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Sofa Love: A Housing Romance Study Guide



SEASON 3

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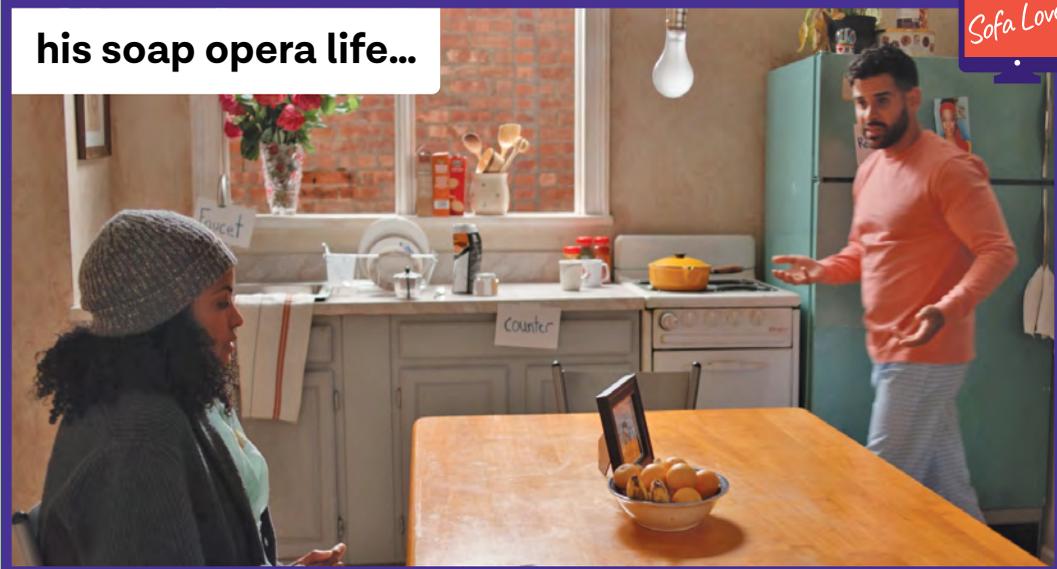
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Sofa Love: A Housing Romance

Starring Javier Lopez,
the man with apartment problems in both of his lives—

his soap opera life...



and his real life...



The Story: Sofa Love: A Housing Romance

Sofa Love: A Housing Romance is a drama.

Dramas have three parts. The parts are called “Acts.”

Sofa Love

Act I

Act 1 of *Sofa Love: A Housing Romance* is a soap opera. A soap opera is a drama with characters who have very strong emotions and are facing very difficult situations. In Act 1, you meet the characters in the soap opera and learn a little bit about their problems.

⋮



Act II

Act 2 takes place in the real world. In Act 2, you meet the actor who plays the main character in the soap opera. He is facing housing problems like the housing problems in the soap opera. In Act 2, the actor learns how to solve his problems.

⋮

Sofa Love

Act III

In **Act 3**, we return to the soap opera. In Act 3, the soap opera characters learn how to solve their problems, too.



Bon Voyage, Sofa Bed

Manny checks his watch. His wife is arriving to the U.S. today, and he is running late.

Watch out, Manny! Something's falling from the sky!



It looks like a sofa cushion. What's going on up there?!



Manny has to do something.

He **snaps into action**. He turns around and runs back inside.



snap into action = take action quickly; respond to a problem without waiting

The Sofa Has to Go

It's Tatiana, Manny's upstairs neighbor!
She is throwing cushions out the window.



Tatiana broke up with her boyfriend. His name is Boris.
She is getting rid of all of Boris's stuff...



Boris's record collection... His old-fashioned TV...
Tatiana is throwing out all their old love letters, too!



Tatiana is **determined**. Manny moves closer to try to stop her.

The sofa has to go!
Bye, bye, sofa bed...



14



15

Tatiana starts crying. She really loves Boris.

Bye, bye, Boris.
You broke
my innocent heart.



16

Okay, okay, I get it.
The sofa has to go...



17

Manny tries to **calm her down**. He shows **sympathy**.
He encourages her to **do the right thing**.

...but if you want to
get rid of it,
you can't just throw it
out the window.



18

Look, Tatiana,
I understand how you feel,
but you have to do it properly.



19

determined = when you don't give up;
when you keep trying until you succeed
calm someone down = help them relax

sympathy = compassion and emotional
understanding
do the right thing = do something properly;
morally or ethically correct

311 is the number to call for information about City services.
If a sofa has a mattress, there are special rules for throwing it out.
311 can tell you the rules.
Tatiana appreciates Manny's help, but she doesn't want him to leave.



But Manny has to leave. He's excited. Today is one of the **biggest days of his life**.



You Forgot the Flowers!

Oh, look! It's a soap opera. They are filming the show.
The director is stopping the action.
Manny forgot something for his wife! They have to do it again.



biggest days of someone's life = very important and memorable days



Do You Have Heat?

Manny and his wife, Clara, are back from the airport.
Clara inspects (checks out) the apartment.



Clara is not happy with the apartment. The paint is peeling.
The light is bare. The apartment is *not* in a good condition.



Manny put labels on the furniture to help his wife learn English.
Clara knows how much Manny loves her.



Oh, Manny, so sweet...
You labeled everything for me,
to help me learn English even more.



But there is another problem with this apartment.



Clara touches the radiator.



What is that bucket near the plants? *Drip... drip... drip...*
Is that a leak in the ceiling?! Clara picks up the bucket. It is full of water.
Clara asks Manny a question.



Would You Like to Join Us for Dinner?

Surprise! There is a guest. She's all dressed up. She has flowers and a platter of food, too. Manny seems to know her.



Clara does *not* look happy. She is suspicious.



Manny invites Tatiana to join them for dinner. Clara is shocked. Has her husband been faithful?

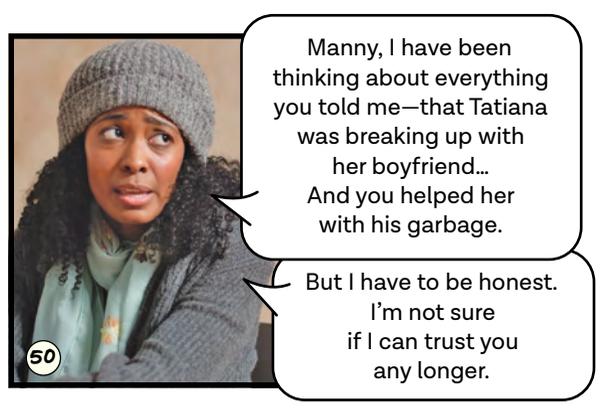


How Did You Sleep, *Mi Amor*?

The next morning, Clara is freezing in the kitchen. Manny enters. He tries to turn on the lights, but the switch is not working.



Manny thinks everything is okay. He told Clara about Tatiana and Boris. But Clara is feeling sick, and she doesn't trust him.



And Clara is very unhappy with the condition of the cold apartment.



didn't sleep a wink = didn't sleep at all

Overnight, the bucket filled with water from the leak in the ceiling.
Clara calls the leak a waterfall.

There's a waterfall
in that dark corner.



Manny has many excuses.
But now, he says he will fix everything.

I just moved here last month.
I looked hard to find
a cozy home for us.
I've been busy at the denture lab
where I work.



I'm going to
take charge
of it all.



Clara **breaks the bad news**.

Manny, I want to believe you.
But now, I'm not sure if
I made the right decision
to leave home
to live in this misery.



I want to go home.



take charge = be responsible and take action

break the news = give someone information that will make the person unhappy

What Happens in Act I?

The Soap Opera World

- labels
- flowers
- switch
- leak
- information
- suspicious
- trust
- real
- electricity
- ~~sofa~~
- faithful
- broke up
- heat
- stomach

1. Manny is in a hurry. He's going to the airport to pick up his wife. She is arriving to the United States today. He hasn't seen her for five years. He checks his watch. He's running late. But wait, there's a problem. Someone is throwing sofa cushions out the window.



2. Manny runs back to the building. His neighbor, Tatiana is throwing out the cushions. She _____ with her boyfriend and she's very upset. She's crying. Manny tells Tatiana to call 311 to get _____ about throwing out **bulk** garbage.
3. Suddenly a soap opera director screams, Cut! She stops the action. It's not _____ life. They're making a soap opera.
4. The soap opera continues. Clara arrives. She loves Manny. He's such a nice man. He put _____ on the furniture to help Clara learn English.

bulk = very large

5. However, there are many problems with the apartment. The paint is peeling. It's cold. There is no _____. And water is dripping from the ceiling because there is a _____. Clara is not happy.
6. Suddenly, another woman enters the room. She has a bouquet of _____ and food. She asks Manny for a vase for the flowers, and she puts the food on the table.
7. Clara is _____. She wonders, Is my husband **unfaithful**? Is he having **an affair**?
8. The next morning, there is a new problem with the apartment. The light _____ isn't working in the kitchen. It looks like there is a problem with the _____.
9. Clara tells Manny that she couldn't sleep. Her _____ is upset. She thinks that Manny has not been faithful.
10. Manny says that he has been _____. He has been waiting for Clara for five long years. But Clara doesn't _____ him. She wants to go home.



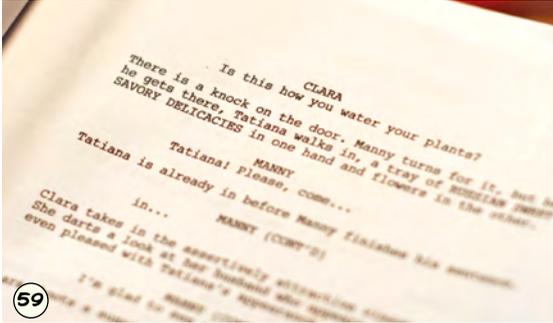
unfaithful = not loyal; when someone has a romantic relationship and keeps it secret from his/her partner
an affair = a romantic relationship with someone who is not your partner



Is That How You Water Your Plants?

We are in the real world now.

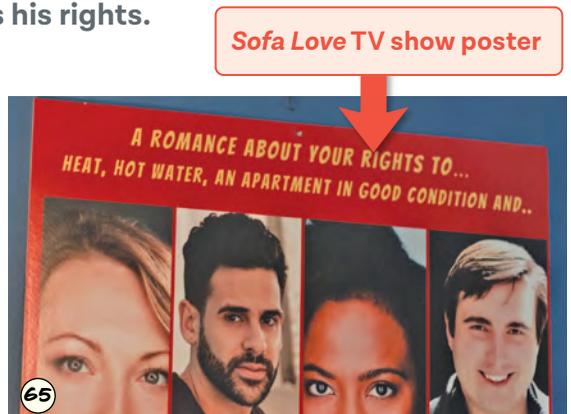
Javier is the actor who plays Manny in the soap opera.
His friend, Musa, is visiting and reading the soap opera script.
Javier offers Musa some hot chocolate.



Javier has apartment problems in real life. But Javier doesn't want to take action.



Musa knows his rights.



Musa works for a City agency called the **Public Engagement Unit (PEU)**.

The PEU helps **tenants** and provides other services, too.

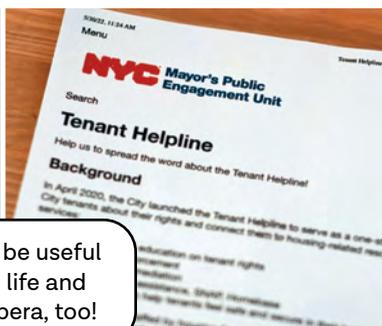
Musa looks in his bag for important information to give Javier.

Javier hears water dripping. He turns and sees a leak.



Musa gives Javier information about the Tenant Helpline.

It is a number to get free help with apartment problems.



Musa sees the leak, too. This is not good.



tenants = people who rent apartments from landlords

Javier moves the plant under the leak.
Musa picks up the soap opera script.



Musa remembers a line from Javier's script! He says it out loud and sounds like Clara. Musa knows that Javier needs to take action.



Musa **means business!**
But is Javier going to take action?



Musa **means business** = Musa is serious.

You're Manny, Right?!

Javier and Musa are in the apartment of Ushi and Bao.

Ushi and Bao live above Javier.

Bao is on the phone with **the super**, Frantz. They are taking action.



79
Yeah, I turned off the valve.
Thanks, Frantz.
I'll let him know you're coming tomorrow.



80
Frantz will come to your place in the morning.

Where have I seen him before?

Ushi is looking at Javier. He looks familiar to her.
Javier mentions another problem with his apartment.



81
I notice your apartment is warm. Mine is cold.



82
It's probably a problem with your radiator. When you see Frantz tomorrow, tell him about it.
Okay.

Aha! Ushi figured it out. Javier is the actor who plays Manny.
He has apartment problems on TV and in real life.



83
I know where I've seen you before... On TV... You are Manny, right?



She figured it out!



84
That's right! My friend, Manny—the man with apartment problems in both of his lives...
his soap opera life and his real life.

the super = the worker who repairs and maintains the building; superintendent

The Public Engagement Unit

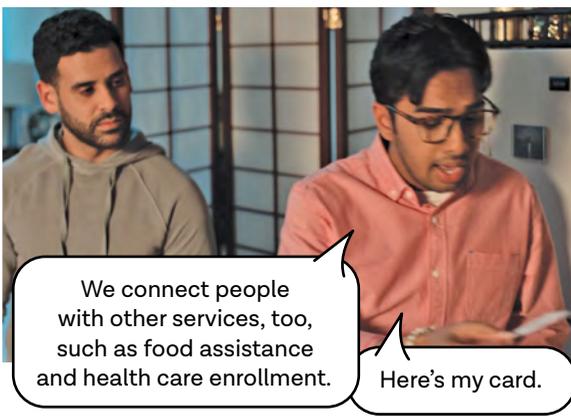
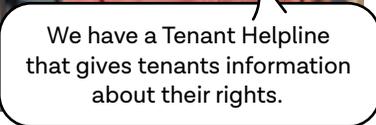
Javier admits the truth.

He's learning how to take care of his apartment problems.

Javier introduces Musa to Ushi and Bao.



Musa explains the services of the Public Engagement Unit.



NYC Mayor's Public Engagement Unit
Musa Hassan
Tenant Support Specialist
Mayor's Public Engagement Unit

Practice Your Lines

Javier and Musa return to Javier's apartment. Musa advises Javier.



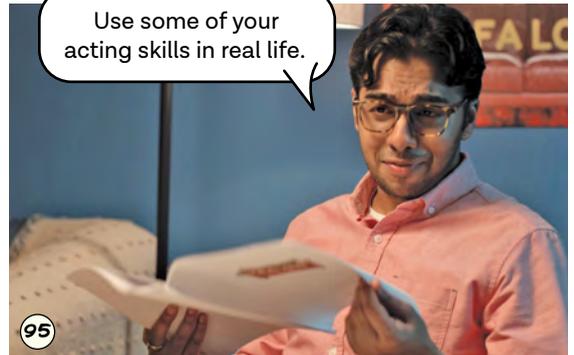
All tenants have rights and can get help if they are facing problems.



Javier is facing problems. Musa has an idea for him.



I'm facing problems.



Use some of your acting skills in real life.

Musa explains his idea.

He encourages Javier to practice what to say to the landlord.



How?

Get into your role and **practice your lines**.

It will help you **get over your fear** of talking with landlords, and you'll know what to say.



practice your lines = practice saying what you want to say
get over your fear = stop being afraid

They begin to practice.

Start with the leak or the cold radiator.



Imagine I'm the landlord. What are you going to say to me?

There's no heat in my apartment. I know it's spring but it's still cold.

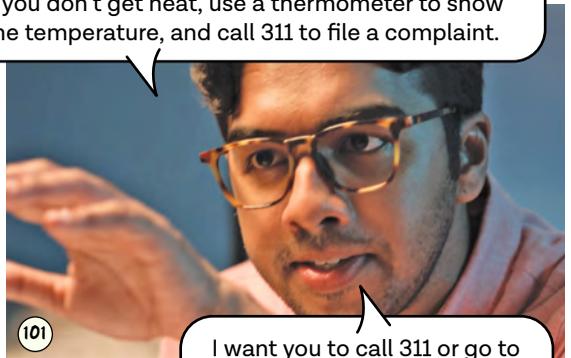


But Javier needs to learn his rights. Musa gives him important information.

Actually, Musa, I think I need to find out the rules. What rights do tenants have in regard to heat?



The landlord has to turn on the heat when the weather is below a certain temperature. If you don't get heat, use a thermometer to show the temperature, and call 311 to file a complaint.



I want you to call 311 or go to the 311 website and get the details about heat.

Musa wants Javier to practice more. Practice will prepare Javier to take action. It will increase his confidence. It will help him solve problems.

For now, let's practice about the leak. Imagine I'm Frantz. What are you going to say to me?



Musa's right. I need to practice my lines.



He Knows His Rights

The next morning, the super, Frantz is there. They talk about the leak.



Javier wants to tell Frantz about another problem.

But at first, Javier seems a little afraid. Then he shows more courage.



Javier did his homework. He did what Musa told him to do: He went to the City website and learn about his rights.



What Happens in Act II?

The Real World

- figures out
- fix
- confidence
- stares
- proud
- practice
- landlord
- ~~actor~~
- services
- rights
- tenants
- condition
- truth
- radiator
- super

1. Act II takes place in the real world. In Act II, we meet Javier. He is the actor who plays Manny in the soap opera.

2. We also meet Javier's friend Musa. Javier and Musa are having hot chocolate in Javier's apartment. The apartment is cold. The heat is not working, and there's a leak. The _____ of Javier's apartment is similar to the condition of Manny's apartment in the soap opera.



3. Javier and Musa go upstairs to tell the tenants about the leak. Their names are Bao and Ushi. Bao is on the phone with the building _____. The super, Frantz, tells Bao to turn off the valve. (The valve controls the water supply.) Frantz will come to _____ the leak in the morning.

4. Ushi _____ at Javier. She wonders, *where have I seen him before? Somewhere in the building?*

5. No, not in the building! Ushi has seen Javier on TV. She _____ that Javier is Manny in *Sofa Love*. She says to Javier, *You're Manny, right?*

6. Javier is shy. He doesn't want to be famous, but he doesn't want to lie to Ushi. He admits the _____. He is Manny in the soap opera.
7. Javier introduces Musa to his neighbors. Musa works for the Public Engagement Unit (the PEU). The PEU has a Tenant Helpline that helps _____ with problems. He explains the _____ that the PEU offers people. Ushi and Bao are impressed and happy to learn about it.
8. Javier and Musa go back to Javier's apartment. Musa encourages his friend to _____ his lines. Practicing his lines will build Javier's _____. Musa knows that by practicing his lines, Javier will know what to say to the _____ and to Frantz, the super.
9. The next morning, Frantz comes to Javier's apartment. They talk about the leak. At first, Javier seems afraid to talk about problems in the apartment, but he tells Frantz about the cold _____, too.
10. Javier got information about his _____ to heat and hot water from a City website. He also got confidence by practicing his lines with Musa.
11. Frantz is impressed by Javier. Javier is _____ of himself.





I Heard She Called 311

This is Boris. He is heartbroken and crying.
Clara meets him in front of the building and listens to his story.



Tatiana called 311. Boris explains 311 to Clara.



record collection = Before streaming music, people bought records and collected them.

cuddle = hold someone close in a cozy and loving way

evictions = when a landlord tries to remove a tenant

file a complaint = make an official report about a problem to get help to solve it

An Angel from Heaven

Boris is a very romantic person. He is famous for writing love letters. He wrote Tatiana hundreds of love letters. But she threw all of them out.



Clara wants to help Boris. She wants to save his romance with Tatiana. She has an idea.



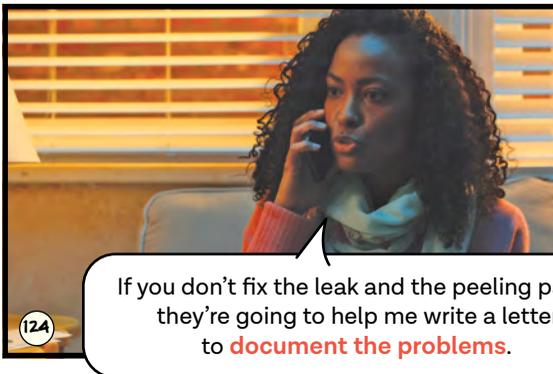
Boris is so **grateful**. His heart is beating fast. He is full of hope and begins to write.



grateful= thankful; full of thanks and appreciation

Clara Takes Charge

Clara is on the phone with the landlord. She is **asserting** her **tenant rights**.
Manny comes home from work. He is worried.



This is too stressful for Manny. He walks away.



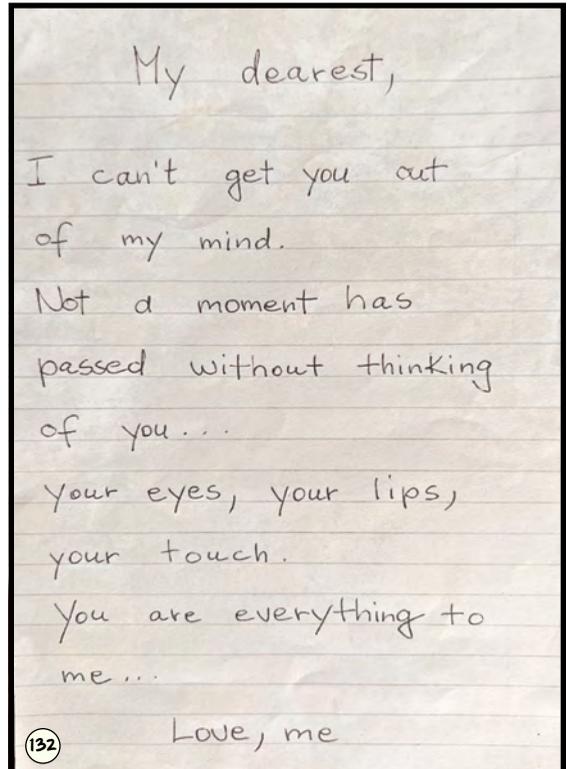
asserting = speaking up; communicating with strength
tenant rights = the rights of tenants; things that tenants can do or are entitled to by law
document the problems = make an official record of the problems

The Love Letter

Manny picks up a letter from a small table in the corner. He starts to read it.
Clara is finishing up the phone call.
It sounds like the landlord is going to meet with her.



Clara is proud. The landlord is going to fix things.
But there's a new problem.
Manny is reading a private love letter! Look at what it says!



got the message = This is an expression. If someone *gets the message*, it means they understand what you are trying to communicate.
So, Clara means that the landlord knows he has to fix things.

I Think It Was a Sofa Bed

Manny thinks the love letter is for Clara. He is jealous.

Who is in love with his wife?!



Clara, my Clara...
I go to work for a few hours
and come home to find this!



You misunderstand.
It's a love letter.



I know it's a love letter.
I just don't know
who wrote it to you.

It's from Bo.



Bo?!
Who is Bo?

Boris. You know,
the man with the sofa.

What Sofa?!

I think it was
a sofa bed.



My marriage
is falling apart.

Manny, my dear,
Bo is Tatiana's boyfriend.
You helped her with his garbage.
I found him crying in front of
the building this afternoon.



He told me his story.
I told him to write a love letter to Tatiana.
I told him I would deliver it to her.

You Need to Know Your Rights

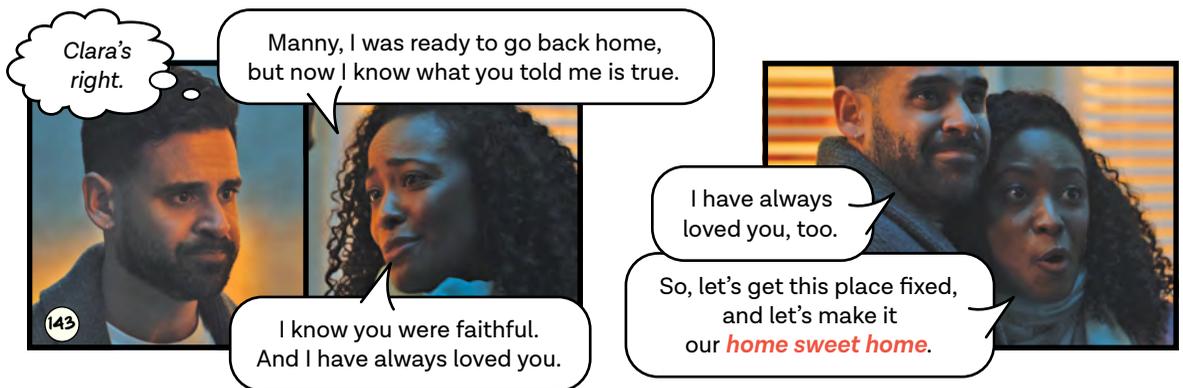
Manny is suspicious. Clara **clarifies** the situation. She didn't deliver the letter yet because she needed to take action to get the apartment fixed.



Now Manny understands. But he feels bad about the condition of the apartment. He gives Clara many excuses for not taking action. The truth is he didn't know his rights.



At the end of Act 1 (page 10), Clara said she wanted to go back home. But this is her new home. Together, Manny and Clara will make it beautiful.



clarify = to give a clear explanation to help someone understand

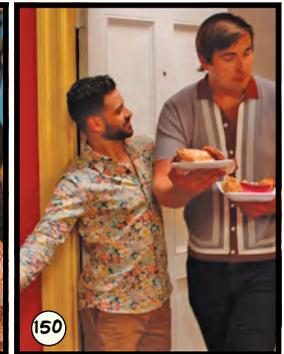
home sweet home = an expression for how much you love your home; the warmth you feel for your home

The Potluck Dinner

Some time has passed. Clara and Manny are expecting some guests. The apartment looks beautiful. There's no more leak. Manny is watering the plants the right way! The heat is working, too.



The guests arrive. It's Tatiana and Boris. Are they back together?



They are together! Tatiana explains the word *potluck* to Clara.



The Grateful Lovers

Tatiana and Boris are so grateful for (thankful for) Clara and Manny's help. They can't control their emotions.



Clara and Manny are grateful, too. They also can't control their emotions.



Manny is grateful for Clara's leadership. He has learned a lot.



assert our rights = speak up for the things we are entitled to by law

rendezvous = meet

a toast = when people raise their drinks, touch their glasses, and say some words to celebrate an important achievement or event

Reunited

Manny invites everyone to enjoy their new sofa.
He pulls off the cover like a **matador**.



Boris and Tatiana are shocked. It's not a new sofa...



It's Boris's sofa! It's a gift for him and Tatiana.
They are **reunited** with each other and his beautiful sofa!



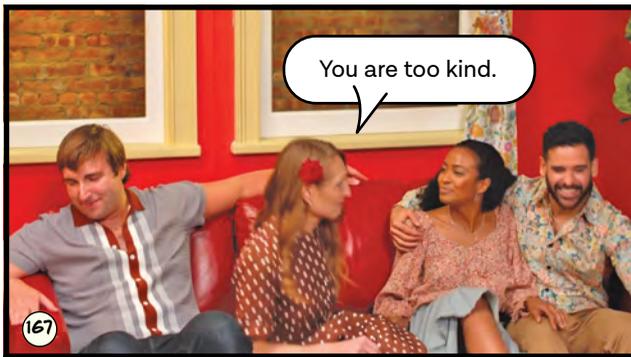
matador = Spanish word for bullfighter

reunited = back together again

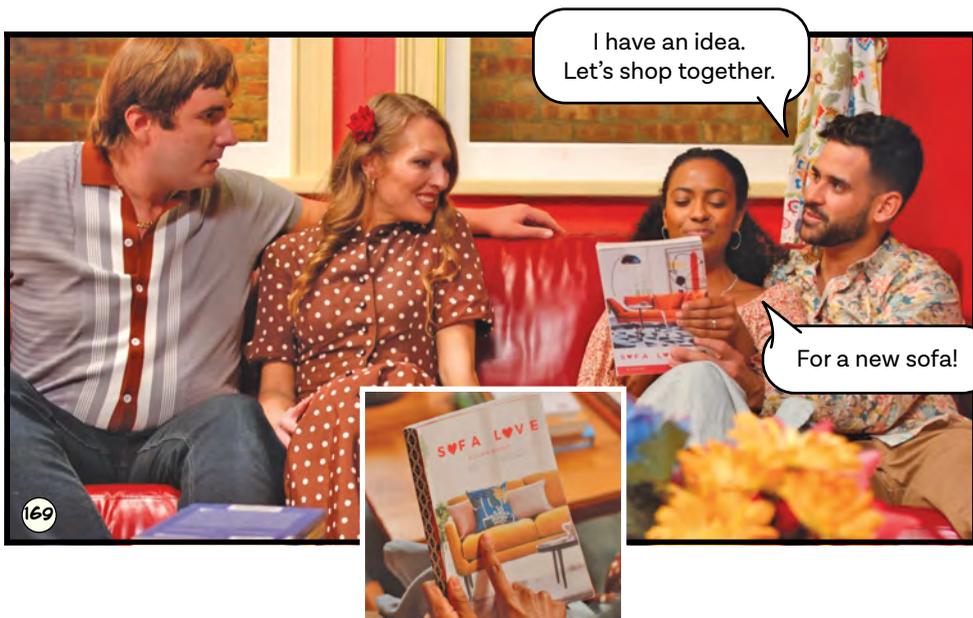
Sofa Love



But if they give the sofa to Boris and Tatiana, Clara and Manny won't have one.



Manny and Clara have a shopping catalog. Look at the name...



What Happens in Act III?

Home Sweet Home

- health
- conflict
- letters
- reunited
- ~~heartbroken~~
- asserts
- covered
- rental
- heart
- fixed
- shock
- stronger
- catalog
- gift
- explain
- rights
- eyes

1. Act III takes place in the soap opera. Tatiana's ex-boyfriend, Boris, is sitting next to Clara at a water fountain in front of his old apartment building. He is heartbroken.



2. Boris tells Clara what Tatiana did. She threw out everything—his old records, his old TV, his old love _____, and his beautiful old sofa.

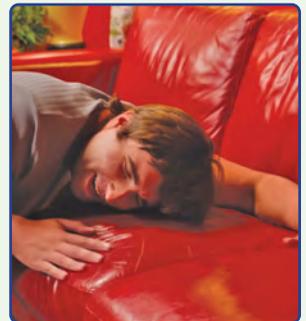
3. Boris also tells Clara about 311—the number for information about City services, for example, emergency _____ assistance, vaccines and _____ insurance, housing problems, and many others. Clara is grateful for the information.

4. Clara has an idea for Boris. She tells him to write a new love letter to Tatiana. She will bring it to Tatiana. Boris is very excited. His _____ starts beating again.

5. In the next scene, Clara is on the phone with the landlord. She _____ her rights. She tells the landlord that he has to fix things in her apartment.

6. Manny comes home and hears Clara talking to the landlord on the phone. He is nervous. He doesn't want a _____ with the landlord.

7. While Clara is talking to the landlord, Manny goes to a corner of the room. He sees a letter on a table and starts to read it. It's a love letter. Manny is in _____. He thinks the letter is for his wife. It says at the bottom, *Love, me.* Manny is horrified. *Who wrote this letter to my wife?*
8. Clara says the letter is from Boris. She tries to _____. At first, Manny is confused, but then he understands.
9. Manny feels better about the letter, but he tells Clara that he is worried about a conflict with the landlord. The truth is, Manny needs to know his _____. Manny accepts the truth, and he realizes that Clara loves him. They love each other deeply and are going to get the apartment fixed.
10. In the final scene, the apartment is _____. The walls are painted. There is no more leak. The lights work. The heat works. It's great.
11. Suddenly, Tatiana appears. She has flowers for Clara. Then Boris appears. He has food for Clara and Manny. The recipes are Tatiana's, but they cooked them together. Boris and Tatiana are _____.
12. Everyone shows their gratitude (thankfulness). Tatiana thanks Clara and Manny for reuniting her with Boris. Clara thanks Boris for the information he gave her about 311. Manny thanks Clara for making him _____—for showing him how to speak with the landlord and assert his rights.
13. Manny has an idea. He tells everyone to go to the other side of the room. They can all sit on their new sofa. It is _____ with a bright red cloth. Manny pulls off the cover like a bullfighter.
14. Boris can't believe his _____. It is his old sofa! Manny and Clara offer the sofa to Boris and Tatiana as a _____. Boris is in heaven.
15. But Tatiana is concerned. If Manny and Clara give them the sofa, then Manny and Clara won't have one. No problem... Manny has another idea. He takes out a sofa _____. Together, they shop for a new sofa for Manny and Clara. They are in sofa heaven. They are in sofa love.



Who We Are

Complete the sentences. Follow the example.

Clara • Tatiana • Boris • ~~Manny~~
Javier • Frantz • Ushi and Bao • Musa



Soap Opera Characters



1. My name is Manny. I'm the star of a soap opera called *Sofa Love*. It's a love story. It's also about housing and tenant rights. My apartment in the soap opera is in terrible condition, but I haven't taken action. My wife, Clara, just arrived in New York and she is not happy. She is also jealous. She misunderstands my relationship with my neighbor, Tatiana.

2. My name is _____. I am a character in the soap opera, too. I just arrived in the U.S., and I'm not happy about my husband's apartment. There's no hot water. There's no heat. There is a leak, too. In addition, my husband, Manny, seems very friendly with his upstairs neighbor, Tatiana. I'm not happy about the situation at all. *What can I do?*





3. **My name is** _____. I am also a character in the soap opera. My boyfriend, Boris broke my heart. I think he loves his sofa more than me. So I kicked him out and I threw out his sofa, too. Manny helped me when I was in trouble. He told me about 311.

4. **My name is** _____. I'm a brokenhearted soap opera character. My girlfriend, Tatiana, threw me out and threw out all my beautiful belongings, too. Clara helps me. And I give Clara helpful information about 311 and solving housing problems.



Real-World Characters



5. **My name is** _____. I'm the actor who plays Manny in *Sofa Love*. The condition of my apartment in real life is similar to my apartment in the soap opera. My friend, Musa, helps me to assert my rights.

Activity 1

6. **My name is** _____. I'm Javier's friend. I work for the Public Engagement Unit. It's a City agency that helps tenants with housing problems and health care, too. My friend, Javier, is afraid to talk to the landlord. He needs to *practice his lines*. It will help him to know what to say and to **assert his rights**. Information is important, but it is also important to assert your rights.



7. **Our names are** _____. Our apartment is above Javier's apartment. We help Javier by speaking with the building super, Frantz. We're so happy to meet Javier and his friend, Musa.



8. **My name is** _____. I'm a building super. Javier seems a little nervous talking about problems in his apartment. But he impresses me with his knowledge about heating rules. He went on the City website to learn his rights.

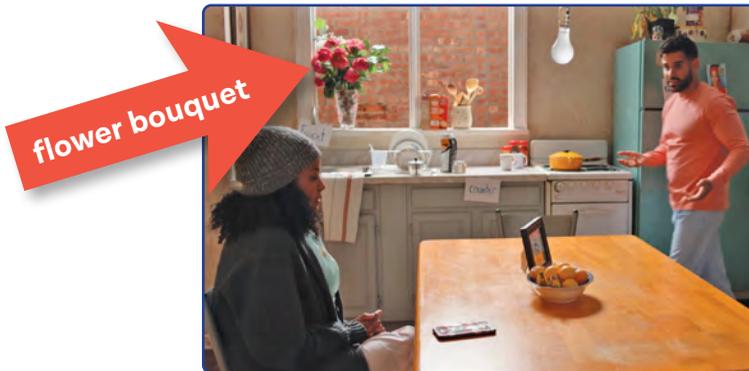


assert his rights = When someone *asserts his rights*, it means he knows his rights and he speaks up so he gets what he is entitled to by law. For example, when a tenant *asserts his rights* to heat and hot water, the tenant tells the landlord that the landlord must provide heat and hot water.

Where Is It?

Find these things in the story.

Write the page number(s). Follow the example.



1. flower bouquet pages 2, 3, 4, 8, 10
2. record collection page
3. love letters pages
4. radiator pages
5. leak pages
6. soap opera script pages
7. Sofa Love poster page
8. business card page
9. fountain statue page
10. watering can page
11. chocolate layer cake page
12. sofa catalog page

Talking about Housing Definitions I

Find the meaning. Follow the example.

- enrollment
- rights
- real life
- eviction
- solve
- ~~assistance~~
- issues
- engagement
- Tenant Helpline
- radiator
- Public Engagement Unit

1. assistance help (n)
2. _____ participating; getting involved
3. _____ registering for something such as health care;
getting signed up
4. _____ being removed from your home or apartment
5. _____ problems
6. _____ a City agency that helps all New Yorkers
participate in health care, get assistance
with housing and other services
7. _____ a heater that radiates (spreads) heat
8. _____ reality; not fantasy
9. _____ things you are entitled to by law;
legal protections
10. _____ to find a solution to a problem
11. _____ a telephone number for renters to call
to learn about their housing rights and
to get help with their apartment

Your Rights

Rights are things you are entitled to (can get) by law and legal protections, too. There are different kinds of rights. There are *worker rights*. There are *tenant rights*. There are *human rights*.

WORKER RIGHTS



Worker rights are the rights of workers. For example, workers in New York have the right to paid sick leave. Employers are not allowed to hire children. Discrimination against workers is not allowed based on race, gender, religion, and other protected categories. (Watch the **We Speak NYC** episode, **Rolando's Rights** to learn more about worker rights.)

TENANT RIGHTS



Tenant rights are the rights of tenants. Tenants have the right to heat and hot water and a building in a livable condition. Tenants have the right to ask for a window guard even if there are no children in the apartment. Landlords are required to provide some safety equipment in the building, such as a door lock at the entrance to the building and smoke detectors.

HUMAN RIGHTS



Human rights are the rights that all people have. For example, human rights include protections against discrimination and against physical abuse. Human rights include the right to education and freedom of thought and expression. See the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** of the United Nations for a list of human rights.

It's important to know your rights so you can assert them, and be treated fairly, with the full protection of the law.

Talking about Housing I

The Public Engagement Unit

Read the dialogue and complete the sentences. Follow the example.

- rights ~~radiator~~ solve enrollment eviction
 Tenant Helpline Engagement assistance real life

Ushi is looking at Javier. He looks familiar to her.
 Javier mentions another problem with his apartment.

Where have I seen him before?



I notice your apartment is warm. Mine is cold.

It's probably a problem with your (1) radiator. When you see Frantz tomorrow, tell him about it.



Okay.



Aha! Ushi figured it out. Javier is the actor who plays Manny.
 He has apartment problems on TV and in real life.

I know where I've seen you before... On TV! You are Manny, right?



She figured it out!



That's right! My friend, Manny—the man with apartment problems in both of his lives...



his soap opera life and his (2) _____.

Javier admits the truth.

He's learning how to take care of his apartment problems.

Javier introduces Musa to Ushi and Bao.

It's true. But thanks to all of you, I'm beginning to (3) _____ them.



Musa works for the Public (4) _____ Unit.



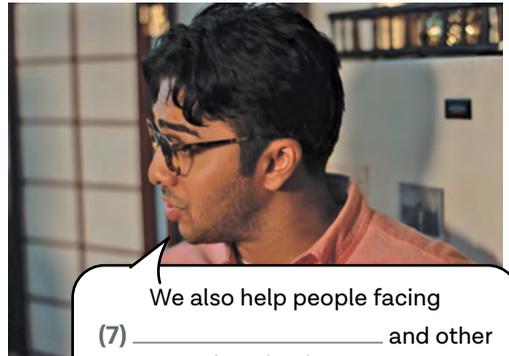
Musa explains the services of the Public Engagement Unit.

It's a City agency. We help people with apartment issues.

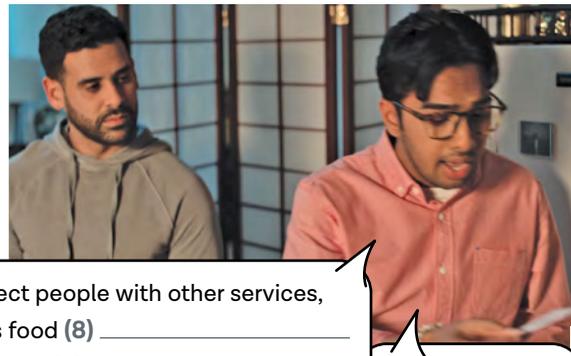


We have a (5) _____ that gives tenants information about their (6) _____.

We also help people facing (7) _____ and other housing issues.



We connect people with other services, too, such as food (8) _____ and health care (9) _____.



Here's my card.



NYC Mayor's Public Engagement Unit

Musa Hassan
Tenant Support Specialist
Mayor's Public Engagement Unit

Talking about Housing

Definitions II

Find the meaning. Follow the example.

file a complaint • rules • ~~facing~~ • fear • thermometer
leak • landlord • practice your lines • skills • temperature

1. facing dealing with
2. _____ being afraid
3. _____ make an official report about a problem to get help to solve it
4. _____ a person who owns a building and rents it to tenants
5. _____ when water drips because of a broken pipe or another reason
6. _____ practice saying words you need to say
7. _____ policies that you are supposed to follow
8. _____ abilities; things you know how to do
9. _____ the degree; how hot or cold the air is
10. _____ a tool that measures the temperature

Talking about Housing II

Practicing Your Lines & Asserting Your Rights

Read the dialogue and complete the sentences. Follow the example.

thermometer

complaint

skills

practice your lines

leak

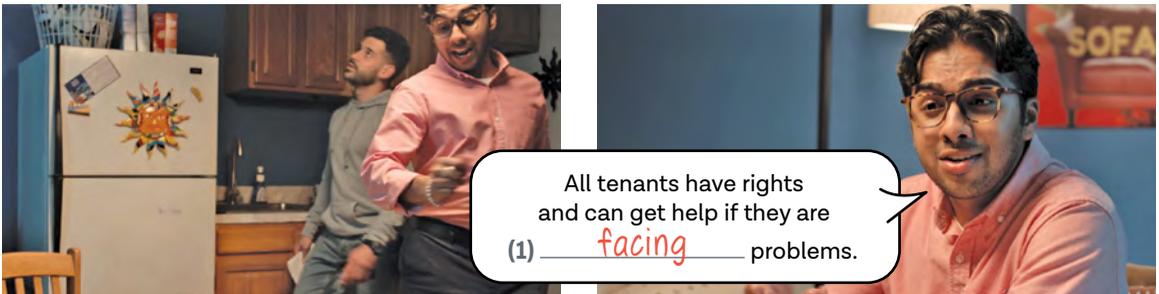
fear

temperature

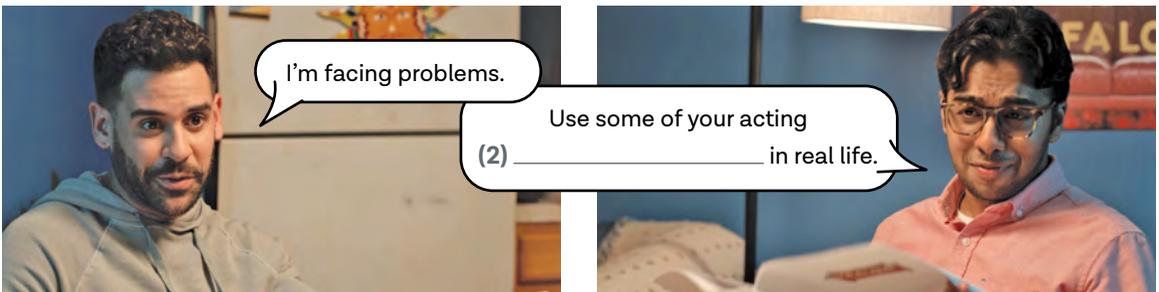
rules

~~facing~~

landlord

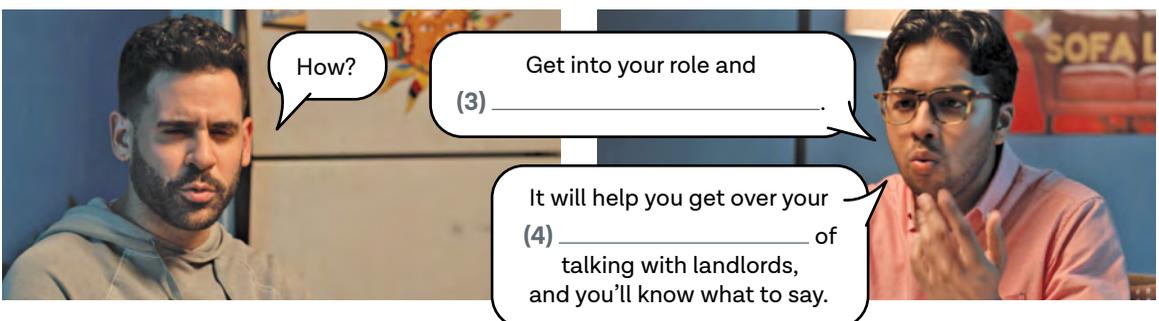


Javier is facing problems. Musa has an idea for him.



Musa explains his idea.

He encourages Javier to practice what to say to the landlord.



Activity 6

They begin to practice.

Start with the (5) _____
or the cold radiator.



Imagine I'm the
(6) _____.
What are you going to say
to me?



There's no heat
in my apartment.
I know it's spring
but it's still cold.

But Javier needs to learn his rights. Musa gives him important information.

Actually, Musa, I think I need to find out
the (7) _____. What rights
do tenants have in regard to heat?



The landlord has to turn on the heat
when the weather is below a certain (8) _____.
If you don't get heat, use a (9) _____
to show the temperature, and call 311 to file a
(10) _____.



I want you to call 311 or go to
the 311 website and get
the details about heat.

Musa wants Javier to practice more. Practice will prepare Javier to take action.
It will increase his confidence. It will help him solve problems.

For now, let's practice
about the leak.
Imagine I'm Frantz.
What are you going
to say to me?



Musa's right.
I need to
practice my lines.

Talking about Housing

Definitions III

Find the meaning. Follow the example.



- records
- ~~City services~~
- fix
- get rid of
- rent
- cuddle
- vaccines
- connect

1. City services public programs that help people meet their needs in New York City
2. _____ put in touch; bring people together (in person, by email or another way) so they can communicate with each other
3. _____ get close to somebody in a cozy and loving way
4. _____ repair
5. _____ throw away; dispose
6. _____ music on vinyl discs; These were popular before streaming and CD's. People collected and played them on a record player/stereo system.
7. _____ pay money to use something for a limited time
8. _____ injections that protect against illness

Talking about Housing III

311 & City Services

Read the dialogue and complete the sentences. Follow the example.

vaccines

City services

cuddled

get rid of

~~record collection~~

connect

Everything... Tatiana threw out everything...
My (1) *record collection*, my TV, even my sofa.

How did she
(2) _____ the sofa?

Your sofa, too?

Yes, my sofa... *our* sofa...
the sofa we (3) _____ on,
the sofa we dreamed on.

Tatiana called 311. Boris explains 311 to Clara.

I heard she called 311.
The sofa had a mattress,
so there are special rules
about throwing it out.

311? What's that?

It's the number for City services and information.
They have information about all (4) _____.
It's not just for making complaints about noise or for parking rules.

You can get information about
(5) _____, help with food,
emergency rental assistance...

You can even file a complaint
if the landlord doesn't fix problems
in your apartment.

They can (6) _____ you to
services that can help with evictions.

File a complaint!
Good to know!

Good Question I

Hospitality and Gratitude

You are Manny. Choose the best question. Follow the example.



1. Tatiana brings a lot of food to your apartment.

Did you cook all of this for us?

2. Tatiana broke up with her boyfriend and is lonely.

3. You want to know if Clara got a good night sleep.

4. You offer Clara a hot drink to warm up.

5. Clara showed you how to assert your rights and you are very grateful.

Good Question II

Housing and Tenant Rights

Clara is speaking with the Tenant Helpline about problems in the apartment. She asks good questions. Choose the question. Follow the example.



1. The paint is old and peeling.

Is the landlord responsible for painting my apartment?

2. I'm worried about the landlord increasing the rent because I am asking for improvements.

3. The apartment is not in good condition. For example, there is a leak and the light switches don't work.

4. It's spring but it's cold inside and out. However, the heat isn't working.
5. I want to know what I can do if the landlord doesn't take action.



What questions do you want to ask the Tenant Helpline about your tenant rights?

What Can You Say?

Choose the best words. Follow the example.

Situation

1. F **You are Musa.**
You tell Javier why it is helpful to practice his lines.
2. **You are Musa.**
You tell Javier the rules in regard to heat.
3. **You are Musa.**
You tell Ushi and Bao about the Tenant Helpline.
4. **You are Boris.**
You give Clara examples of information she can get from 311.
5. **You are Clara.**
You tell the landlord about problems he needs to fix.
6. **You are Clara.**
You tell your husband Manny what he needs to do.

What You Can Say

- A. The landlord has to turn on the heat when the weather outside is below 55 degrees Fahrenheit.
- B. There is a leak and peeling paint in my apartment, and it needs to be fixed right away.
- C. The Tenant Helpline gives tenants information about their rights and helps people facing eviction.
- D. When you call 311, you can get information about vaccines, health insurance, food assistance, emergency rental assistance, and all other City services.
- E. You need to know your rights and to take action.
- ~~F.~~ When you practice your lines, you will know what to say.

**Practice your lines.
Say the answers
out loud!**



What Can You Do?

Match the problem with the best solution. Follow the example.

Problem

1. D Your apartment is cold. There is no heat. There is no hot water. **What can you do?**
2. ____ You came home and there was an eviction notice on your door. **What can you do?**
3. ____ You have a friend who needs help with housing issues and getting affordable health care. **What can you do?**
4. ____ Your apartment is in unlivable condition. The paint is peeling. There's a leak. The walls are moldy. The landlord is not fixing it and you don't know your rights. **What can you do?**
5. ____ The landlord increased the rent and you can't afford it. **What can you do?**

Solution

- A. Call **311** and say: *Tenant Helpline*. When you speak with people at the Tenant Helpline, tell them the problems in your apartment. Ask them about your rights. Ask what they can do to help you.
- B. Tell your friend about the **Public Engagement Unit**. The Public Engagement Unit can help people with housing issues and finding affordable health care.
- C. Call **311** and say: *Help with eviction*. Ask to speak with someone from the Tenant Helpline. Tell them that you received an eviction notice. Ask them what to do.
- ~~D.~~ You have the right to heat and hot water. Speak with your super or landlord. Tell them the problem. Use a thermometer to measure the temperature and take a picture of the temperature. If the landlord doesn't provide heat and hot water, call **311** and file a complaint. You can also ask to speak with the **Tenant Helpline**.
- E. Contact the **Tenant Helpline**. Ask if the landlord is allowed to increase your rent. Ask if you are eligible for a rent freeze or emergency rental assistance or any other help with rent.

More Information about Rent Regulation

If you live in a **rent-regulated apartment** (rent controlled or rent stabilized), the NY State government regulates the amount that your landlord may increase your rent. You can call the NY State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) at **718-739-6400** and ask if your apartment is rent-regulated. You can also **click here** to access your apartment's rental history. DHCR can also answer questions about your rent.



If your apartment is not regulated, DHCR does not control the maximum amount of rent you pay. If you have a **lease**, the legal rent is what the lease says, and the rent can be raised based on the lease. If you do not have a lease, the landlord may raise your rent to any amount the landlord wants, *as long as the landlord tells you a month before the rent increase*. If you do not pay the increase, the landlord may evict you if you received one-month notice of the increase.

If you live in public or **subsidized housing**, there are regulations for increases in rent. The rent is usually related to your family's income.

For more information visit Tenants' Rights and Responsibilities:

www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/tenants-rights-and-responsibilities.page

rent-regulated apartment = an apartment with a limit on the rent a tenant pays; Rent-regulated apartments have rules that control the rent.

lease = a rental contract

public or subsidized housing = housing that is owned by the city or state or supported with public (government) funding

How Do They Feel (I)?

Choose the best word to complete the sentences.

Follow the example.

proud

shocked

heartbroken

~~grateful~~

assertive

disappointed

impressed

flabbergasted

concerned

1. Tatiana and Boris are grateful for Clara and Manny's help.
2. Boris is _____ because Tatiana broke up with him.
3. Frantz is _____ by Javier, and Javier is _____ of himself.
4. Manny is _____ to see cushions flying out the window.
(two possible answers)
5. Musa is very _____ about the leak in Javier's apartment.
6. Boris is _____ when he sees his old sofa in Manny and Clara's apartment. (two possible answers)
7. Clara is very _____ with the condition of Manny's apartment.
8. Clara is _____ when she talks to the landlord.



Find the picture on
pages 55 or 56 that
matches the feelings.

How Do They Feel (II)?

Find the sentence on **page 54** that matches the pictures below.
Write the sentence under the picture. Follow the example.

What's going on up there?!



1. Manny is **shocked** to see cushions flying out the window.

The condition is terrible!



2.

You need to go upstairs to tell your neighbors there is a leak. Right now!



3.

Those are the fact. You know your rights.



I feel ten feet tall!



4.

How Do They Feel (II)?

(continued)

Tatiana threw out everything...
my love letters...
even my sofa...



5.

That's right, Mr. Landlord.
If you don't fix these problems,
I'm going to have to take action.



6.

Clara, Manny,
how can we ever repay you?
You saved our lives...
our love!



7.

It's my sofa.
I can't believe it.



8.

Watch the Show

Who Says It?

Watch **Sofa Love: A Housing Romance**. Listen carefully.
Find out who says these lines.

Who says it?

1. She is arriving in one hour.
2. Your husband is such a gentleman.
3. She is a great cook!
4. We just moved here a couple of months ago, but he's already helped us with a few repairs.
5. You're in Sofa Love!
6. Now I'll have some of that hot chocolate.
7. Give me that script.
8. Ushi and Bao said that I can rely on you.
9. None but the lonely heart can know my sadness, alone and parted, far from joy and gladness.
10. You didn't have to.

Manny



~~Manny~~



Clara



Musa



Bao



Boris



Ushi



Javier



Tatiana

Watch the Show

What's Going On?

What do you think is going on in this picture?



Watch **We Speak NYC • Sofa Love: A Housing Romance**
to find out what is going on.
Go to www.nyc.gov/WeSpeakNYC

Tell the Story

Use words in the Word Cloud ([page 59](#)) to create or summarize the story of **Sofa Love: A Housing Romance**.

Before you watch *Sofa Love: A Housing Romance*, choose words from the Word Cloud to create a story. Who are the people in your story? What problems are they facing? How do they solve the problems? Write your story here:

After you watch *Sofa Love: A Housing Romance*, use words from the Word Cloud to write a summary or tell a friend about what happens in the video. How is the video different from the story you created in #1 above?

Words in the Cloud I

Find the Words

Look for words in the Word Cloud (**page 59**) to complete this chart.

<p>1. Find 5 (or more) names.</p>	<p>2. Find 5 (or more) words related to romance.</p>
<p>3. Find the word for a person who owns an apartment and the word for the person who rents it.</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>4. Find the name of a City agency that offers support for tenants. <i>(There are 3 words in the name of the agency.)</i></p> <p>_____</p>
<p>5. Find the initials for the same agency as in number 4. (3 letters)</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>6. Find the word for something that radiates heat in an apartment or a building.</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>7. Find a device that measures the temperature.</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>8. Find an expression that communicates your affection for your home. <i>(The expression has 3 words, but 1 of the words is repeated.)</i></p> <p>_____</p>

Words in the Cloud II

Complete the Sentences

Find the words in the Word Cloud (page 59) to complete these sentences.

1. Tenant _____ are the rights of tenants such as the right to heat and hot water and a building in a livable condition.
2. All tenants in New York City have the right to heat, hot water, and an apartment in a livable _____.
3. If a landlord does not provide you with the rights in number 2, you can file a _____.
4. The Public Engagement Unit has a Tenant _____ that supports tenants who are dealing with housing problems.
5. Javier is an actor in a _____ opera.
6. In the soap opera, Clara is very disappointed with the condition of Manny's apartment. The radiator is cold, there is no _____ water, the electricity is not working, and there is a _____ from the ceiling.
7. Clara calls 311. They put her in touch with the Tenant Helpline. She tells the landlord that he has to fix the problems in the apartment. She teaches Manny how to _____ his rights.
8. Tatiana breaks up with Boris. She throws out his _____, his old TV, his _____ collection, and his old love _____.
9. Clara finds Boris crying at the water _____. He is _____.
10. Boris writes Tatiana a _____ letter to let her know how he feels about her. At the end, Boris and Tatiana are _____.

What You Can Do to Assert Your Tenant Rights

Responsibilities of Landlords

Landlords are responsible for providing heat, hot water, good lighting, and a building that is in safe and livable condition. They are responsible for providing security devices—smoke detectors, building locks, and window guards if your apartment has children under 10. The landlord must provide window guards if you want them even if you do not have children. If there is peeling paint, they must fix it. If there is mold, they must get rid of it. If the building is **rent-regulated**, the landlord must provide a lease and can only increase the rent by a percentage allowed by the state.



Getting Help



If the landlord does not provide these things, speak with the landlord or the company that owns the building. Call 311 and ask to speak with the Tenant Helpline if they do not fix things. The Tenant Helpline can help you write a letter that describes the problems in your building or apartment. In the letter, you can ask for the problems to be fixed by a certain date. You can also file a complaint with 311. You can take legal action against a landlord if they do not fix or fulfill their responsibilities. To learn more about actions you can take, click [here](#) and also [here](#).

rent-regulated apartment = an apartment with rules about the amount of money a landlord can charge and other rules. There are different kinds of rent-regulated apartments: *rent-stabilized apartments* and *rent-controlled apartments*.

No Heat or Hot Water?

If you do not have heat or hot water, you can file a complaint by calling 311 or online at nyc.gov/311. Heat is required between October 1st and May 31st (“Heat Season”).

There are certain temperatures and times of day when the heat must be on. Go to the 311 website or call 311 to get details. Building owners must also provide tenants with hot water 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, at a minimum temperature of 120 degrees Fahrenheit.



Paint, Peeling Paint and Lead Paint



The landlord is responsible for painting the apartment every three years. If you have peeling paint, tell the landlord. If the landlord does not fix it, call 311. You can also get the paint tested for lead. If there is lead in the paint, the landlord must remove it. Go to the [NYC Department of Health](#) webpage to learn more. Also, see the [Lead and Leadership Study Guide](#).

Anti-Discrimination

Landowners are not allowed to discriminate against people who want to rent because of race, color, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, immigrant status, source of income, or legal occupation, or because you have children. The landlord cannot evict you based on your immigration status. If you have questions about your tenant rights or rental assistance that might be available to you as an immigrant, call 311. Ask for the Tenant Helpline for free one-on-one support.



Rent Increases

If you live in a rent-regulated apartment, the state controls how much the landlord can charge for your apartment and how much the landlord can increase it. If you live in a rent-regulated apartment, you may also be eligible for a rent freeze if you are a senior citizen or disabled. If you have questions about your tenant rights or any rental assistance that might be available to you as an immigrant, **call 311**. Ask for the Tenant Helpline for free one-on-one support.



Contacting the Tenant Helpline



Call 311 and say *Tenant Helpline*. You can get help in your language. If the Tenant Helpline is not available when you call 311, please leave a clear message with your name and phone number. Someone from the Tenant Helpline will return your call as soon as possible. (A Specialist will call you back from a number that you don't recognize so make sure you look out for the call.)

This information is adapted from:

Tenant Support Unit
Tenant Rights and Responsibilities



Notes:

Dictionary: Translations of Key Words

English	Español	中文
1. assert your rights	hacer valer sus derechos	维护自己的权利
2. City services	servicios de la Ciudad	城市服务
3. eviction	desalojo	驱逐
4. file a complaint	presentar una denuncia/queja	提出投诉
5. landlord	propietario	房东
6. leak	fuga	渗漏
7. Public Engagement Unit	Unidad de Participación Pública	公共参与小组
8. radiator	radiador	暖气片
9. tenant	inquilino	租户
10. Tenant Helpline	línea de ayuda al inquilino	租户帮助热线
11. tenant rights	derechos del inquilino	租户权利
12. Tenant Support Specialist	especialista en apoyo a los inquilinos	租户支持专家

Go to www.nyc.gov/WeSpeakNYC to learn more.

Русский	اردو	العربية
отстаивать свои права	اپنے حقوق کا دعویٰ کریں	المطالبة بحقوقك
городские услуги	شہری خدمات	خدمات المدينة
выселение	بے دخلی	إخلاء
подать жалобу	شکایت درج کریں	تقديم شكوى
арендодатель	مکان مالک	مالك العقار
утечка	رساؤ	تسريب
Отдел по взаимодействию с общественностью	عوامی مشارکت اکائی	وحدة المشاركة العامة
батарея	ریڈی ایٹر	مشعاع
арендатор	کرایہ دار	مستأجر
горячая линия для арендаторов	کرایہ دار ہیلپ لائن	خط مساعدة المستأجر
права арендаторов	کرایہ دار کے حقوق	حقوق المستأجر
специалист по поддержке арендаторов	کرایہ دار سپورٹ ماہر	اختصاصي دعم المستأجر

Dictionary: Translations of Key Words

English	kreyòl ayisyen	français
1. assert your rights	revandike dwa w	faire valoir vos droits
2. City services	Sèvis vil la	Services de la ville
3. eviction	degèpisman	expulsion
4. file a complaint	depoze yon plent	déposer une plainte
5. landlord	mèt kay	propriétaire
6. leak	koule	fuite
7. Public Engagement Unit	Inite Angajman Piblik	Unité d'engagement du public
8. radiator	radyatè	radiateur
9. tenant	lokate	locataire
10. Tenant Helpline	Liy Asistans Lokatè	Ligne d'assistance aux locataires
11. tenant rights	dwa lokatè	droits des locataires
12. Tenant Support Specialist	Espesyalis Sipò Lokatè	Spécialiste du soutien aux locataires

Go to www.nyc.gov/WeSpeakNYC to learn more.

한국어	Polski	বাংলা
권리 주장	dochodzić swoich praw	আপনার অধিকার নিশ্চিত করুন
시 서비스	usługi miejskie	শহরের পরিষেবা
퇴거	eksmisja	উচ্ছেদ
민원 제기	złożyć skargę	একটি অভিযোগ দায়ের করুন
집주인	wynajmujący	বাড়িওয়ালা
누출	przeciek	ছিদ্র
공공 참여 세대	Jednostka ds. Zaangażowania Publicznego	জন-সম্পৃক্ততা একক
라디에이터	kaloryfer	বিকিরক
세입자	najemca	ভাড়াটে
세입자 헬프라인	Infolinia dla najemców	ভাড়াটে হেল্পলাইন
세입자 권리	prawa najemców	ভাড়াটে অধিকার
세입자 지원 전문가	Specjalista ds. obsługi najemców	ভাড়াটে সহায়তা বিশারদ

Answers

What Happens in Act I?

1. sofa
2. broke up, information
3. real
4. labels
5. heat, leak
6. flowers
7. suspicious
8. switch, electricity
9. stomach
10. faithful, trust

What Happens in Act II?

1. actor
2. condition
3. super, fix
4. stares
5. figures out
6. truth
7. tenants, services
8. practice, confidence, landlord
9. radiator
10. rights
11. proud

What Happens in Act III?

1. heartbroken
2. letters
3. rental, health
4. heart
5. asserts
6. conflict
7. shock
8. explain
9. rights
10. fixed
11. reunited
12. stronger
13. covered
14. eyes, gift
15. catalog

Who We Are

1. Manny
2. Clara
3. Tatiana
4. Boris
5. Javier
6. Musa
7. Ushi and Bao
8. Frantz

Where Is It?

1. pages 2, 3, 4, 8, 10
2. page 3
3. pages 3, 26
4. pages 7, 20, 26, 28, 29
5. pages 7, 10, 14, 20
6. pages 13, 15, 18
7. page 13
8. page 17
9. page 23
10. page 29
11. page 29
12. page 32

Talking about Housing: Definitions I

1. assistance
2. engagement
3. enrollment
4. eviction
5. issues
6. Public Engagement Unit
7. radiator
8. real life
9. rights
10. solve
11. Tenant Helpline

Talking about Housing I: The Public Engagement Unit

1. radiator
2. real life
3. solve
4. Engagement
5. Tenant Helpline
6. rights
7. eviction
8. assistance
9. enrollment

Talking about Housing: Definitions II

1. facing
2. fear
3. file a complaint
4. landlord
5. leak
6. practice your lines
7. rules
8. skills
9. temperature
10. thermometer

Talking about Housing II: Practicing Your Lines & Asserting Your Rights

1. facing
2. skills
3. practice your lines
4. fear
5. leak
6. landlord
7. rules
8. temperature
9. thermometer
10. complaint

Talking about Housing: Definitions III

1. City services
2. connect
3. cuddle
4. fix
5. get rid of
6. records
7. rent
8. vaccines

Talking about Housing III: 311 & City Services

1. record collection
2. get rid of
3. cuddled
4. City services
5. vaccines
6. connect

Good Question I: Hospitality and Gratitude

1. Did you cook all of this for us?
2. Would you like to join us for dinner?
3. How did you sleep, *mi amor*?
4. Would you like some coffee, tea or hot chocolate?
5. How can I ever repay you?

Good Question II: Housing and Tenant Rights

1. Is the landlord responsible for painting my apartment?
2. Can the landlord raise the rent because I am complaining about the condition of the apartment and want it to be fixed up?

- Is the landlord responsible for fixing the leak and the light switches?
- When does the heat have to come on?
- What can I do if the landlord doesn't repair the apartment?

What Can You Say?

- F
- A
- C
- D
- B
- E

What Can You Do?

- D
- C
- B
- A
- E

How Do They Feel (I)?

- grateful
- heartbroken
- impressed, proud
- flabbergasted or shocked
- concerned
- flabbergasted or shocked
- disappointed
- assertive

How Do They Feel (II)?

- Manny is flabbergasted / shocked to see cushions flying out the window.
- Clara is very disappointed with the condition of Manny's apartment.
- Musa is very concerned about the leak in Javier's apartment.
- Frantz is impressed by Javier, and Javier is proud of himself.
- Boris is heartbroken because Tatiana broke up with him.
- Clara is assertive when she talks to the landlord.
- Tatiana and Boris are grateful for Clara and Manny's help.
- Boris is flabbergasted / shocked when he sees his old sofa in Manny and Clara's apartment.

Watch the Show! Who Says It?

- Manny
- Tatiana
- Manny
- Bao
- Ushi
- Musa

- Javier
- Javier
- Boris
- Clara

Words in the Cloud I: Find the Words

- Manny, Clara, Tatiana, Boris, Bo, Javier, Musa, Frantz, Ushi, Bao
- heartbroken, love letters, romance, bouquet of flowers, breakup, blow kisses, cuddle, hug, faithful (and other words)
- landlord, tenant
- Public Engagement Unit
- PEU
- radiator
- thermometer
- home sweet home

Words in the Cloud II: Complete the Sentences

- rights
- condition
- complaint
- Helpline
- soap
- hot, leak
- assert
- sofa, record, letters
- fountain, heartbroken
- love, reunited



**Practice your lines
and contact the
Tenant Helpline
if you need help!**

Watch
Read
Learn



www.nyc.gov/WeSpeakNYC