

# Looking for a place to call home

July 9, 1986

"Not to worry, Karen, not to worry," my landlord said to me in his thick Italian accent last Sunday, after telling me he was raising the rent by \$200, and selling the building.

"When do you want to sell?" I asked him.

"Tonight if I can," he said. "I'm bringing people over in ten minutes."

I balked at him, he left, and I ran upstairs to unpack the bags I had just carried in from a trip to Maryland that weekend.

I told my roommates, we quickly re-evaluated our situation, and decided not to stay.

"It's not worth \$600," someone said, referring to the vibrantly clashing wallpaper, the peeling linoleum floors, and the chipping paint along the windowsills and woodwork.

"And what if the new owner raised the rent even higher?" she continued.

I have to be practical, I thought. They're right. It's not worth it.

As I looked around the orange dining room, bright yellow and dark brown kitchen, and purple bedroom, I remembered all the time Brenda and I spent turning this ugly little apartment into home.

We learned to live with the wallpaper, ignore the linoleum, and laugh about the slanting floors.

It was our first apartment, and I hated to move out.

The next week we spent apartment-hunting.

The first place we looked at I fell in love with.

It had cream-colored, neutral walls, hardwood floors with new linoleum in the kitchen, two large bedrooms and a half-sized room, plenty of storage space, and walls lined with windows.

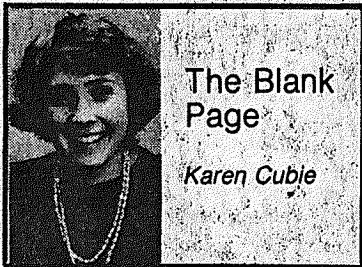
Then we met the landlord. "Who are you?" she asked in heavily accented English.

"I'm Karen," I answered. "I called a few minutes ago, and you told us to come over."

"But you're not a family," she said. "Well, if you live here, you can't have any visitors."

We just looked at her. "Your families could come up once in while," she said, crossing her arms suspiciously over her chest. "Do you have boyfriends?"

"We do," both Michelle and I



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Karen Cubie

answered. Chris shook her head.

"Well, they can't ever come in," she said.

I looked at her.

"This is a family neighborhood," she said adamantly. "No one here ever has any visitors, and if you were to live here, I'd have to raise the rent."

Michelle, Chris, and I shrugged, and told her we weren't interested.

The next few places we looked were also nice, but most only had two bedrooms. The other landlords also seemed more interested in renting to families, or at least to married couples.

Finally, after looking for about two weeks, we found something.

It was a bright yellow, two-apartment building a few streets over from our present apartment,

and a block away from the beach.

We answered the ad, and set up an appointment.

Chris was working, so Michelle and I ran over to take a look.

Before we entered, the landlord said, "The people who lived here just moved out yesterday, but it would be clean by the time you moved in."

"I hope so." I thought to myself. The floors were covered with litter including dirty socks and underwear, crayons, cigarette ashes, and plastic children's toys.

There were two big bedrooms, one seven-foot by eight-foot bedroom, a sun porch, a dining room, a kitchen, a bathroom, and a little hallway.

"We'll do all the cleaning," Michelle volunteered. I could have kicked her.

"I think we'll take it," she said.

I could see the potential in the place myself, so I didn't mind too much. But after what I had gone through cleaning my first apartment, I didn't know if I wanted to do that again.

Unlike my former landlord, the new landlady has offered to pay for all the cleaning and painting supplies, the wallpaper, and lamp globes.

She also plans to buy a new sink, a new toilet, and new linoleum for the bathroom.

We scrubbed and painted the living room, scrubbed and trimmed the dining room, and yesterday we started on the kitchen.

Each step of the way we've moaned and groaned about how gross the previous tenants were. They obviously never cleaned, and I resent inheriting all their human scum. What did I do to deserve it?

I scraped the goo off the stove, and Michelle has been scrubbing and scraping the sticky kitchen cabinets.

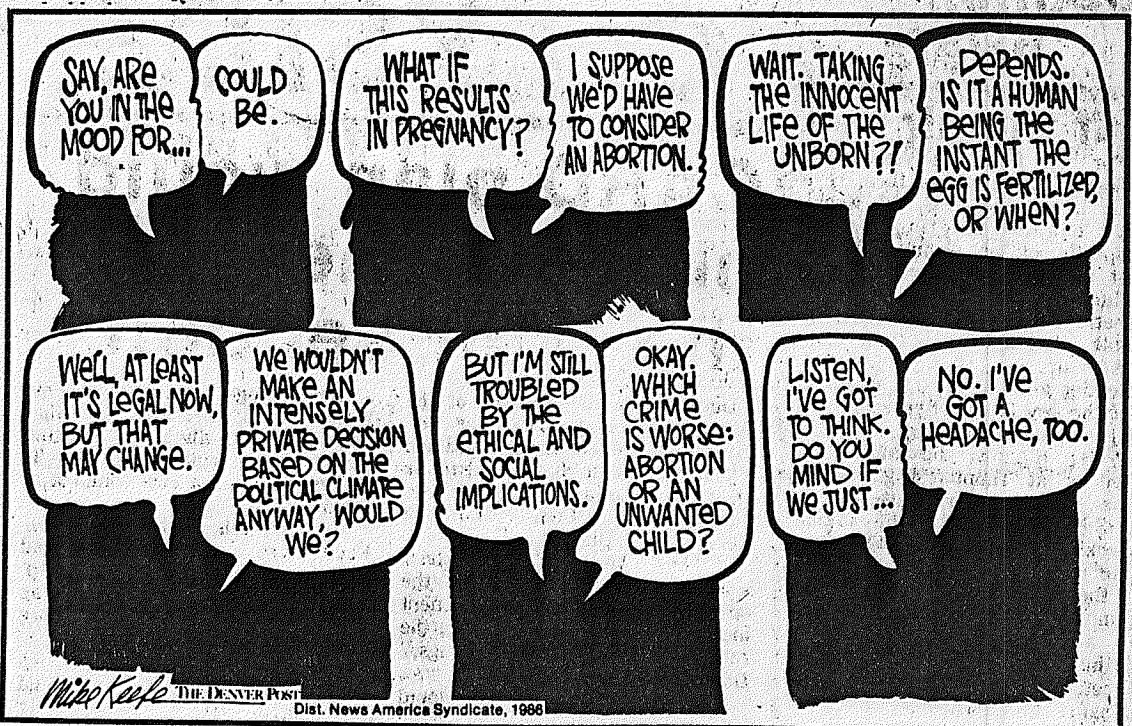
Chris has been cleaning the bathroom. We've found children's toys, a box of unused sanitary napkins, and a plastic tampon applicator.

Needless to say, we're throwing out everything the former tenants used. This includes the oven's rusted broiling pan, and the aluminum bowls holding the stove's electrical burners.

We've also been looking for dining room and bedroom wallpaper, kitchen paint, and floor rugs.

But in spite of the left-over scum and goo, I find it happening all over again.

I think I'm falling in love.



# A yes vote for Manion confirmation

WASHINGTON — When the Senate returns from its Independence Day recess, a top order of business will be a second vote on the confirmation of Daniel A. Manion to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Cir-

American Bar Association's committee on judicial appraisal has given Manion its "lowest possible rating" of "qualified." Come now. From Lyndon Johnson's inauguration through Reagan's first term, 66 years

Supreme Court." The charge is unworthy of anyone who knows the first thing of law. The facts are that the Supreme Court in 1980 held it unconstitutional for Kentucky to require the posting of the Ten Commandments at public

