

Wine Carton
Tape

THE MOVE

SCENE I

[Scene opens with two faculty members packing boxes. They are talking about the move to the new building.]

One: I just don't understand it. I used the guidelines from Gail for estimating the number of boxes I'd need for the move, but they're not nearly enough. By the way, I bet you'd like my complete set of The American Journal of Halitosis, there are only 137 issues.

Two: No thanks, I'm having the same problem. Say, if you give me a box, I'll give you my life-size cardboard cutout of Alvan Feinstein. He even autographed it!

One: What are all those holes from?

Two: Oh, I use it as a dartboard.

One: It's tempting, but I think I'll pass. Now I wish I'd said "no" when Vic offered me his file of old Epid 168 exams. There must be 50 lbs. worth here. I'll bet Dana Loomis would want them. He's new on the faculty and hasn't had a chance to accumulate much stuff yet.

Two: Good idea! Vic tried to give them to me, but I refused when he wouldn't take my reprints on extrapolation bias. I'll save them for Dana, too.

One: This move is such a nuisance. I'll sure be glad to have it over. Joyce told me the movers have such a tight schedule that they've installed a "move alert" bell in every hallway. Here's some old computer cards that Jim Thomas would probably like. He's new on the faculty, too. These cards are almost antiques now.

Two: A "move alert" bell, huh? Sounds a little extreme. Why don't they just...

A BELL SUDDENLY RINGS LOUDLY

One: That's it! The move alert! Grab your boxes and get going!

[They each grab a box and head offstage, but run into Joyce.]

Joyce: Hold it, hold it! Keep packing. That's just a false alarm. Just the ice cream man.

Two: A false alarm, huh? You mean like last July and last September and last October?

Joyce: ... and last December and last January. Afraid so. I just stopped by to give you more tape. It's not the right kind but we ran out of state money. I thought if you sort of stuck these together

One: Thanks Joyce. I bet you'd like this box of legal length file folders for your new office.

Joyce: No thanks, the new file drawers only hold standard length folders.

ice
cream

Tape
state money

Standard
length
folders

One: I know, these longer ones will be really hard to get after the move. Better take them while you have the chance.

next summer

Joyce: Let me think about it. I'll let you know next summer sometime.

BELL RINGS AGAIN

Two: The move alert! That must be it!

fire alarm -

Joyce: Calm down. It's just the fire alarm.

One: Oh, is that all? Guess we'd better stay put and pack some more boxes. Would anyone like my avocado tree? You might have to do without your file cabinet to make room, but it would look great in your new office! [bell stops ringing]

Two: I sure wish I could find my coffee pot. I packed it away last summer during the first move alert, and I've slept through every faculty meeting since.

packed applicant files

Joyce: I packed away all of the new applicant files. The Admissions Committee will have to decide on admissions without reading the folders.

One: You mean we're suppose to read those folders?

Two: I heard that Jinny packed away her fish tank last summer, and now she has to keep her fish in a coffee pot until after the move.

One: Yeah, I heard that Dr. Hulka almost drank him with cream and sugar late one night.

[Joyce ^{make face} laughs and walks offstage]

BELL RINGS AGAIN

One: The move alert! At last!

Two: I'm afraid that's just your telephone ringing.

One: Really? It doesn't sound like my phone.

Two: That's because you have it packed away in one of your boxes.

[Bell continues to ring; frantic search of the boxes]

One: What do you think the chances are that I'll find it before they give up.

Two: About the same chance that it's a wrong number. Just forget it. They can always call you in your new office.

One: Right. Think of all the extra work I'll get done without any phone calls for 3 months. [ringing stops]

Two: Don't be so pessimistic. It couldn't possibly be delayed for 3 more months.

BELL RINGS AGAIN

One: You're right, and in fact, there's the move alert! I'm sure of it.

Two: No, that's just my phone. [picks up receiver] Hello? Sure, my calendar is pretty free, we can meet anytime. If you want to meet after the 17th, we'll need to meet in my new office, but if you want to meet earlier we can meet in this office which will become my old office, unless the movers are late again then I'll still be in my old office after the 17th, but I hear the movers are running ahead of schedule, so we might meet in my new office even if it's before the 17th. Got that? [pause] Well, if your plans change be sure to give me a call. My phone number might change at any time, so try calling me at my new number and if I don't answer call my old number, and if I don't answer it may mean that I just stepped out of the office or that I moved to my new office and that my old phone was forwarded to my new phone but I stepped out of my new office, or it might mean that I'm in one office or the other and my phone was disconnected or not yet connected or... Hello? Hello?

One: Did they hang up?

Two: Yeah, I don't understand. I said I could meet anytime. [phone rings again] Oh, they must be calling back. Hello? Hello? That's strange, I picked up my phone and it's still ringing.

[Joyce rushes onto the stage]

move alert Joyce: What's wrong, don't you hear the bell? It's the move alert! Get moving or they'll bump you to the end of the list!

[The two faculty members give each other a startled glance, grab a box, and run offstage.]

SCENE II

[Scene opens with a faculty person unpacking in a new office.]

Three: I can't believe it! I'm finally in my new office! I was afraid the new building would be an old building before we finally moved. Some of these boxes don't look too familiar, but I guess it's because I packed them so long ago.

[sits down at a computer]

These movers are great! They even unpacked my computer and have it up and running. I hope my files are OK. I forgot to back them up before the move. Hmmm! Here's a literature review on extrapolation bias. I don't remember doing that. And here's a newsletter from the "Society for the Prevention of Feinsein". What's going on here?

[TWO burst into the office]

Two: What are you doing in my office? Those files are confidential.

Three: What do you mean your office. This is my office.

Two: Guess again, you're not even a member of the Epidemiolgy Department.

Three: Epidemiology! Something's wrong here. I'm in the Department of Geostatistics.

Two: Oh! You belong one floor up. I'd love to help you move these boxes out of my office, but I think I'm late for something. You can put them in the hall for the time being, but the Dean said he doesn't want to see any boxes in the hallways.

Three: Don't worry, I'll be out of here in no time--I don't want to catch any skin diseases! [hurries offstage clutching boxes]

Two: What a nerd! And to think that I almost went into Geostatistics.

[ONE comes onstage]

One: What are you muttering about?

Two: Oh, somebody from upstairs tried to move into my office. Here s/he's a Geostatistician and can't even count the flights of stairs.

One: I can't either, that's why I always use the elevator. You know, these new room numbers are confusing. I just gave a whole lecture on odds ratios, and then I found out I was in the wrong room.

Two: It seems like the students would have caught on sooner.

One: Oh, there weren't any students there. I insist on starting my lectures on time. I figured I'd just start the lecture and the students would trickle in when they found the room.

Two: Did you by any chance bump your head during the move?

One: No. Why do you ask?

[Joyce walks onstage]

Two: Uh, your hair was a little messed up. I'm afraid that I lost some of my most important files during the move. Vic had the right idea. He sent all his plants, books, and important files through electronic mail.

Crisis - lost psych.
Joyce: Keep this under your hat, but the Department is facing a crisis. [slowly in hushed tones:] We lost the Psychosocial Program during the move.

One: Come on! How could we lose the whole Psychosocial Program during the move?

Bert. David Sherman
Joyce: Well, we still have Bert, but he's nowhere near a critical mass unless he puts on a lot of weight. David & Sherman were last seen at NCNB bending over some big boxes, and they haven't been seen since. We keep hoping that they'll turn up. You haven't heard any voices from your boxes, have you?

Two: Not yet. Does it seem a little cold in here to you?

One: Now that you mention it...

[Knock on the door. Person from Physical Plant walks in carrying a bag. Joyce leaves.]

PP: Hi, I'm from Physical Plant. Is this the office that called about the window problem?

Two: No, we're having a heat problem, but the window looks great! They don't come any cleaner than this. Wait a minute. There's no glass in this window!

PP: The building contractor ran into a little supply problem, but he assures us that the glass will arrive before summer when the bugs come out. The whole north side of the building is without glass.

Two: What am I supposed to do this winter? Freeze?

PP: Of course not! I'm installing this in all the windows until the glass arrives. [unfurls a roll of wax paper from the bag]

Two: You can't install wax paper in my window! I have to be able to look out the window.

PP: Well, OK. They told me to save this for the Full Professors, but I can put up some Saran wrap if you promise not to tell anyone. I have some candles for you, too.

Two: Candles!!?? What for?

PP: I guess you haven't tried your light switch recently. You won't have any electricity for a few weeks while the electricians make the final connections. The candles will help keep you warm, too. Pretty efficient, huh?

One: What is this? No windows, no light, no heat? What next?

PP: Funny you should ask. We just discovered that all the cables that connect your computers to the VAX and mainframe were accidentally hooked up to the Cable TV system. But never fear. University surplus is bringing over some equipment you can use for your word processing.

Two: What kind of equipment?

PP: It's an ingenious device called TYPEWRITER. The more advanced models run without electricity.

One: Amazing. I've heard of TYPEWRITER, but I always thought it was a word processing software. I can't wait to get my hands on some new cutting edge hardware.

Two: But how do we run our logistic regression models?

PP: No problem. [he pulls out an abacus & slide rule] These advanced devices also run without electricity or mainframe support. Academic Computing Services will be offering a special short course on their use for the School of Public Health.

One: Wow! Sounds like we're really getting a jump on the other schools of public health with this new equipment. At last our luck is changing.

PP: I guess you could say that. Well, I have to go talk to the plumbers.

Two: Plumbers?

PP: Yeah, they're having a little trouble, too. But don't worry. The Environmental Sciences & Engineering Dept is right on top of it. They're installing a new sewage disposal facility that works without water. Said something about a 'two-holer'. They're digging the ditch right now out in the courtyard.

[TWO frantically starts throwing things back into boxes]

One: What on earth are you doing?

Two: I'm moving back to NCNB. Help me with these boxes, will you?

[The three disappear offstage carrying boxes.]

THE END