An excerpt from

THE NAKED TRUTH

a comedy by Rich Orloff

Characters

CLARK, about 30, a clerk at the Godiva Inn
GEORGE, 40’s, the new owner
LIZ, 40’s, his wife
JANE, 30’s, the inn’s handyman
FRED, 40-50 (or so), a hotel chain representative

Setting

The lobby of a small inn on Key West, Florida. The present

The opening scene: The lobby of the Godiva Inn in Key West. Although this place has seen better days, it’s been kept in decent shape. CLARK, the resort’s clerk, stands behind the counter. Flamboyant and sharp, Clark has seen it all, and he wishes he had taken photos. The phone rings.

CLARK

(into the phone:)
Godiva Inn, where every guest is barely dressed... Yes, we’re a clothing-optional resort...
No, I’m not naked... Because my body is a temple, and it’s only open on religious holidays... No, you can’t be naked in the lobby, just around the pool and hot tub, which we clean daily – we have our reasons.

Another line rings.

CLARK (cont’d)
Will you hold a second?

(switches to other line, and:)
Godiva Inn, where every woman and man gets a full-body tan... I said I’ll pay you!... As soon as I pay everyone else!... Well, stop thinking of it as money, and start thinking of it as your contribution to art... Well, if that’s how you feel, you should’ve never gone into the sequin business!

(switches lines, and tone:)
Thank you for holding... I’d be glad to make a reservation for you... I’ll check...
Another line rings.

CLARK (cont'd)
One moment.
(switches lines:)
Godiva Inn, where the thin and stout like to flesh it out... Of course, I plan to pay you...
Well, not that soon... Not that soon... I plan to be reincarnated. Ask me in my next life.
(switches lines, and tone:)
Yes, we have a few rooms free that night.
Do you prefer smoking, non-smoking, or "I don't smoke, but if I end up with two smokin' hotties I'll supply the match."...
Will this be your first time in Key West?...
Oh, you'll love it. Key West is like Disneyland with a libido... Now to hold your room, I'll need your address and a credit card number...

On the last sentence, JANE has entered. Jane is the inn’s handyman, a job she loves because she gets to wear a tool belt.

JANE
I fixed the faucet in Number Eight.

CLARK
(into the phone:)
And the card number?

Jane notices a hang nail. She tries to bite it off, unsuccessfully. So she uses her wire cutters on it. She blows on the wire cutters as if it were a gun, and she puts it back in her belt.

CLARK (cont'd)
Expiration date? You’re all set...
See you in a few weeks.

Clark hangs up.

JANE
Any word from –

CLARK
Jane, can you lend me ohhhhh twenty-thirty thousand dollars till payday?

JANE
If I could, do you think I'd be working two jobs?
CLARK
What am I going to do, Jane?
Creditors are calling me day and night.

JANE
Well, maybe you should stop spending so much money on your hobby.

CLARK
Being a drag queen is not a hobby! It’s my art.

JANE
Then stop thinking of it as an art and turn it into a hobby.

CLARK
Oh, what am I going to do?

JANE
Have faith.

CLARK
I do have faith. I have faith that one day I will be the Sarah Bernhardt of drag queens. I will be the Duse of Drag. I’ll be the greatest female impersonator since Tallulah Bankhead impersonated herself.

JANE
Shouldn’t they be here by now?

CLARK
I don’t want to think about them.

JANE
You’re going to have to. Their car should be pulling up any –

CLARK
I doubt it. I bet they’ll stop at every key along the way, going, “Look darling, in Florida they call their islands keys. Isn’t that cute? Let’s put one in our trunk.”

JANE
Are you going to be nice to them?

CLARK
I don’t see why I should be.
JANE
Because Roger asked you to be.

CLARK
They didn’t even come to his funeral.

JANE
They weren’t invited.

CLARK
If I only went to places I was invited, I’d be a hermit.

JANE
Do you think folks would’ve been comfortable with them at the funeral?

CLARK
If they dressed up in drag.

JANE
Clark.

CLARK
A boa. One boa.

JANE
Look, just because Roger’s brother wasn’t accepting of hi—

CLARK
No. “Not accepting” is like “This dress is lovely, but it makes my ass look big.” Rejecting your brother is –

JANE
You don’t talk to your brother.

CLARK
My brother’s an asshole. A big asshole. A huge asshole.

JANE
Okay.

CLARK
There’s like a Grand Canyon between his cheeks.
JANE
Well, Roger never described his brother or sister-in-law as assholes.

CLARK
Well, you see, there’s another problem.

What?

CLARK
His brother’s married. You know what that means?

What?

CLARK
There’s a two-thirds chance he’s straight.

JANE
Hey, don’t knock married men. My other job would vanish if it weren’t for married men. They’re dependable, they pay on time, and they’re totally grateful for my services.

CLARK
Well, I guess you’ve had better luck with married men than I have. All the secrecy, the deception. No more, you hear me, no more! If you can’t be straight with your wife – you can’t be gay with me.

JANE
Admit it, Clark. You’re a heterophobe.

CLARK
I am not. Some of my best friends are straight people.

Name five.

CLARK
I didn’t say “a lot”.

JANE
Well, just remember what Roger asked us.

CLARK
I will.
JANE
On his deathbed.

CLARK
I will bathe them in lovingkindness,
and squeeze the sponge.

Jane’s cellphone rings. She answers it.

JANE
Mistress Dominique. Speak... Well, how much do you
want it?... Is that all? Tell how much you really want it...

Clark imitates a begging dog, whining softly, barking, and panting.
Jane nonchalantly takes a newspaper and swats him.

JANE (cont'd)
Okay, I’ll meet you in a half-hour... ‘Bye.

GEORGE and LIZ enter. Both in their forties, they’re clean-cut,
model citizens, although not necessarily this year’s model.
They carry some luggage.

CLARK
Hello, may we help you?

GEORGE
Is this the Godiva Inn?

CLARK
No, it’s Key West Hospital. Take off your clothes and say “Ahhhh”.

GEORGE
Um –

JANE
You must be Roger’s brother.

GEORGE
Yes, hi, George Drummond.
And this is my wife Liz.

LIZ
Nice to meet you.

JANE
I’m the handyman, Jane.
CLARK
And I’m Clark, the hotel’s clerk and concierge. You have an “erge”, I’ll conci it.

GEORGE
Well, it’s, it’s nice meeting both of you.

JANE
How was your drive?

GEORGE
Exhausting.

LIZ
Our car barely made it.

JANE
I’ll be glad to look at it if you like.

GEORGE
You know your way under the hood?

JANE
That’s what my girlfriend says.

(George and Liz freeze.)

Oh, I forgot. You’re from Ohio.

GEORGE
By the way, I, um, stopped at a gas station for directions here and was told that this place was um “clothing optional”. By, by any chance does that mean like – “casual”?

JANE
Didn’t Roger tell you two about this place?

LIZ
Tell us what?

CLARK
Why do you think it’s called the Godiva Inn?

GEORGE
Because staying here’s like eating a fancy chocolate?

JANE
Well, some of our guests love chocolate syrup.
CLARK
But only when they’re covered in it.

JANE
So Roger didn’t tell you –

GEORGE
Well, he and I, we didn’t um –

LIZ
So this is like a nudist resort?

JANE
We prefer the phrase “clothing optional”.

CLARK
Adults only.

GEORGE
And what do these “adults only” do here?

JANE
I don’t ask; I don’t tell.

CLARK
I ask; I tell.

JANE
I assure you the people here are 98% wholesome.

LIZ
And the other 2%?

CLARK
They’re my favorite customers.

GEORGE
You mean, more goes on here than just nudity?

LIZ
George, that’s probably true of every hotel.

From the pool area, we hear:

FEMALE HOTEL GUEST (o.s.)
Anybody got a spare condom?!

GEORGE
I’ve never heard that at a Holiday Inn.
CLARK
Look, anything that happens here has to be between two or more consenting adults.

JANE
And no animals.

CLARK
Remember when we had to kick out the guy with the sheep?

JANE
She was such a cute little sheep. With those little white curls.

CLARK
Just like my grandmother, except less judgmental.

Clark and Jane sigh.

GEORGE
I knew it was a mistake coming here.

LIZ
George.

GEORGE
We’ve had good lives in Dayton.

LIZ
Had, George, had.

GEORGE
When the lawyer told me Roger left me this place –

CLARK
He what?!

GEORGE
Didn’t Roger or the lawyer tell you two that we –

JANE
You’re not just visiting?

CLARK
You own my, my sanctuary?

GEORGE
Don’t worry. I plan to sell it.
LIZ
You promised it’d be a joint decision.

GEORGE
But Liz, this place sounds like a, a non-stop orgy.

JANE
This place is not a non-stop orgy.

CLARK
Except of course, during Non-Stop Orgy Week.

JANE
And, I guess, Fantasy Fest –

CLARK
Mardi Gras –

JANE
And months ending in R or Y.

CLARK
Visit during March or August; it’s dullsville.

LIZ
Oh, I get it. You’re pulling our leg.

JANE
Clark will pull anything people let him.

GEORGE
So then this isn’t a nudist resort?

From poolside, we hear:

ANOTHER HOTEL GUEST (o.s.)
Anybody have any peanut butter – or KY jelly?!!!

GEORGE
We’re selling.

LIZ
You promise we’d give it some time.

GEORGE
Aren’t you aghast about what goes on here?

LIZ
I’m completely aghast, and slightly intrigued.
JANE
I like her.

GEORGE
And what if our kids find out we’re connected to this place?

LIZ
Then for the first time in our lives they’ll think we’re interesting.

JANE
You have kids?

LIZ
A boy and a girl, both in college.

JANE
That must cost a mint.

LIZ
Plus some.

GEORGE
If you don’t believe us, ask our creditors. All our creditors.

CLARK
Bonding. I sense bonding!

JANE
(checking her watch:)
Oh crap, I gotta run.

GEORGE
(checking his watch:)
Are you already done for the day?

JANE
I’ll be back in an hour-and-a-half or so.

GEORGE
Where are you going?

JANE
When I come back, I’ll show you all around the premises. Nice meeting you.

Jane rushes out.
GEORGE
Roger let his employees just take off like that?

CLARK
Well, you see, Key West is such an expensive place to live; it’s hard to make ends meet with just one job.

GEORGE
What’s her other job?

CLARK
Um, customer relations.

LIZ
Do you have a second job?

CLARK
Of course.

GEORGE
What kind of job?

CLARK
I’m an entertainer.

GEORGE
What kind of entertainer?

CLARK
Fabulous.

GEORGE
What kind of fabulous?

CLARK
Totally fabulous.

GEORGE
What kind of –

LIZ
George, maybe we should unpack and settle in first.

CLARK
I guess you’ll want to stay in the owner-manager’s suite.
LIZ
Is that where Roger lived?

CLARK
Yep. It’s what he called home.

LIZ
George?

GEORGE
Yeah, I guess that’s where we’ll stay. Clark, will you help us with our bags?

CLARK
Oh, no, I’m sorry, I don’t do that.

GEORGE
You don’t?

CLARK
I did that once and broke a nail.

George and Liz pick up their bags and start to exit.

LIZ
Welcome to Key West, darling.

CLARK
You’ll love his suite. It has a view of everything.
(particularly to George:)
And I mean evvverything.

They exit into Roger’s suite.

The lights fade.