

MY LIFE IN CARDBOARD

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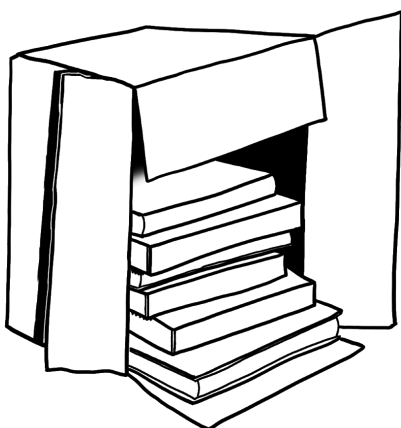
My Life in Cardboard is a game about packing, losing and rediscovering the objects which mean something to us. It's an introspective game, and the "rules" are just guidelines. It is a creative writing exercise with few mechanics on top. All you need to play is some paper and a pen.

Components: A pen, paper to write longform like a notebook, 10 smaller pieces of paper which you can write in and fold (standard-size Post-Its are the perfect size).

The ten pieces of paper represent 10 boxes in your move (I'll refer to them as boxes from now on). In each box, write down an important item contained within. This isn't the only item in the box, it's the most important item in it.

There are other filler items; just padding, the useful-but-forgettable things life requires, but the one you write down is something important to you. It has a backstory, brings back memories, evokes emotion.

Once you have written an item on all boxes, fold them so you cannot see what is inside. Mix them up and then put them in a hat or, if you're feeling thematic, a box. Now follow the prompts in the following page, each of which will ask you to open one of the boxes and write about the objects inside.





The move.

The courier arrives and hurriedly picks up the boxes from your house, but there's been a booking error: you only booked nine boxes, and there is no space in the truck. The courier drives off with the boxes they've already loaded.

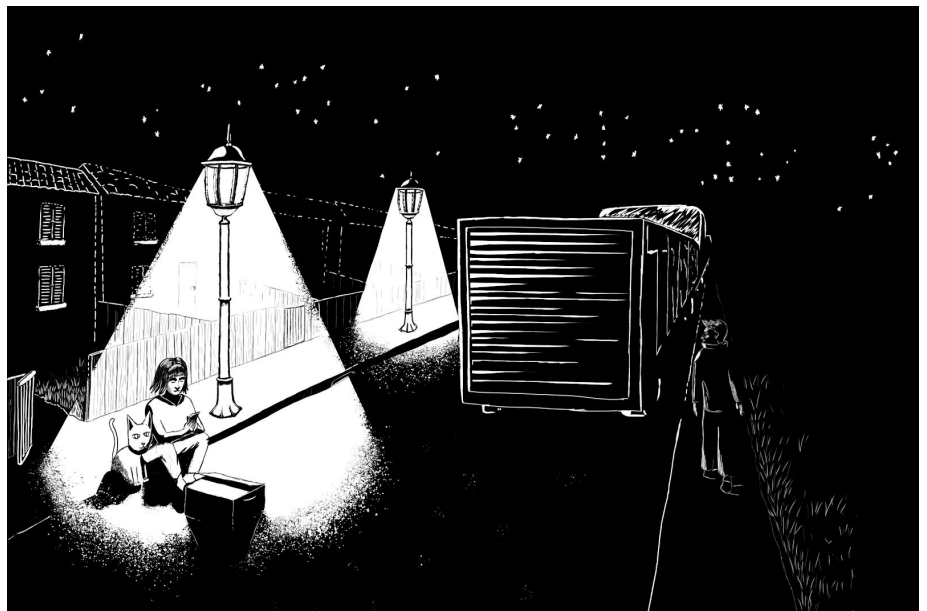
Pick a random box and open it.

This box is not coming with you to your new home abroad. Your flight leaves tomorrow, you can't book another courier, but you have enough time to give it's contents to a friend. Will you miss the item within? Who will you give it to? Will you give them instructions on how to treat it?

Remove the box from play.

You have arrived at your new home, and your boxes have too. But not all of them.

You receive compensation, but you never see one of the boxes again.



Extract one box and destroy it without looking at its contents. Render it illegible and irretrievable.

Of the ones that have arrived, some boxes are broken. The last few days of the move were hectic, and you don't remember what they contain.

Extract two boxes and mark them with an X. These boxes are broken. See broken boxes for reference.

Shuffle the boxes and put them in a line: this is the order you'll open them in, from left to right, and for each box you'll answer the prompts below, in order.

Before opening a box, check to see if it has an X behind it. If so, instead of using the next prompt refer to Broken Box 1 on the first X and Broken Box 2 on the second. Return to the next unused prompt for the following box.



Prompt 1. Where will this item fit into your new life? Do you have need of it, or is it an heirloom?

Prompt 2. What's the backstory of this item? If it had been lost, how would you have felt? Is it replaceable?

Prompt 3. What does this item represent? When friends ask you about the item, will you tell them the truth of its origin?

Prompt 4. A loved one asks you to have this item for themselves. Will you let them have it? If not, what will you tell them to convince them that you cannot give it away.

Prompt 5. Who else does this item belong to and what does it mean to them? If it is only and exclusively yours, would you be willing to share it and it's story with anyone? Who and why, or why not?

Prompt 6. You find this item does not fit in your new house. Which of the previous items would you be willing to get rid of to make space for this one? Why? Is the connection you have with this item stronger than the other one, and why so?

The destroyed box (the one you will never see again): Do you remember what it was? What was the connection it represented? Will you miss it? If not, sort through your boxes and try to recall what is missing. Do you think the person who will end up with it will treasure it? If you could find the person who has this item in ten year's time, would you want the item back?



Broken Box 1

Rip this box in half before opening it. This item is broken, irreparably so. It was just bad luck. Will you keep it in its broken state, or try to fix it? Will the fact it's broken make anyone else upset, and why?

Broken Box 2

Rip this box in half before opening it. This item is broken, but it is clear it was broken because it was handled at some point during transportation. Will you complain, ask for a refund? Is it even refundable? Will you attempt to fix it, or throw it away? More importantly, is the connection to you broken, or does that still exist?