

A Reader's Theater adaptation of Emily Jenkins's *Toys Go Out*

By Dorcas Hand

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©*Toys Go Out* by Emily Jenkins; illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky, published by Schwartz Wade Books, and imprint of Random House Children's Books.

Approximately 6 minutes.

Readers:

Lumphy	Narrator 3
Sting Ray	Narrator 4
Plastic	Narrator 5
Narrator 1	Little Girl
Narrator 2	

Narrator 5: This scene is taken from Chapter One of *Toys Go Out*. Lumphy, Sting Ray and Plastic are going on an unexpected adventure.

Narrator 1: The backpack is dark and smells like a wet bathing suit.

Narrator 2: Waking up inside, Lumphy feels cramped and grumped.

Lumphy: I wish I had been asked. If I had been asked, I would have said I wasn't going.

Narrator 3: Sting Ray doesn't like the dark backpack any more than Lumphy.

Sting Ray: Shhh. It's not so bad if you don't complain.

Lumphy: We weren't told about this trip. We were just packed in the night.

Sting Ray: Why don't you just close your buffalo mouth? Your buffalo mouth is far too whiny.

Narrator 4: There is a small nip in the end of her tail, and Sting Ray curls it away from Lumphy's big square buffalo teeth.

Narrator 5: Plastic usually hums when she is feeling nervous.

Plastic: (*humming*) Um tum tum – um tum tum – tum – tiddle – tee

Narrator 5: Plastic is trying to see if she can make the backpack seem any nicer.

Lumphy: Don't you know the words to that song?

Plastic: There are no words. It's a hum.

Narrator 4: After that, no one says anything for a while.

Lumphy: Does anyone know where we're going?

Narrator 3: Plastic does not.

Narrator 2: Sting Ray doesn't either.

Lumphy: My stomach is uncomfortable. I think I'm going to be sick.

Narrator 1: Buh-buh bump! It feels like the backpack is going down some stairs-- or maybe up some stairs.

Narrator 3: Sting Ray tries to think calming thoughts. She pictures the high bed with fluffy pillows where she usually sleeps.

Narrator 4: She pictures the Little Girl with the blue barrette, who scratches where the ears would be if Sting Ray had ears.

Narrator 5: But none of these thoughts make her feel calm.

Sting Ray: I hope we're not going to the vet.

Lumphy: What's the vet?

Sting Ray: The vet is a big human dressed in a white coat who puts animals in a contraption made from rubber bands, in order to see what is wrong with them.

Narrator 2: Sting Ray sometimes says she knows things when she doesn't.

Sting Ray: Then he pokes them over and over with needles the size of carrots, and makes them drink nasty tasting medicine, and puts them in the bumpity washing machine to fix whatever's broken.

Plastic: If anyone needs to go to the vet, it's the one-eared sheep. He's the oldest of the Little Girl's toys. And Sheep's not even here. No, we can't be going to the vet. We aren't broken.

Lumphy: Speak for yourself. I feel even sicker than before at the thought of the bumpity washing machine.

Narrator 1: Woosh. Woosh. The backpack begins to swing. Back and forth. Back and forth.

Sting Ray: I hope we're not going to the zoo. They'll put us in cages with no one to talk to. Each one in a separate cage, and we'll have to woosh back and forth all day, and do tricks on giant swings, with people throwing quarters at our faces, and teasing us.

Plastic: I don't think we're big enough for the zoo. I'm pretty sure they're only interested in very large animals over there.

Lumphy: I'm large.

Sting Ray: She means really, really very, very large. At the zoo they have sting rays the size of choo-choo trains: and plastics the size of swimming pools. Zoo buffaloes would never fit in a backpack. Those buffaloes eat backpacks for lunch.

Lumphy: Is that true?

Narrator 2: Plunk! The backpack is thrown onto the ground-- or onto a garbage truck.

Sting Ray: We might be going to the dump! We'll be tossed in a pile of old green beans, and sour milk cartons, because the Little Girl doesn't love us anymore, and it will be icy cold all the time, and full of garbage-eating sharks, and it will smell like throw-up.

Plastic: I don't think so.

Sting Ray: I'll be forced to sleep on a slimy bed of used paper baggies, instead of on the big high bed with fluffy pillows!

Narrator 3: There is a noise outside the backpack. Not a big noise, but a rumbly noise.

Sting Ray: Did you hear that? I think that is the sound of an x-ray machine. The vet is going to x-ray us one by one, and look into our insides with an enormous magnifying glass, and then poke us with a giant carrot!

Plastic: I'm sure it's not an x-ray. An x-ray would be squeakier.

Sting ray: Then I think it is a lion. A lion at the zoo who does not want to be on display with any small creatures like you and me. A lion who doesn't like sharing her swing set, and wants all the quarters for herself. She is roaring because she hasn't had any lunch yet, and her favorite food is stingrays.

Plastic: A lion would be fiercer. It would sound hungrier, I bet.

Lumphy: Maybe it is a giant buffalo.

Sting Ray: Maybe it is a dump truck--a big orange dump truck tipping out piles of rotten groceries on top of us, and trapping us with the garbage-eating sharks and the throw-up smell.

Plastic: Wouldn't a dump truck be louder? I'm sure it's not a dump truck.

Narrator 4: The backpack thumps down again with a bang.

Lumphy: I would like to be warned. Sudden bumps make everything worse than it already is.

Sting Ray: (*almost in tears*) The Little Girl doesn't love us and she's trying to get rid of us!

Narrator 5: The backpack opens. The rumbling noise gets louder, and the light is very bright – so bright that Sting Ray, Plastic, and Lumphy have to squinch up their eyes and take deep breaths before they can see where they are.

Narrator 4: A pair of warm arms takes them all out of the dark backpack.

Narrator 3: The three toys look around. There are small chairs, a sunny window, and a circle of fidgety faces.

Narrator 2: It is not the vet. It is not the zoo. It is not the dump. (They are pretty sure.) But where is it?

Narrator 1: The rumbling noise surges up. A grown-up asks everyone to Please Be Quiet Now. And then they hear the familiar voice of the Little Girl.

Little Girl: These are my best friends in the whole world. That's why I brought them to show-and-tell.

Narrator 3: Find out more adventures of Lumphy, Plastic, Sting Ray and the Little Girl by reading *Toys Go Out* by Emily Jenkins.