

# THE PURPLE TEDDY BEAR

Liam didn't like his Christmas present.

By Kimberley Warner  
(Based on a true story)

On Christmas morning, Liam woke up extra early. He sneaked into the living room with his two younger sisters, Holly and Sarah. There, seven homemade stockings hung in a row. Some were small and wide. Some were long and thin. And some were so old that their colours had faded. But the important thing for Liam was that each stocking was filled with yummy sweets.

Liam grabbed his stocking and turned it upside down. He frowned. There was one candy cane, an orange, and only a handful of sweets.

"Is this it?" he asked.

Holly and Sarah were frowning too. Then Liam grinned. Maybe this meant his present would be really good! He hoped it was that new video game all his friends were playing.

But when Liam finally opened his present, his disappointment only grew. His gift was a purple teddy bear. It was handmade, with black button eyes and a little stitched smile.

"Merry Christmas, Liam," Mum said with a big smile.

Liam did not smile. This was not the present he wanted.



FOR OLDER KIDS

His little sisters got stuffed animals too, and so did his three older sisters. But that didn't make Liam feel better. This was the worst Christmas ever!

"What's wrong?" his older sister Erin asked after breakfast. "You've been grumpy all morning."

"I don't really like my present," he said. "It's just a teddy bear Mum made. Why didn't she give me something I wanted?"

Erin smiled. "Come with me."

She took him to Mum's bedroom and pointed at the old sewing machine on the table.

"It's Mum's sewing machine," he said. "So what?" "What else do you see?"

Liam frowned. He saw sewing needles, colourful thread, and some folded pieces of fabric. He also saw a bag of stuffing, soft and fluffy like a cloud.

"I know you wanted Mum to buy you something else for Christmas," Erin said. "But we don't have the money for that. I love the teddy bear Mum made me. It shows how much she loves me."

"What do you mean?"

"It takes time to make a stuffed toy. It takes patience. Mum sat at this table for hours making a toy for each of us. She made sure we each got a present. Don't you think that means she loves us?"

Liam touched the purple fabric that Mum had used to make his teddy bear. Maybe Erin was right. A present didn't need to be fancy to be a good gift. In Primary, Liam had learned that Jesus was the greatest gift, and Jesus was born in a simple stable.

Liam ran to find Mum. He gave her a big hug. "Thank you for the teddy bear," he said.

He didn't think the teddy bear was so silly now. Even if there had been no gifts at all, he felt his family's love. And that made it a special Christmas. ●

*This story took place in New Zealand.*

