



## Housing Headache

DEFENDANT’S CONFIDENTIAL FACTS: Kirin

### **Kirin’s personal situation:**

Kirin is in their last semester of school and is set to graduate in the same month as the lease ends. They just want to finish out the year and graduate without any further stress and conflict from this situation. They have enough money to cover the rent for the next few months, but that would leave them with almost nothing left over for food, transportation, or anything else. They tried to reach Quinn repeatedly, but after a few texts back months ago, Quinn has gone completely silent. Kiran’s parents are unable to help them financially and do not live in the area. Kiran already has a part-time job waiting tables and cannot take on another job while finishing school.

Kiran has a good job lined up after graduation, but it’s in a different city and won’t start until the month after graduation. Kiran would rather be saving up for the move rather than paying all this money in rent for a roommate who abandoned them. They are also worried that a collections or eviction mark on their record could make it challenging to find housing in their new city, or even be grounds to have the job offer rescinded.

### **Legal Concerns**

Kiran hopes this mediation can work because they have major legal concerns around their liability for the full rent under landlord-tenant laws. Their research and the terms of the lease indicate that each tenant can be held responsible for the entire rent amount if one roommate defaults. This situation is further complicated by the landlord, Shannon, who is enforcing the lease terms strictly, including late fees and the threat of eviction. Kiran worries that if the dispute isn’t resolved soon, Shannon could pursue legal action and will have a strong legal case.

### **Communications with Shannon**

Kiran initially appreciated having Shannon, a local community member, as their landlord instead of dealing with a giant, impersonal property management company. When they met to sign the lease, Shannon had described themselves as a "mom and pop" landlord and said they were a “proud SAU alumni who loved giving the next generation of students a place to call home while they

attended school”, which made Kiran feel more at ease and confident about their rental choice. Shannon also didn’t charge application fees, and only asked for a \$500 deposit. Kiran also valued the idea of a more personal relationship, expecting Shannon to be approachable and supportive. However, as soon as problems arose with Quinn's sudden departure, Kiran felt that Shannon's attitude shifted drastically. What once seemed like a caring and community-focused landlord became, in Kiran's view, dismissive, rude, and unhelpful. Kiran’s recent interactions with Shannon left Kiran feeling disillusioned and unsupported.