

Airport Birthday Tweets

by Heidi McDonald

On my 44th birthday, a variety of unfortunate circumstances arose, trapping me in the Pittsburgh International Airport all day. I elected to compose Tweet-length flash fictions based on the people I observed in the airport. There were 44 tweets, to correspond with the number birthday I was having that day.

1. Cpt. Devereaux, thanks to advances in autopiloting, had enjoyed his nap; but now ambled confusedly toward clues as to which city he was in.
2. As Jerry pushed the sandwich cart with effort, he realized he'd never said as a kid that he wanted to be a Sandwich Guy when he grew up.
3. It dawned on Ira that no matter how loudly he conducted phone business, despite people watching, he didn't really feel any more important.
4. Julio's eyes faced straight ahead. He had to reach the baggage claim before the TSA x-ray guys realized his duffel bag was full of sex toys.
5. "Piss on all of you low-toed miscreants," thought Lola to herself. "My heels are THE highest. You couldn't walk half the distance in these!"
6. Perhaps he would get mistaken for Alan Rickman again. Don never minded, and had been practicing a British accent for just such an occasion.
7. Mike hoped that the harder he chewed his magic gum, his wife's voice would become less shrill. Mike was wrong. The magic gum had expired.
8. Trey enjoyed zooming around in the electric cart, but wished that just once, he could send an old lady flying into the airport ceiling.
9. Brian was a wiry man who looked shiftily around, believing that somehow, everyone looking at him could tell he had women's underwear on.
10. Marching proudly down the hall like the Pied Piper, Marla smiled. The green purse had mesmerized all four children, who followed obediently.
11. Prof. Johns stared at his torn-up Oxford shoes, pondering the artificial speed of the electric walkway. He hoped it wouldn't end too soon.
12. Cathy understood that the only way she could keep smiling today was to tie her uniform neck scarf just a little too tightly.
13. Ed walked with a spring in his step, matching each one to the beat on his iPod. He smiled so that others wondered what song was playing.
14. Arman looked downtrodden as he deplaned. His wife would be happy he'd worn the tie she'd bought. He, however, would not be happy to see her.
15. The horny masseuse stood in the doorway of his empty shop, his eyes fully exploring the bodies he'd love to get his hands on as each passed.
16. Looking vacantly out the window, Doreen wondered what might have happened had she decided to take that one plane, that one time, long ago.
17. She went on about his jacket. "Muriel," he thought, "if you say the word 'parka' one more time, you can board the damned plane by yourself."

18. Yang typed furiously on his ThinkPad, hoping to beat the 5:00 deadline. He simply HAD to get that motorized dinosaur before the offer ended.
19. Kathryn was horrified. Designer luggage and a perfectly-matched pink outfit, yet her young daughter's finger still went right up her nose.
20. The mountainous zit on Zach's face, visible from yards away, begged to be squeezed. "Oh God, the pressure!" it silently screamed.
21. Strolling along in his straw hat and breezy Hawaiian shirt, Clarence smiled as he decided he didn't need to be in Jamaica yet, to relax.
22. Matt chewed the burrito extra slowly. He thought perhaps he'd bitten into a piece of bone. Or had one of his teeth broken? He wasn't sure.
23. "I look like an ice cream man," sighed Hugh, regretting he'd let Nancy choose his white shirt and pants. "Nonsense," she said, kissing him.
24. Lin Su scratched vigorously at her nose. Damned allergies. If she couldn't find a tissue soon, she might have to use her new silk scarf.
25. He walked gingerly, holding the cherry between his buttocks. They'd said his mother's life depended on an intact delivery of the cherry.
26. They had no idea their eerily identical business suits with salmon ties made them strange, rather than the regular they were hoping for.
27. How Hannah hated working at McDonald's. Not counting the disgusting food, minimum wage didn't cover the way these fat old men looked at her.
28. If he pulled the hoodie around his ears tighter, Ryan thought, maybe he could keep the voices out. He didn't realize they were in his brain.
29. Indira stamped along, with purpose, ready to deliver her thesis to the scientists. Global warming was real, and her data would prove it.
30. Darrell walked in long strides, thinking about tryouts. This scholarship meant everything, so he'd bring the heat, and make the scout proud.
31. Sally smiled, realizing she'd been able to hide her trained pet squirrel under her cowboy hat the whole flight. Nutsy would be hungry soon!
32. Since Helen died, the only time Walter got to waltz was at the airport. It's why he'd bought that big 4-wheeled bag. It'd never replace her.
33. Selena strutted around the baggage claim, waiting for her blind date to recognize her lilac-toned pants. Her date would be wearing the same.
34. He saw her waiting there, and his soul was restored. They embraced like the world was ending, yet for them, it was only just beginning.
35. Five-year-old Emily Clark bounced along, blissfully unaware that her light-up shoes were transmitting secret messages from an alien race.
36. Once the whole team had deplaned, Coach said, "Even though we lost the yodeling tournament, I'm proud of you kids. Damned proud."
37. Harry emerged from the men's bathroom, still wearing his fishing vest and hat, and looking very sad to have not caught any fish in the john.
38. Debbie had one pair on her face, and another on her head. In fact, her purse and whole suitcase were full of nothing but pairs of glasses.

39. John didn't know how he'd explain to his parents that his sideburns were...alive. They curled like vines, stroking him to sleep each night.
40. Officer Dooley realized he looked grumpy to folks, but it was only because the chin strap on his hat was itchy, and he really needed a hug.
41. Linda let taxi after taxi pass. None were giving off the right aura. She'd hail one when she was sure the driver within had magical powers.
42. Janice waited for forty minutes, making phone calls and looking for his car. If Lou was drunk again, it was best that he stayed home.
43. Harold knew he looked like a slow old man shuffling along; his balls now hung so low that this was the only way to scratch them politely.
44. Greg stood watch, mentally cataloguing all the nice new things he'd have from today's TSA confiscations.