

# THE CHAIR

a short drama

by Jean Blasiar

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## THE CHAIR

AT RISE,

JENNY MARSHALL (20's) is coming in the door of her apartment, her hands filled with groceries.

She almost drops both bags and her purse as she stumbles over a large overstuffed chair in the middle of her apartment. No other furniture needed on stage.

JENNY

What the.....?!

(NOTE: Jenny is not by nature profane.)

Perplexed as to what this monstrosity in her apartment is and what it's doing in her apartment, Jenny walks over, opens her front door and looks out into the hallway. No one there.

Jenny takes her phone out of her purse and speed dials the superintendent of her apartment building.

JENNY (on the phone)

Mister Clemens... this is Jenny Marshall, 2A. What in the world-?

Mister Clemens says something which makes Jenny reply-

JENNY (on the phone)

Yes, I am aware that the rent is due tomorrow. I'll bring it down as soon as I write the check. But first... I'm calling because there's a monster chair inside my apartment.

(listens as Mister Clemens is offering an explanation)

You did? A present from whom?

(listens)

Did I hear you right? You *assumed* it was from my mother?

(listens)

This chair, lounge, or whatever it is, is not something my mother would pick out for me, Mister Clemens. Not in a million years.

Was there a card with it?

(listens)

No card. Then how do you know it's from my mother, which I can assure you is as impossible as-

Jenny is interrupted by Mister Clemens.

JENNY (on the phone)

Oh, the moving men thought so, too. Two of them. And you let them in.

Jenny walks over, closes the door and checks what looks like chipped paint on the door.

JENNY (on the phone)

Yes, I see where they had trouble getting it inside the apartment.

I'm not surprised they had to take the legs off.

(listens)

And you stood there and watched them, I suppose.

(listens)

Just so you know, Mister Clemens, I am not going to pay for that repair to the door nor to the repair of the marks they'll no doubt make getting that monstrosity OUT OF HERE as soon as I find out who "they" are. Meanwhile, I intend to hold back your rent check until I get to the bottom of this.

(listens)

You violated my privacy by accepting this...

this sixties relic.

(listens)

I suggest you do that, Mister Clemens. Call your attorneys.

Jenny turns off her cell phone, fuming.

She takes a deep breath and speed dials her mother.

JENNY (on the phone)

(leaving a message on her mother's message machine)

Mom... I just got home and found the world's worst joke sitting in the middle of my apartment.

I am NOT amused!

Jenny hangs up. She stares at the unbelievably monstrous chair taking over her apartment.

JENNY

This better be a mistake.

Jenny spies an envelope on the backside of the chair, reaches down and yanks it off, opens it and reads aloud.

JENNY

"Dear Jenny,

If you are reading this and wondering who willed you this wonderful chair, I will have departed this world for another.

(pauses a few seconds; resumes reading)

I can only hope (and pray) that the clouds in the “other world” are as soft and inviting and heavenly as this chair has been for me.

You won’t remember ever seeing me. I was in the back of the church at the time of your christening and I watched from afar at your graduations. I haven’t amounted to much actually, but I always followed you and your accomplishments.

I know now that I won’t be there when you get married or have children, but I hope when you feel alone or overwhelmed, you’ll sit in the chair and let it comfort you.

I’ll be happy knowing you are “sitting pretty”.

Love from Uncle Charley.”

Jenny looks the chair over, gingerly sits down on it. She sits back, her feet barely touching the floor because of the depth of the seat. Her first observation is how comfortable the chair really is. She leans back, pulls her legs up, scrunches until she’s comfortable, closes her eyes and nods off.

LIGHTS DIM to indicate the passage of time.

DOORBELL

LIGHTS UP on Jenny waking in the chair. She looks around wondering what just happened.

DOORBELL again.

Jenny gets up, stretches, walks to the door and opens it.

A moving man in a uniform with TOM DONOVAN MOVERS printed on his shirt is at the door.

MOVING MAN

Hi, I’m Tom.

(looks over Jenny’s shoulder and spies the blanket on the chair)

My men left a pad here when they unloaded a chair earlier. I didn’t want anything to happen to that fabric.

JENNY

What fabric?

MOVING MAN

Haven't you seen it? My grandmother used to have fabric like that in her house. I can tell you it's expensive. I had to take off my shoes every time I sat on her sofa or chairs. May I?

The moving man walks in without really waiting for an invitation. He pulls the pad off the chair to show Jenny the fabric underneath.

MOVING MAN

(exposes the fabric of the chair)

See? This is an expensive chair. It's big enough for two, right? You should have it appraised.

JENNY

I understand you think my mother sent this to me.

MOVING MAN

I said that?

JENNY

The Superintendent of this building told me the movers thought this was a present from my mother. Who sent it?

MOVING MAN

You don't know?

JENNY

No, but I can tell you that this is not my mother's doing.

MOVING MAN

(pulls an invoice out of his pocket)

Jenny Marshall, 2110 Fillmore , right? Apartment 2A.

JENNY

(nods)

Where did you pick it up?

MOVING MAN

At a run down building on the east side of town. Sorry. I hope that wasn't a relative or friend of yours living there.

(checks his watch)

I can't reach anybody any more tonight. But first thing tomorrow I'll check it out and call you. I have your number on the invoice.

The moving man shakes his head.

MOVING MAN (cont'd)

Man... getting that chair out that door and down that staircase again.  
The guys should have waited until somebody came home before  
unpacking it.

JENNY

Yes, they should have. I have a call into my mother.

MOVING MAN

Let me see if I can reach the guy who hired us.

JENNY

I'd appreciate it.

MOVING MAN

(checks his invoice)

I'll call.

(dials; waits for a response;

phone rings many times but no one picks up)

No one there. And no message machine. I could put it on  
our auction if you really want to get rid of it.