

On My Box Seat
Robert S. Griffin
www.robertsgriffin.com

I have dreams just about every night. I wake up at the end of one either in the middle of the night or in the morning. I often forget a dream if I don't write it down, so I keep a notebook by my bed stand to briefly record it. I find my dreams to be lessons on what is currently going on with me. They are allegorical, not literal representations of what is happening with me, but they are easy enough to interpret. I'll analyze last night's dream and the meaning I gave it as a way of suggesting that you do the same kind of thing with your own dreams.

The dream:

I'm alone in the box seat area of a major league baseball stadium while a day game is being played: it could be Yankee stadium in New York. Box seats are right down near the field. It was on the third base side, just about in line with the pitcher's mound.

I'm standing in the fourth row from the field passively watching two ballpark employees in dark blue work shirts in the third row preparing what I understand is to be my permanent seat for the games. I had no part in deciding that this would be done, and I'm not directing them at all. They are bent over concentrating on their work and paying no attention to me.

The workers dig a small square hole about half a foot deep just big enough for my seat. It is like a small square grave—it has dirt in it, not concrete. They place the seat, my seat, into the hole, a tight fit.

While my seat is being set up, four young men, mid-twenties, are standing by the railing next the field joking around and gesturing and paying no attention to the game or to the stadium crew preparing my seat or me. They look as if they might have consumed a lot of beer.

The workers stand aside and I take my dug-out seat. Down low like that, I can only see the heads and shoulders of the players, on the field, and the jokesters, who are still going at it, are obstructing my view of the game and dominating the scene in front of me.

Sitting there, I have no interest in the game, which I can barely see in any case. Plus, the setup makes me uneasy—the odd seat arrangement, which makes me stand out as being apart from everything and everybody else, and the loutish characters a couple of feet in front of me. I say softly to the stadium workers, “I want to go home.” It appears none of them heard me.

I wake up.

The meaning of the dream hit me. It’s my life now. Alone, passive, among strangers of another generation who are alien to me, some of whom are off-putting and vaguely forbidding. I’m invisible as a distinct human being to others. People doing their jobs, not ill-intended toward me but nevertheless making things worse for me, or at least no better—in this case, digging a kind of grave with a chair in it. Not being interested in the game going on (until recently, I’ve been caught up with spectator sports) or, really, in the larger world. The best thing I can think of to say in moments like this—or better, think period, because there is no one to hear me if I speak—is that I want to go home.

The dream ended there, but if it had continued, very likely I would have gotten up from my seat and found my way home, or better, my two-room rented apartment. No one—including the people, none of whom I knew, sitting in adjoining seats—would have acknowledged that I had left; no one would have cared if I was there or not. I can go wherever I want, do whatever I please.

Being home (the apartment) is indeed better than being uninvolved and ignored among strangers and amid what seems to be pointlessness. The apartment is quiet and safe, and I can cook my meals, read my books, watch my films, write my website thoughts and webzine articles, sit by the nearby lake, and look out for my young daughter who lives far away. Unless I can come up with

something better--and I'll try to do that, for a while at least even though I'm very old and very tired and it's getting very tough to get around (friends, love, travel, a closer connection with my daughter, a book project, a nicely furnished living space in another geographical area)--I'll stay here where I am at this moment, sitting on a leather couch in the living room where I spend my days, doing what I'm now doing now for the rest of whatever time is left to me on this earth. And really, that might not be half bad, and it might even be good if in the process I can manage to find a fair measure of peace of mind, something I've never experienced in the whole of my life.

See what your dreams tell you about what it's like to be you.