

Stuck at the airport on Christmas day

By Filip Tomala, kl. 2 c

I always hated airports, because of the crowds, the palpable rush hanging in the air. The constant buzz and humming never let me enjoy the flight. I love trains. This unhurried, calm ride. Views outside the window. Small stations. This year's Christmas trip, however, was to take place by plane. I was flying with my uncle to London at the invitation of my great-grandmother's last surviving brother. Once Antoni, now Tony, stayed in London after World War II. He was an aviator. His whole life revolved around airplanes, which I thought was cool.

While waiting for our plane we sat down in the airport cafe and poured hectoliters of hot chocolate into ourselves. Just to taste the upcoming holidays. Hohoho. Suddenly I felt sick. My stomach hummed like Airbus engines...

Was it the information that the flight was delayed due to the snowstorm raging in London, or was it simply an excess of sugar? My uncle drummed his fingers on the table top, trying to reach Tony so he wouldn't worry, our flight would just be delayed. Tony wasn't answering, so uncle called his friends to let Tony know somehow. After all, he is an old man, he will worry unnecessarily.

I was thinking about Tony. The photos he sent me showed a decorated Christmas tree and hanging on it christmas balls in the shape of passenger planes and jets, which I sent him from Poland as a gift a few years ago. His little London house looked warm and I dreamed of just boarding the plane and going there. But it was still going to take time, because departures to London were still on hold. There were a lot of people around me who, like us, were waiting for the possibility of departure. In winter jackets, they looked

like colorful winter snowmen. Their children drank hot chocolate from paper cups, asking when they would get on the plane and if they could talk to the pilot. Uncle managed to call Tony. Tony assured us he would be waiting. The turkey is already in the oven and Aunt Pearl's gravy has just finished cooking. He also made Brussels sprouts from Jamie Oliver's recipe, because he loves his cooking programs. I was delighted. And hungry. And I just wanted to give Tony a hug. I don't remember when it all started and we finally took our seats on the plane. I don't remember much from the flight itself (apart from the children demanding a conversation with the pilot and the patient flight attendants who explained to them that the pilot would show them the cabin after landing).

Finally we sat down with Tony at the table. The fire was bubbling in the fireplace and the planes on the Christmas tree swayed steadily. It was a long night full of stories and memories. Food prepared with love. Three generations together. I will never forget these holidays...

