

# BY THE WAY...

a ten minute comedy

by Jean Blasiar

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BY THE WAY

*Setting:*

*The living room/dining room of Aaron Mitchell (age 25).*

*AT RISE: No one on stage.*

*DOORBELL*

*AARON MITCHELL ENTERS from bedroom door, stage right, to answer the door, stage left.*

*MINDY JAMES (age 23) is at the door with a large suitcase in one hand, a purse, papers and a note pad in the other. She sets the suitcase down, puts out her right hand.*

MINDY

Hi. I'm Mindy. Is Erin in?

AARON

*(shakes her hand)*

I'm Aaron.

MINDY

You're...?

AARON

You thought maybe E... r... i... n?

MINDY

Yes, I did. I got a call from a friend of a friend of mine about a room and bath for rent at this address. I was told to see Erin.

AARON

*(checks his watch)*

I phoned that info into a rental hot line not fifteen minutes ago.

MINDY

I was in the neighborhood. I'm desperate for an apartment, Mister...

AARON

Mitchell.

MINDY

Mitchell.

*(voice cracks; regains control)*

I start a new job tomorrow and I don't have a place to stay.

*First part of Mindy's next comment is muffled as she bends down to get a tissue from her purse.*

MINDY (cont'd)

... Sex?

AARON

*(taken back)*

WHAT?

MINDY

Am I the wrong sex? Did you want a man?

AARON

Did I WANT a man?

MINDY

No, that didn't come out right. I'm just so anxious to make  
a good impression.

AARON

You're off to a shaky start. You better come in.

MINDY

Thanks.

*Mindy picks up her suitcase, enters, looks around.*

MINDY (cont'd)

Nice apartment.

AARON

I have a spare bedroom and bath for rent with kitchen  
privileges. Who is your friend of a friend?

MINDY

Charlotte Carlotta.

AARON

*(shakes his head)*

Don't know her. I'd remember that name.

MINDY

She said...

*(chokes back tears, dabs at her eyes with hankie)*

AARON

Forget it. You're here. Somebody told you about the room.

MINDY

I have references. I'll be working late and getting up early.

About five. I'm a runner.

AARON

You okay with the rent?

MINDY

Yes. Do you have to have first and last month's?

AARON

I can waive last month's... for now.

MINDY

Thank you. I'll be a good tenant, I promise you.

You won't even hear me. I'm very quiet.

AARON

I guess I'll see you on weekends.

MINDY

They said at my job that for the first year weekends  
are just like any other day.

AARON

Sounds like my first internship. Whatever happened to the forty hour week, eh?

MINDY

My dad used to talk about that. Oh... speaking of my dad, He's a minister. I have his email address if you'd like to contact him. It's in my references.

*Mindy hands Aaron her references.*

AARON

Put them on the table.

Mindy puts the papers on the table.

AARON

I'll show you the bedroom and bath.

MINDY

I'll take it.

AARON

You haven't seen it.

MINDY

It's okay. I'll take it.

AARON

Can you really afford this?

MINDY

I get my first paycheck the end of the month.

AARON

It's only the second of November. I don't want to take your last cent.

MINDY

My father gave me a check. I don't have time to look for an apartment any more.

*Aaron picks up the suitcase.*

AARON

What's in here, weights?

MINDY

Books. I have to know everything there is to know about copy writing by tomorrow.

AARON

Tomorrow?

MINDY

I got those books at the library. They cost a fortune on line.

AARON

Thrifty.

MINDY

Indigent, actually.

AARON

I suppose that means you want to move in...

MINDY

Today. Yes. I'm desperate. I didn't want to sound desperate, but the truth is I am... desperate. Sorry... I don't remember your last name.

AARON

Mitchell. Yours?

MINDY

James.

(hesitates)

I have to tell you, Mister Mitchell, my dad... being a minister and all... raised me to be honest. I knew you were Aaron, A... a... r...o...n, not E... r... i... n before I rang your bell. I was hoping that wouldn't be a problem.

*Aaron stares at the girl for a long time. Then he points to the door, upstage right.*

AARON

The bedroom's through that door, second door on the right.

MINDY

Thanks. I'll take it.

AARON

You haven't seen it.

MINDY

I'll take it.

AARON

Go look at it.

MINDY

Okay, but don't let anybody else have it.

AARON

Before you sign the rental agreement, I want you to check it out, have somebody else read it... your father maybe.

MINDY

Okay. But I'll take...