



**International Network for School Social Work**

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### **A True Story**

Once upon a time, a long time ago, I lived with Jr. and his family. My name is Teddy Bear, Teddy after a famous President and Bear is my family name. I was called Teddy after a President who was also a hunter. He once spared a bear's life and so a lot of stuffed animals like me are called Teddy, after Teddy Roosevelt.

I went to live with Jr. when he was very young and I was always with him. He loved me very much and always played with me. It was a very happy life with no worries.

One day Mom took Jr. away and left him at a school. He cried a lot but she just left him there without me! She said he had to stay there. It was cruel.

But not long after that, the school sent him home. Hurrah. It wasn't something he had done wrong that got him sent home. It seems something flew around in the air (that's why they called it the Flew). It could fly at you and kill you dead. Bam! Or it could make you sick, or make your Mom sick, or kill your Dad. At home everyone was talking about the Flew. It flew around in the air (like a bird or maybe a bullet), but it was small and invisible. Sometimes they called it the Pan-Dummy. It was a dummy all right – stupid. But if Jr. got to stay home it was all right with me.

Unfortunately, although he got to stay home, they made him sit at a desk and do stupid stuff like ABC's. I wasn't allowed to be with him then. But one day Jr. quit his desk and came and played with me on the floor. Mom came in and yelled a lot. She grabbed me and threw me on the ground. Fortunately nothing was broken, like an arm or a leg. But it wasn't very nice being treated like that.



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This went on for a long time. Jr. wanted to start to play baseball but he wasn't allowed. All the sports were cancelled. He cried a lot. Mom cried too. Someone in our family had died of the Flew. Mom wanted to go to the funeral but she wasn't allowed to go in case the Flew got her. When she went shopping she covered herself up, even her face, to hide from the Flew.

After a long time, Mom said Jr. could go back to school. But she was scared that the Flew could still get Jr. I was left home again. No stuffed animals were allowed to go to school. One day Jr. decided he didn't want to go to school without me so he pretended he was sick and stayed in bed. I stayed with him, of course. After a few days Mom decided Jr. wasn't sick at all and told him to get up, but Jr. just wanted to stay home with me. Who wouldn't? A very mean lady came to the house and ordered him to get out of bed and get ready for school. He went, but he wasn't very happy about it.

A few weeks later, they kicked the kids out of school again. The Flew was back. Hurrah! Jr. stayed home for a few more weeks. There was so much Flew around again that Jr. was afraid that Santa would not be able to come. People didn't have much money any more. Perhaps Santa didn't have money to make toys. People didn't even have enough money to buy food. Dad grew a lot of food in our garden, so we had pumpkins and stuff. Sometimes we gave food from our garden to poor neighbors who didn't have anything to eat.

Well, Santa did come. But it was just as well that Jr. had me, because Santa didn't bring very many toys that year. He couldn't afford to make many toys to give to the children because of the Flew.

School was back and I was lonely again. But Jr. seemed happy about it. He talked about friends at school and about his teacher. He said she was only mean when the kids deserved it.

Jr. liked school so much, he kept going there for a long time. When he was older he went to bigger and bigger schools. I was left behind and was alone again. But I am still here, one hundred and two years later, to tell the story of Jr.'s first year at school in 1918 and how he was sent home because of a Pan-Dummy. Watch out that another Pan-Dummy doesn't come and get you. Teddy Bears like me give out much better stuff than stupid Pan-Dummies.



The End