Airport

by andlat

Joey and Josh are flying without their parents. Will it go off without a hitch? I wrote this story back in 2021, but apparently never posted it? If you remember this story, please call 1-800-ANDLAT-1

The Costume Box
2023

Chapter 1

Airport

"Alright, buddy system, guys!" Dad said. "Joey, I want you holding Josh's hand the whole time, okay?"

"I'll make sure he does, dad." Josh said, grinning.

"Alright. You two be good and listen to grandma when you get there, kay?" He waited until the both of them had nodded. "Neither of you let go of the other's hand and don't let your brother out of your sight."

"Maybe we should get you one of those leashes." Josh whispered once dad had left them. Joey glared at him. Despite being Josh's older brother, mom and dad always talked to him as if he was younger than Josh, which the bratty fourth grader loved, of course. It did not help that Josh stood inches taller than Joey. Mom and dad had reassured Joey that it was just genetics and he would catch up, but it was still tough being in seventh grade and having little kids taller than you. "I'm just kidding. C'mon, let's go find our gate."

Joey was all for going straight to the gate, but Josh seemed more than happy to see all the sights, keeping what felt like an iron grip on Joey's hand no matter how he tried to pull the bigger boy along.

"We're going to miss our flight." Joey whined under his breath. It was more to himself than to Josh, but his brother heard anyway.

"Calm down, buddy. See that clock over there?" He pointed. "Our flight is at eleven. What time is it now?" Joey's nose wrinkled.

"You know I can't read those clocks." He mumbled.

"Well, what number is that little hand pointing to?"

"It's between the nine and the ten." Joey was fairly certain that meant it was still before ten, but he did not add that. Josh would make fun of him if he was wrong.

"Exactly. It's not even nine thirty." Josh explained gently. "So we've got plenty of time." He brightened. "I know, how about you sit while I'm looking around?"

"We need to stay together."

"I know." Joey was flummoxed. How could he sit and stay with Josh?

"Well, how can I sit while you're looking at all this dumb stuff?" He spied a bench nearby. "Just sit on that bench?"

"Yep." Josh said. "I'll come get you when it's time to move on." Joey considered it. He knew he was supposed to stay right with Josh, but to bring that up would only make him sound like a little kid who always did exactly what mom and dad said.

Crossing over to the bench, he sat there and watched Josh. Keeping a close eye on him seemed like a good compromise, right? He just wished Josh wasn't taking an eternity in the store. He was looking at luggage, so obviously he was doing

it just to annoy Joey.

He had almost psyched himself up enough to go give Josh a piece of his mind when a security guard, who had been watching him, came over.

"Hey there, buddy."

"Hi."

"Do you know where your parents are?" Joey stared up at the guard in a mixture of shock and embarrassment.

"Oh, I'm flying with my brother." He pointed over at Josh, who was still examining the luggage. The security guard nodded and murmured something into the walkie talkie she wore on her shoulder.

"Oh, alright. How about I hang out with you while your brother finishes up?"

"Uh, sure?" The security guard nodded and stood a close distance away until Josh, whose eyebrows rose as he saw the security guard next to Joey, came over.

"Something wrong?" Joey smirked as Josh, whether it was intentional or not, deepened his voice somewhat like he always did when talking to an adult.

"Just keeping an eye on your little brother."