

ROSIE, THE TEDDY BEAR

By Steven Bergman

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CHARACTER: Rosie – 15-25 years old, dressed in a fuzzy life-size teddy bear suit. SHE has a rose where her belly button would be and a small tear in her right arm

PLACE: The side of a highway road, dirt and gravel on the ground

TIME: Present

(ROSIE is seated on the ground, half leaning, as if against a large rock. SHE is in a contorted position. SHE addresses the audience)

Hi there. Nice to see you. How am I? Feeling a little down, but other than that, I'm doing okay. You found me here lying by the side of the road. I bet you didn't know that the breeze of passing cars can actually be refreshing at times. Don't think so? Well, that's probably 'cause if you stop on a highway, chances are something is wrong. But it's true – I know.

(pause)

I hear one coming now... here it comes... whoosh!

(SHE wobbles from side to side)

That felt pretty goo... ow! Unless, of course, you forget about the rip in your arm. It can sting a little if the breeze gets TOO strong. I could probably use some stitches, but I don't know when that's gonna happen. I've been here through two light times and two dark times. I don't get nearly as lonely during the light times as I do during the dark times, because I can see what's going on. During the dark time, I can never tell if something will come around to check me out. In the light time, I can see them coming by to sniff me, and even though it's comforting to be able to see, all I think about is "please don't take my stuffing, please don't take my stuffing, PLEASE DON'T TAKE MY STUFFING!" During the last light time, a small, furry animal came to check me out. He got up real close, and I could feel his warm breath on my tummy as he sniffed me. He tried to nudge me, to see if I was alive and would move or something. You would think that real animals would be smarter than teddy bears, but it appears not, since I obviously was NOT going to move for him. So when I didn't move for him, he put his teeth in my arm and threw me back and forth a couple of times, like this...

(SHE flings herself as if being tossed around by the animal; SHE stands as SHE continues to talk)

And that's how I got the rip in my arm. Oh, don't worry, it's not the first rip I've had. I've had this happen to me before: when the Little Girl was tiny, she would swing me and throw me around all the time. I was newer then, so I stayed together much better than I do now. But one time she threw me into a wall, and my eye popped off. It didn't hurt too much, I'm well padded, I just couldn't see very well until the Bigger Lady took out a small sharp object, put a piece of string through it, and put my eye back on. I felt good as new after that. But now it's been many dark times and many light times, and I'm starting to get frayed, so that stupid animal's teeth opened the hole in my arm. I wish the Bigger Lady was here to stitch it up, but I know she won't be.

The Little Girl got me as a present before she could even talk. A Big Boy found me in a trash can - a little dirty, but still new in my box - and brought me to where the Little Girl and the Bigger Lady lived. "I got 'ya something for your kid!" he said, and tossed me on the table. So the Bigger Lady opened me up and placed me next to the Little Girl while she slept. It was very nice. The Little Girl looked so peaceful lying there sleeping in the dark times, and just looking around and making all sorts of cute cooing and gurgling noises during the light times. That was the happiest time of my life. The swinging phase was not a lot of fun, but I saw the pleasure it gave the Little Girl, so getting tossed around didn't matter much to me. As the Little Girl got bigger, she stopped throwing me around so much. Instead, she would hug me and squeeze me and talk to me all the time. During the light times, she would ask my thoughts about what-to-do's, why's, and where-to-go's. "Should we have water or tea with our snack, Rosie?" or "Where do you think we should go today, Rosie?" or "Do you think Mommy's gonna have any visitors today, Rosie?" Rosie – that's my name. When the Little Girl would get upset, she'd call me Rosie Rosie, but most of the time, she just called me Rosie. She called me that because I have a rose in the center of my tummy – she told me so herself. It was a nice name – I liked it. I knew when she used it that she was talking to me. There were dark times when she would say things like, "Don't listen to what she's saying, Rosie Rosie!" "If we put our hands over our ears, we won't hear what they're saying, Rosie Rosie" or "Maybe if I stay here, she won't find me, Rosie Rosie," and then the Bigger Lady would come into the room and she wouldn't be acting like she did when she fixed my eye – oh, no. She would start to say very loud things that I couldn't understand because she connected all her words together, like...

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