

# **Moving Day**

by

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## Moving Day

I'll never forget the day we moved house. It was the most exciting day of my whole life.

When Mummy told me about it, she took me on her knee, pushed back the brown curl on my forehead and hugged me. 'I know you're only five,' she said, 'but I want you to be a good girl and help us move.' So that's what I decided to do.

I couldn't wait for the day to arrive. Every morning I got up early, rushed downstairs and asked her if it was today.

At first she just said, 'No,' with that nice look in her eye. Then, after the first few days, she sighed wearily and said, 'For goodness sake, Claire, I wish I'd never mentioned it in the first place.'

When the day did arrive, I looked out of my bedroom window to the street below to see a huge brown van. Rain was pouring, running down the windows like streams and I had to squint to see what was written on the van. It was such a long word that I could only read the letters 'R E M . . . I know what it is,' I said, jumping up and down. 'It's moving day!'

I ran out of my bedroom and bumped straight into Daddy, who was carrying a lot of clothes and bedding. He was so surprised that he threw them into the air and they fell down the stairs, decorating the banisters like flags at the fair.

'Now look what you've made me do. Please go and get dressed and don't get so excited.'

After I'd put on my new jeans and green jumper with the pigs on it, I began to think what I could do to help. I couldn't carry my bed outside but I could take the bedding. I pulled the duvet off and dragged it downstairs. It was so heavy it trailed on the steps behind me and I almost tripped up on it. There was no-one in the hall so I opened the door and pulled it outside. There were puddles on the path to the gate and when I looked around, I saw my duvet trailing in the mud. 'Oh well, Mummy's washing machine will sort that out.'

As I opened the gate and pulled it after me, I thought I heard a rip in the cloth but perhaps it was my imagination. I dragged it up the ramp to the van and gave it to the man inside. He gave me a funny look, took it from me and pushed it into one of the boxes.

'I'll just get the rest,' I said, as I dashed back indoors. He shouted something after me but I didn't hear what it was.

When my bedding had been safely packed into the van, I decided to help Mummy by getting my own breakfast. I went into the kitchen and looked in the cupboard where the cornflakes should have been. It was empty. Then I saw the boxes by the door.

I went to one of them and started taking everything out. There was rice, flour, cheese, red beans, it fact almost everything but cornflakes. I had just taken a bottle of tomato ketchup out when Mummy came into the kitchen.

'What are you doing?' she said in her crossiest voice.

'Looking for the cornflakes.'

'They're over there. Look, on the top. I've left them out with the milk and sugar.'

'Silly me.'

'And please don't unpack any more boxes,' she said as she bent down to put everything back. 'Can you manage to get your own breakfast?'

'Of course I can,' I said as I dragged the tall kitchen stool to the worktop. It made a horrible noise over the floor. Mummy cringed but didn't say anything.

I climbed on the stool just as Toby rushed into the kitchen. 'Toby, Toby, we're moving today,' I said, turning round and knocking the milk bottle off the top with my elbow.

'Oh no!' said Mummy, standing up and staring.

'It was Toby's fault.'

'Rubbish,' said Mummy, coming towards me with that horrible look in her eye.

Before she could say any more, I jumped off the stool, grabbed the kitchen towel and began to wipe the milk up.

'No, no. Not with that.'

'I've done it now,' I said. 'Anyway, it doesn't really matter, it was only an old house after all.'

Mummy leaned against the kitchen sink and looked as though she was counting. 'Look,' she said at last. 'Be a good girl, finish your breakfast and take Toby out for a walk down the lane. It's going to be a long day. And don't go on the main road.'

'Okay, Mummy.'

The rain had stopped but the grass was wet and huge drops of water were still falling from the trees. If I stood under a bush and shook it, it was just like being in the shower. I shook the rain over Toby too. He liked it.

Toby ran all over the place, he was so happy. He chased rabbits over the field and I had to run to catch up with him. We walked all the way to the farm at the end of the lane and Toby found that big, dirty heap he liked to roll in. I had to call him several times to get him to follow me back home.

When we arrived, the van was packed up and Mummy and Daddy were just getting into the car.

'So there you are,' said Daddy, crossly. 'We thought we'd have to launch a search party.'

'I took Toby right up to the farm.'

'Never mind that now,' he said. 'Just get in, we've a long way to go.'

I opened the car door for Toby and he jumped inside. I climbed in after him.

'Say goodbye to your old house,' said Daddy as we drove away. Then he sniffed. 'What's that funny smell?'

'Oh no!' said Mummy as she turned to look at Toby. 'Just look at him.'

'Claire, what have you let him roll in?' Daddy asked. 'Get him out at once and clean him up.'

'Not now,' said Mummy. 'For goodness sake, let's get going.'

I didn't want Toby to get into trouble so I just hugged him. Slime from his coat turned the pigs on my jumper green like the rest of it.

'Oh no!' said Mummy again.

Hot sun was shining through the windows and I must have dozed off because the next thing I knew, we had arrived at a big house without any curtains. I wonder what kind of helping they need now? I thought to myself.