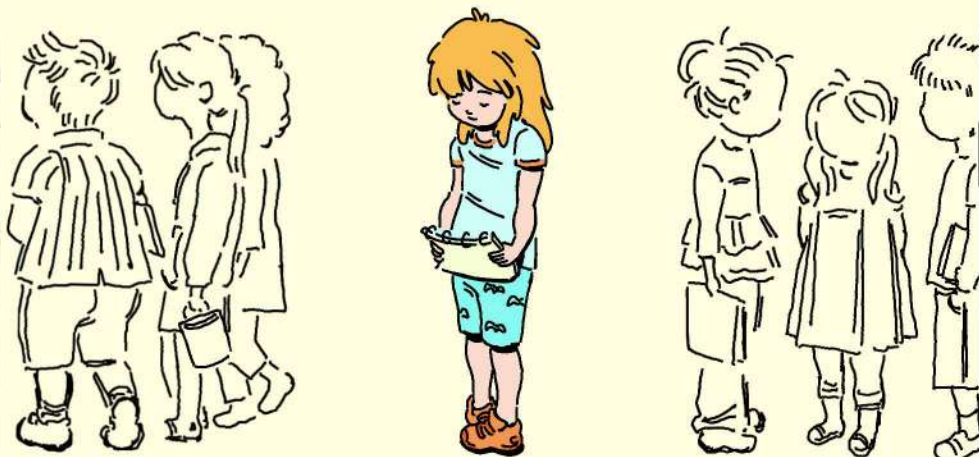


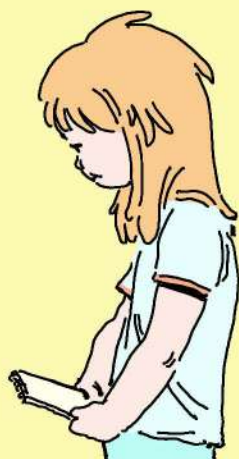
Christine

By Tammy Kim

Everyone
knew
Christine as
the girl who
never spoke.



She was the
first friend I
ever made in
Canada.



She didn't
speak to the
teachers, or the
classmates.



She was always
excused from
presentations.

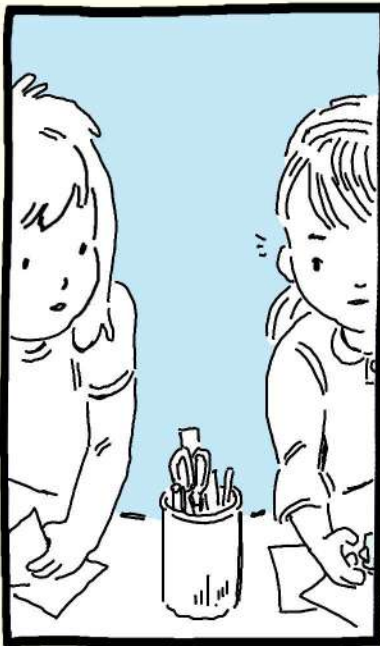


No one had ever
heard her voice, at
least not at school.



But she was the
type of girl who
would help other
kids clean up the
mess at the end of
every art class.





We became close to each other after one class assignment where we had to create our own origami zoo.



I showed her how to fold a paper crane and that impressed her.

It didn't really bother me that we didn't talk, since I was still new to Canada and could barely speak any English.

From then Christine was always next to me. With a bag of fish shaped cheese cracker, we would spend our recess sitting on a rock in front of the playground fence.



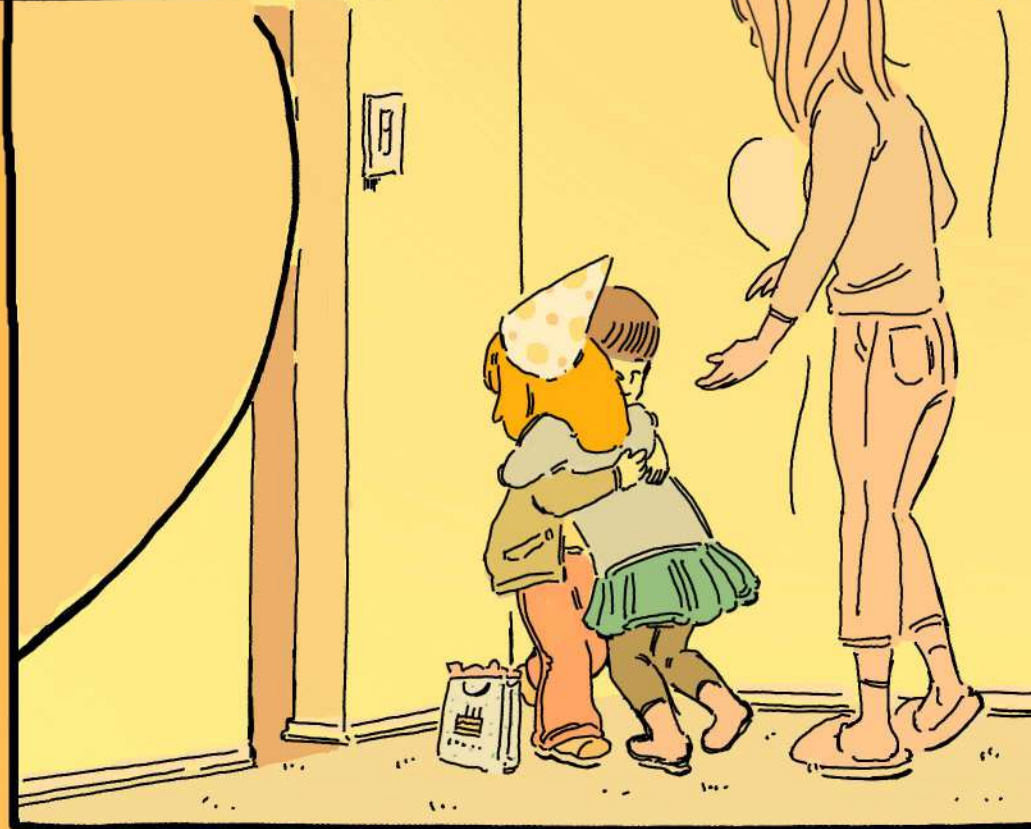
In December I was invited to her birthday party along with few other kids from school.

Her father wasn't there, but her mother baked cupcakes with strawberry icing, each of them decorated with our names.



After the party the other kids left before me. My dad was supposed to pick me up but he was running late.

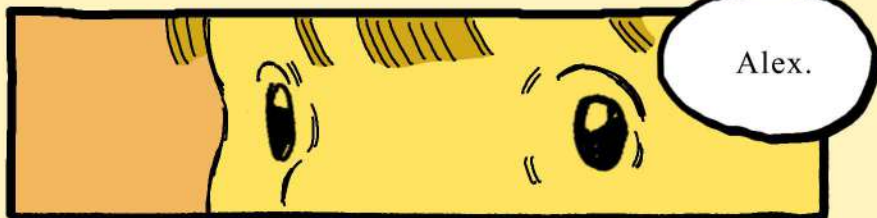
So Christine and I waited in the hallway with a bag of fish crackers, just like we always did.



The quietness after the party
was comforting.



Alex.



It was a faint sound. A gentle whisper

Thank you for
coming.



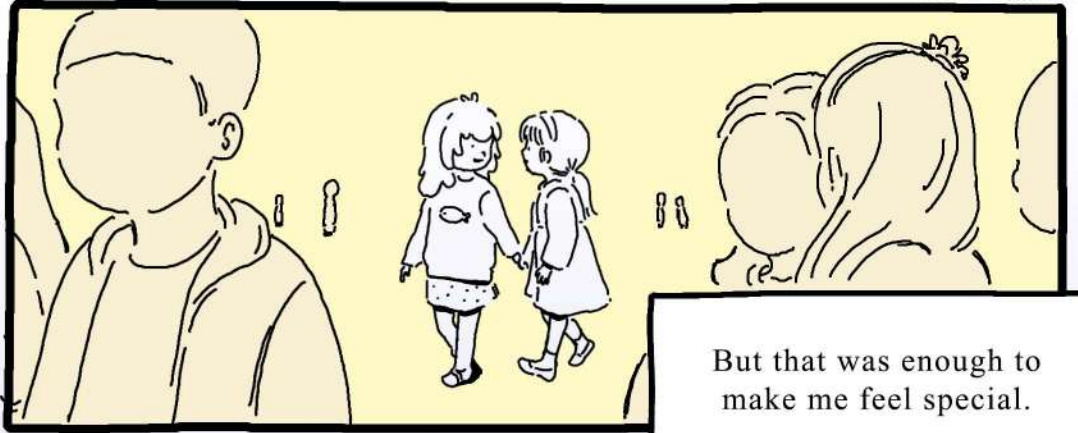
Christine
Spoke to me.



From then on
she would
whisper to me
from time to
time.



It was mostly
small things, like
“hello”, “ok”,
“wait” to “Alex”.



But that was enough to
make me feel special.

And the incident happened when
we had a new music teacher.



Good job, Alex.
But try to sing
louder from next
time, alright?

Who do we have next, ah, Miss Christine. It's your turn.



Miss Fredrick, Christine can't

No, I saw you whispering with Alex, Christine. I know you can do it.



No more excuses, let's hear from you!



Now!

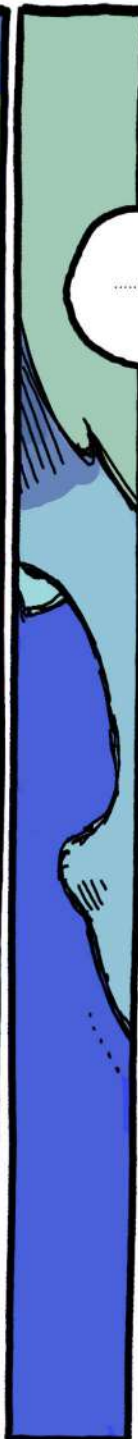
I...



In.....I.....



.....!



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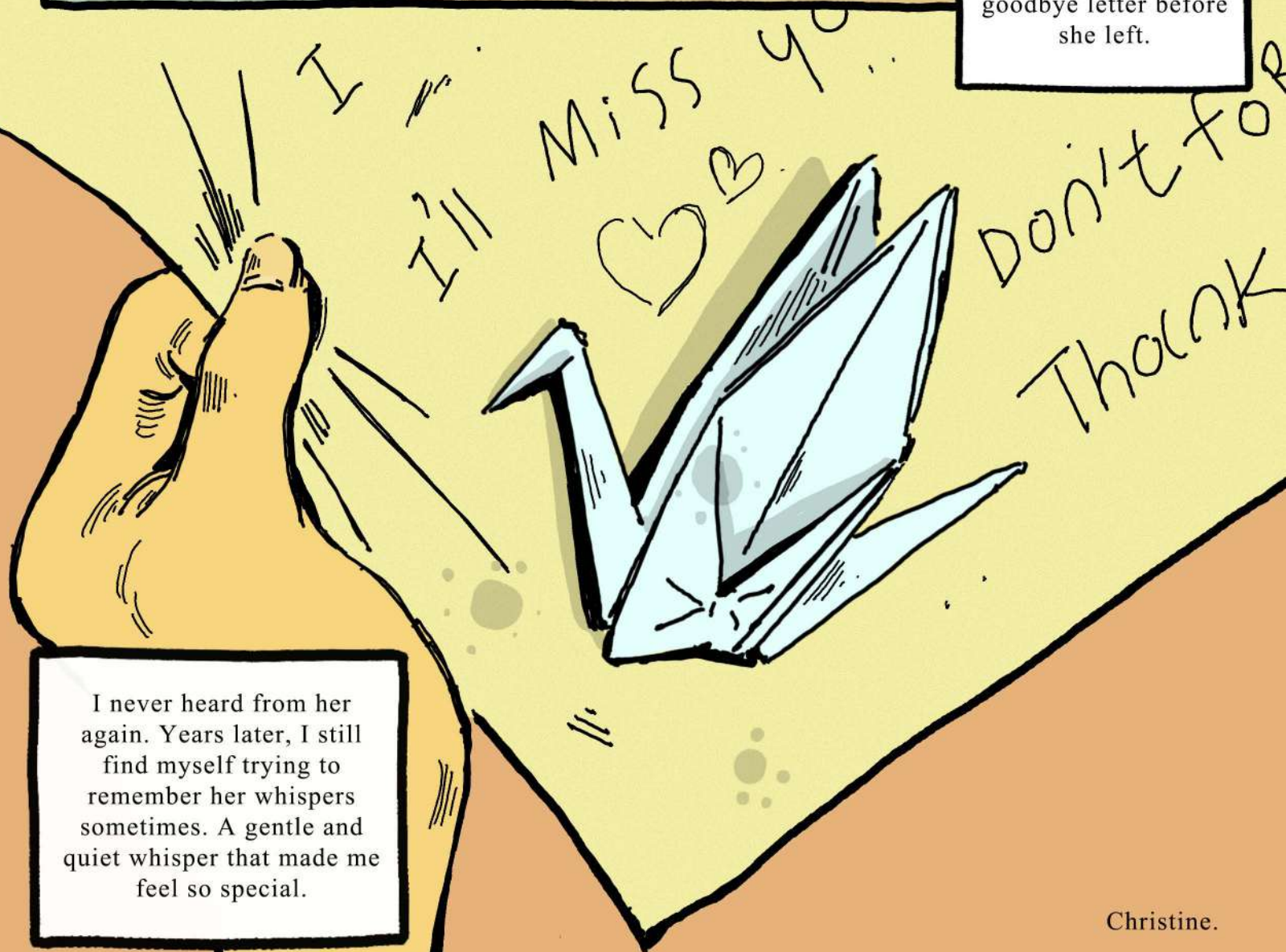
I never
heard her
whisper
again.



A month or so later,
Christine and her family left
the town.



She wrote me a
goodbye letter before
she left.



I never heard from her
again. Years later, I still
find myself trying to
remember her whispers
sometimes. A gentle and
quiet whisper that made me
feel so special.

Christine.