



Getting Naked on TV (It was a good thing)

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I was just thinking I believe this is one of the good things I did in my life, but I'm not sure.

I do not know why I remembered this now. Once upon a time, before my divorce, my art was in an art exhibit in Cambria, California; a beautiful town near Big Sur. One of the guys I met at the exhibit lived in the nearby mountains. I will call him Tom. If my memory is correct, Tom worked at a state park public recreation area, called Hearst Castle. Tom had worked there for many years, maybe even 20 years, at least 15. He had a special prosthetic shoe and a very bad limp because the heel of his foot had been shot off in Vietnam. As the exhibit was in progress, I made friends with him.

One morning, Leslie Freedland, the woman managing the art group running the exhibit, woke me up saying we had to go and help Tom. (I was staying at her house.) She was extremely agitated and said it was an emergency and I had to hurry. She drove us over to his house. She told me the story on the way to his home. Tom was getting a new drug from the VA and acting very strange. Since he had been taking the new drug, he was acting paranoid and crazy.

Leslie was in love with a different Vietnam vet that had begun to act the same way this guy was doing. She was afraid to have the man she loved in her house anymore. The staff at Hearst Castle wouldn't let Tom, who they had worked with for a decade and a half, come to work. They were afraid of Tom now. The Vietnam vet whose house we were on the way to, was in danger of losing his job and everything else he loved. The only reason he hadn't been fired yet, the reason that so far Tom had only been put on medical leave, is because of his many years of friendly continual service. But, now they were afraid of him. All of this because of his very new and very strange changed behavior.

As for this particular day, Tom's beautiful teenage daughter had been in a car accident the night before. Tom became very scary and demanded that she come home and convalesce at home. He even had a medical bed installed in his house. I immediately began to wonder, how did Tom get all that medical stuff in the middle of the night in a rural farming area? Is that the reason the cops are pointing guns at Tom's house?

For some reason the police thought Tom was dangerously crazy. He was locked in his house with weapons, not letting anyone come in. There was a large number of police arranged around his house - - like a Cowboy and Indian movie - - with all their guns pointed at his house. Tom wouldn't talk to them. The police were saying very aggressive stuff on a bullhorn. They were profoundly terrified of Tom. He was really paranoid and wouldn't let anyone come to the house, and he was a good shot. The police were afraid of him. Besides that, he was a combat veteran from Vietnam. I didn't like the way the police were acting.

I could see Tom's wife looking out the window. She was terrified looking at all those guns pointed at her rural wood framed farm house. It was obvious that she knew if they opened fire they would blow the old wood house away, literally!

Thinking of how I could walk through this free fire zone and not get shot by Tom or the cops, I decided to take all my clothes off. Completely naked, I walked nonchalantly to his front door. Some cop on a bullhorn told me I had to stop, but I just flipped him off. That stupid cop was saying a lot of stupid s**t loudly with his bullhorn, making the whole situation very bad. Probably the only reason it hadn't turned into a bloodbath were all the TV vans and press completely around the house filming everything. I casually walk naked across his hundred-yard-long, grass only, lawn.

Tom, my friend and everyone else there could easily see I had no cover, no concealment, and no weapons. Tom knew me, and he easily could see I had no stuff that could threaten him. On the way to his front door I turned around so

that Tom could see all of me. At first Tom made me sit outside on his front porch as he talked to me through a crack in his front door. There I was sitting on his front porch completely naked with a rifle sticking out of the partially open front door pointed at me. Gradually I got Tom to relax. Eventually he let me go in the house. I asked him about his daughter and why he had gotten so freaked out about the situation. However, I was much more diplomatic than that, as I talked to him.

His teenage daughter was in a hospital bed that was in the living room. She was also terrified. I wanted to go in and meet her but I was naked, so the mom got me a pair of Tom's pants, which were much too big for me. Now I am standing by his daughter's hospital bed holding Tom's pants up so they wouldn't fall off. I talked to the girl, him, and the mom, and they relaxed. I tried to help the man, his wife, and his daughter.

While I was inside talking to his family, his wife and daughter said that he was on a new medication that was making him crazy. He disagreed vehemently. He tripped my trigger when he said the drug only let him get a good night's sleep. So I asked the guy what the name of the drug was. He had a bottle of them in his pocket and he showed it to me. I was surprised he had a bottle of that drug in his pocket, and asked him why. His wife told me he never went anywhere without that drug and Tom told me the doctor told him he should take one every time he felt bad.

I had also been on that medication for a short time. A woman I knew very well, she and I were writing a book together, came to my house one morning, so that we could work on our book together. She just stared at me when I opened my front door. Then she ran away. I did not know why she ran away without saying a word. She stopped and stood on the opposite side of the street and yelled across the street at me. "Are you taking a new medication?" Her ex-husband had been a combat vet also. The man had become a drug addict mostly from the stuff he was getting from the VA. Now, she was a single mom working at a halfway house helping women with drug addiction, abuse, and other serious problems. I said yes

I was. She asked me what it was? I told her the name. She got in her car and drove away. In a short time she came back with a medical book describing all of the drugs that were on the market. She sat the book on my front step with a rock holding it open to the page about my drug's side effects. She rang the doorbell and ran back across the street. I came out pissed off and asked her what she was doing. She was being stupid running away from me because we knew each other very well. I had not done anything to frighten her in any way. Her only reply was to forcefully say read that page! Repeatedly “read that page”.

So I sat down on my front steps and read her pills book. I read a page and a half, about the drug I was taking. It described that the drug gave side effects of paranoid schizophrenic blah, blah, blah s**t. There were a lot of Vets going crazy at that time. The press called it going postal. My friend said that I was going postal. I denied that I had any mental problem. I told her the drug only helps me get a good night's sleep. She said that I was addicted to the drugs and she wanted to see them. She worked in a halfway house, helping people get their lives back together and get off of drugs, and all their bad relationships. After a time, she started walking closer to me crossing the street, never getting within reach of me, but I didn't have to yell across my 3 lane wide street anymore. If I would show her the bottle, she would know how strong it was. I brought the bottle out. I'd only been on them for two or three days. The doctor that gave them to me at the VA said they would help me sleep. I thought they did help me sleep.

My children, who were very small then, came outside, because they saw Joan and they knew her and liked her very much. They agreed with Joan, chiming in with their opinion that I wasn't sleeping well. Joan read the stuff on the bottle and said it was a really strong dose of a really bad drug. I said, “So what!? They help me sleep!” She said she could prove I was addicted to the drugs, and I said no I am not! Oh!? Ok! How will you prove I am addicted? She said, simply, throw them away. On the curb not far from where I was sitting was a grate in the street for water to drain when it rained. She said dump it in there. I tried to dump them but I couldn't do it. When I couldn't do it I knew I was addicted, as Joan had said. I

started crying. Sitting on the curb by the grate in the street I couldn't stop crying. Joan sat next to me, took my hand in her hand and moved my hand to dump the pills in the drain. I realized how lucky I was to know her and that she was probably saving my sanity, even my life.

Tom had the very same drug that f****d me up after only three days. He had been on it for over two weeks. I told him that the drugs are making him crazy and that's why the cops were pointing guns at his house. If they started shooting up his house, they would shoot up his wife and daughter. I told Tom she was a very beautiful teenage girl. It would be a shame to have her dead because he was addicted to a bullshit drug. Tom said he wasn't addicted. So I told him I could prove he was addicted - - exactly the way Joan had shown me. I took him into the bathroom. We sat by the toilet. I told him to dump them in and flush the toilet. He realized he couldn't do it and that he was addicted to a drug that was making him crazy. So I helped Tom empty the bottle into the toilet and flushed it. He sat on the floor next to the toilet and cried and cried. I went out to his wife and said, did he have any more of this crap? She got a whole bunch of different bottles. She told me she didn't know what they were. I didn't know what they were either, so I dumped everything into the toilet. That was the end of my involvement inside Tom's house with his family's story. I am sad to say I never saw any of those three people again.

I went out the front door and walked to where my clothes were and put them all on. By now there were hundreds of news crews and people standing all around his property. I put my clothes back on and talked to Leslie, who was running the art exhibit that I was in. She was friends with this man and I told her what I knew about the drug. I also told her that I had disposed of all of his drugs. He might go through withdrawal but he will not go crazy from it anymore. What he needed now would be to detox, maybe with a good doctor. I told her all of that as loud as I could so all of the Press could hear, and I told the cops to go away. After I pointed out to the guy with the bullhorn that one decorated combat warrior could probably take out all of his men, he decided they could just go home. That

was a good thing. The cop with the bullhorn was a fool that had never been in combat in his life.

That night at the Art exhibit a whole lot of press people, like paparazzi, wanted to talk with me about the incident. It had made big news in this rural California farm community. I got rather famous on California TV for walking into the house naked. I was really buff back then, very athletic. I wish I had a copy of that film and video footage to remind me of what I used to be. Also to prove that I really did this, some people don't think I did it.

The number of women that showed up at the museum and gallery after my television debut filled the gallery. They all seemed to want to get to know me in very physical ways. That was sweet and fun. Ha ha ha! Women filled the gallery telling me how good I looked naked, and wanted me to get naked again real soon with them. It's been so long I almost forgot about that and I do wish it would happen to me again right now. Later there was a TV show where there was a similar standoff in a small mall when a cop took all his clothes off and walked in and chilled out the whole scene just like I had done. I am sure that I was the inspiration for that TV scene. I think that's one of the good things I did in life - - I defused a potentially very violent misunderstanding.