

Roomies

By Carolyn Hedley and Sean Harris

Characters

Zak – a sarcastic, cynical, and a generally monotone person

Dustin – an OCD, compulsive neat freak

Sara – a very optimistic person, always smiling

Nicole – a punk-ish girl

Bruce – Sara's equal

Jackie – a valley girl

Girl/Boy

Scene 1: CSR a couch and a coffee table, USC: a sink with a trash can next to it, DSL: a kitchen table with three chairs.

(Dustin at the kitchen table reading a newspaper or a magazine; Sara bangs into the door frightening Dustin; he falls off his chair; Sara enters the room holding flyers in her hand,.)

Sara: I've posted them!

Dustin: *(stands up and pushes in chair)* I thought you posted them last week.

Sara: I did, but no one's called yet, so I decided to put up some more. That way, more people will read them. Besides, maybe I just didn't put them in the right place. Someone somewhere has got to be looking for an apartment.

(Zak enters and slams the door behind him)

Zak: I'm home *(drags dirt in room)*.

Dustin: *(Looks at dirt on floor)* We noticed.

Zak: What are those? *(takes flyers from Sara's hands and stares blankly at them)* Hmm. *(tears up flyers and tosses the pieces onto the ground; Dustin makes a distraught noise and stares intently at the paper shreds)*

Zak: No one ran this by me. We don't need a new roommate.

Dustin: I can't take it. *(Throws himself at the paper shreds and begins to clean them up)*

Sara: But Zak, we're not making enough money to pay the rent as is and we have an extra room.

Zak: That is a guest room. It's for guests.

Sara: We never have guests.

Zak: That's because you have no friends.

Dustin: No, you have no friends.

Sara: And Dustin won't let me bring mine over.

Dustin: Your friends are messy and reckless. Is it really that difficult for them to make the beds after they're done with them, and fluff the pillows, and steam the carpet?

Zak: Look, we have enough people living in here already.

Dustin: *(frantically)* Move your foot!

Zak: *(looks down at him)* What?

(Dustin gestures for him to move; Zak does so, and Dustin cleans the paper shreds that had been under the foot; the phone rings and Sara exits to answer it)

Zak: *(calling after her)* We don't need a new roommate!

Dustin: You know Zakkie, we wouldn't need someone to help with rent if you hadn't been fired from your job.

Zak: *(defensive)* They had no good reason to fire me!

Dustin: You stole from them. You stole a twenty dollar CD.

Zak: You don't have to make it sound like such a big deal.

Dustin: What? That you robbed your place of employment? It sorta is.

Zak: *(stumbling over words)* Well...I...shut up...punk!

(Sara re-enters)

Zak: Who was it?

Sara: Someone interested in the apartment. Her name is Nicole. She's coming for an interview in about 45 minutes.

Dustin: *(panicky)* What?

Zak: But we don't need a roommate!

Sara: Well I'm going to go get ready. (exits)

Dustin: (*frantically*) Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God!
Oh my God! I can't clean the whole apartment in 45 minutes!

Zak: You're right. Look at all this dirt and dust everywhere. You'll never clean it in time,
and then the earth will implode!

Dustin: (*glares at Zak as he gets out a dust pan and brush from underneath the sink*) Go
to your room.

Zak: (*laughs*) Dustin. I...

Dustin: (*sternly*) Go!

Zak: (*somewhat frightened*) Okay. (exits)

(*Blackout*)

Scene 2

(*Sara is arranging flowers in a vase on the kitchen table. Zak is on the couch looking bored.*)

Sara: I can't believe we got two interviews for a roommate in one day!

Zak: Assuming the first one even shows up. (*gets up and walks to Sara*) She's almost
thirty minutes late.

Sara: Oh don't worry. She'll come.

Zak: So who's the second person?

Sara: His name is Bruce and I really like him! He sounded really nice.

(*Dustin enters wearing an apron and carrying Windex and paper towels, he puts them
underneath the sink and walks over to Zak and Sara*)

Dustin: (*out of breath*) Okay, I'm finished.

Zak: Really? I don't see a difference.

Dustin: (*ignoring Zak's comment*) By the way Zak, what CD did you steal from your old
job? While I was cleaning your room I didn't see any new CD's.

Zak: *(obviously nervous)* Oh, it was, uh, nothing.

(There's a knock on the door).

Sara: *(excited)* She's here!

Zak: Oh God.

(Sara walks to the door and opens it; Nicole is standing there holding a can of soda)

Sara: Come in!

(Nicole enters and looks around).

Sara: I'm Sara and *(pointing to Dustin and Zak)* this is Dustin and Zak.

Nicole: Hello.

Dustin: Hi.

Zak: *(rude and hesitantly)* Sup.

Sara: Ok, well I'll show you around the apartment. *(points to kitchen table)* This is where we eat. *(Points to couch)* This is our...living room, I guess.. *(Points SL)* That's our kitchen. *(Points SR)* And that's where our bedrooms and bathrooms are. *(Nicole is about to speak but Sara interrupts)* Come sit down on the couch *(pulls Nicole over to the couch and sits her down)* So, tell us about yourself.

Nicole: *(sets soda on table)* Well, what do you want to know?

(Dustin takes a towel, picks up the soda, wipes underneath it, then places it on a coaster)

Sara: What do you do?

Nicole: I work as a waitress.

Sara: Oh! Where?

Nicole: *(picks up soda and takes a sip)* At Café Biscotti. *(sets drink on table. Dustin picks soda up, wipes underneath it and puts it on a coaster again)* I'm going to audition for a Broadway musical in a couple weeks. *(picks soda up again)*

Sara: What musical?

Nicole: Phantom of the Opera *(drinks, and sets soda back down. Dustin repeats what he's been doing)*

Sara: I love that musical! Can you sing a song from it?

Nicole: Now? *(Sara nods)* Alright. *(singing)* Those who have seen your face, draw back in fear. I am the mask you wear

(Zak quietly sings with her)

Nicole: Your spirit and my voice in one combined. The-

Zak: *(Suddenly belts)* The Phantom of the Opera is there inside your mind! *(notices everyone staring at him and gets awkward)* Huh. *(Zak walks offstage nonchalantly)*

Sara: What CD did he steal?

Dustin: I'm hoping it wasn't that one.

Sara: *(to Nicole)* So anyways, you're going to audition for it, right?

Nicole: *(picks up soda and drinks)* Yeah and if I get it I can finally quit my job *(sets soda down)*

Dustin: Use a coaster!

(Nicole moves the soda onto a coaster)

Sara: Do you not like your job?

Nicole: My boss is disorganized, *(picks up soda and drinks it)* my co-workers are stupid, and the costumers are so messy. *(sets drink on table)*

Dustin: *(completely furious by now)* Messy?! What is wrong with you?! Don't complain about messy costumers when you can't even put a drink on a freaking coaster! Get out! *(leads Nicole to the door and picks up her drink)* I don't want you or your messes here! Leave! *(Nicole scurries out the door and Dustin throws the soda can after her; after a short pause he looks down at the floor and points.)* Spill! *(runs frantically to get a towel and wipes it up)*

(Zak re- enters awkwardly. Dustin and Sara look at him)

Sara: *(pause)* Care to explain?

Zak: No. *(exits)*

(Black out)

Scene 3

(Dustin is taking some Advil or aspirin. Zak is sitting on the couch holding a water glass)

Zak: Two interviews in one day is just too much.

Sara: Nonsense! I'm excited for this next interview.

Zak: *(walks over to Dustin)* I don't think Dustin can handle it. I haven't seen him get that mad since I wouldn't let him clean my room.

(There's a knock at the door; Dustin opens it)

Bruce: *(unusually happy)* Well, hi there! My name is Bruce! I work at the bank as a janitor. I've been there for two years, although I'm hoping to get a new job soon. My girlfriend kicked me out of her apartment and dumped me because I was apparently too optimistic. It wasn't a good idea to permanently leave my apartment *(laughs)*. Nice place!

(Zak and Dustin stare in shock)

Zak: Wow...

Sara: Hello there, Bruce! I was so excited to meet you! I heard you on the phone and you sounded like such a nice person. The last person we interviewed was nice, but Dustin, here, didn't like her, but I don't think you're going to have a problem. I'll bet Zak and Dustin will like you immediately. You make such a good first impression.

Zak: Oh my God, there are two of them.

Bruce: Why, thank you. I try to stay as optimistic as possible. You know, I read once on a poster in a dentist's office that a smile was the first thing people like about you and I agree.

Sara: Me too. A smile means the same thing in every language. I too read that in an orthodontist's office.

Dustin: *(To Zak)* Are my ears bleeding? I think my ears are bleeding.

Zak: I can't hear you on account of the blood in my ears.

Sara: A positive attitude has gotten me far in life.

Bruce: Me too. Thanks to my positive attitude it was easier leaving my girlfriend.

Sara: Thanks to my positive attitude it wasn't so bad when I flunked out of college.

Zak: How can they keep going?

Bruce: I got into a car accident and broke my leg, both my arms, and had a concussion, but I woke up with a smile.

Sara: *(suddenly competitive)* My brother accidentally spilled boiling water down my back when I was seven and I didn't cry or complain.

Dustin: Oh God.

Zak: I second that "Oh God."

Bruce: When my dog died after being part of my family for fifteen years *my cheerfulness* got us through it.

Sara: *(very angrily)* Well, when my mother died I smiled the entire time during her funeral!

(Both Zak, Dustin, and Bruce stare shocked at Sara; Pause)

Dustin: What?

Bruce: Oh yeah? Well I...

(Sara pushes Bruce out the door before he can finish and slams the door behind him; Sara pauses as she takes a deep, frustrated breath, then back to her cheerful, normal self she turns back to Zak and Dustin who stare at her puzzled)

Sara: What? He didn't seem like roommate material.

(Zak and Dustin continue to stare)

Dustin: *(somewhat scared)* You smiled through your mother's funeral?

Sara: Well, no, not exactly. It was more like a smirk. I was happy that she was in heaven...with God. Hey, she was mean to me! *(exits in a huff)*

(Pause)

Zak: There's optimism and then there's just creepy.

Dustin: *(stifles a cry)* He was a janitor. She passed up a janitor.

Zak: Darn it. That's just what we need around here too. More clean freaks. *(exits)*

Dustin: A janitor.

(Blackout)

Scene 4

(Zak is at the kitchen table drinking coffee. Dustin is washing his hands. Sara is sitting on the couch obviously tired. Zak sets his cup of coffee on the table. Dustin picks it up, wipes underneath it and sets it on a coaster, then sits next to Sara on the couch. All are wearing bathrobes.)

Sara: Who asks for an interview on a Sunday at 7:30 A.M.?

Zak: Who agrees to it?

Sara: *(defensively)* This is the only time this week she could do it. She said she was busy all week.

Zak: Temper, temper.

Dustin: I've never seen you like this, Sara. You're obviously not a morning person.

(There's a knock at the door; Sara answers)

Jackie: Hi! *(She lets herself in)* Do you guys have something to drink?
(Sara goes back and sits on the couch)

Zak: Not for you.

Sara: *(to Zak)* Quiet! *(to Jackie)* We have milk, soda...

Jackie: No, just water, I'm on a diet.

Sara: Sure. Dustin, get her water.

Dustin: Why me? She asked you.

Sara: Because you're already standing.

Dustin: No I'm not. I'm sitting right next to you.

(Dustin notices that Sara has fallen asleep)

Dustin: Sara? (*into Sara's ear*) Sara!

Sara: What? I'm awake.

Dustin: Get her water.

Sara: Zak, get her water.

(*Zak, obviously annoyed, exits and re-enters with a glass of water*)

Jackie: Thank you *so* much! (*Giggles*) So who are all of you?

Zak: Sara, Dustin, and I'm Zak.

Jackie: Oh, I'm Jackie and let me say I totally like your place.

Sara: (*yawning*) Thanks. I was wondering if we could ask you a few questions.

Jackie: Go ahead, Cara.

Sara: My name's Sara. So why did you leave your last apartment?

Jackie: Oh it's, like, a really long story, but I'll totally tell you it anyways. So I was living with my friend Jenny and she had, like, this boyfriend and they had been dating for, like, four months. She kept, like, saying she was, like, totally in love with him and stuff and I was like, "Psh! Whatev!" She *so* did not love him, but I'm, like, such a nice person so I didn't tell her that. But then, like, her boyfriend totally started coming on to me and so I was all, like, well he's pretty hot, so I guess it's okay to, like, make out with him. So I did, but Jenny walked in on us and then she started screaming at me and calling me, like, selfish and stuff and I was like, oh, I'm the selfish one? You don't even care about me having a good time. And, so now that's why she, like, kicked me out.

Dustin: (*pause*) What? I didn't quite follow.

Jackie: (*sighs*) I was living with my friend Jen...

(*Zak runs over to her and puts a hand on her mouth*).

Zak: No! No, I'll tell him later. Don't worry.

Jackie: (*checks watch*) Okay, good, because I'm almost late for my hair and nail appointment.

Sara: (*irritated*) What?

Jackie: I said I'm almost la...

Zak: (*faking enthusiasm*) And we wouldn't *want* to make you late. (*leads her to the door*)
After all, those split ends won't cut themselves.

Jackie: (*almost out the door*) Oh, and if I, like, live with you guys, I'm going to want to totally redecorate.

Zak: Okay, bye! (*closes door*)

Dustin: I'm starting to think a new roommate isn't such a good idea.

Zak: Like I said before, we don't need one.

Sara: I guess not. I'll take the flyers down later today. However, right now I'm going to sleep.

Dustin: Sounds good.

Zak: I'm going to stay up and finish my book.

Dustin: You listen to Broadway *and* read? Why didn't I know about this?

(*Zak throws a couch pillow at Dustin; all exit stage right; after a pause someone knocks on the door; Zak re-enters with a book; He opens the door and glances up.*)

Girl/Boy: Hi! I read that you guys needed a roommate and...

(*Zak closes the door, continues reading, exits stage left and slams the door behind him; blackout*)