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## Panic Room

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## Panic Room

August 16, 2010 in [Photo](#) by [The China Beat](#) | [Permalink](#)



On my (continuing) walk across China, I have occasionally come across the kind of construction featured in the attached image — a farmhouse with a door half way up the wall, no stairs attached. I have previously assumed the house was still under construction, or perhaps they ran out of money before doing the stairs. But as I passed his one, in Guang'an county in the middle of Sichuan, last Saturday, it struck me that this is in fact a "panic room", a way to seal off and protect the family and its assets in the top room, safe from marauders. A man I met on the road asked me how the law and order situation is in England compared to China. I replied: "I really have no idea."

— Graham Earnshaw, author of [The Great Walk of China: Travels on Foot from Shanghai to Tibet](#)

*To read an excerpt from The Great Walk of China, click the link above; to listen to Graham Earnshaw in dialogue with Jeffrey Wasserstrom and Zhang Lijia in Shanghai last month, check out [this podcast](#) at [Popup Chinese](#).*