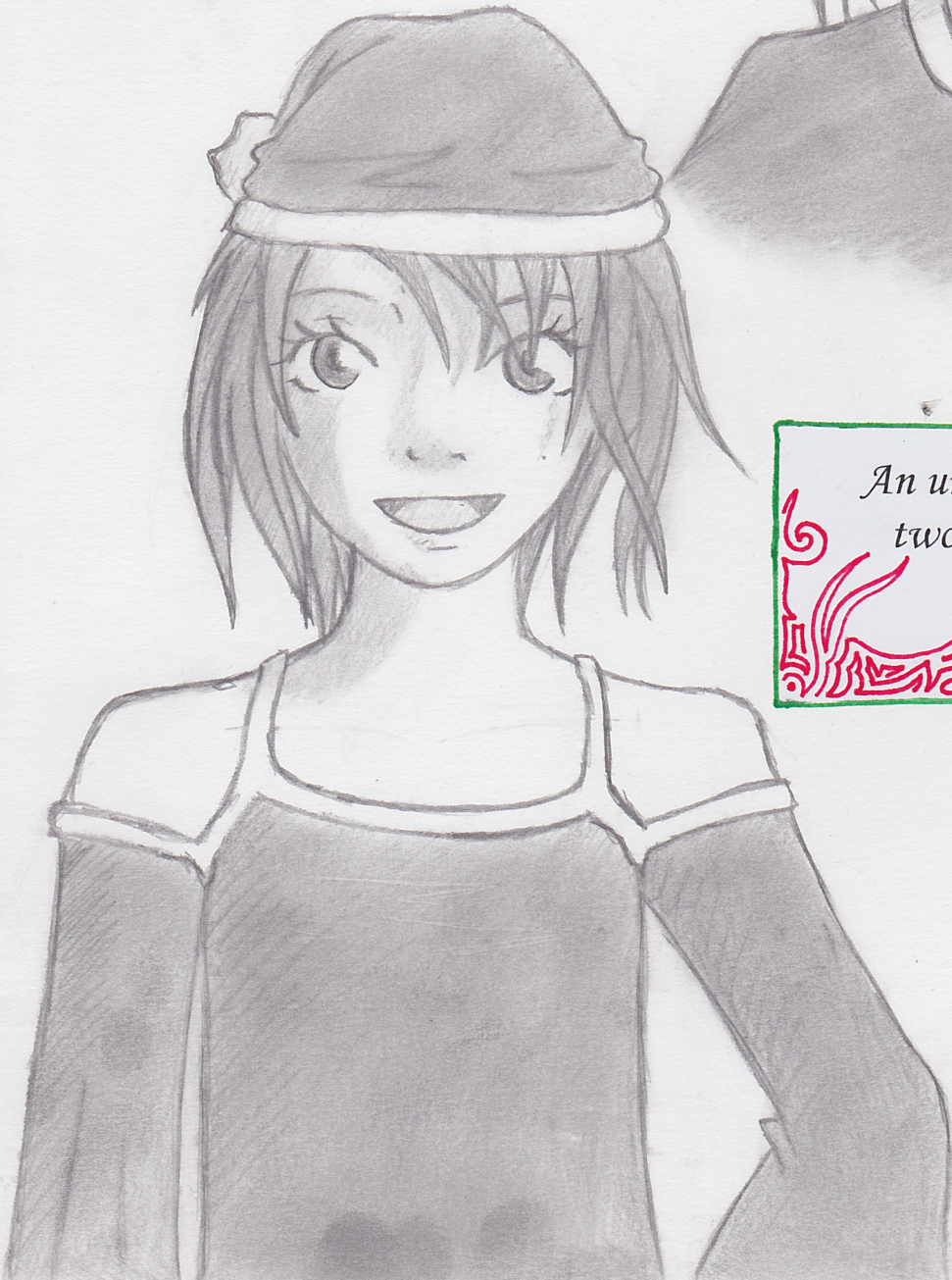
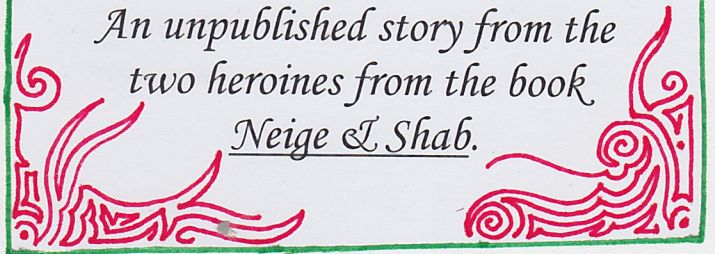


Neige & Shab's
Christmas



An unpublished story from the
two heroines from the book
Neige & Shab.





Before reading : Neige¹ isn't a very expressive little girl. She comes from the north, somewhere where all is the whole time under the snow. Due to some events she was sent in the desert in the south where she met Shab². Shab is a very talkative and smiling girl. Both Neige and Shab were slaves. This story takes place as they escape in the desert in order to take Shab's belongings before going back to Neige's land. Both of them live in a different world than us : there are indeed a lot of parallel worlds.



Shab was very tired. They had been searching for her possessions for several hours now. She had just found the last chest.

"I'm exhausted. What about you Neige ?"

The little girl nodded. Neige wasn't usually very talkative but for the moment she looked lost in her thoughts.

"What are you thinking about ? asked Shab.

- ... I was just thinking that it's very hot here. It's never that hot in my country. Have you ever seen snow before ?

- Snow ? Like your name ? What is it ?

- It's a little bit like the sand but it's very cold, it's solid water and it's white."

Neige had a very gentle smile saying that. One could see that the little girl really did like what she called "snow". Shab was so surprised -Neige didn't smile often- that she momentarily forgot how to talk. It was something unexpected for the talkative little girl, and both of them stayed a few minutes like that.

And it was Neige who was the first to speak again :

"Somehow I heard from a custom in another world. It's called Christmas.

- Christmas ?

- Yeah it's during winter, there's a lot of snow and they decorate a tree who's called a Christmas tree. There aren't any of them here but there are plenty in my land. It's a tree with leaves which never fall and which are pricking.

- How ?

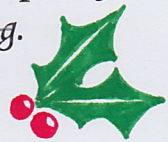
- How does it prick ?

- No, how do they decorate it ? laughed Shab.

- They put some multicoloured stuff on it. For example, they have magic coloured lights. And on this day that they call "Christmas" they give each other presents and celebrate."

Neige could see the light in the eyes of her friend as she said those words.

"It would be fun if we could do that when we go back to my land."



¹ Neige is the French word for snow

² Shab is the Soleivien word for sand. The Soleivien is an imaginary language used in the book Neige & Shab.



A few years later ...

In the middle of the sitting room of the big castle stood a giant Christmas tree. Shab, her husband-to-be, Neige, her adopted daughter Shinobu, her friends Mimosk and Kylian took a long time to decorate it. Shinobu was very excited when she heard about this custom from Shab. And when the latter said to her

...

“Wanna try?”

... of course the teenage girl was very enthusiastic. Neige explained ^{to} them a little bit more about this custom, how a big man wearing red clothes brought the presents. She also explained that the origins of this custom were related to a religion and that on this day, they were celebrating the birth of a special child.

Everybody agreed that Seb would be Santa Claus. Myrthille, who raised Neige, made the clothes. Seb protested a lot, but ⁱⁿ at the end he was finally forced to dress up with cushions in order to make him look bigger. However, the man didn't stay angry for a long time because of the joyful atmosphere.

At nightfall, everybody came back in the sitting room. Thanks to the candles, the room was lit well enough. In front of the Christmas tree stood a bunch of presents.

Shab was too happy to keep the teenagers from waiting and she announced that it would be the dinner time before opening the present. As expected from them, as soon as they finished eating, Shinobu and her friends rushed towards the presents. A moment later the tiled floor was covered in torn paper.

The room was full of joy.



Later, when the teenagers went to bed, Neige joined Shab on the balcony. The young girl was looking at the snow.

“What's in your mind? Do you remember that you asked me that back in the desert?”

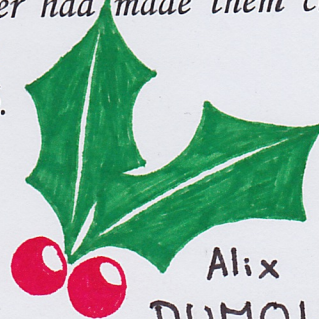
Shab smiled and answered:

“Not really but now that you mention that fact... You really do have a good memory ... I was just thinking that it would be nice if it could snow once in a while in the desert. Somehow I would really love watching such a thing ...”

The two girls smiled, all those years spend together had made them close friends who didn't need words to understand each other.

“Christmas is really something funny, concluded Shab.

- Of course it is.”



*Alix
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