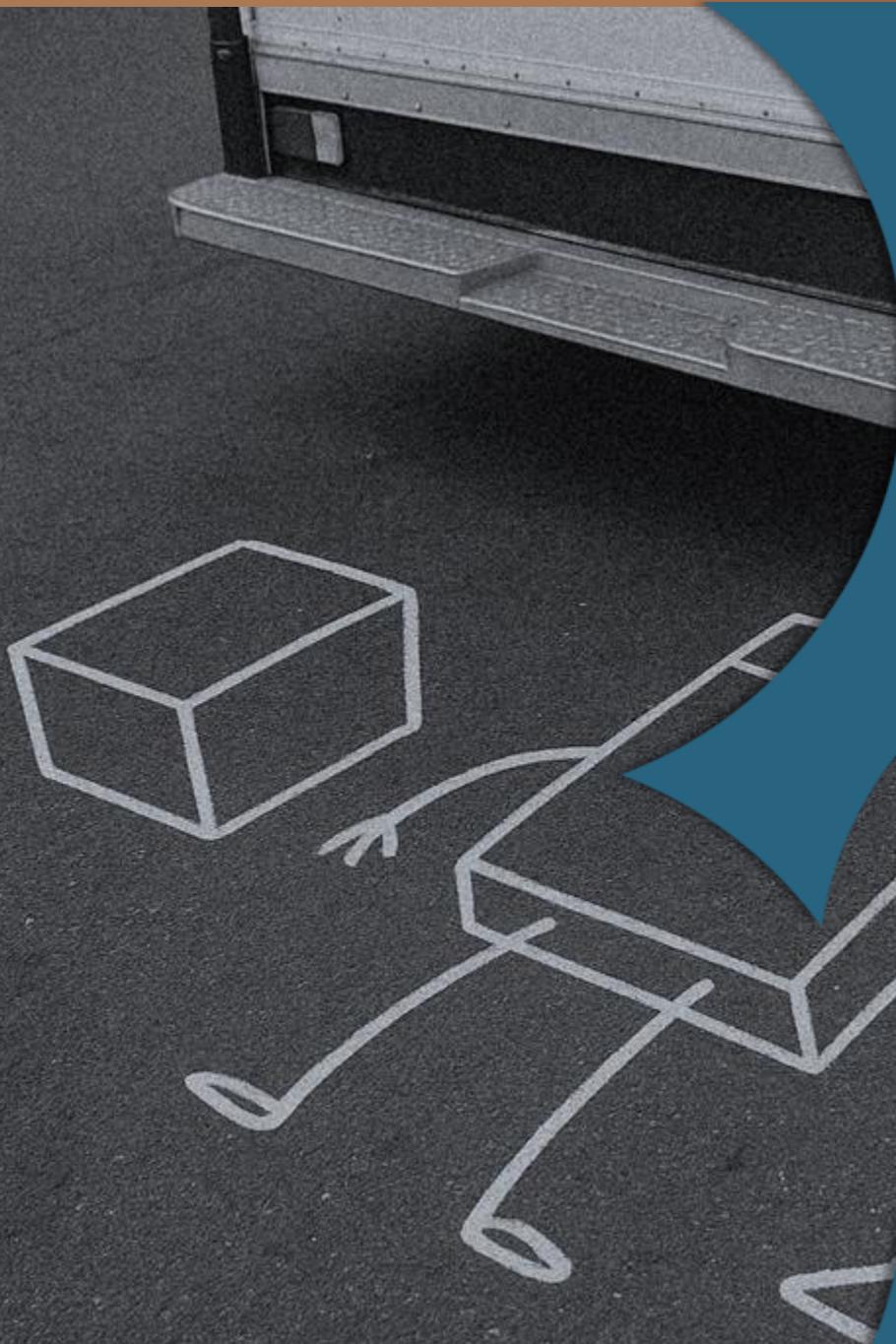


The Last Cardboard Box

A Biography of Easy Moving Box, Civilization,
and the Death of Cardboard



By Joshua Lankford
Published by Biografa



Dedication

*For everyone who ever lifted a moving box and thought:
“there has to be a better way.”*

Foreword

This book is for anyone who has ever stood ankle-deep in boxes and thought: there has to be a better way.

If you've ever:

Spent a weekend enclosing yourself in a maze of cardboard boxes fighting tape dispensers like dragons of old,

Carried the same box up and down stairs five times because the system demands it,

Paid hundreds of dollars for "cheap" boxes that collapse under the weight of your own life,

Or simply looked at a leaning tower of corrugated hope and whispered, 'Why do we still do it this way?'

—then this book is yours.

...

Welcome to the last cardboard box you'll ever touch.

— For everyone who has ever moved and wondered why it had to hurt.

Acknowledgments

Every revolution takes more than one pair of hands. Easy Moving Box — and this book — would not exist without the vision, grit, and contributions of a few key people.

Marco Zeledón — for the spark itself, the moment backstage when a simple truth became impossible to ignore: moving could be easier, greener, better and you dropped everything and rolled with me to F.O.H. Events and grabbed 15 road cases. My brother who truly has rolled with me through the best and worst of times: May the times get even better and longer.

Gary Lankford — for grounding, guidance, and the stability to build creative wonderlands that give guys like me big bounce.

Joel Duncan — for the strategic insight, the steadying hand, and the belief proven by contribution and the giving of energy. But mainly for sharing that disruptive spirit and the times we just dug in and did it.

And finally, a special acknowledgment to Biografía, the publisher that saw the story not just as a business tale, but as a biography of change.

This is not just a book about a box. It's the story of how people, working together, can lead society to a better way.

Copyright

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This book is a work of narrative nonfiction. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, some details and dialogue are presented in a literary style. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental unless explicitly noted.

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Prologue – The Last Cardboard Box

This is how you know you've lost control of your life.

You're standing in a hallway with a tower of cardboard leaning like a drunk uncle at a wedding.

Sixty boxes.

Five trips per room.

A weekend lost to tape, sweat, and curses.

By the end, you've lifted the same couch twelve times. You've carried the same blender four times. You've wasted two days and a few hundred dollars to play Tetris with your own misery.

Sixteen million American households move every year, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The average household uses 60 boxes per move (Moving.com). Multiply that out and you get 900 million cardboard boxes consumed annually in the U.S. alone.

That's nearly a billion boxes—and five billion unnecessary lifts—every single year.

Packaging historian Susan Strasser once called cardboard a “quiet revolution of disposability.” Quiet, yes. Efficient, yes. But disposable has a cost—billions of trees turned into temporary cubes, billions of hours wasted lifting and relifting.

You don't own cardboard.

Cardboard owns you.

Every move, every trip, every unnecessary lift is a tax on your body, your time, your wallet.

And then—rolling out of nowhere—comes Easy Moving Box.

Black. Orange. Silver.

A road case on wheels, designed not for your kitchen but for Madison Square Garden.

The kind of box that carries concert speakers, not blenders. The kind of box a roadie pushes with one finger while an entire city tour packs itself.

Marco Zeledón saw it backstage. Thousands of pounds of gear gliding smoother than air. And he thought: Why are families still breaking their backs with paper cubes?

This was the revelation:

Road cases move more, faster, with less effort.

Road cases survive.

Road cases scale.

So he created the Anti-Box.

Cheaper. Easier. Better.

The only way revolutions win.

This is not just about moving.

This is about history.

It's about how humans have dragged their stuff from caves to castles to condos.

It's about how cardboard took over the world.
And how one box is here to burn cardboard's obituary into the ground.
The last cardboard box you'll ever touch.

Part One

Chapter 1 – Box on Wheels

It doesn't start with a business plan.
It starts with a box.

Black. Orange. Silver.

A road case on wheels that looks like it belongs backstage at Madison Square Garden, not in your apartment hallway.

This is Easy Moving Box.

The box that doesn't crumble.

The box that rolls instead of rips.

The box that makes cardboard look like a cave painting.

Cardboard cuts your fingers, demands tape, wastes weekends. It multiplies your misery with five times the lifts per move: apartment to dolly, dolly to truck, truck to dolly, dolly to house, house to room. Multiply that by 60 boxes, and you're performing 300 pointless lifts in one weekend.

Easy Moving Box? Push it with one finger and you're moving half a ton. Cheaper than cardboard, faster than movers, easier than bribing your brother-in-law.

Marco Zeledón doesn't just sell you a box.

He sells you time. He sells you your back muscles. He sells you sanity.

And here's the part most people miss.

Marco didn't stumble onto this in a startup incubator.

He was backstage.

Event production. The world of lights, trusses, speakers the size of refrigerators. You don't move that with cardboard. You move it with flight cases. Black, silver, orange, indestructible. The kind of cases roadies shove down a ramp with two fingers while the band is already boarding the plane.

One night, mid-load-out, it hit him.

If you can move an entire concert with these, why are families still sweating with paper cubes? Why are movers fumbling with tape guns while roadies roll half a city in an hour?

The answer wasn't strength. It was design. Wheels, balance, and simplicity.

That was the spark.

Not just: this is easier.

But: this is civilization-level stupid, and we can fix it.

Because Marco isn't just an entrepreneur; he's Costa Rican to the bone. Pura vida isn't a slogan—it's a compass. He sees forests, not waste. He sees nine hundred million cardboard boxes a year, a billion trees cut so someone can move a blender.

The revelation came in two parts:

One: Road cases make moving easier.

Two: Road cases make moving greener.

Cheaper. Easier. Planet-saving.

That's the trifecta. That's how you overthrow a system. Not by preaching sacrifice, but by giving people something so much better, they don't even think twice.

That's Ford's Model T. That's the iPhone. That's Easy Moving Box.

Marco isn't asking for permission. He isn't waiting for laws. He isn't politely requesting we all rethink our cardboard faith. He's rolling the Anti-Box straight through the cathedral doors.

Whether oligarchs steal it or doors open wide, it doesn't matter. The future doesn't need permission slips.

Because the moment you glide a sofa out of your home with one finger, you realize the future is already here.

Box on wheels.

The last box you'll ever need.

Chapter 2 – Humans Always Move

Before Easy Moving Box, before cardboard, before tape guns and rented dollies, there was this:

Cavemen dragging pelts across rocks.

No wheels. No rope. Just scraped hides, hunched spines, and the first recorded moving-day arguments.

Fast-forward. Egyptians rolling stone obelisks across logs. A thousand men pushing one monument for a pharaoh who never touched a box in his life.

Romans. Builders of aqueducts, rulers of roads. Legions marched across Europe with wooden chests strapped to their backs, spilling amphorae of wine in the mud. An empire built on bad moving days.

The Vikings had trunks. Iron-banded, heavy as guilt. Packed with furs, coins, maybe a stolen cross. Loaded onto longships, unloaded into fjords. No wheels. Just curses in Old Norse.

Medieval peasants? Burlap sacks tied with string. Dragged on sledges through mud, praying the village dog didn't rip them open.

And immigrants at Ellis Island. Steamer trunks stacked high, tied shut with rope like coffins for past lives. Families clutching the same chest from Naples to New York, praying their china survived the Atlantic.

Historian Fernand Braudel once wrote, "Material life changes little until a true disruption enters." Cardboard wasn't disruption—it was delay.

From animal skins to gilded coffins, from logs to sledges, from trunks to cardboard—moving has always been miserable.

Here's the punchline:

Humans build pyramids.

Split the atom.

Fly to the moon.

But when it comes to moving our stuff from one cave, castle, or condo to another? We're still terrible at it.

Always have been.

Always will be.

Unless the box itself changes.

Chapter 3 – The Trunk, the Chest, the Steamer

If you thought cavemen dragging pelts was bad, wait until you meet the trunk.

The trunk is humanity's middle finger to ergonomics. A wooden coffin with brass fittings, iron bands, and just enough sentimental value to guarantee you'll ruin your spine hauling it up three flights of stairs.

Victorians adored trunks. They called them heirlooms. They called them necessary. Really, they were punishment with handles.

Immigrants hauled trunks across oceans. Ellis Island was less an entry point to the American Dream and more a graveyard of trunks. Each one tied with rope, each one heavy enough to break a dockhand's spine.

By the 1800s, the trunk wasn't just storage. It was identity. "What's in your trunk?" was another way of saying "Who are you?"

Then came the steamer trunk. Advertised as modern. Lighter. Convenient. Which was hilarious, because "lightweight" still meant two men sweating through suspenders just to get it onto a trolley.

Colonial America wasn't better. Conestoga wagons rattled with trunks nailed shut. Every bump cracked another dish. Every mile bent another back.

And through it all, nobody thought: Hey, maybe put wheels on it?

Spoiler: durability means nothing when you're the one doing the lifting.

The trunk, the chest, the steamer—each one promised safety, identity, continuity. Each one delivered pain, loss, regret.

And still, we called it progress.

Part 2

Chapter 4 – The Invention of the Cardboard Empire

The trunk was heavy. The chest was worse. The steamer trunk nearly killed us.

And then, out of nowhere, came cardboard.

Light. Cheap. Disposable.

A miracle of corrugation.

Corrugated paper was patented in England in 1856 as a liner for tall hats. That's right—before it carried your blender, it cushioned a gentleman's headwear. By 1871, American entrepreneurs had adapted it for shipping. By the 1890s, corrugated boxes were mass-produced, stamped out in factories like candy.

And for a while, it was progress. Compared to trunks and chests, cardboard looked like liberation. You didn't need iron bands or brass locks. You didn't need three men and a mule to carry it. You could fold it flat, pop it open, and suddenly your belongings had a temporary home.

By the 20th century, cardboard was everywhere. Supermarkets stacked pyramids of it, filled with cornflakes and detergent. Movers swore by it. Factories churned it out like dollar bills. Cardboard became America's default religion: In Corrugation We Trust.

It was light enough to carry alone. Cheap enough to toss after one use. Strong enough—until it wasn't.

Nobody cared. Because cardboard was the perfect product for capitalism. It was designed to fail. To be used once, maybe twice, then replaced. Like razors. Like plastic bags. Like marriages.

Cardboard didn't just solve moving. It created an entire ecosystem.

U-Haul built an empire selling you boxes at the counter.

Home Depot made cardboard an impulse buy, stacking it by the registers.

Amazon built the largest retail machine in history on brown corrugated coffins delivered daily.

Cardboard wasn't just packaging. It was identity.

“Cardboard packaging revolutionized the way goods moved in America,” wrote historian Susan Strasser. “But revolutions of disposability always come with hidden costs.”

Those costs? Entire forests. Entire weekends. Entire generations bent under unnecessary labor.

One ton of cardboard requires 17 trees and 7,000 gallons of water to produce (EPA). Globally, packaging consumes 3 billion trees per year (WWF).

And once it became the default, no one questioned it.

Cardboard wasn’t just a box.

It was empire.

Chapter 5 – Cardboard is God (and God is Absurd)

Cardboard is God.

Not the God you pray to when lightning strikes.

The God you curse when the bottom falls out.

Sixteen million moves a year.

Nine hundred million boxes.

That’s not logistics. That’s liturgy.

Every summer, across America, worshippers gather in the fluorescent temples of Home Depot and U-Haul. They walk the sacred aisles. They kneel before the cardboard altar. They buy their offering: ten, twenty, thirty corrugated sacrifices.

The rituals are always the same:

- Holy tape, unrolled with a screech. Watch the teeth!
- Sacred marker, bleeding black ink across cardboard skin.
- Feed the box. Never enough room. More boxes.
- Pilgrimage from apartment to dolly, dolly to truck, truck to dolly, dolly to house.

Cardboard is God because it demands faith.

Faith that the bottom won’t collapse.

Faith that your stack won’t topple.

Faith that your dishes won’t break.

And the absurdity is baked in.

Cardboard requires five times the lifting per move. From apartment to dolly. Dolly to truck. Truck to dolly. Dolly to house. House to room. Multiply by sixty boxes, and you're at 300 pointless lifts.

Cardboard demands extra trips.

Extra expenses.

Extra weekends.

Americans spend \$15–20 billion annually on moving supplies, most of it cardboard (IBISWorld).

Worship isn't free.

And still you forgive it. You buy more next time.

Because cardboard is a cruel God. A petty God. A profitable God.

U-Haul loves it. Home Depot loves it. Amazon worships it. Entire corporations kneel at the altar, printing profit from your devotion to the corrugated cult.

And every year, the same holy war plays out. You curse the box. You swear you'll never do it again.

Next time you'll plan better. Next time you'll buy sturdier boxes. Next time you'll call movers.

But cardboard always wins.

Because cardboard doesn't need to be good. It just needs to be everywhere.

Cardboard is God.

And God is absurd.

Chapter 6 – Marco Zeledón vs. the Corrugated Empire

Every religion needs a heretic.

The Church of Cardboard has had one for years. His name is Marco Zeledón.

He grew up Costa Rican. Pura vida isn't a motto—it's a compass. You don't waste what you don't need. You don't kill a tree for a one-trip container.

Marco's revelation didn't come in a design lab. It came backstage.

Event production. Flight cases rolling down ramps. Half a ton pushed with the light touch of a finger.

And he thought: Why the hell isn't everyone moving like this?

The answer was cardboard.
Cheap. Disposable. Everywhere. A corrugated monopoly.

Marco didn't accept that. He wasn't wired to.
So he built Easy Moving Box.

Not sturdier cardboard. Not slightly better tape.
A weapon.
A heresy.
A box that rolls, stacks, and refuses to collapse.

And this is where he became dangerous.
Because the corrugated empire isn't just cardboard. It's a trillion-dollar packaging industry.

The global corrugated packaging market exceeds \$300 billion annually (Statista). Add plastics, bubble wrap, tape, and the rest, and packaging waste surpasses \$1 trillion a year.

Marco didn't just build a better box. He declared war.

And the brilliance of his heresy is this: he's not asking people to sacrifice. He's not guilt-tripping them with eco-morality. He's offering something cheaper, faster, safer.

No religion survives that kind of competition.

This is Luther nailing his theses to the cathedral doors—only the doors are cardboard, and the nails are wheels.

Marco knows revolutions get co-opted. Oligarchs might steal his idea, slap their logos on it, roll it out like it was theirs. He doesn't care. Because once the Anti-Box exists, once people touch it, society tilts.

Like Ford's Model T. Like the smartphone. Like fire. Once you see it, you can't unsee it.

As Clayton Christensen put it in *The Innovator's Dilemma*:
"No revolution succeeds unless it is cheaper, better, easier."

That's exactly what Marco built.

Marco Zeledón isn't just fighting for better moving.
He's fighting for the death of cardboard's God.

Every heretic needs a church to burn.
Marco chose cardboard.
And the flames are spreading.

The Last Cardboard Box

Part 3

Chapter 7 – How We Got Stuck with Boxes Anyway

Here's the dirty secret: nobody chose cardboard.
Cardboard chose us.

Like cigarettes in the 1950s, like plastic bags in the 1980s, cardboard became the default not because it was good, but because it was everywhere.

It's the law of convenience. The first product to show up that's cheap, light, and easy wins—even if it sucks. And once it wins, it owns you.

By the mid-20th century, cardboard wasn't just packaging—it was propaganda.

Advertising told you it was modern, efficient, American. Glossy ads showed housewives packing china into neat boxes while kids played in the background. Moving day was framed as cheerful, family-friendly.

Reality? Your dishes still broke. Your arms still bruised. Your boxes still toppled off the dolly halfway to the truck.

But people bought the illusion. Because cardboard was “progress.”

And progress sells. The American Dream came with a mortgage, a garage, and stacks of cardboard in the attic. Buying boxes meant you were going somewhere better. Cardboard wasn't just a container—it was a symbol.

Corporations capitalized:

U-Haul turned boxes into a \$500 million annual side hustle (U-Haul Investor Report, 2022).

Home Depot keeps towers of them by the registers, knowing you'll panic-buy.

Amazon shipped 7.7 billion packages in 2021—nearly all in cardboard (Statista).

Cardboard became a subscription you never signed up for. Every move, every order, every holiday—you're paying rent to corrugation.

Psychologically, boxes became therapy. Stack them neatly and you feel in control. Label them carefully and you pretend chaos has borders.

But the therapy is a lie. Because cardboard is fragile, temporary, disposable. It demands five lifts where one should do. It makes you pay extra for tape, bubble wrap, dolly rentals, weekends lost to labor.

We didn't stick with cardboard because it worked.
We stuck with it because no one gave us anything better.

Until now.

Chapter 8 – Easy Moving Box: The Anti-Box

Every empire falls.
Rome had lead pipes.
Cardboard has gravity.

And into that weakness rolls the Anti-Box.

Black. Orange. Silver.
A road case dressed like rebellion.

Let's break it down:

Time.
Cardboard demands weekends. Sixty boxes = 300 lifts.
EMB slashes the labor by two-thirds. Rooms packed in minutes, not days.

Labor.
Cardboard is five times the lifting. Apartment to dolly. Dolly to truck. Truck to dolly. Dolly to house.
House to room. Repeat until your back gives out.
EMB? One finger pushes half a ton. Your sofa glides like it's coasting down a parade route.

Stress.
Cardboard is chaos disguised as order. Unstable stacks, toppled dollies, broken dishes.
EMB is certainty. No tape. No collapse. No gambling.

Injury.
Cardboard is booby-trapped. Cuts, sprains, hernias. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety

Commission reports 94,000 ER visits annually from moving-related injuries. Cardboard doesn't just cost money—it costs bodies.

EMB removes the traps. No unnecessary lifting. No fatigue. No strain.

Cost.

People think cardboard is cheap. It isn't. A typical household move eats \$200–\$400 in boxes, tape, wrap, and equipment rentals. Add lost time and stress—it's robbery.

EMB rents for less. \$5.95 a day buys a revolution.

This is the Anti-Box.

Not sturdier cardboard. Not a minor upgrade. An entirely new species.

Like Ford's Model T. Like the iPhone. Like Netflix.

It doesn't just replace what came before—it makes the old way look ridiculous.

Chapter 9 – Storage, Freight, Gig Economy, Oh My

Cardboard thinks small.

One box. One trip. One dump.

Easy Moving Box thinks big.

Storage.

Families pay billions to store cardboard mausoleums behind chain-link fences. EMBs turn that into order. Roll-in, roll-out. No collapse, no dust.

Freight.

Shipping is cardboard's empire. Pallets of cubes wrapped in miles of plastic film. Waste on top of waste.

Swap in EMBs: modular, stackable, reusable. Freight without the landfill.

Gig Economy.

DoorDash, Uber Eats, Instacart—millions of trips, mountains of disposable packaging. EMB shrinks down, scales to micro-pods. Reusable, watertight, branded. Deliveries roll clean.

Universities.

Dorm move-ins are cardboard apocalypse events. EMB turns chaos into choreography. One hour, one fleet, one clean campus lawn.

Disaster Relief.

When hurricanes hit, cardboard fails. Supplies ruined. EMB doesn't. Aid arrives sealed, stackable, mobile. Relief without collapse.

The World.

Packaging is a \$1 trillion industry (Statista). That trillion-dollar machine eats 3 billion trees annually (WWF).

Storage, freight, gig economy—oh my.

The cardboard empire stretches everywhere.

But EMB rolls further.

Chapter 10 – Civilization in a Box

Every revolution starts small.

The wheel. The press. The Model T.

A box on wheels doesn't sound like much—until it rewrites civilization's logistics.

Cities that move themselves.

EMBs stacked by the thousands, shrink wrap replaced by green alternatives. Trucks carry modular fleets, not disposable piles.

Neighborhood fleets.

Sidewalks buzzing with autonomous EMB pods. Groceries, furniture, medicine—delivered without waste.

Global freight without waste.

Ports unloading containers that don't die on arrival. EMBs living decades, rolling endlessly.

Micro-storage on demand.

No renting units. Fleets roll to your door, swallow clutter, roll back into the hive.

Disaster recovery.

Supplies arrive sealed, stackable, storm-proof. Aid delivered as it should be.

Civilization in a box.

Reusable. Durable. Modular. Self-driving.

As UNEP's Inger Andersen put it: "Forests are not renewable in the timeframes we're consuming them." Cardboard's clock is already out of time.

The story of humanity has always been one of movement. From pelts to trunks, from trunks to cardboard. But for the first time, we built something that doesn't fight us.

Something that moves with us.

Civilization in a box.
Black. Orange. Silver.
Rolling us out of the past and into the future.

The Last Cardboard Box

EPILOGUE

Epilogue – The Box is Dead. Long Live the Box.

Picture a landfill.
Mountains of collapsed cardboard.
Brown cubes, broken, stacked into silence.
Labels still visible: “KITCHEN.” “BATHROOM.” “FRAGILE.”

This is the cardboard afterlife.
Billions of trees turned into temporary faith. Billions of hours wasted in labor.

Paper and cardboard now make up 23% of U.S. landfills (EPA). Entire ecosystems buried in brown.

Now picture a city alive.
Fleets of EMBs rolling like arteries. Apartments packed in minutes. Warehouses humming. Trucks loaded with precision. Sidewalks buzzing with autonomous pods.

The landfill shrinks. The forests breathe. Civilization rolls forward.

And in the middle of it, Marco Zeledón’s heresy stands vindicated.
The Anti-Box becomes the system.

Because revolutions don’t always roar.
Sometimes they roll in quietly, one finger pushing half a ton.

The box is dead.
Long live the box.

About the Author

Joshua Lankford is a writer, entrepreneur, and cultural strategist dedicated to telling the stories of ideas that reshape how we live. Through Biografa, his publishing initiative, he brings history, narrative, and disruption together in biographies that read like manifestos.

The Last Cardboard Box is his sharpest project yet — a satire, a history, and a call to action wrapped in one. It's a book for anyone who has ever moved and thought there had to be a better way. The Last Cardboard Box was written with the sharp edge of a modern blunt instrument!

He lives at the intersection of storytelling and innovation, helping ideas like Easy Moving Box find their place in civilization's story.

About the Publisher

Biografa is dedicated to telling the stories that define us. Not just the biographies of people, but the biographies of cultures, movements, and ideas that shape civilization.

Every life, every tradition, every invention carries within it a narrative that deserves to be remembered. Biografa books bring those stories to light — weaving history, culture, and innovation into narratives written not as textbooks, but as living stories.

Our mission is simple: to make biography bigger. To move beyond dates and timelines, and instead capture the heartbeat of change — whether it comes from a person, a people, or a disruptive idea.

For more, visit biografa.com.

Notes & Sources

This book is a narrative biography of an idea. While its style is satirical, every statistic and quotation comes from reliable sources.

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