

So we are showing our house as if to sell it.¹ And the rooms are small like they are upstairs (in fact they look just like the rooms upstairs). The house appears to be at ground level on a busy downtown street corner. When we get to the master bedroom, it is large and has decent closets; the couple looking says “This is more like it” to which I respond, “Well this would be *your* room, the others are for the kids.” Then, I show them a large room behind some doors: it is a vast movie theater² at intermission. The movie begins again and the lights go down.

Enter some professors from school. They want to play indoor soccer³, so we take an elevator upstairs. On the way up, we are juggling the soccer ball around. I kick it just barely over the wall of the elevator and it falls down the shaft. “No problem” say I “I’ll go get it from the basement.” I take the elevator down to the basement, but the elevator base is below even that level, so I take the stairs down, from the movie theater to the basement. While looking for the soccer ball, I discover a large sub-basement full of stuff. I also see a Samoyed⁴; it belongs to one of the professors from the elevator. The dog and I play for a while. Then I return to looking for the ball. I discover that the building has attached to it a large, old, undeveloped (abandoned) store front on its back end. I discover other rooms: a large workshop which I greatly admire, and a large kitchen. Middle Eastern women⁵ are coming down the stairs; they admire the kitchen, and I ask them if it isn’t so where they come from. They respond that they have to wear the veil there, that their lives are totally controlled. I go back to trying to find the ball. I discover another storefront with a ramp beneath it to the street. Perfect for getting motorcycles in and out.

Continuing on through the bowels of this apparently ever-growing old building⁶, I discover yet another storefront—this one filled with vintage or reproduction bicycles. It looks like a going concern. A small door connects to another storefront—this one filled with vintage or reproduction motorcycles. I think they come from China⁷, but they look pretty cool anyway. I exit from the storefront onto the alley upon which it resides. It is 4:30 in the morning. Across the street, a forklift operator is expanding the foundations of the ruined building across the alley. He looks just like a carpet layer I once knew who remuddled a house. The expanded foundation is very poorly built. I run back in to find a camera.

¹ We may be selling our house this year.

² I have worked at two movie theaters, one of which had a basement area.

³ I have played on several sports teams with professors; at least one of the professors in this set was not of the sport-playing variety.

⁴ The kind of dog my parents have.

⁵ I read the Persepolis books not too long ago.

⁶ I have owned an old commercial building, and so the image of seeing and imagining commercial spaces from the inside out is familiar to me.

⁷ Knock-off Chinese motorcycles are something of a politico-economic cause célèbre in the motorcycle world.