PART 1.

A ROOM FOR RENT.

A: "I'm calling about the available room. Is it still available?"

B: "Yes, it is. Do you know where we're located?"

A: "Yeah. I drove by this morning and I liked the location. What's the rent?"

B: "It's $850 a month. So, you would pay $425 a month plus half of the bills."

A: "How big is the place?"

B: "It's a two-bedroom, one bath and roughly about 800 square feet."

A: "Is the complex pretty quiet? Can you hear a lot of noise or anything like that?"

B: "They have a strict policy in the apartment complex concerning noise level. So it stays very quiet after 10 PM."

A: "Are you the only person who lives there now?"

B: "Yeah. I'm only looking for one roommate."

A: "Everything sounds good. Can we schedule a time to meet so I can look at the place?"

B: "I'm available anytime today or tomorrow."

A: "How about if I come over now?"

B: "That works with me. But what is your name?"

A: "Oh, my name is Brad."

B: "Ok. I'm Randy. So, I'll see you in a bit?"

A: "Should only take about 15 minutes to get there."

B: "Sounds good."

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Part 2.

Transcript

A

We saw the ad in the summer, in about July, I think, but we weren't really serious about moving then so we didn't even go and see it. It wasn't until November when they readvertised it that we got in touch with the agency and had a look. They'd put the price down since the summer too, I suppose because it had been empty so long, so that made it more affordable for us which helped us make up our minds. It was perfect – a bigger garden for the kids and enough space for an office. In winter it was lovely, very cozy, in fact, which is important to me as I really feel the cold, whereas my husband will open a window when it's minus temperatures outside! Anyway, in July when summer really started and we had that heatwave, we understood why no one had wanted to rent it over summer. It was boiling! All those lovely big windows that made the flat so light and open were like a greenhouse as soon as it got warmer. From about 8 in the morning until 7 in the evening, it was like living in a sauna! We couldn't stand being at home, and weekends were especially bad. No air conditioning, of course. If only we'd gone to see it when it was first advertised in July, we'd never have moved in!

B

I always rent apartments when I go on holiday, rather than staying in hotels. Hotels are so impersonal, aren't they? This way you get to feel like you really live in the place you're visiting. It's the first time I've done it the other way round, though, and rented out my place … but it seemed like a good way of making some extra money. The website is really easy to use and they only charge five per cent commission, which is lower than a lot of the other holiday rental sites. It's all about the photos and the reviews. Get the photos right and the place can look really upmarket and spacious, but you don't want to make it look too much better than it really is or you end up with a bad review. It's better to undersell and overdeliver so guests are pleasantly surprised and leave an extra positive review. So far, I'm averaging three stars because of one bad review that brought my average down from four and a half stars, but hopefully I'll get it back up during the busy season.

C

Buying a house seems so far out of my reach it's almost impossible, as it is for loads of people my age these days. My parents always told me renting was throwing money away, but it was different in their day. Then people could afford to buy a house on a normal salary, but nowadays house prices are so high and no bank will look at you unless you've got a huge deposit. The problem with my dream of buying is that it's never going to come true. Not unless my parents help me out, but I've got two sisters and we're all in the same position. At least they've both got good jobs. Not good enough to buy a house, but at least they can afford to rent places of their own in nice areas. I just don't earn enough to rent around here.

Even if I get promoted to manager, it'll be tough to find somewhere unless I share, and call me fussy, but there aren't that many people I want to share a bathroom and kitchen with. Some days I think I'll be stuck living with my parents forever – even renting is like a dream to me.

D

At first our landlord was really helpful, couldn't do enough for us. You hear stories of nightmare landlords and we felt like we were really lucky, or so we thought anyway. He redecorated the whole place, from top to bottom, and let us keep all the bills in his name so we didn't have the bother of contacting all the companies ourselves. He even offered to come round and do the gardening as he knew we both worked long hours and might not have time.

That's where the problems started now, I look back. Then he'd pop round 'just to check everything's OK for you' … once a month, then twice a month. Soon he was coming every week with some excuse or other. In the beginning we'd invite him in for tea, but it was only encouraging him, so when we realized, we'd try to have the conversation on the doorstep instead. It got so bad we pretended to be on our way out if we saw him coming up the path.

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We'd grab our coats and walk round the block until he'd gone. I don't know if he was just lonely or just didn't trust us not to ruin his precious house. In the end we gave our notice and found somewhere else. It's a shame because we really loved that house, but at least it's more peaceful in the new place.

Part 3.

Vocabulary and Sample Sentences

- **work out (*phrasal verb*)**: going well
  – My new job schedule has really worked out for me.
- **commute** (*verb*; also a noun): to travel between home and work or school
  – VERB: I have to commute two hours each day to get to work.
  – NOUN: How long is your commute to work every day?
- **utilities** (*noun*): public services including water, gas, and electricity
  – How much do you pay for utilities each month?
- **furnished** (*adjective*): containing furniture, for example, a sofa, tables, and washing machine
  – I decided to rent a furnished apartment so I wouldn't have to buy so many things.
- **vacancies** (*noun*): rooms not being used or rented
  – Do you have any vacancies starting next month?

Roger: Hello?

Ann: Hello Roger? This is Ann.

Roger: Oh hi, Ann. How have you been? And how's your new apartment **working out**?

Ann: Well, that's what I'm calling about. You see, I've decided to look for a new place.

Roger: Oh, what's the problem with your place now? I thought you liked the apartment.

Ann: Oh, I do, but it's a little far from campus, and the **commute** is just killing me. Do you think you could help? I thought you might know more about the housing situation near the school.

Roger: Okay, what's your budget like? I mean how much do you want to spend on rent?

Ann: Uh, somewhere under $200 a month, including **utilities**, if I could. Oh, and I'd prefer to rent a **furnished** apartment.

Roger: Hmm. And anything else?

Ann: Yeah, I need a parking space.

Roger: Well, I know there's an apartment complex around the corner that seems to have a few **vacancies**. I'll drop by there on my way to class today.

Ann: Hey, thanks a lot.

Roger: No problem.

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PART 4.

Manager: Hello

Richard: Hello. My name is Richard Wilson and I'm calling about the apartment that is advertised in the newspaper. Is it still available?

Manager: Yes, it is available for first of the month.

Richard: What can you tell me about it?

Manager: Well, it's a one-bedroom apartment. It's on the second floor at the back of the building away from the street so it is very quiet. It has new carpets and it was painted recently. The fridge, stove and dishwasher were all replaced last year. Most of the tenants are older and there are no children or pets. It is a very quiet building.

Richard: Does the apartment have a washer and dryer?

Manager: No it doesn't. But there is a coin operated laundry in the basement of the building.

Richard: How much is the rent?

Manager: If you wish to rent month to month, the rent is $650 a month and we require one month rent in advance as a damage deposit. If you want to sign a one year lease the rent is $625 and $600 as a damage deposit.

Richard: Is everything included in the rent?

Manager: No. Heat and one parking stall are included but you have to pay for your own electricity and cable television.

Richard: The parking is not important because I don't have a car but it is important that there is a bus route close by.

Manager: There is bus stop one block away. It is a major route so the service is quite frequent.

Richard: What else is in the neighborhood?

Manager: There is a park close by and there is a small mall that has a grocery store , post office and video store.

Richard: It sounds just like what I am looking for. When can I come and see it?

Manager: How about tomorrow at 1 o'clock? If you like the apartment, you can fill out an application. The address is 123 Northside Drive. You can catch the #15 bus and get off Center Street intersection.

Richard: Sounds good. I'll see you then.

Manager: See you tomorrow.

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