

ROOMIES

"Meet the Roomies"

TV Pilot for Half-Hour Sitcom

written by

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Having fallen on hard times in a post-pandemic world, stuck-up English teacher Kate and her haunted lamp move in with magician Doug and actress Saidy. Although Doug works in the world of illusion, the worlds that Kate reveals will blow his mind and everyone else's.

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ROOMIES

PILOT - "MEET THE ROOMIES"

COLD OPENING

EXT. ALLEYWAY BEHIND HOUSE - DAY

It's a GLOOMY, FALL DAY IN TORONTO in a post-pandemic world. We are in a back alley staring at a BATTERED OLD CAR held together with duct tape and a prayer that has been filled to bursting with boxes and other items one sees in a move. The huge trees spilling over from wooden fenced backyards are turning orange, many leaves dancing and whirling to the ground. MUSIC IS UPBEAT AND QUIRKY.

WOMAN NARRATOR (V.O.)

When it comes to change, some people embrace it while others run away screaming. Then there are those who want to scream but instead, take a deep breath, firmly lace up their boots, stand up tall and face whatever... (laughs) We all like to think that's how it goes, but it never does. Human life is never so neat and tidy. For instance, take the case of Kate Green.

KATE GREEN, THIRTIES, conservatively dressed, walking along the University of Toronto campus carrying a satchel and a purse, hair in her face as she struggles with hurrying and keeping a composed posture and blank face.

WOMAN NARRATOR (V.O.)

Kate is your typical product of the eighties. And she's a typical product of the pandemic.

A MONTAGE of Kate dressed to the nines, classy, at various parties in high society. Showing her working hard as an executive, phones, planes, boardrooms with interested buyers, A HANDSOME MAN on her arm in several pictures. Then the images shift to Kate living alone in a small apartment. Staring out the window.

WOMAN NARRATOR

Someone who had it all and lost it all and then lost it all again.

PRESENT: KATE is walking to the car that was in the opening shot, CARRYING one last load. BECKY, same age, fun jock type, comes up behind her with a small box. They cram the items into the car and get in.

KATE

You're sure we got everything. I looked twice.

BECKY

Yes, you got everything. I checked it all. I'm pretty sure the rest of the stuff that's left is theirs.

BECKY is the driver. They begin the short drive in the belching car a couple of blocks to Kate's new home. Kate is not happy.

KATE

This roommate stuff sucks.

BECKY is more laidback than uptight Kate.

BECKY

Well, there needs to be give and take.

KATE

But simple chores...there are already bugs everywhere...just rinse the damn glass.

BECKY

Tell me a glass wasn't the hill you chose to die on.

KATE

There was more...so much more...

BECKY

Maybe...just...like...lower your expectations. Just worry about your own room and to hell with the rest.

KATE

I do, but I hear things...I see things...I hate it. It's so hard to get along with strangers...

BECKY

It was hard to get along with your lover...husband too, remember?

KATE

Not when he was hard...but it's different to cohabituate with strangers than with romantic partners even if they argue robustly.

BECKY

Robustly, my foot...

KATE

I just hope that the new roommates aren't freaks.

BECKY

Those other ones weren't freaks. I liked Paul, Larry, and Janice.

KATE

They were nuts. It was hell. So sloppy, the bathroom...ugh...

BECKY

I'm sure it's difficult. Just try to remember it's not the end of the world. We already lived through that.

Kate takes a deep breath.

KATE

I hate to hear you say I told you so, therefore, I'm going to give these new people a chance, as long as they aren't weirdos.

BECKY

Kaaate!

KATE

Yes, Becky.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - DAY

DOUG THE MAGICIAN, mid-twenties, is practicing a levitating gimmick with his work partner, DEEDEE in the common living room. THE BIG OLD COUCH IS PUSHED TO THE SIDE, AS ARE A COFFEE TABLE AND SOME CHAIRS. DEEDEE is "FLOATING" IN MID-AIR. She wears a long skirt that hides the wire apparatus. They are casually dressed.

DOUG
Okay...easy...

DEEDEE GIGGLES.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Shhh...you are asleep...

Deedee tries to contain herself.

DEEDEE
I'm sorry. I'm just feeling silly today.

There is a knock at the door. They look at the door. Saidy, their roommate, breezes through from another room towards the door. She's in her forties, an aspiring actress, flamboyantly dressed, a cross between Divine and Sophie from 2 Broke Girls.

SAIDY
I'll get it. Don't need you two scaring her off!

Deedee is lowered from the apparatus and brushes her skirt to straighten it.

DEEDEE
Who?

Saidy opens the door to reveal Kate, conservatively dressed, long skirt and leggings, carrying a suitcase, and a large satchel around her body.

KATE

Hi, I'm Kate. (She awkwardly sticks out her hand.) I'm your new roommate.

SAIDY

(doesn't touch her hand, it's post-pandemic times)

Saidy...

(Kate realizes her faux pas and steps in dragging her suitcase, rubbing her hand on the side of her skirt.)

...and that's Doug and Deedee.

Saidy shuts the door while Kate nods at EVERYONE. Doug and Deedee politely wave but come closer.

KATE

Nice to meet you all.

DOUG

Same.

Kate looks around, not impressed. She drags her suitcase a little way in.

KATE

I see everything is pushed around. Different than when I came to look at it last week.

DOUG

Oh, we're just rehearsing. Might finally have a gig after all this time.

KATE

Show?

Saidy chuckles as Doug and Deedee theatrically introduce themselves.

DOUG

The Amazing Duo: Doug and DeeDee!

Doug and Deedee bow. Kate nods.

KATE
And what is it you do?

DEEDEE
We're magicians.

KATE
(rather skeptical)
Oh, really?

DOUG
Check it out!

KATE
Maybe in a minute...I have more stuff
to unload.

Doug signals for Deedee and they prepare to do the levitation trick. Kate is trapped, she edges towards the door during the trick.

DOUG
Join us for the marvels of the
universe, all the way from the ancient
tunnels at Yonge and Bloor, the
Diaphanous DeeDee!

Deedee prances around, her skirt billowing and she waves some scarves.

DOUG (CONT'D)
See acts you've never seen, experience
thrills, chills, and excitement.

Kate stifles a yawn. She's not a playful type.

DOUG (CONT'D)
And now, before your very eyes, I will
levitate Miss Deedee using just the
power of my mind!

Doug and Deedee perform some theatrical moves with dancing and scarves before Deedee is levitated.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Ta-dah!

Saidy claps enthusiastically while Kate claps politely.

KATE
Very nice.

THERE'S A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

KATE (CONT'D)

Oh, I bet that's Becky.

Saidy opens the door to reveal Becky, Kate's age, fitted t-shirt and shorts, headband, conservative jock type and chatty. Becky is carrying a box. She speaks as she enters.

BECKY

I guess you forgot you had more stuff.
No matter. Someone left and I grabbed
a parking spot practically right out
front. Our lucky day!

Becky puts the box down by the suitcase. She waves at the gang.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Hi, I'm Becky, I teach at the
University, like your gal Kate, eh.

DOUG

Nice to meet you, Becky. I'm Doug and
this here's Deedee.

SAIDY

I'm Saidy. Please to meet you. Are
there more boxes? Should we come down
and help out?

Kate begins to refuse but Becky chimes in.

KATE

There's not...

BECKY

The more the merrier and I can get out
of here! Follow me!

Kate, Doug, and Saidy follow Becky out the door. Deedee falls behind to remove her skirt and wiring. She pulls on a pair of shorts and follows.

As she's about to go out the already open door, Mr. and Mrs. Hardsworth enter a few feet into the living room. They are, or rather, **were** very wealthy but lost millions during the pandemic. Mrs. Beth Hardsworth is the dominant party.

BETH HARDSWORTH

Oh, you again.

Deedee tries to get by her but Beth steps in front of the door, blocking her.

BETH HARDSWORTH (CONT'D)
Should we be charging you rent as well? Seems like you're always here.

Deedee doesn't take beth's snobby manner.

DEEDEE
No, I don't live here. We were just rehearsing as you can see by the furniture and rigging over in that corner.

Beth sneers and walks in, eyeing the boxes.

BETH HARDSWORTH
And these?

DEEDEE LAUGHS.

DEEDEE
Your new tenant. I'm sure you remember she moves in today, why else are you here?

BETH HARDSWORTH
Yes, just making sure she's moving in okay. And alone, with no pets, as per the rules of the house.

DEEDEE
You run a tight ship, that's for sure.

DOUG comes through the open door with some boxes. He takes them right through to the spare room. Saidy and Becky are behind. Kate carries a long, heavy lamp. She struggles with it through the door, a comedic bit nearly decapitating her new roommates and then stumbles into the room.

KATE
I swear this thing is going to be the death of me.

She rolls it around until it's on the other side of the room. Doug helps. It's a huge, wrought iron ugly lamp with wrought iron gargoyles around the base and up the lamp with one perched on top, glaring down. She fusses with the lamp for a moment, crawling around looking for the plug. She plugs it in with delight.

She turns it on, it's even more hideous but not to Kate. She clasps her hands and turns to speak.

KATE (CONT'D)
I hope you don't mind...It's a replica
of...

Only then does she realize that the Hardsworths are watching
her. She puts a hand to her face.

KATE (CONT'D)
Oh boy...

She straightens back up to the serious Kate.

KATE (CONT'D)
Why, Mr. And Mrs. Hardsworth. What a
delight!

BETH ROLLS HER EYES.

BETH HARDSWORTH
We just wanted to see that you moved
in and had everything. Your keys work?

KATE
Yes.

BETH HARDSWORTH
You checked the mail key?

KATE
Yes.

BETH HARDSWORTH
This is your laundry card.

Beth produces a file folder. She opens it up and digs for a
second to get the laundry card. She hands the card to Kate
and then pulls out a form.

BETH HARDSWORTH (CONT'D)
Here, please sign that I gave you the
card.

KATE SIGNS.

BETH HARDSWORTH (CONT'D)
Any questions or concerns?

KATE
Not so far.

BETH HARDSWORTH
You have my number if you have any
issues. Also, let me know if these ...
clowns are acting up.

DOUG
That would be MAGICIANS!

KATE
Will do.

THE HARDSWORTHS SURVEY THE ROOM.

BETH HARDSWORTH
Very well. Have a good day everyone.

THE HARDSWORTHS LEAVE.

DEEDEE
Those two always know how to suck all
the air out of a room.

KATE
It's not just me then...whew.

DEEDEE
Hey, is there more down there?

KATE
Oh, yeah...there's always more.

KATE AND DEEDEE LEAVE.

DOUG IS STARING AT THE LAMP.

DOUG
Wow...

BECKY
That lamp can tell you some stories.

DOUG
I'm sure...as long as it's not in the
middle of the night when I'm home
alone...

THEY LOOK AT THE MOCKING GARGOYLES AND SHUDDER.

BECKY
Let's go. You'll have all night to
look at the thing.

DOUG
Where's it from?

BECKY
I'll let Kate tell you all about it.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The couch, chairs, and coffee table have been pushed back into place. Deedee has gone home. Doug and Saidy sit on the couch watching TV which means they are facing the audience. The lamp is in a different spot.

Kate emerges from her room. She's a bit disheveled from moving and unpacking. She's wearing loose dull comfy clothes.

KATE

Whatcha watching?

DOUG

American Horror Story. An old one,
Freak Show.

KATE

Oh, yeah, I saw some of that.

SHE STANDS AWKWARDLY.

SAIDY

You can join us. We're all roomies
now!

SHE JOINS THEM ON THE COUCH.

KATE

Hey, I see you moved the lamp. Guess
you didn't like where I put it.

Doug and Saidy look at the lamp. They look at each other.

DOUG

I didn't touch it. It was hard enough
getting it up those stairs.

SAIDY

I wouldn't touch that thing.

Saidy shudders. She looks at the lamp. Then a fake smile comes over her face.

SAIDY (CONT'D)
Oh...I mean... I would be afraid to
...smudge it if I touched it. I
wouldn't want to offend...you...

THE "YOU" IS POINTED AT THE LAMP.

SAIDY (CONT'D)
(under her breath)
It looks like it could use a good
cleansing smudge.

KATE GOES OVER TO THE LAMP.

KATE
(she whispers to it)
You'd better behave.

KATE LOOKS AT DOUG AND SAIDY.

KATE (CONT'D)
(lying)
I...just remembered. I did move it.
I'm so tired, I forget what I've done
and not done. Don't mind me.

Doug and Saidy watch her sit back on the couch.

They continue to watch TV. Saidy grows more agitated until she can't contain herself any longer.

SAIDY
You told that thing to behave. What's
that about?

KATE
I'm kidding, teasing. I have been
known to pull a prank or two in my
day.

Doug and Saidy aren't convinced but leave it alone.

SAIDY
Alrighty then...

They watch for another few seconds. Doug turns off the sound.

DOUG

Hey, why don't I whip us up some pancakes while you tell us about yourself, Kate? Do you like fresh blueberries?

KATE

Pancakes? It's almost bedtime.

SAIDY

When you work crazy hours, anytime is pancake time.

Doug is in the kitchen which can be seen in the open concept living room kitchen when the camera is pulled back.

The kitchen is a wall of colourful cupboards covered in garish stars against the back wall, a DENTED turquoise refrigerator, A BATTERED BRIGHT RED STOVE, A SMALL MICROWAVE, COFFEE MAKER, ELECTRIC KETTLE ON A SMALL COUNTER WITH A DOUBLE SINK.

DOUG

So, how about those blueberries?

KATE

I love blueberries.

SAIDY

Then you can stay.

They all chuckle as Doug rustles around putting a pan on the stove, berries from fridge, a little hand mixer, bowl, milk, flour, eggs and so on and begins to cook.

KATE

What do you do?

SAIDY

Well, not working, that's for sure. Not yet, soon, I hope.

KATE

I'm sorry.

SAIDY

Hey, we're all in this together. Although the government money ran out. It's hitting everyone who didn't get called back yet.

KATE

So, what do you do?

SAIDY

I'm a background performer. I'm one of those people you see in crowd scenes.

KATE

Oh, yes, an extra.

SAIDY

Yes, that too. It's called a few things, and of course, agents don't want you doing that kind of work if you're trying to climb higher as an actor...a movie star. Me? I just want to eat.

Saidy goes to help out in the kitchen. She gets the plates and pitchers of maple syrup and sets the small four-seater metal folding table in the front corner of the living room.

SAIDY (CONT'D)

I used to be cashier for many years but about five years ago, I set my sights on acting. I've taken a million classes and have done a lot of auditions. I'm never the right type.

KATE

It's a tough business.

SAIDY

Yeah. But one thing I did get to do a lot of was background work. I'm versatile, flexible, and have a car.

KATE

I bet that pays well.

SAIDY

Pays great if you're union. I'm not union.

KATE

Why not?

SAIDY

A lot of reasons but I like the freedom of being able to do other shows, low budget stuff, YouTube videos, dancing in clubs...no, not strip clubs, get your mind out of the gutter...and so on. Once you're in the union, you can only work for union wages or you get in big trouble.

(MORE)

SAIDY (CONT'D)

Anyway, there are a lot of us who won't join the union and we worked a lot in the Before Times.

KATE

But are the union ex...background performers working yet? The film business has been back for a while. I see trucks and crews everywhere.

SAIDY

Definitely. But there are hardly any crowd scenes and for the ones that do exist, they seem to be sticking to union players. And the rules might be a bit different now cos of the virus. Each production is a bit different for now.

KATE

I see.

SAIDY

I think the days of five hundred people crowd scenes aren't going to happen for a while. Maybe one day again.

KATE

So what are you going to do?

SAIDY

Trying to figure out options. The other thing I used to do for some money was dog-walking but all of my regulars are still out of work as well or have cut hours so they don't need me. And then, there was always waitressing...all those types of jobs that you figure will always be a good back up but now...what a different world this is.

KATE

Things will turn around.

SAIDY

Yes, they will. But it IS a different world.

KATE

(Kate ignores her and turns to Doug)
And you? A magician?

DOUG

Yup. Eight years pro, three of them with DeeDee.

KATE

Are you and DeeDee...

DOUG

Oh, no...not at all...(laughs) NO. We're two uniquely talented magicians who sometimes work together and sometimes do our own thing. And we're not to-ge-ther.

KATE

And how's work going for you?

DOUG

So slow. We usually perform at corporate functions, fairs, parties, amusement parks, all of it. Our first decent corporate gig in forever is on Saturday. Up until now, there's been three small parties and that's been it since the pandemic. We do a bit of stuff online and sometimes people will toss us a few bucks. It's been a tough road. So many magicians, so few opportunities to perform.

SAIDY

I keep telling him to conjure one up, but he doesn't listen.

KATE

I guess between people being too broke for fun and all the rules about gatherings, it's harder than ever to earn a living in the performing arts...I feel for you both.

DOUG

And you?

KATE

These days, I'm a teacher over at the University.

DOUG

Well, I guess you've been doing okay then.

SAIDY

What do you teach?

KATE

English, History. Not really full time so I don't get tenure or all those great benefits.

DOUG

In-person or online?

KATE

It was all in-person until the pandemic. Then it went completely online. Now I do a hybrid.

DOUG

That pandemic sure changed things for all of us.

KATE

I feel very grateful I had a job and have a job. It's not big bucks but I survive.

Table set, pancakes cooking, Kate's pacing.

She looks at the lamp. Doug follows her gaze. She looks away and continues to pace, studying the few books in the bookcases, mostly about magic and acting.

DOUG

Why are you here? What happened to where you lived before?

KATE

Well, I got divorced a few years ago. It's been a pretty rough road ever since as my loser ex drained me of every penny. But hey, divorce isn't for the weak, that's why so many people stay in terrible marriages. Besides, sometimes we all need to just...shake it all loose and begin again. But after I lost everything, I had to find jobs, apartments. Lucky I got a teaching job a couple years ago. Toronto is so expensive. I used to have my own house, a pool, and now I have to live with roommates like I'm in residence all over again. Just scraping by. (she begins to get maudlin) Place to place ... Bad choices plus a pandemic...

SAIDY

Well, you've come to the right house.
We all feel like you do. Where do we
go from here?

Doug brings a stack of pancakes to the table. He sits down
and doles them out. TWO pitchers of syrup are on the table.

DOUG

Alright, let's eat. These are magic
pancakes, they'll make you forget your
troubles.

Saidy pours some syrup on her pancakes and digs in.

SAIDY

I've already forgotten.

Saidy waves Kate over to the empty chairs.

SAIDY (CONT'D)

Come on, don't be shy.

Kate sits. She reaches for one of the containers. Doug
smirks. Kate notices and pulls away her hand.

KATE

What?

DOUG

I should warn you, there are two types
of syrup. You're reaching for
Blueberry Hill Magic, my special blend
of blueberries, almonds, and Mary
Jane.

KATE

Mary Jane? Weed?

DOUG

Yes, a gourmet way to usher in the
night, get ready for bed.

Kate weighs it out.

KATE

I'll pass this time. I still have more
puttering to do.

SAIDY

Suit yourself. (She has already taken
more pancakes from the main stack.)

(MORE)

SAIDY (CONT'D)

She pours a healthy dose of Blueberry Hill Magic over her stack of pancakes.) As for your puttering, don't make too much noise after eleven or Ms. Cranky-Pants who lives below you might give you a hard time.

Kate reaches for the other syrup.

DOUG

Yes, that one's safe. Just plain old blueberry maple syrup blend without the magic.

He reaches for the weed syrup and pours it over his pancakes.

KATE

Who's Ms. Cranky-Pants? Someone I should know?

SAIDY

You'll know soon enough, mark my words.

KATE

And other neighbors, what should I know?

DOUG

Most people are pretty cool. This place was mostly for university students but things are still not recovered from the pandemic so there's, well, I guess all of us here in this room are like the others. Fallen on hard times, need a cheap place to live, (coughs) well, cheap for Toronto, I guess, and here we all are.

KATE

Anyone I should be worried about? Besides Cranky-Pants?

Doug and saidy look at each then back at her.

DOUG

No one comes to mind. You'll meet everyone quick enough. No one is totally sociable these days, you know..

SAIDY

If you're coming in from a hot date, be very quiet going up those front stairs. Or you'll set off Cranky-Pants.

KATE

No worry about that...well, of a hot date, I mean. That ship isn't docking at this port. I also don't seem to go out as much as I did in the Before Times in general though, (she grows thoughtful) I guess...no, I surmise, it's entertainment that's missing, the lightness that fills the dark void of our consciousness...those creatives who let us lose ourselves if but for a moment... like what you both do...huh...

SAIDY

Sure you're not the one getting high?

KATE

I digress...and really, I need to get back to organizing my room so I can sleep tonight.

Kate picks up her plate. Saily takes it from her.

SAIDY

It's okay honey, we'll get it this time. It'll be your turn soon enough.

KATE

Thanks.

KATE EXITS.

DOUG

What do you think?

SAIDY

I'm buzzing already, a bee in a field.

DOUG

No, I mean about...(he mouths "Kate" and points at the room)

SAIDY

I think everything is going to be...(mocks Kate's elitist demeanor by carefully pronouncing her word) educational...

DOUG

We'll think things we've never thunk before.

SAIDY

Hey...(Saidy looks at the lamp which is in yet another different spot) I didn't see her move that lamp, did you?

Doug looks over at the lamp and his eyes grow wide. He nearly chokes on his pancakes.

DOUG

When would she have moved it? We were all right here the whole time.

SAIDY

Wouldn't we have seen it move?

DOUG

We're right here...

SAIDY

You're the magician, how did it move?...Hey, maybe you're setting me up for one of your magic tricks. AHA!

DOUG

No, I didn't do it, I swear. But who's to say that YOU aren't in on a little game of tricking the magician. I'm going to check it for wires. I'll catch you.

Doug gets up. Saidy pops her last bite of pancake into her mouth.

SAIDY

I don't know...

Doug wants to move one step closer but the gargoyles appear to be glaring at him.

DOUG

I don't...I think that I'm just going to clean up th -

THE LIGHTS GO OUT. THERE'S A SCREAM.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The dull YELLOW GLOW of little domed lights all over the walls and ceiling give the apartment an otherworldly appearance.

Kate rushes out of her room.

KATE

What happened? Why are the lights out?
What's all that?

Kate looks around at the lights.

DOUG

Don't worry, it's just a fuse.

SAIDY

It happens so often we put up these
emergency lights.

KATE

That's crazy. How long have you lived
here?

DOUG

About eight months.

SAIDY

Just going on six for me.

KATE

And this happens all the time?

DOUG

Yup.

KATE

Who fixes the fuse?

SAIDY

Whoever is brave enough to go into the basement or call the so-called super who is not known for his punctuality.

KATE

What's in the basement?

DOUG

It's a basement.

KATE

So?

SAIDY

It's a basement in THIS house.

KATE

What's wrong with this house?

SAIDY

I'm sure it's full of bad karma. It must be almost two hundred years old.

DOUG

A lot of bodies are buried here, that's for sure.

KATE

Oh, please, no bodies are buried in this house.

DOUG

I was making a joke. Obviously not a good one.

KATE

So, one of you might as well show me the basement.

Saidy looks over at the lamp which looks even creepier in the dim lighting.

SAIDY

Why don't we all go together? Wouldn't that be fun?

Kate rolls her eyes.

KATE

Let's go.

CUT TO:

INT. FURNACE ROOM - NIGHT

The area where the fuse box, furnace, hot water tank and laundry facilities are all in a run down, musty basement. The floor is cracked concrete and the walls are mostly dirt-covered brick. It's dark, no emergency lights down here.

Doug leads them down the old, wooden creaky stairs, each person holding a big flashlight.

Lots of old boxes, chairs and tables. Some fancy clutter from better times. Low ceilings, Doug has to stoop.

DOUG

Over here.

They head over to the box. There's a loud BANGING SOUND. Kate jumps.

KATE

What was that?

DOUG

Just the furnace...well the fan really. It's not quite cold enough to turn on the furnace.

KATE

Especially since we have to pay for it.

DOUG

You have that right!

KATE

Maybe one day.

Doug opens the fuse box and flips the switch. The house roars back to life.

THE LIGHTS FLICK ON.

SAIDY

Whoah! Trails! (she shades her eyes from the sudden brightness) Where are my shades?

Doug also shields his eyes.

KATE

Sheesh, it's not that bright. Anyway, what did you do? Just flip that switch?

DOUG

Yep.

Kate looks around at piled up furniture and various small signs.

KATE

It seems strange to have this stuff down here.

SAIDY

Well, back in the glory days, the Hardsworths weren't in the business of renting to newly hard on their luck people like us. They were living high on the hog in Hogtown, that's for sure.

They are looking at old salt shakers, knick knacks, candy dishes while talking.

DOUG

Richer than rich. They owned five or six homes around Toronto plus a few condos. I don't know for sure how many. I'm sure no one does except whoever prepared their will.

Kate nods, silently reflecting on how far she herself has fallen.

SAIDY

They, of course, didn't live in any of them. They spent their time between Blue Mountain, Banff, and Florida.

KATE

So they just rented out all those properties then. Big deal.

DOUG

Well, the big deal is that they started with one house and they lived in it. Then they came into some money and bought a little cottage up north. They decided to rent out the city house as an Airbnb. It brought in more money than you could ever imagine.

SAIDY

Think about it. If your mortgage is \$1500 plus utilities, repairs, taxes, whatever, so maybe your house is three grand a month to run.

(MORE)

SAIDY (CONT'D)

Let's say you rent it out by the night as an Airbnb. Who wouldn't want to stay in a nice house in the Annex or a condo down in the entertainment district, or Yonge Street or wherever when you're a tourist? A regular hotel room is around three hundred a night. Imagine having a house complete with kitchen for that. So even if they undercut and asked two hundred a night for a whole house, they could potentially earn six grand a month; double what it costs to run.

DOUG

Don't forget, Airbnb's have zero staff, you book through a website.

SAIDY

You pay by the person sometimes. And it's extra if you want to use various things like the kitchen.

KATE

You can see how they divided up this house. Four floors, and who knows how they charged, by the room like we're doing, or by the floor. If they charged four floors that mythical bnb price you mentioned, they would make eight Gs a month.

SAIDY

Five grand profit, just for one place, and we're probably lowballing.

KATE

Yes, you are. Or you would have been at the height of the insanity, just before the COVID hit.

DOUG

It's still outrageously expensive to live in this city, don't kid yourself.

KATE

At least there's a bit of breathing room.

DOUG

No, there isn't. No one's breathing well at all.

(MORE)

DOUG (CONT'D)

Not the people with the COVID-19, not the people who can't work, not the people who lost their homes.

SAIDY

Stop, Doug. Tough times for all of us. Where was the guarantee written when we were born. There is none.

KATE

You speak the truth.

Doug leads them up the stairs.

EXT.- ROOF BALCONY - NIGHT

Kate, Saily, and Doug are sitting on a small rooftop patio with beer in their hands. There's a covered up jacuzzi and small stand up bar along with several deck chairs and little tables. The city of Toronto is visible through a few cracks of buildings.

KATE

Wow, this is nice.

SAIDY

Look straight up!

Kate looks up.

KATE

Oh, my goodness! The CN Tower is right there, I can almost touch it!

DOUG

Maybe if your arm is 553 meters long!

Doug and Saily crack up, obviously high.

KATE

I think we made some miscalculations on these Airbnbs if they included access to this. How many properties times how much income per property plus whatever else they do. Mighty impressive. (she tips her beer in a toast to the air)

SAIDY

Shows you how much they lost when the tourist business tanked.

DOUG

Lucky for the likes of us.

KATE

Imagine, taking a jacuzzi and looking up at the CN Tower and not spending a grand a night!

SAIDY

Imagine...we've done it plenty, and you will too.

The new roommates seem pretty content with each other, for now.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The camera pans around the room, lighting on the old leather binding of a thick book among other books, a miniature space ship, a Ouija board, a doll, then ends on a lit up grinning gargoyle on the gargoyle lamp while the narrator speaks.

NARRATOR

Our case study may be bonding with her new roommates but time will tell with that. You never know who is watching, who is keeping score, and who is isn't. Who has to pay for the consequences of their actions? Sometimes the answer is closer than we think.

END OF ACT THREE