

Move or Burn?

Don't mention the words 'box' or 'cardboard' in the same sentence. Also on the vetoed list of words are: tape, van and, obviously, packing.

Moving house. I could stop there, but why spoil the fun. It's high up on the list of stress inducing life events - pipped to the post only by divorce and bereavement. This time last week, that seemed so unfair, after all I've only got to get a few things in a few boxes. What's the big deal?

If I had home insurance, I would quite happily commit arson at this point. I've figured it all out. First, make sure the neighbours are out, so that no one gets hurt. Next, book the cats in for an appointment with the vet, thus ensuring that they are safe and there's no suspicion cast on my subsequent actions. Then just drop a match and walk out on the whole sorry, chaotic mess that is now 'home'. Was it really only last week that sat on the sofa, tea in hand, watching EastEnders?

Looking around, I wonder what might fit into a bag to chuck over my shoulder as I nonchalantly walk away. Those special mementos, the little things that contents insurance couldn't replace. The imaginary 'get away' bag pretty soon turns into a suitcase as I walk into the bedroom and know that I'd never turn my back on the pile of vintage clothes now strewn across the bed. Then there are the shoes - could I discreetly slip out of a gently smouldering house with a trunk? Even that wouldn't be big enough.

Perhaps the plan was foiled from the start. There are the obvious moral and legal implications. But, walking from room to room I realise why moving is so stressful; simply because the truth is that I'm packing far more than possessions into these boxes.

I'm carefully wrapping special moments into newspaper. Folding first dates, parties and happy times into suitcases. Discarding tearful days and bad memories into bags for the charity shop. Moving house is really a military operation in looking at every significant life event. To fill the boxes you have to trawl through every high and low of your personal history.

The arson idea now seems abhorrent. I wouldn't even have been able play damsel in distress and fulfil a 'rescued by hunky firemen' fantasy. As I make an industrial strength coffee and resign myself to a very long night packing, the need to walk away from the eclectic piles in every room shifts. It might look like a random collection of rubbish right now - but the chaos around me is actually irreplaceable, and, truth be told, I'm really quite attached to it all

What if something really did happen to all my stuff?

I call the removal firm to check that they are fully insured for the move, and go online to arrange contents insurance for the new house. Third party, fire and theft now takes on a whole new meaning.

About the Author

Sarah Maple was last seen taking out [home insurance](#) and buying a box of matches.

Source: <http://www.spivo.com/articles>