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*“Your couch has feet!”*

*“You have a couch?”*

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The site-visit subset of our proposal team has spilled out into the parking lot. Hoping to freshen up—the air in the room, not themselves—folks have left their doors open, although this pre-Easter weekend is past chilly. So we all verify that this room does, indeed, have a couch with feet; this room has a couch without feet; and this little piggy has none.

I have a couch but would gladly—gladly—give it to someone willing to also take the shag carpeting, which I am working at not thinking about. I can live with the faux knotty-pine panelling and the rusting metal shower, 18 inches square.

Not that it was even remotely my job, but maybe I should have paid better attention, or any attention, to the logistics for this trip to Canada’s Less-than-Great but Decidedly White North. I remember overhearing some executive-level conversation about the importance of our non-executive site-visit team staying in the community nearest the work site.

It would look better, they agreed. It would show our commitment to the community, they were sure. How any of this would affect the evaluation of our proposal by people unconnected to the community, they were unclear. As am I, standing in the parking lot of this no-tell mo-tel that no self-respecting local would park in front of, even with a flat tire.

But it has one huge competitive advantage. We can stand around anywhere and talk about our plans without fear of being overheard. Every blessed one of our competitors is in the modern, chain motor hotel in the bustling semi-metropolis all of 10 minutes down the road.

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*Who’s that hairy guy about to fall on me?*

Late-arriver Buddy tiptoed into his darkened room around midnight, without benefit of the parking-lot debrief. He got into bed as quickly and quietly as he could.

Waking in the morning, he rolled over, stretched, looked up, and almost had a heart attack. Until he realized that there was a mirror on the ceiling.

Funny in the telling? Yeah. TMI? That too.

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*“That’s why I can’t hear your shower!”*

As I turn left into the bathroom to fill a small cup with shampoo, I stop and look back at the guy in the doorway. He’s the proposal manager and my current next-door-to-the-right neighbour.

He’d come over to borrow shampoo, having mistakenly assumed it would be provided.

He’s just now realized that my bathroom is not back-to-back with his.

I’ve just now realized that Neighbour Buddy’s thought about my shower. In any context.

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