

1.

(The kitchen.)

(SHARON finishes helping ROBYN carry boxes in. So many boxes! One contains weird vegetables from a CSA. Some vegetables are just odd, but others look actively dangerous.)

SHARON. *(A little out of breath.)* And this is the kitchen
I'm a big cook, I love to cook
You said you cooked?

ROBYN. I cook, sure.

SHARON. Okay! Okay
Well

we can divide up the refrigerator or the pantry shelves
depending on
sort of *what* and *when* you cook

ROBYN. I'm a vegan

SHARON. *(Doesn't really know what that is.)* Okay! Okay...

ROBYN. No animal products.

SHARON. Okay!

So like...no meat...

ROBYN. Nope, no meat

SHARON. Or eggs

ROBYN. That would be an animal product

SHARON. Sure! Sure it would

Un...but like, carrots

ROBYN. Yes carrots are fine

SHARON. I mean, clearly carrots are [fine]
...but for example, using pans or pots or
knives or

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THE ROOMMATE

you know, that I've used for meat...
I mean, is that going to be...?

ROBYN. I have my own cooking utensils
in one of the boxes there's

SHARON. Oh! sure sure
yeah we can find
there's some extra cabinet space if we just
move things around a bit

ROBYN. Yeah there's a lot of space
this seems very spacious

SHARON. I mean there's *space*
it's not *palatial* but
I mean, Iowa, it specializes in
corn and *space*

(She laughs, ROBYN doesn't. Awkward.)

If you want you can leave stuff on the porch
'til you're all unpacked

ROBYN. Oh no no, I don't want to take up your

SHARON. No no! That's fine

I don't use the side porch that much anyway
it's nice in the summer I guess but

(Picking up a weird vegetable:)

What's this?

ROBYN. That's goya.

SHARON. What-now?

ROBYN. Goya. It's a vegetable.

A bitter gourd.

SHARON. Okay! Yes. Yes. Wow. Well. I see I am going to
learn a lot from having you as a roommate.

(She laughs. ROBYN doesn't really.)

(Beat.)

You must be tired. Driving all the way from... New
York, you said?

THE ROOMMATE

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ROBYN. The Bronx.

SHARON. The -! The Bronx!

ROBYN. Took about two days, by car.

SHARON. I thought...

ROBYN. What?

SHARON. I don't know,

When you said New York, I thought
somewhere Upstate

I didn't think...

Isn't the Bronx...

dangerous?

ROBYN. "Dangerous."

SHARON. And you're – I mean. You're a woman.

I mean. I don't know.

I've never lived in New York.

ROBYN. It's okay. I mean. There's parts. Parts where you don't wanna

late at night, you don't wanna

but it's fine. I stayed there for a little while and nothing ever

SHARON. (*With relief.*) Oh you aren't *from* the Bronx!

(*A slight pause.*)

ROBYN. Everywhere has parts like that.

SHARON. Oh it's mostly pretty safe here.

Except for the tornados.

ROBYN. (*Alarmed.*) Tornados?

SHARON. Oh yeah, in the spring mostly early summer

you just go on down to the basement 'til they pass. It's fine.

ROBYN. (*Even more alarmed.*) There are a lot of tornados here?

SHARON. Not as bad as some places.

ROBYN. Like how many tornados would you say, on average?

SHARON. It's fine! If you hear that big old siren you just go down to the basement.

Really

it's no scarier than the Bronx.

ROBYN. (*Has to smile.*) I guess not if you're from here.

SHARON. (*Immediately.*) I'm not *from* here. You know. I'm not *Iowan*.

ROBYN. Oh okay

SHARON. I don't know if I said that?

When we talked on the phone, if I said that?

ROBYN. I don't think so, but it doesn't really

SHARON. I'm from Illinois, originally.

ROBYN. Oh!

SHARON. It's actually quite different from Iowa.

ROBYN. I'll take your word for it.

(*Beat.*)

SHARON. My son lives in New York.

ROBYN. Oh!

You have a son?

SHARON. I do, he lives in New York.

ROBYN. That's great. In the Bronx?

SHARON. No! No no

He lives

"Park Slope" do you know where [that is?]

He lives in "Park Slope."

ROBYN. Oh yeah, that's great.

SHARON. He pays way too much for [rent]

I tell him that all the time, I say

In Iowa you could have a *house* for the money you spend on [rent]

(*Laughs a little, stops.*)

He doesn't like it when I say that.

He didn't like Iowa.

ROBYN. The tornados?

SHARON. No he just didn't like it.

(Beat. Have they run out of conversation?

SHARON *hastens.*)

He's a designer.

ROBYN. Oh! That's great!

SHARON. He's very good, everybody thinks he's very good.

ROBYN. What does he design?

SHARON. *(Doesn't really know.)* Clothes, he mostly designs clothes. For women?

ROBYN. Oh!

SHARON. Everybody thinks he's a homosexual, but he's not.

(Where did this come from? SHARON has surprised herself. A beat.)

ROBYN. I'm gay.

SHARON. Oh!

You're -?

Oh!!

You're -??

(Beat.)

I mean, I don't have any problem with homosexuals.

ROBYN. Oh good.

SHARON. Nope. Not at all. I think, you know, gay rights!
Let them marry!

ROBYN. Thank you

ROBYN. I thank you.

SHARON. Some of my son's friends are homosexual people.
Probably most of them.

ROBYN. Oh.

SHARON. I think most New Yorkers are.

ROBYN. I think actually there are a lot of straight people in
New York.

SHARON. I kissed a girl once in college.

(Beat.)

I'm sorry. I'm nervous.

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THE ROOMMATE

ROBYN. Why are you nervous?

SHARON. I mean. A roommate! I've never had a roommate.

(This is an admission of failure:)

I'm fifty-four years old.

A roommate!

ROBYN. It's okay. You'll save money.

SHARON. No, I know! I know. I definitely
I will definitely save money.

(Beat.)

You – did you have a lot more boxes in the car?

ROBYN. I've got it.

SHARON. *(Really doesn't want to keep carrying boxes.)* Well
if you're sure.

ROBYN. Be right back.

(She exits back out to the car.)

(SHARON sits alone in her kitchen with all these new, weird vegetables. She takes a deep breath. Okay. It's okay.)

SHARON. *(Calling after ROBYN.)* Today is my reading group!

ROBYN. *(Offstage.)* What did you say?

SHARON. Oh, I said: today is my reading group.

If you want to come with me.

(ROBYN returns. She's carrying a heavy box.)

ROBYN. Your "reading group"?

SHARON. You know, a book club. Only Tanya calls it a reading group -

(She jumps up to help ROBYN set the box on the table. ROBYN pulls away.)

ROBYN. I've got it!

SHARON. - Tanya's the one who runs it, she says everything just a little bit wrong, it's because she's from Idaho and there wasn't any culture there, so she didn't get exposed to things until much later in life.