

Old doors close, new doors open

I don't remember all of the houses. We looked at too many. The only occasion which sticks sharply in my memory was the very kind lady who provided my sister and me with the entertainment of a glass of lemonade sitting at her dusty brown breakfast bar, which was soon to become ours. The bright rooms, the bleak, browning wallpapers and enchanting gardens, merge together and many of those possible homes no longer remain in my memory.

On the day of the move, I can distinctly picture a small group of unfamiliar, builder like men heaving the sideboard (which to this day sits like a part of the family in the conservatory) out of the door as I offered my help with the lifting from my dad's arms. That house, now being emptied and stripped of any sign which says 'the Monypennys lived here' had been more than house to me for my early life. It was most of what I knew of the world. Along with the brightly yellow and blue nursery school and the unfamiliar smell of my childminder's house, it had been the home of my childhood. It had been there that I had sat listening to my mother shouting from the safety on the baby monitor downstairs and in that garden that I been an unfortunate guinea pig for my brother's various home made grass-sledges and go-karts.

Yet as I left to spend the day playing with my cousins, out of the way on the moving van and furniture bearing workmen, I did not realise the importance or understand the concept that when I returned home the walls would have moved, the wallpaper unrecognisable and there would be the lingering aroma of the old lady who had lived there previously. I did not look back over my shoulder as we drove away in order to savour one last glance of what I was leaving behind. The nostalgia I now feel when I think back to that house had not yet developed and I had not learned to miss the large garden, bright flowers in a sea of green with its vast tree bearing sharp grass coloured cooking apples.

I don't remember arriving at my new home, ringing the doorbell to be greeted by my parents wearied by sorting and moving. I do, however, remember the sense of mystery. Was this my new home? What was it like? Which one was my room? It had a musty, old smell and narrow colour scheme of dated browns, faded black painted picture rails and what was originally a clinical white. Best of all was the carpet which inhabited the dining room and bathroom. It was a dirty green colour and consisted of lots of long threads resembling a thick covering of grass.

The new house now is very different to how it was then. The garish, patterned carpets which to this day remind me of old people have been replaced by a less offensive beige and the unfriendly, overbearing conifers which had gathered in the small garden have been sent away to make room for vegetable patch.

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