

Hello, I am a bear. A stuffed bear, more commonly known as a teddy bear. I belong to an eight year-old girl. She has had me for eight years. I *think* my name is Pooh-bear, because that's what she always calls me, not that she calls me anything very much. I'm also pretty sure her name is Liv. I am her favorite toy, and she sleeps with me every night. One of the most scary experiences as a toy, is traveling. Usually, we go on planes. I feel bad for the other toys, because they always put them into a stinky bag when we get on planes, but Liv lets me stay out, so I get to see the airport. But before we get to the airport, I am stuck in the smelly bag. And I will tell you the story of the first time I ever went to the airport.

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I am sitting on Liv's bed, I am usually there, because she can't sleep very well without me, so she doesn't want me getting lost. I was watching Liv's mother put the other toys into a blue bag. Liv walks in and her mother says something to her.

"I need to go make dinner, you'll have to finish packing your backpack on your own."

"Okay." Liv begins to put the remaining toys in the bag, while her mother walks out of the room.

The next morning, Liv gets up really early. Hurriedly, she pulls on her clothes, brushes her teeth, and stuffed me in the blue bag in the corner. It stinks. And it's crowded, *and*

stuffy. Under me, Pinky, the owl, is complaining in a whisper. We don't want Liv to hear us.

"Why are we in here?" Pinky whines "I don't like it." Next to Pinky, Fetch and Slush are squashed together. They are both dogs, and are a bit in love with each other. Under them is Ice Cube (the penguin), Safari (the giraffe), Snowy (polar bear), and Cress (the bunny). I am all squished up in a ball, and it's really, really, uncomfortable. After a few minutes, the bag starts to move, but we're so packed together, we don't roll around. Pinky is still whining, but stops as the bag is swung around, and hits something bony and hard. I'm not too excited about being in such a confined space. You would think I'd have gotten used to them, after being in a box for weeks before someone bought me, but confined spaces give me the jeebies. I put my paws on my head, and I barely have space to maneuver. After what feels like hours, but is really only a few minutes, Liv unzips the bag, and pulls me out. We are in a huge building, about forty meters across, and completely white. Liv straps me on her chest by my belly, with a gray strap that snaps together in the middle. I don't have super good eyesight, so I can only see clearly about one hundred feet ahead of me, over that, and it gets all blurry. Liv has two sisters, who are walking ahead of us. One of them turns around, and I see one of my friends on her chest. My friend isn't sure what her name is, but she has asked me to call her Rose. Rose is Liv's older

sister's, or Emily's favorite toy. Rose was in the family two years before me, and Emily is two years older than Liv. Rose and I are the same type of teddy bear, except, I am more tattered. We both don't have mouths, and have to use sign-language to talk to the other toys. After a few more minutes of walking, we reach a machine people are putting their luggage on, and next to it, a doorway without a frame. Liv unbuckles me, and puts me in a plastic basket on a conveyor belt that goes into the machine. Emily puts Rose next to me, and the belt starts to move. Inside the machine, it's dark, and I can't see anything, but when we reach the middle, a bright white X-ray light shines over me and Rose. I force myself to be still. I don't think I like this place too much. An hour later, we're standing in front of a sign that says:

## **GATES 9-13**

We step inside a doorway (or is it gate?) and walk for another fifteen minutes. I am once again strapped on Liv's chest. We reach another sign, but this one is closer ceiling. It says:

## **GATE 10**

Liv walks through a doorway under the sign. We sit in **GATE 10** for four or five minutes until a voice comes blaring from in front of us.

“First class and Business class may now began boarding. First class and Business class may now began boarding...” I squint and see a woman holding a scanner speaking into a megaphone. After a few more minutes she speaks again. “Economy class may now began boarding.” Liv pushed herself off the padded chair, and follows her mother to the woman. Her mother shows the woman a few little books, which the woman scans. I think we’re buying them. The whole Carisch family follows Liv and her mother down a hallway. When we reach the end of the hall a doorway opens into around vehicle. Liv walks by a few seats, and at the thirty second one, she sits down. And that was my first time at the airport.

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I was born in a big factory in Chattanooga, TN, U.S.A. The first thing I ever saw was the face of a woman. She had been sewing my parts together, and she threw me in a big basket with about sixty other bears. A few hours later, I was covered in other bears. The woman threw the last bear in the basket, and picked it up. She took us to a man who was standing by a conveyor belt. The man put us, one by one on the belt. The belt went right past two long arms. As a bear reached the arms, they put them in a box, and stuck blanket in with them. When it was my turn, I expected it to squash me in more, but the box just about fit me and the blanket. The conveyor dropped us into another basket, with a lot of bumping. A few moments later, someone else picked it up, and carried us to a big truck. After another few hours, the truck was full, and someone shut the back, and it began to move. A few minutes later, we had arrived at a store. The workers unloaded the bears and put them on shelves. I sat there for *weeks* watching the other bears get sold. Then, one day, a tall woman walked up to our shelf, and took my box!

My box! The woman took me home with her, and gave me to my new owner, Liv. I have lived with them ever since.