

A NEW HOME FOR THE HOLIDAY

Marcy is probably up to her eyeballs in boxes both empty and full right now. I picture McCaffrey the MilleniaLab wandering lost if excited among them, wearing a loose doggy grin as his nails tick-tack across the new floor. Mr. Emptywheel may likewise be wandering between boxes while muttering in an Irish accent under his breath about a well-deserved beer.

Ah, but they're home for the holiday. What a great memory this will be in years to come. Congrats to Mr. and Mrs. Emptywheel on their new digs!

Most of us have memories of home on this holiday—many good, some bad, but enough decent ones to compel us to go home to give thanks with others. Many of you are preparing for a harried road trip, or an even more hectic trip by air. I wish you safe and secure between here and wherever it is you need to be. Watch out for deer if you're driving.

A number of my own best/worst Thanksgiving memories involve travel. Like the time I flew from Detroit to Omaha to see my folks and kid brother; it was like landing in another world, a movie set replete with All-American high school football stars and cheerleaders. We drove from the airport past the Platte River, where sandhill cranes amassed by the thousands along the banks in nearby fields. I made my dad stop the car to hear the roar they made as these dinosaur-ish creatures chattered at one another.

Or another year when I drove hundreds of miles to volunteer with my nurse-mom at a convent. Well, more like a nursing home for nuns; I helped with bedpans, walkers, visited and served dinner, attended an utterly silent prayer service. Absolutely insane experience, all the elderly women patting me on the cheek like I was the one who needed care. I will never forget the

tiny, frail 80-something sister who sat next to me during their turkey dinner; she clutched my hand, then patted it, and rasped, "This'll be one Thanksgiving you'll never forget." She fricking winked at me and smirked, and then tried to recruit me to take vows in their order.

Hell yes, sister, I still think of it and you every year. Sorry about those vows, though. I know you meant well. I've never been nun material.

When I was growing up, nearly every T-Day holiday my family took in a new movie. We don't do that anymore, but we do watch oldies but goodies at home. They've become part the rituals that my kids will remember in the future as they think back on their Thanksgiving holidays past. Like watching my personal favorite, Home for the Holidays, while we bake something yeasty for tomorrow's feast at the in-laws. There's nothing quite like Home for the Holidays to brace one's self for visiting the extended dysfunction that is family. Tomorrow we'll watch Planes, Trains, and Automobiles while we cuddle up on our couch, lolling about in our overfed discomfort, and enjoy a fire in the fireplace.

What about you? What are your favorite Thanksgiving Day memories? Are you traveling? And what about holiday movies—is there one you'd share or enjoy every year?