

Synopsis

When Vera meets an unusual stranger named Bob at a party, she discovers he is an alien whose spaceship has crash-landed nearby. Offering him shelter for the night leads to unexpected chaos, especially when Bob starts dismantling household appliances. Matters become even more complicated when Vera's mother discovers their extraordinary guest.

BOB FROM BEYOND

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A comedy in one act

Characters

- **VERA** – A practical young woman in her twenties.
- **BOB** – An alien who looks mostly human except for odd habits and occasional glowing ears.
- **MUM** – Vera's mother, dramatic and easily startled.

Scene 1: The Party

A lively party. Music plays. People mingle. VERA stands with a drink. BOB stands alone, staring intently at a bowl of crisps.

VERA: First party?

BOB: Is it that obvious?

VERA: A little. You've been examining those crisps for the last ten minutes.

BOB: They appear edible but also very dangerous.

VERA: They're cheese and onion, so probably.

VERA laughs.

VERA: I'm Vera.

BOB: Bob.

It's the closest translation.

VERA: Translation from what?

(BOB freezes.)

BOB: Err from Yorkshire.

VERA: Right.

(A loud CRASH is heard outside. The room shakes slightly.)

VERA: What was that?

BOB: Oh dear.

VERA: You know what it was?

BOB: Hypothetically, if someone has parked a spaceship badly...

VERA: A spaceship?

BOB: Then one might hear a noise very much like that.

VERA: You're joking.

(BOB's ears briefly glow blue.)

VERA: Err your ears are glowing.

BOB: They do that when I'm nervous.

VERA: Wait. You're actually an alien?

BOB: Yes.

Scene 2: Vera's Living Room

Later that night. A sofa, a small table, and a doorway leading to the kitchen.

VERA: Let me get this straight, your ship crashed in a field.

BOB: Correct.

VERA: ...and you can't contact your people.

BOB: Correct.

VERA: And you need somewhere to stay.

BOB: Preferably somewhere with a roof.

VERA: Fine, you can stay here for one night.

BOB: You are extraordinarily kind.

VERA: Don't make me regret it.

(BOB sits on the sofa and immediately starts inspecting a lamp.)

VERA: Please don't touch anything.

BOB: Understood.

(He unscrews the light bulb.)

VERA: Bob!

BOB: Sorry.

Blackout.

Scene 3: Very Early Morning

(Lights up. VERA enters in pyjamas and freezes.)

VERA: Bob.

The room is a disaster!

Bob!

(BOB pops up from behind the sofa.)

BOB: Good morning!

VERA: Why is my toaster in pieces?

BOB: Research.

VERA: Why is the kettle hanging from a curtain rail?

BOB: Engineering.

VERA: Why is there a whisk attached to my television?

BOB: Science.

VERA: None of those are explanations!

BOB: I am building a communications device.

VERA: Using everything from my kitchen?

BOB: Your technology is surprisingly adaptable.

VERA: Hey, that's my blender!

BOB: It has excellent signal amplification.

VERA: It makes smoothies!

BOB: It can do both.

(BOB proudly reveals a bizarre machine made from kitchen gadgets.)

BOB: Behold.

VERA: OMG that looks dangerous.

BOB: Most important inventions do.

Scene 4: Mum Arrives

(The sound of footsteps upstairs.)

VERA: Oh no.

BOB: What?

VERA: My mother.

BOB: Excellent. I enjoy meeting new species.

VERA: Don't say that.

(MUM enters, sleepy.)

MUM: Vera, why does it smell like burnt toast?

(She sees BOB. Long pause.)

MUM: Err there's an alien on the sofa.

VERA: Mum...

MUM: There's. An. Alien. On. The. Sofa.

BOB: Good morning.

MUM: It talks!

BOB: Most of us do.

MUM: Vera, why is there an alien on the sofa?

VERA: It's a long story.

MUM: I leave you alone for one evening.

BOB: To be fair, I arrived unexpectedly.

MUM: Aliens normally do.

(She notices the dismantled appliances.)

MUM: Is that my food processor?

BOB: Parts of it.

MUM: Parts?!

BOB: The rest is helping contact my home planet.

MUM: Vera!

VERA: I know! I know!

MUM: He's taken apart the kitchen!

BOB: In my defence, it was an excellent kitchen.

Scene 5: Calling Home

The strange machine begins to hum.

BOB: Ah! Success!

(Lights flicker.)

MUM: If that explodes, you're buying me a new kitchen.

BOB: Agreed.

(A series of beeps.)

BOB: They're answering!

VERA: Really?

BOB: Yes.

(BOB speaks into a spatula attached to the machine.)

BOB: Bob reporting. Slight navigation issue. Require collection.

Pause.

BOB: No, I did not crash intentionally.

Pause.

BOB: No, the field was not clearly marked.

Pause.

BOB: Fine. Perhaps I was a little distracted.

VERA: By what?

BOB: The party had a chocolate fountain and music.

MUM: Honestly.

(The machine beeps happily.)

BOB: They're coming.

VERA: That's great!

MUM: Wonderful. Then perhaps my kettle can stop being part of the space programme?.

Scene 6: Farewell

(A distant WHIRRING sound grows louder.)

BOB: OK that's them.

VERA: So you'll be leaving?

BOB: Yes.

Though I shall miss Earth.

VERA: Even after crashing?

BOB: Especially after crashing. I've made friends.

(MUM softens.)

MUM: Well... you do seem polite.

BOB: Thank you.

MUM: Apart from destroying my appliances.

BOB: I can rebuild them.

Better than before.

(He presses a button on the machine. A series of clicks and whirrs. Offstage, appliances somehow reassemble themselves.)

VERA: That's impossible!.

BOB: Alien engineering.

(A bright light shines through the window.)

BOB: My ride is here.

VERA: Ok goodbye, Bob, you are not so bad for an alien.

BOB: Goodbye, Vera.

MUM: Goodbye, Bob.

BOB: Goodbye, owner of this excellent kitchen.

(MUM smiles despite herself.)

MUM: Safe travels.

(BOB waves and exits. The light in the window fades.)

VERA: Well.

Do you think anyone will believe us?

MUM: Not a chance.

(A beep is heard from the toaster.)

TOASTER (offstage): Greetings, Earth citizens.

(VERA and MUM stare at each other.)

MUM: We're never speaking of this.

(Blackout.)

END