

The Naked Man on the Couch

Richard Davis, Jr.





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THE NAKED MAN ON THE COUCH

By Richard Davis, Jr.

CAST

MILDRED: Mildred is an attractive older lady, smart, practical, and clearly the leader of the household of three middle-age to older ladies.

HARRIET: Another older lady. Though she is a bit of a free spirit, she relies on Mildred to make the hard decisions.

SOPHIE: About the same age as the other two, she's a bit more flighty.

BRAD: A young man recovering from a romantic catastrophe. In a moment of drunkenness, he has broken into the ladies' house and passed out on their sofa.

Place

The living room of a modest house.

Time

The present. Early on a Saturday morning.

Production Note

The set calls for a kitchen area which can be as simple or as elaborate as director chooses, though there should be at least a counter with a coffee pot.

Setting: A sitting room with a couch and chair Down Left and the suggestion of a kitchen Up Right. An electric coffee maker with a full carafe occupies a kitchen counter. A door to the rest of the house is Up Left.

At Rise: BRAD is sprawled on the couch asleep. He lies under a comforter. HIS clothes are neatly stacked beside the couch. He lies under a comforter. An empty whiskey bottle is on the floor in front of the couch. MILDRED enters from Up Left. She wears bright pajamas and carries a weekend size suitcase. Humming a happy tune, she crosses to the kitchen, passing the couch without noticing BRAD. Checking the coffee, she calls out.)

MILDRED: Coffee's on.

BRAD: *(muttering)* Gaaa gigh jinn.

MILDRED: *(calling Up Left)* What?

(BRAD waves his hands as if trying to shush MILDRED, but she still doesn't see him)

MILDRED: Harriett! Call Margaret.

BRAD: Gaaa gigh jinn.

MILDRED: Don't know what you're saying. No matter. It's your turn to cook.

HARRIET: *(off)* My day to cook is Friday.

MILDRED: This *is* Friday.

HARRIET: Friday brunch. *(She enters from Up Left pushing a huge piece of rolling luggage. She leaves her luggage next to MILDRED's suitcase, crosses to the kitchen.)*

MILDRED: We're not going to be here for brunch.

HARRIET: You're the one who said we had to get on the road.

MILDRED: I just thought you might—

HARRIET: Please, Mildred. Just cook breakfast.

MILDRED: I will not. We'll have to eat on the road. Where's Sophie?

HARRIET: Road's fine with me. Sophie's coming.

MILDRED: Coffee?

HARRIET: Do we have saccharin?

MILDRED: It's Sweet and Low, dear. *(points to a container on the counter)* And it's where it's always been. Did you call Margaret? *(calling)* Sophieeee!

BRAD: Gaaa gigh jinn.

HARRIET: What?

MILDRED: What?

HARRIET: You mumbled.

MILDRED: I said, "Did you call Margaret?" Sophieeee!

SOPHIE: *(off)* Coming, Millie. *(She enters with way too much luggage. Crossing to where the other luggage is stacked, she looks at BRAD on couch.)* Oh, my. *(She stares at BRAD, then crosses to the couch, pulls back a corner of the comforter, and peeks in.)* Oh, my! *(over her shoulder)* Did you all know there's a naked man lying on our couch?

HARRIET: *(ignoring her)* We should get so lucky.

MILDRED: *(likewise)* Coffee's ready.

SOPHIE: No, really. A naked man. A cute one.

MILDRED: You were going to take your Zanex after breakfast, Sophie.

SOPHIE: I haven't taken my Zanex. There's a naked man on our couch. A cute one.

HARRIET: Pour her a cup of coffee, Millie. Black. Sophie's been drinking.

SOPHIE: I have not been drinking, Harriet. There's a —

HARRIET: *(crossing to SOPHIE)* You're just nervous about Margaret's driving, Sophie, but the Zanex will solve that...*(She sees Brad)* Oh, my!

SOPHIE: Exactly.

HARRIET: Um ... Mildred, there *is* a man lying on our couch. A cute one. And he's under your comforter.

MILDRED: *(crossing to others)* Oh, for the love of Pete, I... *(stops short)* There's a man on our couch. I just finished that comforter.

SOPHIE/HARRIET: Exactly.

MILDRED/HARRIET: *(unison)* How do you know he's naked?

SOPHIE: His clothes. (*she points to the folded stack*)

MILDRED/HARRIET: Oh.

SOPHIE: Plus I peeked.

MILDRED: Sophie! You did not!

SOPHIE: I most certainly did! It's been a long time since I've seen a —

MILDRED: Okay, Okay!

SOPHIE: Naked man.

HARRIET: Is he...cute all over?

MILDRED: Harriet! He could be an escaped murderer!

SOPHIE: Cute's not the word that came to mind —

MILDRED: I'm calling the police.

HARRIET: What if he wakes up?

SOPHIE: I'll get the gun. Um...where is it, Harriet?

HARRIET: Mildred hid it after your little sleepwalking episode.

SOPHIE: Why must you bring that up yet again, Harriet?

HARRIET: You shot the windshield out of the Ford, Sophie.

SOPHIE: I got it fixed, didn't I?

HARRIET: That's not the point! I couldn't sleep for a week for fear you'd...who knows what?

MILDRED: The gun is under the sink. I'm calling the police. (*SOPHIE goes for the gun*) Where's our phone?

HARRIET: It's on the couch because Sophie was talking...Oh. It's on the couch. Under him. Where's your cell?

MILDRED: It's in my pocket, but it's dead. Where's yours?

HARRIET: In my pocket, but it's dead as Hector.

SOPHIE: *(returning with a big pistol)* Got it. *(She crosses to sleeping BRAD)* All right, Nature Boy, stick 'em up! *(BRAD doesn't move)*

HARRIET: Stick 'em up? What is this, a gangster movie?

SOPHIE: Well, what would you say, Harriet? Kindly raise your hands, if it's not too much trouble?

HARRIET: Don't say anything. He's asleep. Nudge him with the pistol.

SOPHIE: You nudge him.

HARRIET: With my bare hand?

SOPHIE: I guess you could put a glove on. But that seems a waste of time.

MILDRED: Will you two stop arguing? There's a naked man on our couch, who could wake at any moment and kill us. Or worse.

HARRIET: What's worse than being killed?

SOPHIE: Well...being raped. Then killed. That would be worse.

MILDRED: All right, all right. Just never mind. Where's your cell, Sophie?

SOPHIE: In my pocket, but—

MILDRED/HARRIET: It's dead.

SOPHIE: As Hector. That's why I was using the house phone, which is right... oh. Yeah, it's right under Nature Boy.

MILDRED: Okay, girls, we have to get the phone. Which means we have to move—

SOPHIE: Nature Boy.

MILDRED: Yes. Nudge Nature Boy, Harriet.

HARRIET: I'm not nudging anybody.

MILDRED: Sophie?

SOPHIE: I have to hold the gun.

MILDRED: I'm certainly not going to...(the others give her a look) Okay. We'll scream. But first Sophie will point the gun at...

SOPHIE: Nature Boy.

MILDRED: Yes. At Nature Boy. Then on the count of three, we all scream, and Nature Boy will wake up. He'll see the gun, and he'll surrender. Then we'll make him get up and—

HARRIET: What if he drops the comforter?

SOPHIE: We're in for a treat.

MILDRED: He's not going to drop the comforter.

SOPHIE: He might. If we really startle him, he could easily—

MILDRED: I'll tell him not to.

SOPHIE: You're losing your *joie de vivre*, Millie.

MILDRED: Just point the gun! (SOPHIE points gun) Ready? (the others nod) One, two, three. Scream! (they let out blood curdling screams)

BRAD: (sitting bolt upright) Arghhhh! What the hell—! Quiet! (The women stop screaming. BRAD sits with his head in his hands.)

SOPHIE: Stick 'em up, Nature Boy. If it's not too much trouble.
(*ignoring them, BRAD clutches his head*)

BRAD: Oh—h—h. My head.

SOPHIE: I said stick 'em up, Nature Boy!

BRAD: (*glaring at the women*) I heard you. There's no need to shout.

SOPHIE: I wasn't shouting. I never shout. Right, Harriet?

HARRIET: Right. Except for that time you were sleepwalking and shot the windshield—

SOPHIE: Never mind, Harriet. Just never mind.

MILDRED: Well?

BRAD: Well what?

HARRIET: Aren't you going to stick 'em up?

BRAD: Are you going to shoot me?

SOPHIE: No. Of course not. I could never shoot anyone. But Harriet might. (*she hands the gun to HARRIET*) Here, Harriet. You shoot him.

BRAD: Wait! Wait! Wait just a minute!

MILDRED: Are you going to cooperate?

HARRIET: I'm not shooting anybody.

BRAD: Then I'm not going to stick 'em up. You all are pretty...mature to be crooks. Aren't you?

HARRIET: Huh? We're not crooks.

SOPHIE: Boy, talk about the pot calling the kettle black.

BRAD: Lady bandits. Whatever. Take what you want and get out. *(He lies back.)*

MILDRED: We live here.

BRAD: *(sitting up again)* What? *(looking around)* Where the hell am I?

MILDRED: Language!

SOPHIE: You're at 247 Waverly Drive—

MILDRED: Why don't give him our phone number?

SOPHIE: Area code 555—

MILDRED: I wasn't serious, Sophie. We have to call the police.

BRAD: What? Why?

MILDRED: So you're going to have to get up.

SOPHIE: Yeah. Just jump up real quick.

BRAD: What if I refuse?

HARRIET: You can't refuse. I have a gun. Um...right, Mildred?

MILDRED: Of course, it's right. So you have to get up, get dressed, and—

BRAD: Right in front of everyone?

MILDRED: What?

BRAD: You want me to get dressed right in front of everyone?

SOPHIE: Sure. We're all adults here.

BRAD: I mean, I can do that. *(he rises, pulling comforter with him)*

MILDRED: Not in front of everyone.

BRAD: No problem.

MILDRED: Not if front of everyone!

SOPHIE: I think he knows best, Mildred.

MILDRED: Get the phone, Sophie!! (*SOPHIE dives for the phone. BRAD sits down abruptly. He and SOPHIE land in a heap.*)

SOPHIE: Oh, my.

HARRIET: You let her go!

BRAD: I can't! She's got her arms wrapped around me.

MILDRED: Sophie! Get up!

SOPHIE: Oh, my.

HARRIET: And get the phone!

SOPHIE: Phone?

MILDRED: Help! Police!!

BRAD: *Quiet! (instant silence)* Now, listen to me. And give me that gun. (*He snatches the gun from HARRIET. The women immediately raise their hands.*) Oh, my god. Will you please put your hands down? (*the hands go down*) All right. I made a mistake. (*they quickly put their hands back up*) Put your hands down, for heaven's sake!

MILDRED: Make up your mind, young man. You just said —

BRAD: Never mind what I just said! Okay? Look, I'm not a bad guy. I just...just... had a little too much...medicine. Oh, boy. Oh, boy, oh boy. I...uh...yeah. I'm pretty sure I beat up some guy. And I took my fiancée's car. Well, my former fiancée's car. Which I think might be in your front yard in the middle of those...were there azaleas?

MILDRED: Were there azaleas? (BRAD crosses to look out the window. HARRIET quickly picks up the phone. BRAD doesn't notice. The others do.)

BRAD: Oh, yeah. They're still there. They're just a little crushed. Anyway, I... um...came in here to sleep it off.

HARRIET: I have to go to the bathroom.

BRAD: Oh, no, you don't.

HARRIET: Oh, yes, I do. Sometimes older women find it necessary to—

BRAD: Okay, Okay. Never mind. Just go. (HARRIET rises to cross Up Left) Wait a minute. You're not going to run screaming for the police, are you?

HARRIET: I'm going to the bathroom. Right in there. (she points Up Left)

BRAD: Okay, Okay. Fine.

(HARRIET heads for the exit Up Left. Behind BRAD's back she proudly shows the phone. The other women react. BRAD glances toward HARRIET. In the nick of time, she ducks out.)

BRAD: Listen, I can replace the azaleas. Which I will do. And I can fix your window. I just had a really bad night. My fiancée left me for an accountant.

MILDRED: My late husband was an accountant. They're very reliable. They make excellent husbands.

BRAD: Well, I'm not an accountant, okay? I'm a writer. And I'm very reliable. In other ways. Sort of.

MILDRED: You drink too much.

BRAD: What are you, my mother? Look, I had a bad night. Okay, I'm not very reliable, but I'm a good guy. I try hard.

SOPHIE: Was it the accountant you popped in the nose?

BRAD: Yeah, I think it was his nose.

SOPHIE: Good for you. Serves him right for taking your girlfriend.

MILDRED: Sophie, violence is never the answer to —

BRAD: I know, I know. Listen, I'm not a violent man.

MILDRED: You're not? You just popped an accountant in the nose, wrecked your former fiancée's car, broke into a private home, and now you're holding three innocent women at gunpoint.

BRAD: Oh. Well, yeah, there's that. But...but...Here, take your gun.

(He gives the gun to SOPHIE, who passes it to MILDRED, who points it at BRAD.)

SOPHIE: Would you like to get dressed?

BRAD: Yes, I would. *(While wrapped in the comforter, he pulls on his pants. Then as they talk, he rises and puts on the rest of his clothes.)* I'm so sorry about all this. It'll never happen again.

MILDRED: I would hope not.

BRAD: *(pulling on his shirt)* Oh-h-h. My head.

MILDRED: Would you like some coffee?

BRAD: That'd be wonderful. Black.

SOPHIE: I'll get it. *(she goes to the kitchen for coffee)*

MILDRED: We have to call the police, you know.

BRAD: Wish you wouldn't.

SOPHIE: *(bringing the coffee)* Do we have to?

MILDRED: I think Harriet already has.

BRAD: Oh, man.

HARRIET: *(returning)* Margaret ran over her cat.

MILDRED/SOPHIE: What?

HARRIET: Phoenix. She ran over him as she was backing out of the driveway. She's hysterical. She can't drive.

SOPHIE: We're not going to Vegas?

HARRIET: Looks that way. Oh. How'd you get the gun?

MILDRED: Did you call the police, Harriet?

HARRIET: Of course I called the police.

BRAD: Damn.

MILDRED: Language.

HARRIET: *(to BRAD)* You're dressed. *(to SOPHIE)* Too bad. *(HARRIET and SOPHIE giggle)*

BRAD: You really called the police?

SOPHIE: I'm going to die without seeing Las Vegas.

MIDRED: You're not going to die, Sophie.

BRAD: Why the...heck...did you have to call the police?

HARRIET: Because you're a criminal?

SOPHIE: Do you know how long I've wanted to go to—

BRAD: Listen, let's make a deal. You let me go, and I'll drive you to Vegas.

SOPHIE: You will?

END OF FREEREAD

You can tell it's quite a wonderful show!