



# Frostbite

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Blizzard 2006 hits and where am I? Syracuse. You heard me right, Syracuse. The coldest place on Earth, aside from perhaps Siberia. And coming from a Minnesotan, that's saying *a lot*.

Unfortunately, I did not make it back to New York City unscathed. My best friend and I endured trauma after trauma on our 24-hour-turned-endless adventure. Out of my love and respect for you, I won't burden you with all the sordid details, but for the sake of my sanity and emotional well-being, there are a few things I must get off my chest.

When there is a blizzard severely raging outside and the temperature is -30, it is imperative that one turn on the heat in his or her house. And do not, I repeat DO NOT, build a fire (in place of turning on the heat) and 10 hours into the still-burning fire tell your bitterly frozen and frostbitten visitors that the fire actually makes the house chillier because it sucks in all the cold air. That's just mean.

By the same token, when your houseguests do not shower, wash their faces, change their clothes, or remove any of their five layers, hats, scarves or mittens upon entering your house, for God's sake take a hint and turn up your heat. And if you're really too cheap to pay for one measly day of heat, send the bill to your guests. I guarantee they'll be overjoyed to pay it.

When your guests enthusiastically offer, and even beg, to shovel your driveway in the midst of a ferocious and icy blizzard, it's not because they're overly nice and helpful people. It's because they're desperately cold and think that shoveling outside in the negative degree weather will bring some warmth and feeling back into their frigid bodies. Not to mention it's a far better option than numbly watching their physical extremities freeze off their bodies and fall to the floor.

Upon learning our flight was cancelled, we attempted to cry, but the tears immediately turned to icicles on our cheeks. Lesson learned: don't release any bodily fluids in subzero temperatures. The results could be tragic. We were lucky.

We paid an additional \$100 to leave on Sunday rather than spend another night in the arctic conditions. Our flight was then delayed. And delayed. And delayed. And oh yes, how could I forget...delayed.

And then there was the intrusive frisking we experienced at security.

Out of all the thug-ish, intimidating looking people, my best friend and I—both 5'2" and a scrawny 100 pounds—were chosen for the "extra-special search." Lucky us! Not many people get to remove their clothing while getting felt-up at the airport.

Meanwhile, I didn't know who to feel worse for—us or the security ladies. Sure, we were the ones getting groped, but they had to frisk our unshowered, grimy, dirt-covered selves with their bare hands. Seriously though, it's very relieving to know that airport security spends their valuable time and resources on [filthy] wimpy, little girls. We can all rest easier at night because obviously our skies are *much* safer now.

When we were finally on the plane, all warm and cozy in our seats, maniacal turbulence set in. I kid you not, for the first time in my life I reached for our barf bag. And used it.

The cab ride home was just as (un)successful. I believe there were a few futile attempts at conversation, intermixed with, "I'm gonna throw up, no more talking." Then silence. Then, "How am I ever going to get up to the 7th floor when I'm too nauseous to move?" Then more queasiness followed by more silence. It was grand.

Thankfully, its months later and we've recovered. Kind of. My best friend couldn't go to work for a while because she was suffering from the aftermath of hypothermia. But the icicles on our cheeks have *finally* melted. And eventually I'll get used to only having nine toes. I never understood the importance of having 10, anyway. So, so overrated.