Prologue
(Christmas in Quebec)

I was just returning from checking my traps when I saw a small plane circling above Bersimis. It was flying low—so low that it looked like it was going to land. I watched the plane and wondered who on earth would be bold enough to risk flying to our little settlement on the Côte-Nord in the wintertime. Today the weather was clear, but it wouldn't be for long. Terrible snowstorms had been plaguing the area for weeks, making almost any kind of travel impossible—even the best sled dogs were no match for the biting winds and blinding blizzards that were keeping the people of Bersimis at home. Though the holidays were fast approaching, the weather was making it difficult for any of us to get into the Christmas spirit.

I urged my sled dogs to slow down so I could watch the airplane more closely. Some of the other villagers had gathered to watch the plane as well. We looked at the sky and then at each other, trying to figure out what was going on. Why would a pilot dare to make a trip so far north this time of year? And why was he just circling overhead?

Suddenly, a hefty grey bag came tumbling out of the plane and then the pilot flew away. Everyone was curious. We rushed towards the mysterious sack, all of us feeling like small children about to open stockings stuffed with gifts on Christmas morning. Samuel untied the rough cord and reached into the bag. Inside were letters and parcels for the villagers of Bersimis. Most of the letters had special Christmas stamps, and there was a great big package wrapped in red paper on which someone had scrawled "Joyeux Noel."

That pilot must have been Santa Claus himself………