

## Look for the Silver Lining



He carried his own case, holding it tight and checking every minute to see that it was still there.

"Did you pack this yourself sir?"

"Yes", he proudly announced. "All my best things are in it."

"Has anyone else opened it?"

"Yes. Mummy took everything out and then put some of it back again so there was room for her make-up. Can I go through that door now? I can't wait."

"Here comes the captain. I'll tell him this is your first time in a plane. He will get the lady to look after you."

"Thank you, but I am nearly seven."

He hopped from one foot to another and managed to walk, not run, to the inviting gate with half an hour to spare.

He was startled to hear his own name on the tannoy.

"Paul Spender. Your parents are looking for you. Where are you? Tell someone in airport uniform where you are."

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"Excuse me. I am Paul Spender."

"O.K. Paul. Stay with me in my little office and I'll tell everyone you are safe."

"Thank you. Who are all these people waiting on the other side? They've been there a long time."

"I know. They are people who want to come and live in Britain. They have heard it may be better than where they live."

"There are a lot of children. They look very unhappy and a lot of them are crying. Can you find them somewhere to wait instead of in that long queue?"



"Come with me and I'll see what we can do."

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"Yes. Good idea. The children will be better off in Hall B. Well done."

"Oh, it was Paul's idea."

"Well done Paul. Perhaps you can stay with them until your flight is called. I'm sorry you have had such a long wait."

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"Have you seen what's happening in Hall B? There's a young boy - he looks about seven or eight - talking to about fifty Asian children. He seems to be telling them about life in Britain. Not what's in the government books though, about the population of Wales and where the Grand National is run. He's telling them really useful things about schools and meals and the weather and what clothes to wear in winter."

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"Thank you Paul. That was great. Those children were getting very tired and worried but now they seem alright. Perhaps you can come and do it again when you come back. It's been a great success. All because your plane was delayed and so you had to help us out. Everybody benefits - we airport staff are pleased, the children are now looking forward to living in Britain and it looks as if you might have a little part-time job here when you return. It looked like being a disaster, but its turned out O.K. Every cloud has a silver lining.

Colin Jenks