

An excerpt from

**SKIN DEEP**

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... 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."

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:)

Sorry for the interruption. 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:)

Expiration date?

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)

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 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

Roger didn't invite them.

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.

JANE

What?

CLARK

His brother's married. You know what that means?

JANE

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.

JANE

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,  
until they get the hell out of here.

Jane's cellphone rings. She answers it.

JANE

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 must 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?

CLARK

Well, some of our guests love chocolate syrup, 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, sometimes 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 –

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 grape 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 cool.

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.

LIZ

Welcome to Key West, darling.

CLARK

You'll love his suite. It has a view of  
everything. And I mean *evvverything*.

They exit into Roger's suite.

The lights fade.