

Believing in an angel - part two: Memories

Von aprileagle

The room was white, the window opened. Snow danced outside. Light, silent. Peaceful. Just as peaceful as the atmosphere was inside. A girl was sitting in front of a huge mirror. It almost covered the whole wall in front of her. She knelt there as if she would pray. But the grin on her face told her that she wasn't thinking of God. Her long, sea green hairs were braided to a long plaid that almost touched her kneebend when she walked. Her long dress was as white as the snow outside. The sleeves were very wide and the skirt covered her feet completely. She almost looked like an angel. But she was not one.

Not yet.

The only thing that destroyed the calm atmosphere was the screaming red jacket she wore. Although she grew up during the past Christmases it still fitted her perfectly. And although many people told her that it would be ugly and that she should throw it away, she kept it. Because for her it was something special. Or better, it remembered her of someone special.

Amused she giggled and clapped in her hands while she looked into the mirror. But she didn't see her reflection there. Instead she saw some girls having a big snowball battle. They built themselves little fortresses and hide behind the walls of snow. Just to use the next chance to throw their soft snow balls at the enemy. The enemy who was one of their best friends.

"What's so funny, Michiru?" A young man entered the room. His long blonde hairs were bound together on his back and he wore a white suit. He held a tray with two steaming pots in his hands.

"Oh, they are having a snowball battle." Answered Michiru and giggled even more as a girl stumbled over her own scarf and fell right into the snow. She was the most clumsiest girl Michiru had ever seen, but she had a big heart and was a good friend for the other girls who stood now around and laughed. Soon she and a red haired girl had a big argument while the others continued their fight.

"That's what I like most about Christmas. All those happy children."

"Oh, I think they are a little bit too old to be children any longer."

"Do you really think so, Michiru? The way they behave?"

"Well, maybe you're right, Keichi."

The young man handed her the pot and they both drank the tea he made for them in silence.

"Isn't she having fun with them?" asked Keichi after another long time they simply sat there and watched the girls using their new sleighs. It was a race of life and death. Or at least of having a candied apple as winner or not.

"No." Michiru sighed sadly and leaned forward. Her hand touched the glass for some seconds and the girls blurred. The whole scene changed and suddenly they looked inside a dark room. Only one light was on, producing a strange twilight. They could see a tall girl in a training suit. She leaned against a red car, holding a spanner in her dirty hands. Another girl, she seemed to be older and her look was stricter, stood opposite to her. They seemed to have a fight. Finally the older girl threw something on the ground and left the room. The tall one only shook her head and picked the paper up. For some seconds she stared at the closed door, before she switched on some more lights and concentrated again on the car's motor.

"She doesn't want to celebrate Christmas this year, too?" asked the young man sadly and stared in his tea.

"Hai." Michiru sighed and put her pot aside. "She has very good friends, but she only pushes them away. For her Christmas is nonsense. Guess she hates Christmas."

"Now she's alone on Christmas Eve?" asked the young man and looked nervous up to her. Michiru smiled understanding, leaned forward and corrected the scarf he wore around his neck. All the time. Even in summer.

"Don't worry." She said and looked again into the mirror. Seeing the shadow of a girl swearing as the car didn't do what she wanted it to do. "She won't be alone."

The old man smiled friendly as he saw the girl running towards him. As every year he got ready to make all those children happy. But she wasn't happy. Not yet. Maybe she would be happy by the end of this Christmas. Maybe...

She grew up during the past years. The past Christmases she didn't want to return. She didn't talk about the two other chances that were left for her. But today she would go. He knew it as he looked into determined blue eyes.

"Did you find your parents?" he asked and corrected his red cap.

"Hai." The girl nodded and for a moment sadness covered her face. "But they moved away. They got another child and are grandparents now. They wouldn't recognize me and I guess they wouldn't love me. I died and they forgot me."

"They didn't forget you. Never."

For a moment she was unsure, then she shrugged her shoulders.

"Maybe you're right. But I know that I don't belong in their lives any longer."

"And you think that you belong in her life?" The old man chuckled as he looked into a surprised face. "You are watching her in the mirror almost all the time. Maybe I am old, but I am not stupid."

For a moment there was silence. Only the snow falling down made a quiet noise. The noise of Christmas. And the old man's bells jingled quietly as he stepped nearer to the girl.

"Are you sure that she's the one who will help you?" he asked wisely.

"No, I am not." Michiru shook her head. "But I know that she wants to spend this Christmas all alone. No one should spend Christmas all alone."

"Doesn't she have good friends?"

"She sent them all away."

"Won't she send you away, too?"

"Maybe, but she won't get rid of me as easy as of her friends."

"Why do you think so?"

"Otherwise than her friends I can walk through locked doors."

The old man looked at her for a moment, then he laughed his famous, low laughter. Friendly he petted her shoulder and smiled at her like only grandfathers could do. "Then I wish you luck, little one."
"Arigato." Michiru wrapped herself deeper into the jacket and raised her head to watch the snowy sky above. "I will need it."

Believing in an angel
- an Haruka & Michiru Christmas carol-
(by April Eagle)

Part two: Memories

"Dancing bears.
Painted wings.
Things I almost remember.
And a song someone sings
Once upon a December"

"I told you that I don't want to celebrate." Haruka rolled her eyes as the light was suddenly switched off. Only one person would do that. "Sets, I have to repair that car. I have an important race next week. Leave me alone."
"Alone, alone! That's what you always are. Are you happy with your situation?" The tall woman tapped impatiently with her right foot on the ground. "Usagi and the others want to have a big Christmas party this evening in Rei's temple. And you are invited, too!"
"Forget it!"
"Why? Usagi asked you and you said hai."
"Hell, Sets! You know that you can't say no when Usagi begs for anything. She isn't only our future queen, she is a damn begging monster if she wants to achieve something."
"So she should have come instead of me to convince you?"
"But she's not here and I won't change my mind!" Haruka turned around and held the spanner tighter in her hands. She didn't want to talk to anyone today. Maybe for some people Christmas Eve was the happiest day of the year. For her it was the worst. Setsuna never understood it, but she never told her about her brother. How he committed suicide. Today. Exactly ten years ago. But she knew that she hardly spoke a word with her parents. As soon as possible she left her parent's house and went to school in Tokyo, living at a boarding school. Cars were her greatest hobby. When she wasn't at school or in her room, you could find her on the race track. Repairing some cars, dreaming that she would be able to race them one day, too. And Setsuna was very sure that she would be the best racer Japan had ever seen before. Not only because she was the senshi of the wind, but because it was her passion.

"But they all organised to so much. They will surely be sad when you won't come. Mako makes her famous Christmas cake and Mina already decorated the Christmas tree."

"Then they will have a lot of fun."

"Not without me."

"Oh, Sets! I am not so important that they wouldn't be happy without me!"

"They are your friends. As I am your friend."

Haruka sighed deeply and wanted to turn again towards the car, but Setsuna held her back.

"Is it really so much fun for you to sit alone on your bed at your room, staring at the wall? I know that you won't visit your parents and that you don't have any friends at that boarding school. We are not only the Sailor Team, we are also your friends, Haruka! And I don't want you to be alone the whole Christmas."

"And I don't want to celebrate. Christmas is nothing you should celebrate. It's humbug!" snapped Haruka back and freed herself out of the older woman's touch.

"Okay, it's your free decision. Hope you are happy with it, Haruka Scroodge!" Setsuna threw a torn sheet of paper on the ground and turned around. "If you want to come, you know where Rei's temple is." With these words the door closed with a loud bang.

"Sure..." Haruka looked at some seconds at the closed door.

You don't know that Christmas is only a lie. It has nothing to do with love. Better you celebrate your festival alone. I would only destroy your fun with my bad mood.

The tall blonde bowed and picked the paper up. It was the invitation Usagi had made together with Chibiusa. It should show all of them, sitting happily around a Christmas tree. Haruka didn't recognize all of them, but she suggested that she was the line girl with the shortest hairs in the picture.

Of course, for them it's funny.

For me it's only hurting...

Haruka put the sheet away and concentrated again on the car's motor. Not caring that she was the only one working on a holiday. That she was all alone on the race track. That she was alone in her whole life.

The answering machine was blinking as she returned to her room in the boarding school. It was silent in the big building. Surely she was the only pupil who didn't spend her Christmas holiday with the family or at least with friends. Haruka didn't want to be a spoilsport for her friends and she didn't have any family. Well, her parents were still alive, but the more she found out about her brothers death when she grew up, the more she hated them. It had been cowardly of him to escape all his problems this way. But it had been her parents fault that he had so many problems. Problems which hadn't been real problems if her parents had been more tolerant. If they would have really loved their son...

Shortly Haruka looked around in her room. Her parents were rich and paid enough for her education. Surely to calm down their bad conscience. They hardly wrote her any letters. Maybe one for her birthday and one for Christmas. She lived in this boarding school for now over two years, they never ever visited her. Haruka was thankful for that. She didn't want to see them again.

They paid enough that she had a big room. She even had her own bathroom and a balcony she hardly used. Mostly Ami asked if she could sit there in summer and read a

book. Haruka allowed it to her and showed her where the secret key was. She preferred it more to go jogging in the near park. The balcony was simply too small for her, but a paradise for Ami as she often called it.

Haruka put her back bag down on her bed and stretched herself. She would take a hot shower, a small dinner and then go in the library to watch TV. Mostly it was forbidden to use the television set, but right now she was the only one at school, no one would find it out.

"Haruka, I know your opinion, but Usagi really..." The tall blonde groaned and switched the answering machine off as she heard Setsuna's pleading voice. She really wasn't in the mood to celebrate Christmas. The earlier the senshi of time understood that, the better. Haruka didn't want to hurt anyone with her rude behaviour, but she couldn't celebrate Christmas. She simply couldn't.

"Hope they won't burn the Christmas tree. Usagi's too clumsy." Whispered Haruka while she stripped her dirty racing suit. She pulled it under her bed, hoping that it would get clean from all alone. Then she took a long, hot shower. Enjoying how the water ran down her body. Slowly she washed herself and simply stood under the waterfall for another thirty minutes. Humming a the melody of an old song she hardly remembered the lyrics. Her melody sounded a little bit strange and she missed some notes, but she didn't care. No one was around she could have scared to death anyway. "That was nice." She wrapped herself in a bathrobe and rubbed her hairs dry. For a long moment she looked into the mirror, seeing herself in it. Seeing her short, blonde hairs, her dark green eyes that looked mysteriously back at her. Most girls at this school thought that she was a boy. She didn't like them, she didn't need them, so there was no use to explain them that she was a girl, too. And for the racing team, it had some advantages when everything though that she was a guy. No one looked at her and doubted that she could be good, just because she was female. She did her best and got what she deserved. No matter what gender she had.

Some water ran down her temples and as she wanted to wipe it away, the picture changed slightly. Suddenly she looked at a young man. He looked the same way she did. Only his hairs were a little bit longer. But the eyes, the face, they were very similar.

"Brother..." Haruka stretched her right hand, but the picture was gone as her fingertips touched the glass. Shortly she blinked, then she shook her head. "I really missed a lot of sleep during the past weeks. Christmas time, always hectic. Everyone wants to write tests and the Sailor Team wants to bake cookies, buy presents and I have to help them." Haruka shook her head again while she walked over to her sleeping room again. She grabbed her hair brush from her with sport magazines and old books covered desk and smiled at it. "And I guess I should buy myself a hamster. So that I have an explanation why I am talking to myself."

Determinedly she brushed her hairs, biting on her lower lip as she ripped out some strands because of her impatience. Finally she was done. Normally she would have changed into her jeans and a shirt, but today she decided for her dark blue pyjama instead. No one was in this boarding school, no one would laugh about her appearance. No one would care today.

Haruka pulled her dark coat over her pyjama, took her bag with her dinner and the videotape in the one and the roses she bought just some hours ago in the other hand and left her room, having her keys in her mouth. She didn't want to lose them but never had a hand free to hold them. Her classmates already made jokes about her, but as long as she didn't gulp them, it didn't seem to be so sensational for them.

Usagi would gulp them.

Haruka grinned and spit them into her bag, too. Then she hurried up. It was ice cold outside the building, but she didn't care. It didn't snow this year, as it hadn't snow during the past Christmas Eves, but it was bitter cold. There was no cloud at the sky and the stars sparkled even colder. Haruka shivered and ran over the school yard to get to the small temple. It was mostly for the teachers, because they feared that young pupils could destroy the valuable shrine. Haruka didn't want to destroy anything. She only wanted to have some moments on her own and to say a small prayer. And to remember a person. A very special person...

Haruka stripped her shoes, left her bag at the entrance and crossed slowly the temple. It was bitter cold in here, too, but she didn't care. She knelt down in front of the shrine, put the flowers down and bowed deeply before it. For some moments she kept so, seeing again so many pictures in her mind. She had been very young that time, but she couldn't forget him. Because there were many photos she took carefully into her photo album. And because he had been the most important person in her childhood. She simply couldn't forget him.

"I miss you..." she whispered silently and put the wrapping paper away. For a moment she stared at the ten red roses. Each rose for each year that passed without him. A single white rose was in the middle of the bouquet. Haruka pulled it out and watched it for some moments frowning.

>Where are my parents?<

The memory hit her like a stone. She blinked and suddenly the picture of a girl was in her mind, too. Of a girl with pale cheeks and tears in her eyes. With so beautiful curls in her sea green hairs.

I could never find her.

Haruka laid the roses down and burned two candles. One more than she had planned. Then she folded her hands and prayed to the gods. That her brother was fine - wherever he was right now. And that she would meet this girl again. Maybe... one day...

She could never find out who she had been. All she had was a single name. Not a family name, not a date of birth, nothing. All she got to know was that the house had been abandoned for over ten years before her parents bought it.

Maybe she was just a product of my crazy mind?

I had been really crazy when my brother died, maybe I had hallucinations or something like that...

But something in her mind told her that this girl hadn't been caused by her mourning and her pain. Something in her memory tried to tell her that this girl had been there. That she had been real. And that she pushed her away when she only wanted to help her.

I destroyed her doll...

Haruka sighed deeply and ended her prayer. For a long moment she stared at the roses, before she rose and went back to the entrance.

Michiru.

All I have is a bloody name. Nothing more...

I searched her over the last ten years and didn't find her. I shouldn't think about her any longer. She was only the dream. The dream of a lonely child who wanted to have some friends. Nothing more.

Nothing more?

Sure?

Hm...

Haruka took her bag and almost stumbled over something lying next to her shoes. She bowed and frowned as she saw the little package. It was wrapped in used paper. The colour was yellowed but it was wrapped with a lot of love. And with skills.

So it can't be from Usagi.

Haruka had to grin but scolded herself that she shouldn't think so bad about her future Queen. On the other hand, Usagi was simply so clumsy, the only wrapped packages she could give away, had been wrapped up by Rei or Makoto. Just in case to hinder a heart attack of the happy person who would get burned cookies or half broken, self made pullovers. Mostly Mamoru was the lucky one. But he seemed to be happy with those gifts, so Haruka didn't say a word about it.

The package was light in her hands and it didn't tick as she raised it to her ear. So there wasn't at least not a bomb in it. Asking she looked around, but the school yard was dark and empty. It didn't look as if someone just ran towards the temple, laid down the package and ran away again.

Maybe Setsuna?

The tall woman was the senshi of time. Haruka knew that Setsuna wasn't allowed to manipulate time, but she knew best that you could bend the rules. As long as you didn't break them, it was fine.

But why? I told them that I didn't want any gifts. I have no room and no use for kitsch. Haruka put the package carefully into her bag and headed quickly through the night's bitter cold towards the main building. There she slowed down. It was warm in the corridors and in the library it was even warmer. There was a huge chimney but it was hardly ever used. Instead the normal heating was used and it was on. Haruka sighed relieved as she stripped her coat and placed herself in front of the TV set. The couch was financed by the teachers and they didn't like it when pupils sat on it, but today no one would look strange at her or tell her to go. This evening she could do what she wanted. And, what was even more important, she would be left in peace.

Hesitating she freed the package from it's wrapping paper and looked for a long time at the white cardboard. Shoes had been in it once. Or something that shouldn't break during the transport.

"What..." Haruka opened the lid and gulped. The sandwich, covered with ketchup and ham, almost fell on the ground. She put it on the near table and licked her fingers clean. Then she reached inside the package and produced a little music box. It was golden with two small figures on top of it. Two bears. Two dancing bears. Haruka's hands shook with a sudden as she pulled the trigger. The next moment a soft melody filled the empty room. The bears started to move. They started to dance.

Dancing bears...

Haruka gulped and the music box escaped her trembling hands. It landed somewhere on the ground, playing on and on.

Dancing bears...

She had loved them when she had been a baby. So her brother made her a music box. Just like that one. For his little sister. To make feeling safe. He told her that she would be with her whenever she would see the bears dance, whenever she would hear the melody.

Sure!

And where are you now?

Haruka gulped and brought her legs to her body, wrapped her arms around her knees. Tears sparkled in her dark green eyes. Tears she never cried. Tears she would never

cry
Where are you now, Keichi?

Someone holds me safe and warm.
Horses prance through a silver storm.
Figures dancing gracefully
Across my memory.

Suddenly rough wind was ripping at the windows, but Haruka didn't notice it. She stared empty into the air and tried not to feel all alone. Of course she could be with Setsuna now, but that wouldn't have helped so much anyway. They couldn't help her and she didn't want their sympathy. They had enough problems without her parents and the story of her brother's death. They had to fight against youmas and to save the world. This task was already too heavy for their shoulders, she didn't want to put the weights of her problems on it, too.

Shimatta...

Haruka buried her face in her arms and pressed her eyelids hard together. She didn't notice how suddenly fire burned in the chimney. How the room got warmer and more comfortable. How the main light was switched on and some candles lightened up. Nor did she hear the footsteps coming nearer. They were as silent as a feather flying through the air. Normally Haruka would have sensed that she wasn't lonely in the room any longer, but today was Christmas Eve. Nothing was normal on a Christmas Eve. Nothing. Haruka learned that fact ten years ago.

"Hush, it's okay."

Her head jerked up as she felt how suddenly two arms were wrapped around her waist and how she was brought to a warm body behind her.

"I didn't know that I would hurt you with the music box. I thought you'd like it."

Haruka turned around and looked directly into blue eyes. As deep as the wild ocean near the boarding school. Sea green curls framed a tenderly smiling face.

Nani?

Haruka had never seen the girl before. She seemed to be as old as she was. Maybe a little bit younger. No, she couldn't remember ever having seen her before at this school. But nevertheless she knew her. Somehow. From somewhere.

This can't be...

Haruka gulped and looked a little bit closer at the girl, but she didn't disappear as she feared first.

That's impossible! You haven't seen her for over ten years now! It can't be that she simply appears like that. She can't know where you go to school. And she's surely not a pupil. So she can't be...

She blinked as she saw the red jacket. The ugly jacket she never liked when she had been small. The ugly jacket she lost some years ago.

Did I really lost it? Or didn't I give it to her? But why does it fit her? She grew up during the past years. Just like me..

Haruka shook her head, still not believing what she saw. But nevertheless she had to ask.

"Michiru?" she whispered, still unsure. "Is that you?"

A bright smile bloomed on the pale face and the girl nodded. Sea green curls flew through the air and two warm arms hugged her happily.

She remembers me!

She even knows my name!

I can't be totally alike to her!

Maybe she needs me? Maybe I can stay on earth forever? Maybe I can be with her?

"Hai, Haruka." Michiru giggled. "I just wanted to say hello and to give you a Christmas present."

Haruka frowned, then she remembered the music box. It was still playing and the tall blonde wondered if it would ever stop again. Maybe the mechanic would do sooner or later. But the melody would be forever in her mind. Torturing her. Letting her feel all the things she lost ten years ago.

"Simply like that?" asked the tall blonde and winced as the dying music box started again to play. As if a ghost had stared her again.

Why don't I ask her where she had been?

Why don't I tell her that I searched her everywhere after she disappeared so suddenly?

Why don't I confess her that I missed her, too?

But somehow she couldn't. All she could do was to sit quiet. Not to move. Then this gentle touch could be broken. Haruka couldn't remember when a someone embraced her the last time. So loving.

Love...

Haruka remembered her mothers words at their last fight. Their final fight when she left the house by the sea for good and moved to the boarding school. Far away from her parent's home town.

No one would ever love someone like me.

And your friends?

They like me. Not love me. That's something different.

"Why not?" smiled Michiru back and pulled the blonde again a little bit nearer to her body. It was so damn good to feel her near. Not only to watch her in the mirror, but to be here with her. To be really here with her. With the girl who became the most important person in her existence during the past ten years. Although she didn't know that.

"Because it's..." Haruka frowned as the music box started again to play. And again. And again. It made her heart beat violently inside her chest and her throat tight. It was driving her crazy.

"What the hell is going on here?" she shouted suddenly and jumped from the couch. She grabbed the music box and wanted it to stop. But it didn't. It simply didn't.

Shut up!

Just shut up and leave me in peace.

Leave me all in peace!

Finally she threw it on the ground where it smashed into thousands of tiny pieces. Michiru's blue eyes grew wide and she screamed. The next moment she knelt next to the music box and looked surprised at all the broken racks.

"Why did you do that?" she asked confused and put the music box back on the table. Shortly she stroke over the bears, then she closed it carefully. "I thought you'd like it."

"No, I hate it."

>I hate you all.<

Michiru's heart sank. She had thought that this feeling increased during the past years. She came here to be with Haruka in that icy, lonely night. She wanted to be there for her and to comfort her. Hell, she wasted one of her valuable Christmases and she only confronted her with the worst.

Well, what did you expect, Michiru?

That she jumps at you, hugs you and confesses you her love?

No...

No? And why are you so disappointed now?

I...

"I hate everything that makes me remember of him. That he died!" screamed Haruka and crossed the room with three big steps. Her shoulders shook as she stood near the window, staring out into the night, showing Michiru her back.

"It shouldn't, Haruka. Your brother would be very sad to see you like this." Said Michiru and gulped. Then she took a deep breath and walked over to the taller girl. Comforting she laid her hand on Haruka's. It was just like the gesture she had done ten years ago. This time Haruka needed some more moments before she pushed her away. But this time it wasn't the child's shame about touching a girl. This time it was the shame about her feelings. Michiru could feel the sadness. She had seen so many moments of despair in Haruka's life through the mirror. Every time Haruka had been alone and Michiru wanted so badly to go to her. To comfort her. To make everything better. Now she had that chance. Even if it was only for this evening.

"You should be grateful of having met him, Haruka. Do not only think of his death, do also think of the happy times you had with him. I am sure that he gave you the music box because he loves you." Michiru smiled understanding and this time Haruka didn't turn away. Instead she kept staring into the dark night of an even darker Christmas. "Don't throw away the memories, Haruka. He'd be really sad about that. He loves you, don't you know?"

Haruka shook her head and her voice was shaky as she answered.

"How can you know that he still loves me? He left me!" she clenched her fists. "He simply went away."

"It had been his decision to leave this world, but you are still his little sister. You'll always be."

"How can you know that, damned!" Haruka raised her voice without noticing it. "Are you an angel or what that you have information about heaven?"

"Not yet."

And if you won't say those words I will become one. Against my will...

"Not yet?" Haruka shook her head. "And what are you then?"

"An angel's apprentice?" suggested Michiru and blushed as Haruka looked closer at her.

"I don't see any wings."

"I told you, I am not an angel yet."

"And your helo?"

"Aren't you listen?"

"No. I am not listen to this crazy stuff!"

"Don't you want to hear that your brother is fine? Don't you want to get to know that he's happy there and that he wants to greet you? Don't you want to stop living your whole life in hate and self-pity? I understand that you run away from your family, that's not what I call a proper family. My parents had been better than yours. But you are running away from your friends, Ruka! They like you and you push them away. On

Christmas! Stop mourning and come back to live! He doesn't want to see you like that any longer!" Michiru had spread her arms and looked now really determined.

And start asking your heart about your feelings.

Start asking it before it's too late. For me...

"Nani?"

"Start living, Ruka! Cars aren't a substitute for love!"

Michiru remembered all the scenes she had seen in the mirror. Helpless. Shouting at the reflection. Crying about it. Wanting to help, but not being able to.

Haruka's entry at school. When her parents didn't have the time to go with her and she had been the only child without any parents or accompany at all.

Haruka's tenth birthday when her dog was killed by a car.

Haruka's argument with her parents when she got to know why her brother killed himself - and that her parent's intolerance and ignorance was mainly the reason for the tragedy.

Haruka's first transformation into Sailor Uranus when she was thirteen and the knowledge that she had to save the world although she didn't want to.

Haruka's next argument with her parents that she wanted to go to a boarding school in Tokyo.

Haruka's fourteenth birthday when she wanted to go to Disneyland with her friends and Setsuna didn't pay attention and broke her right arm. Although it had been an accident, Haruka still believed that it all had been her fault.

And finally Haruka's latest argument with her parents. When she confessed them that she was a lesbian. When she told them that she hated them and that she would never forgive them that they hurt her big brother until he saw no other escape than death. When she told them that she would never return at all.

So many lonely days and nights...

"Be happy again."

Keichi had told her a lot about baby Haruka and how happy she had been then. Until her parents started to argue almost every day.

"Please, Ruka."

Haruka only shook her head and stepped slightly backwards. As if she awaited Michiru to attack and to hurt her. With a knife or a sword or another weapon.

"I don't believe you!" she shouted angrily. "I don't believe in angels, can you hear me?" she raised defensive her hands. "Just go, okay?"

What are you telling her? You searched her for so long, do you really want to let her go, you dummy?

But she knows so much about my brother and me. That's not normal!

Wouldn't it be nice to talk to someone about all this stuff?

Nice? Surely not!

But relieving...

It's not normal!!!

"Go! Leave me in peace! Hell, leave me all in peace! This isn't a damn Christmas carol and you won't convince me that it's good. I am not an Ebenezer Scrooge! And you are surely not one of the three ghosts. And definitively you are not an angel!"

"But..."

Michiru tried to go over to the trembling girl. To take her into her arms and to tell her that everything was right. That she didn't have to be on her own all her life. That she, Michiru, would love it to take care for her. Simply to be there for her, if she want her to be.

Right at that moment someone knocked at the door. Haruka and Michiru spun around. Then it knocked again. Haruka glanced shortly at the other girl with a look that told her that she shouldn't do or say something ill-considered. Then she went over to the door and opened it. And was suddenly embraced by a clumsy girl. A very clumsy girl who would be her queen one day. And who had a big heart. A too big heart. She should have known it.

"U... usagi..." Haruka's eyes grew wide as she saw all the other senshi standing outside the corridor. They all held bags and baskets in their hands and grinned. Setsuna's grin was the widest.

"Nani?"

"Did you really think you could celebrate this Christmas alone? Without us dancing on your nerves?" laughed the senshi of time and shrugged her shoulders. "Usagi wanted to celebrate with you. Just like the rest, too." She pointed over to Usagi who still hang on Haruka and didn't look as if she wanted to let go.

Ami only smiled sympathetic. She had been in the same situation just two weeks ago when she wanted to learn for a test she couldn't fail, because she was too intelligent and Usagi wanted to go to the Christmas market instead. She begged Ami so long until they really went shopping there. So Haruka knew that she had no chance. You really had no chance against a begging Usagi.

Michiru watched them for some moments and her shoulders hang.

What did you expect, you dummy?

Silently she scolded herself.

She has her friends, she doesn't need someone as crazy as you. Why should she love you? You only hurt her with all the memories of her brother! And she doesn't look like a girl who falls in love within just three Christmases.

Michiru sniffed and wiped away some tears.

See it, you'll be an angel and never be able to live here in earth. The old man said that it wouldn't be an easy task and that his powers are limited.

The girl looked at the music box and touched it tenderly. Again she looked over to Haruka who was surrounded by all those laughing girls and felt suddenly superfluous. Totally wrong.

It's better I go. She doesn't need me. Surly not me.

Michiru bowed slowly, then she turned around and disappeared.

Why did she leave?

Where is she now?

Haruka cursed silently. It was now almost dusk and the other left half an hour ago. Very tired, but very happy. Packed with a lot of presents. They weren't angry that Haruka didn't have anything for them, they were happy that she was there, trying to celebrate with them.

Shimatta!

I don't even have her full name.

Michiru...

Haruka took the music box and held it in her hands for a long time. Staring at the dancing bears, hearing again the other girl's words. That she should start living again. That she stop mourning. That she shouldn't be angry and sad, because there were so many memories she surely didn't want to forget. No matter how much the memory of

his death was.

She called me Ruka.

Haruka gulped. Her parents called her bitch and dyke in the end and her friends only said Haruka, Setsuna sometimes Haruka-chan when she behaved like a little child. But a real nickname and such a loving sounding nick name... she didn't have one since her brother's death.

Shimatta!

I am such a baka!

I simply let her go! Again she escaped and I didn't notice it.

Suddenly she regretted all the words she had told Michiru. Okay, she couldn't believe in angels and surely Michiru wasn't an apprentice of one. But she had been here. She wanted to cheer her up and to comfort her. She knew about her brother's death. Now there could have been a person whom she could have trusted all this ugly stuff. And what did she do? She pushed her away. Rudely.

"I am such an idiot!" sighed Haruka and caressed over the bears. Now she regretted that she threw it on the ground in her endless rage and pain. Surely Michiru searched a long time for such a music box. This one was very old, maybe as old as her own one had been. And now it was broken. It was her own fault that she destroyed it. Again.

Haruka sighed deeply.

Will I meet her again?

She hoped it, because she wanted to ask for forgiveness for her rude behaviour and her hot temper.

When will I meet her again?

The tall blonde sighed again and caressed over the bears again and the trigger. Without thinking she used it, although she knew that the inside was smashed.

The bigger was her surprise as the soft melody suddenly swung in the air, filled the room with memories. With memories and never spoken words.

Far away, long ago,
Glowing dim as an ember,
Things my heart
Used to know,
Things it yearns to remember...

Disclaimer:

The persons mentioned in the Haruka & Michiru Christmas carol "Believing in an angel" belong to Takeuchi Naoko.

The song "Once upon a December" belongs to the English soundtrack of the animated movie "Anastasia" by Dreamworks.

How will it all develop? Will Michiru use her third chance and return to earth to search someone who loves her and begs her to stay? Will Haruka be that person?

I'd be glad if you'd read part three: "Trust", too.

Thanks.

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