Jeff Weinstein

My nose is pressed to the window as we’re driving along. It’s Sunday and of course that means that my parents stuff me and my siblings into the car for our traditional Sunday drive. My brother and sister are arguing in the seat next to me and my parents are talking to each other in front of me but I’m not really that interested in any of them right now. All I’m interested in is getting the first glimpse of the big houses just beyond the train tracks.

I used to love looking at those huge houses. I would imagine what life was like in those castles and make up stories for the people who lived there. Most of the time they were superheroes or orphans that suddenly found out they were left millions but despite they’re less than humble origins they still lived a normal life in their chocolate pudding swimming pools.

These days I’m much older than I was when my family and I would go for those drives. My wife and I are driving back from dinner and I see a familiar shape in the fading darkness. There’s a for sale sign outside of a house. I give my wife a look that she’s all too familiar with and she rolls her eyes and smiles. She knows that just seeing that house I already have dreams of buying it and she’s already thinking about what sort of improvements we can make, though unfortunately chocolate pudding pools are never on that list.

The first property we bought was absolutely terrifying. I had just gotten done paying off my law school debt and now we were jumping into property debt. While not all of our deals have gone perfectly, one of the greatest things to see is a family moving into a house you just made into a home. I’ve even had a few rental properties that I’ve bought however, usually after a few years of renting I try and convince my renters to buy so that they can watch their money work for them rather than for me.

I definitely wouldn’t consider us flippers or real estate moguls. We more so invest in houses as a hobby, something we can do together. It started when I was a young lawyer looking for a good way to invest in our future. I wasn’t really fond of the idea of just sinking my money away in something I couldn’t see or feel. I wanted to invest in something real and tangible that I could drive by and see. Hence, real estate.

My intentions soon grew nobler however. I enjoyed watching new families move into a house I made for them or finding renters to fill the vacancies from the ones that just found their first home. It soon became almost a project for me to help people who knew nothing about real estate get their feet wet, grow their investments, and eventually even become investors themselves. To help people go from mom and dad to mortgage was pretty darn sweet.