

It was supposed to be a dream trip to the United Kingdom to visit a friend, but a 19-year-old St. Paul woman ended up getting kicked out of the country for reasons she still doesn't understand.

As a member of the Minnesota National Guard -- and as a person with a clean criminal record -- Rochelle Burnes didn't expect to run into any trouble on her first trip overseas. Unfortunately, she was barely allowed off the plane.

Burnes told FOX 9 News she believes never having been overseas before counted against her, along with money she had in an account. As a student, she took out a \$2,500 loan for the trip. When she told a UK border agent about it, it seemed to be a red flag.

"I started getting grilled with questions," she recalled.

She had been heading to New Castle to visit a friend studying abroad, but that dream vacation turned into a nightmare once she crossed the pond.

"What's the reason you are here? What's your friend's full name? What's her phone number? Do you have proof you are leaving the country?" Burnes recalled. "I showed her my itinerary that was a round-trip ticket."

Even so, Burnes said her answers weren't enough to clear her to pass. Instead, she was taken to a holding cell and fingerprinted. Throughout the entire ordeal, Burnes made a point to tell the agents she is a member of the Minnesota National Guard.

"I figured me telling her I was in the military would prove right there there was no way I could have dishonest intentions in the United Kingdom," Burnes explained.

In the end, it didn't change their minds. After six hours, she was denied entry and given a letter that read in part, "You have asked to enter the United Kingdom for one week but I'm not satisfied you are genuinely seeking entry as a visitor for the limited period as stated by you."

That letter also mentioned the loan Burnes took out.

"I did not find it credible that in order to pay for a one week trip to the UK you had to take out a bank loan which it will take you two years to repay," the letter read.

Agents escorted Burnes back to a plane and sent her home, cutting her trip very short very quickly.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," Burnes protested.

According to Bob Hajek, an attorney who specializes in aviation law, the UK border agency is more into profiling and using interview techniques to limit access, unlike the TSA. Even so, he says Burnes' experience is an odd one.

"It's unusual for any country to do that as abruptly as to what happened to her," he said.

Unfortunately, Hajek says once a U.S. citizen leaves the country there's not much that can be done.

"The U.S. Embassy in London has no jurisdiction. They cannot help her," he explained. "It's all regulated by the British authorities, so they can deny entry for any reason they wish."

Although she's back at home, Burnes isn't backing down yet when it comes to finding out why she was booted.

"It was definitely a slap in the face," she said. "There is no justifiable reason for denying me entry and I don't understand and I want answers."

Burnes told FOX 9 News she plans to contact the embassy and the UK Border Agency, but Hajek says her best bet is to hire an attorney in London.