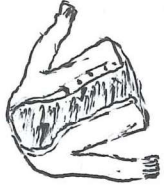


me to another detector through security with no problem. The agent walked before. I knew the routine. I waited. An agent opened my backpack, took out a passport control, and something else, seemed satisfied, and then she swiped my bag with those swabs they use at airports. I suppose she struck them in the machine. Usually at this point I'm about to get to leave. But the agent consulted her colleague. I overheard "two alarms." Another party went through security with no problem. The agent walked me to another detector



I hate flying. Beyond one last time. Then I proceeded to the security checkpoint. I placed my belongings in two bins. I walked through the metal detector. The bin with my backpack got diverted, but that had happened before. I knew the routine. I waited. An agent opened my backpack, took out

my empty water bottle and made me take off my cardigan and shoes to send them through. Meanwhile, she gave me a full pat down. Back at the end of the checkpoint, her colleague said, "Full search." I had to place my laptop bag on the other side of a Plexiglas barrier too, even though before the agent had told her colleague it wasn't the concern. The agent started taking everything out of

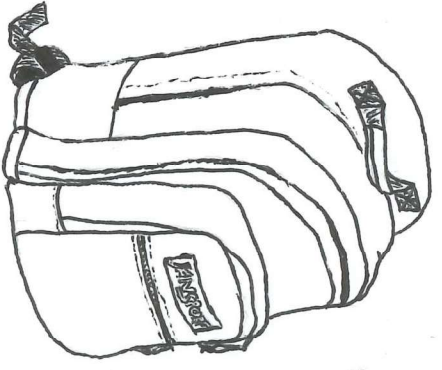


In June 2020, after spending the whole of the first French confinement in Paris, I took the RER to Charles de Gaulle to fly back to the U.S. My 90 visa-free days in the Schengen area were almost up. Before passport control, I and I hugged goodbye in our masks. She told me she'd tucked two surprises in my backpack. She knows



all the pockets of my backpack. Piles of fossilized papers! Meanwhile, she shot accusatory questions at me. "Do you always travel with this bag? Where do you put it? On the ground?" "Did I know everything that was in it? (Uh... O-O)" Something she said prompted me to say there might be art supplies in it. I felt like she was trying to make me admit something. Or I might have to list all possible art sup-

Contrôle de sécurité Vol. 1



Eleanor Gleasure

I said the bag had been in L's studio, where she painted and pulled prints. The agent seemed to think the studio was significant. Toxic art supplies?! A new switch triggered a third alarm. They'd found nothing in my backpack. The agent had taken everything out. So her colleague said, "Now we call the police." →

To be continued...

plies she might find, and I had just told me there were two surprises in my bag! Surely not paint?! I said my best friend was an artist. "How many times have you visited her with this bag?" "I said twice, but I was including a trip from 2018. Had I put something in my bag to sabotage my departure from France?? Surely not! The agent explained the situation to her colleague.