

DAWN PORTER *shares...*

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Happiness is a neatly packed suitcase

The other day we (boyfriend and I) were moving out of the flat that we have been renting for the past few months. It was Thursday morning and we were to be out by 8am the next day. I hadn't even started packing.

"You do this every time," my boyfriend muttered.

"Do what? It's fiiiine!" I replied as I ushered him out of the bedroom and closed the door, before proceeding to chew my nails for the next 20 minutes or so.

What he was referring to was how, when I moved in 10 weeks earlier, I had two suitcases and a few bits and bobs. Now, for some unfathomable reason, I had 50 suitcases' worth of clothes, 56,289 bits and over 65,039 bobs. How does that happen??

Much like the idea of childbirth, the mathematics of the packing process was sending me into panic. The ratio of carry cases to belongings was unfavourable. No amount of vacuum packing was going to save me this time; I had to be brutal with what I was going to take back to America, and what was going into storage. These sorts of decisions leave me breathless.



He is much better at packing than me. *He* labels things. *I*, on the other hand, don't bother with the labelling and just squash whatever I can into whatever I can find that has a zip or a lid. It is organised chaos, and it works for me.

I do draw the line at bin bags, however (See? I have standards!). Last

year I had to clear a load of my stuff from a friend's loft and it was all in bin bags. It felt so impersonal when I went back to it, like I had rubbished it in some way. I ended up throwing most of it out in the bags I had stored it in, so this time I wanted to respect my belongings a little more. My books, my clothes and my credit card statements

- surely they at least deserved a cardboard box?

I got to it. Anything that I hadn't worn in the last three weeks went into storage, the rest was coming with me to America - apart from my pink shoes, my pencil dress, my leopard-print maxi and a few other essentials of course.

By midnight I had done it. My suitcases were satiated and I was

"This time I wanted to respect my belongings a little more"

knackered. There wasn't a millimetre of space left in any of the boxes or cases and I was on standby with a roll of masking tape for when one of them burst, but so far so good.

I dragged (take that literally, the wheels had broken) each case into the living room where my boyfriend was sipping on a beer surrounded by perfectly packed cases and boxes.

"See? I did it!" I said, clearly extremely proud of myself.

"Well done," he said. "I am impressed. But out of interest, what are you going to do with all the clothes in the tumble dryer?"

Whaaaaaattttttt??!!!!

So I went over to the tumble dryer, emptied its contents into a bin bag and sat down.

"DONE!"

Is it just me, or...

My dad's humour revolves around a device he's called **The Fart Machine**, a small sound box hidden under a cushion, which he controls remotely. When guests come round he makes them tea then proceeds to mortify them with fart noises until they leave. The problem? I think I have inherited this. I bought myself a whoopee cushion recently and honestly think I'm the funniest person in the world each time I use it. Which is a lot.



A WHOOPEE CUSHION: COMEDY GOLD, SURELY?

This picture outside a men's barber in east London really tickled me. Random guy with shaved head, David Beckham with funky shades on and then another random guy with short hair. Please tell me... why the David Beckham shot? Are we supposed to believe he gets his hair cut there? Or are they promising you will look like that for just seven quid? He isn't even modelling for it, it's just a totally random shot. They should have used EastEnders' Jack Branning. Far more likely...

