



# Possum Christmas Chaos

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## Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians and Owners of the land on which we meet today, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and peoples here today.



## Chapter 1

It was the day before Christmas; the airport was filled with festive laughter and joys. “Click click” came from the palpable possum.

“Hi there here is

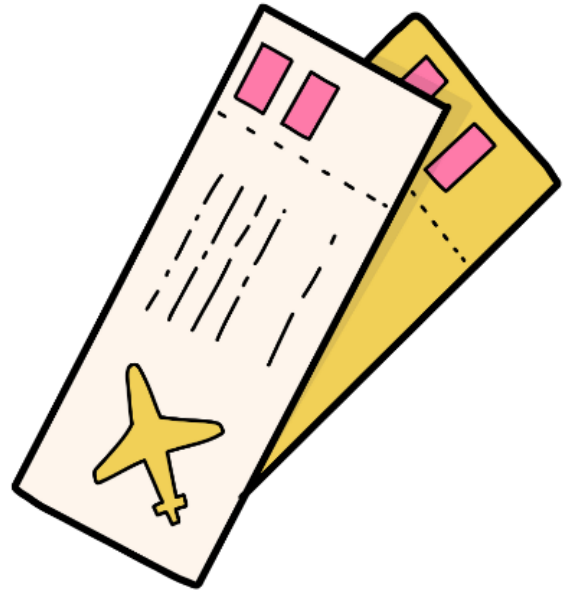
d flight number” said the flight attendant.

Tori and her half-brother Stewart the one and only math wizard spoke with the flight check in desk.

“Yes, hello I'm Stewart \_\_\_\_\_ i am here for the Hobart to Darwin flight thank you” he said while passing the needed passports and documents.

While he was conversing with the check in desk the possum to the side looked rather...strange we'll say.

“So, I'm so glad you created this possum for me Stewy!” Tori exclaimed. Her hand secured tight to her suitcase containing the multiple failed **novels** she attempted writing which led to her being a secretary for a major \_\_\_\_\_ company.



“Of course, Tori is the least I could do after not seeing you for this long.

Tori and Stewart's dynamic was interesting. They never really bonded over the 40 or so years of them being born. With Tori being 41 and Stewart being 67 it sure accounted for many disadvantages, like not being able to spend holidays together because of the crashing schedules.

“Yeah, this small getaway hopefully helps with my writer's block you know., Christmas period with our family gets a bit hectic” Tori muttered with a sign.

Just as she finished up Stewart resolved all matters revolving around the airport. They both went off to sit down in the waiting area.

“Click click click” went the possum.

“Is it supposed to be making that sound?” Tori chuckled.

“No..,no i think it's just a glitch, don't worry about it” Stewart stated with a smile.

The room was dark and crowded and had this lingering smell of exploded pen ink. Papers written with formulas, math topics and equations covered every inch of the room, an English lover's worst nightmare! Stewart stood in the middle of the room with a

table and flasks in front of him. This **gooey** green substance overflowed the flasks.

Stewart himself looked so focused not even a volcanic eruption could disrupt him. The substance that filled the tubes up was the substance remedy that would tranquil the possum in time for our perfect Christmas flight. Yet something looked a bit odd, specifically the serum. The serum looked a bit too bubbly and a bit opaque, usually a concoction like this should be clear with green tint and serene (according to Steward).

There was something wrong, the formula was off, the elasticity of the serum was **gooey**. This changes everything.

## Chapter 2:

After Stewart got in a twist trying to find the formula paper and finally reached it both Tori and Stewart were fascinated trying to solve this problem of the possum.

“Wait Stewy isn’t this formula subtracting 420 instead of 200? Tori said innocently.

Stewart's face turned pale, and not normal pale he turned ghostly. The endless nights spent alone in his basement creating this for his only half-sister could have been a disaster project. The original formula of  $y=x^2+V/200$  didn’t account for the normal dosage of tweaks that the possum will have had. In summary we are cooked.

“According to my very own calculations this is completely wrong!” This sentence came from a person who won numerous awards for his extraordinary math's efforts so this scenario itself is out of the world, some would say mathematically impossible.

While Stewart & Tori were in their own realm trying to figure out what was wrong, they didn't even realize that the very playful possum was trying to wrestle itself out of his controlling cage.

“Wait what does that mean for us? Theo is waiting for me and his exciting gift at home” Tori asked.

“I think this means we might potentially have an outbreak, but without proper calculations and tests it's improper to say or even guess, so i...i have no idea.

Just then in the mist of the verbal chao a loud BANG fills the room. By this point all the passersby repping Christmas attire are looking at Tori and Stewart, two crazy looking people with a possum. With a quick flick of their heads, they can see an insane scene. The possum jumping out.

The travelers coming from all countries yell absurd things all alike, trying to run away from the rabid possum. By this time with the accumulated people the scene attracts the security guards which just see a broken cage.

In the moment the words haven't left either Tori or Stewarts mouths. In a loss for words a little kid that seemed to have appeared for absolutely nowhere yells “OMG THIS IS SO SUS WHERE IS THE POSSUM THAT WAS IN THAT CAGE”. This small little blonde girl with pigtails running through her hair severely disadvantaged the situation.

The rush starts to finally catch up to me, I feel my palms sweating and my heart feels like it's going to explode out of my chest. I can't seem to place where the crazy possum even is right now. Stewart and I hopelessly try to find him, but it seems like he could literally be anywhere.

"I'm going to check the right side of this airport, go check the left." Stewart huffs, immediately scurrying to find this lively of a creature.

I nod, looking and making sure the possum wasn't bothering people and *totally* not embarrassing me—oh and Stewart, of course. As I quite literally sprint a marathon around the whole section of the right side of the airport, looping not one, not twice but *thrice* clearly looking out of my mind bumping into each and every person.

"I am so *sorry!*" I quickly mutter accidentally bumping into a family, briefly thinking about my family and my son THEO—but not *clearly*, because I must focus on this silly experiment that *silly* Stew made. I check every possible place, every crack, every bag and no possum were even found. I even check the ceilings and every possible crevice seen in the airport.

"*Stewart: Meet up at the middle, no luck.*" popped up on my notifications as I responded with the same amount of dissatisfaction. I curse, disappointed and walking back to where we started from, now hearing Joy to The World sung by a Christmas carol choir, which was sung beautifully for the Christmas season.

"The possum is seen nowhere--" BANG! I heard something rustle beside me, an upside-down rubbish can, with clearly something in it and Stewart nods, signalling me



to flip the can to reveal the creature or whatever it is. I quickly take a couple breathes, hoping it's that darn possum. It shuffles a bit more; whatever was in it seems like it was trying to get out and it stops with a thud.

I sigh in relief, hoping it's the possum. Then the music stops. CLASH! There goes Stewart's project. I huff in disappointment.

Stewart suddenly seemed like he gained confidence and like he had a clue on what to do.

"Wait, Tori I have an idea," Stew seemed like he was calculating in his head, "it's a long shot but it's the music."

"The music?" I chuckle, "Really? Like that's going to help." I cross my arms in disbelief.

Stewart goes serious, "Well, the possum responds to the vibrations of the music, and in that case, if the possum focuses enough on the carols and is calm, we could lead the possum with food on..." Stewart looks around looking for something, "this **yarn**! We could tie the food on the **yarn**, getting the possum to follow the **yarn** back to us." he breathed out.

"This better work, Stew." I put my trust in him, as he *is* the guy who made this possum.

## Chapter 4

Now we got to find food for this troublesome possum, it doesn't even have a name but there is so much to take responsibility for it. Stewart and I begin to search for more **yarn** and more food or fruits to capture this possum.

"Check the wrapping station, we need any material to get this possum back home." Stewart examines every single store across the airport as I soon check the wrapping station.

Plastic wrap, plastic wrap, and more plastic and wrap. *Is this ever going to be over?* I try to find anything that could reel the possum in, plastic and more plastic fills the wrapping station, until my eyes catch onto a two bright red **yarn** ball. *Perfect.* I text Stewart that I accomplished finding useable items for the contraption. I continue to find fruits and foods from the bakeries and picking off strawberries from desserts to lure the possum back to us, back home.

"Stew, you owe me." I puffed out, as I brought out the three red **yarns** and a cup load of fruits,

"Good, I didn't find anything." Steward munched on a muffin, nonchalantly.

I rolled my eyes opening the fruit cups and passing it to him, "Whatever, just start tying the food."

"Alrighty, Tori." Stewart chuckled, grabbing the **yarn** and fruits, tying the fruits on top of the red **yarn** for the possum.

## Chapter 5

The calculations begin to form in my head, numbers and letters flow all over the place, but no simple answer can help me figure out what could of possibly went wrong. Suddenly the word globulus spins through my mind, Eucalyptus globulus... Thats right the main missing ingredient needed to make the antidote not too **gooey** nor to moist.

I grab my small notepad small enough to fit in the front pocket of my shirt and begin to get to work, Eucalyptus globulus, bright red raspberries with a mix of Lilly pillies big enough to fill your hunger and finally the special ingredient liquorice root, the road to the possums very first words.

“Only problem is, where will I find these Eucalyptus globulus which I so eagerly need” I say to myself as I pace back and forth looking for a solution. Times ticking and I don't see any signs of Tori and the disobedient possum but wait... There is the tall tree which stands between the festive decorations ready for Christmas covered in dark brown globulus, exactly what I was gazing for.



I dash over to the middle of the airport where the tree lies eyeing it down like it's some sort of prize. I pick the little pieces off the branches grabbing just the right amount I require, with still no sign of Tori. Jingle bells echo through the building while I mix all the necessary ingredients making the most perfect liquorice root formula with no mistakes made. Now all that's left is to find that darn rebellious possum.

“The possum is seen nowhere--” BANG! I heard something rustle beside me, an upside-down rubbish can, with clearly something in it and Steward nods, signalling me to flip the can to reveal the creature or whatever it is.

I quickly take a couple breathes, hoping it's that darn possum. It shuffles a bit more; whatever was in it seems like it was trying to get out and it stops with a thud.

“AHHH” Tori screams as the possum leaps out towards her letting out a loud hiss. “There you are you little rebel” Tori drags the possum holding on as tight as she can trying her best not to let him go. “Finally, you've got the cheeky little thing” Steward says in a mocking tone of voice.

Tori and Steward march on over to the side of the airport trying not to cause to much attention to themselves, clutching as tight as possible as the Christmas songs continue to play.

## Chapter 6:

On a determined mission, Tori and Stewart get the lovely choir to follow them to a secluded room in the end left corner of the airport. There, they ask the choir to sing some melodies in hope of the possum falling to sleep. The instructor moves up to the front and starts counting.

“One, two, three, four. Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let earth receive her Ki-”

“I think it’s working Tori. His eyes are starting to droop.” Stewart exclaimed in an excited tone with Tori watching intently closely behind.

Slowly but surely, the possum’s eyes start to close increasing the excitement Stewart is feeling. The choir noticing the possum falling asleep continues to sing even louder.

“Joy to the Earth! The Saviour reigns”

After a few minutes, the possum has completely gone to sleep.

“Now, Get the serum!” Tori shrieks.

Running out of time, Stewart rushes to his bag and pulls out the **gooey**, green substance. Attached to the tube are his now ruined **homework** papers covered in a green, slime-like liquid.

“Dammit” Stewart curses.

The papers were his subjects test theory which he had worked hard on for the past 3 years. He was supposed to hand it in after the Christmas break to the National

Scientific and Mathematic Council (NSAMC) so that they could review his work and be recognized nationally as a creative, innovative mathematician. Defeated, Stewart stayed frozen in his spot, contemplating how he is going to fix this when he was brought back to reality by Tori. Stewart now in the present reality, rushes back over to where the possum is lying and carefully injects the antidote to ensure that he won't wake up cause more chaos.

## Chapter 7:

Relieved, Stewart and Tori pick the possum up and lay back down softly into its cage. The choir concludes their singing in the background as they leave the room and walk over to their terminal. Upon arriving at their plane gate, the intercom starts speaking.

“All passengers flying to Melbourne by Fox Air please meet at gate number 5. Boarding has now started.”

“That’s us, Stewart. Let’s go before something else happens” Tori alerts Stewart.

They walk up to the reception desk, check in for their flight and board their plane. Tori quickly finds their seats and they sit down thinking that all is well and done when the cage starts rattling. Nervous and afraid, they give each other a worried glance before peeking into the cage where the animal lays to see what is up. Stewart slowly reaches for the cage door, hands shaking showing his old age. He hesitates a little before finally opening the door and to his surprise the possum shoots out.

“AGHHH” Stewart yells.

Alarmed hearing a yell, a flight attendant rushes over and freezes in her tracks. A loud, high-pitched shriek escaped her lips. The possum standing up onto top of the plane seat sees an opening between the flight attendant and makes a run for it. Running across the floor, he goes for the airplane telephone. Once again anxious, Stewart rises from his seat

“CATCH THAT POSSUM” he yells, frantically moving around.

Multiple passengers rise out their seats trying to be as fast as possible to get a hold of that possum but he is too fast for them, making a quick manoeuvre around them all. With his quick speed, he reaches the airplane telephone and jumps up to grab it.

“Hello, fellow passengers” he says casually.

Everyone on the plane is dumbfounded and astounded. A possum is talking on a telephone. That is definitely the first time that sentence has ever been said. The possum continues to speak.

“I would just like to apologise for all the ruckus I caused earlier in the airport. I know I worried a lot with me being a possum on the run and all but it’s technically not my fault because my owners gave me the wrong dosage” he says as he snaps his paws.

Tori lets out a relieved sigh. The possum isn’t causing Chaos for once. Stewart sits down also relieved and the possum returns back to his cage. The rest of the flight goes smoothly.



## Chapter 8

Its Christmas Eve and Tori and Stewart have finally arrived in Darwin and have got a uber back to Tori's house to surprise her son Theo. At this point in time, its only 8am and Theo is still in bed. When Tori went into his room to wake him she saw that he had already woken up and she pulled out the possum to give to Theo.

"Theo honey, I'm sorry I had to miss Christmas eve but here is your present me and uncle Stew have created for you! I hope you enjoy it; it really put us through hell to get this for you."

"MUM YOUR BACK! I was so worried about you, you weren't answering the phone, and I checked to see if your flight was delayed but it said that you guys had already left Tas to come here. Where did you guys go?!" Theo exclaimed in a worried tone.

"What are you talking about, we are here on time. Its Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> of December is it not?"

"Umm no it's the 26<sup>th</sup> Christmas is over."

As Tori and Stewart turned to each other the door had been kicked open and a group of men in black suits. They walked in and pulled aside Tori and Stewart. They were with the FBI and had come to question the two siblings about the flight experience and if anything felt differently.

“No everything was pretty normal we just had some turbulence nothing out of the ordinary, may I ask why you have intruded into my home?” said Tori in her firm mum voice.

“Your plane was shown to be missing, meaning you were meant to land at Darwin airport yesterday morning, but your plane went off our radar and the team couldn’t reach the aircraft for the whole day. You guys have been missing for the past 24 hours” The head FBI agent said to Tori and Stewart

“What your joking right” Stewart said “we were only on the plane for 8 hours”

“Wait you know what when I had looked outside, I saw a big flash but thought nothing of it, could it be we went to an alternate reality? I mean I have read about this happening with Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370.”

After a long discussion with the FBI and the siblings they concluded that Stewarts thoughts were correct and that they had actually gone into an alternate real but the FBI had told them that they were not going to say anything else and this had now become official government business and Tori and Stewart should just move on from this and forget that anything had happened

## Chapter 9

After all that had happened with the plane being missing for 24 hours and missing Christmas Stewart came up with the idea to rethrow Christmas as they had missed the real one.

“Tori I have an idea. Because you missed spending Christmas with your son, we should recreate this year’s Christmas so we can spend it together as a family. Ann Theo looked sad this morning so while he is sleeping, we will get all the gifts we got him and put it under the tree and act as if we never missed it.”

“Stew you’re a smart guy, glad to have you as my brother cause no way I would have come up with that idea. okay but it only just turned 12pm what can we do for the next 9 hours and, we already gave him the biggest present, the possum.”

“T you have plenty of other gifts for him and the possum can just join us now. Wait where is Theo and the possum?”

They went around the house to begin looking for the two. Once they looked around the whole house panic set in but thankfully stew saw out of the conner of his eye the two of them laughing and running around in the backyard.

“Mum, uncle stew! Come out here I came up with his name!!!”

“Oh, dear that’s wonderful, you had me and your uncle worried because we couldn’t find you two”

“So, kid what did you come up with?”

**“Plunge!”**

“Oh, what a name” Stewart said while laughing.

Fast-forward a few hours later the time came to start setting up Christmas 2.0 to surprise Theo. The two siblings came together after tori put Theo to sleep for the night. They spent the day just chilling out and Stewart telling Theo the story of what they went to dramatically.

They got some more decorations from the basement and got to work putting them up to make it seem like the north pole puked in their living room. Tori even got **plunge** the possum to help wrap some extra gifts. This also was the moment Tori found out the **plunge** took after stew and is a mathematics genius.

The next morning, **Plunge** took it upon himself to wake up everyone in the morning and run out to the living room. “GET UP GUYS ITS OUR CHRISTMAS DAYYYYY” **plunge** the possum yells while running through the halls. Theo woke up and to his surprise and see’s the whole living room in Christmas shambles

The day had ended with Tori, her brother and son as well as the new member of the famil, all spending the day like as if its Christmas. Laughter and cheer was spread around the whole family and tori’s last surprise was that her writers block ended and she finally had an idea for her **novel**

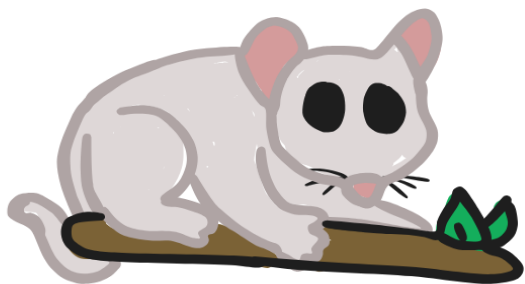
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