

Book of Revelations

*A self-involved woman denies what's
right in front of her despite the clues.*

A 10-Minute Comedy

By Richard Fouts

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JO, female, any race, age 30-40.

SUSAN, female, any race, age 30-40.

JASON, male, any race, age 18-25.

TIME AND PLACE

Early 2016

A townhouse in New York City

(JO and SUSAN are standing in a living room with several packed boxes and some oversized pieces of antique furniture.)

SUSAN

So what's left?

JO

Just divvying up her antiques.

SUSAN

Oh, you take them. We sold Hancock Park ... and none of this works in a Malibu beach house.

JO

Or my tiny apartment. Should we donate them?

SUSAN

Hey, how about an auction! Hell, my neighbor paid four hundred grand for David Bowie's shitty Volvo. Did Angela have a car? People drop oodles of cash for dead-celebrity shit.

JO

Must you .. refer to Angela that way?

SUSAN

As a dead celebrity? What's wrong with that? And why are you wearing those shoes? Don't you want to get married?

JO

You're insufferable.

SUSAN

And you're in denial. It's not like she can hear us.

JO

You don't know that.

SUSAN

(looking up at the ceiling)

Angela, you cool being called a dead celebrity?

(to JO)

Brace yourself Jo, she said yes.

(SUSAN looks inside an open box, picks up a black and red journal.)

SUSAN

(with surprise)

Are these her journals? There must be five dozen of them in here.

JO

More like six ... and put that down!

(Ignoring JO, SUSAN, opens a journal and starts to read.)

SUSAN

Jo, listen to this. *Maria called last night to tell me she's leaving him. She sounded confident, until I reminded her /*

JO

You can't read that, it's private!

SUSAN

Oh please, everyone knows Arnold fucked her over.

JO

Not the point. They belong to Jason now.

SUSAN

(closes the journal)

Oh what does an 18-year-old kid want with his mother's old journals? Did she leave any instructions?

JO

None. But you should at least ask him, he'll be here soon, called me from the train.

SUSAN

Jason's joining us at *The Writer's Guild* tonight?

JO

They asked him to speak. And, while he's here we can talk about this auction idea and .. a few other things.

SUSAN

Oh all right, Jesus, you're controlling.

(pause)

Oh my God, we're so lame. Did I ever tell you what McMillan paid for Susan Sontag's journals?

JO

It was never disclosed.

SUSAN

Almost three million. Jon said the number accidentally slipped out when he was negotiating *The Hunger Games*. He knows all the players over there. If Sontag's shit fetched two bills, they'd pay four to five for Angela. Imagine if Jon could get a bidding war going with *Vanity Fair* and *The New Yorker*!

JO

Susan stop. New York publishers have iron-clad terms. No redactions, no omissions, or the deal's off. It's all-or-nothing.

SUSAN

How do you know?

(pause)

Why .. you sneaky little bitch. Did you /

JO

Oh all right, I tested the waters with Simon & Schuster. They *alluded* to ... 4 million.

SUSAN

THAT was their starting point? What'd you say?

JO

I thanked them and said we'd circle back.

SUSAN

Jo, let my husband take the lead on this. Jon will propose 10, close at seven ... AND soften the terms.

JO

Did you hear me? If even one word is blacked out they walk. Susan, I'm trying to protect you.

SUSAN

FROM WHAT! My story's in a dozen Hollywood documentaries, my trip to rehab is common knowledge, so are my two arrests, not to mention that whole scene with Oliver Stone. Honey, I'm more outdated than the ladies of *The View*.

JO

Then what about me? Or Jon? Did you think about ... Jon?

SUSAN

Oh please, Angela never even asked about him, not one time, actually told me she found him a little dull, a Jonny-one-note. Yet you think these books contain something juicy or scandalous about him? Why? Why would you think that?

JO

Just wait for Jason, will you please? And why is everything about money with you?

SUSAN

Because everything IS about money. And why would your boring little life be in here? What could Angela possibly have said about you that would /

JO

My annulment with Dylan?

SUSAN

Oh honey, you were underage, Dad did what he had to do. Angela was six or seven at the time, she probably didn't even remember, or care.

JO

You don't know that!

SUSAN

So read the goddamn journals! If there's anything in here, that you feel would be embarrassing, I'll get my PR guy to draft a proactive, damage-control-plan. He calls it getting in front of the story, which means /

JO

I know what it means, I'm not an idiot, even though you seem to think I am.

SUSAN

And here's another thing. Angela called me just before she boarded that plane in Tokyo. She said she was going to stop in LA to talk to me about something.

JO

I know.

SUSAN

You do? Then what was it?

JO

I have no idea, she just told me she was stopping in LA before heading back to New York, to ... see you.

SUSAN

And you know absolutely nothing about ... what it was about?

JO

No, Susan. I don't.

SUSAN

Well, whatever it was, it's probably in here. Let's start with 2015.

(SUSAN goes into a box but JO pulls her away)

JO

SUSAN NO.

SUSAN

Why? What are you not telling me?

(We hear keys jangling at the door. JASON enters the stage in jeans and a t-shirt, carrying a garment bag.)

JASON

Sorry I'm late, train got jammed in ... Aunt Suzy you actually came! S'up Aunt Joey? Cool shoes.

(JASON and SUSAN embrace. When SUSAN tries to let go, JASON won't let her.)

JASON

I'm so glad you came, are you still in shock?

SUSAN

Honey, it's a celebration of life. Now, how's school? You enjoying Princeton?

JASON

Fuck no, I hate it so I quit ... and I *ain't* going back.

JO

Jason, your mother pulled some ... questionable strings to get you into that school, you can't just quit.

JASON

Aunt Suzy, with all that's gone down, shouldn't I live in California ... with you?

JO

Jason, you shouldn't make a big decision in the wake of a family tragedy. Did something happen at school?

SUSAN

Oh lay off, I think it's a lovely idea.

JO

Jason, they're in Malibu now, and hideous as it was, I know how much you loved their mansion in Hancock Park.

JASON

Only 'cause I lost my virginity there. Oh man, is there no room for me at the beach?

SUSAN

Please, we still have thousands of rooms, Jo, bless her heart, just wanted you to know you won't have your own ... wing. But, you will have your own entrance.

JASON

That's insane. And I can ... make up for lost time. Our California visits were way too short. And now ...

SUSAN

Jon will be over-the-moon. He always says how much he misses you.

JASON

Wow, you're taking this really well! I thought you'd be more fucked up.

SUSAN

Honey, I'm the strong one!

JASON

Strong? Hell, you're step mother of the century!

SUSAN

(taking JASON in her arms)

Is that how you think of me now? Oh, get over here.

JASON

(sadly)

Oh man, you packed Mom's journals. Thanks for doin' that, I really appreciate it.

JO

Have you thought about what you want to do them?

JASON

Probably burn them. They're like, super-private.

SUSAN

But, Jason, they belong to the world. They reveal your mother's process, insight into her relationships and ... numerous playmates. Honey, there's not a soul in this business she didn't touch /

JO

WHAT Susan is trying to say, is that your ... UNCLE JON has experience with these types of deals ... and these journals could have a commercial value of ... I don't know ... four million dollars?

JASON

Shut the fuck up, four big ones? For Mom's diaries?

SUSAN

Or more, if we let Jon take the lead.

JASON

And he's okay ... with people knowing ...

SUSAN

Honey, there are ways to deal with family secrets ... that are being revealed for the first time. Leave that to me.

JASON

I'm okay with people knowing Uncle Jon's my father if that's what you're worried about.

SUSAN

Oh honey, where did that come from? Your Uncle Jon isn't /

JASON

Aunt Jo? You said you were going to tell her!

JO

Well, I didn't!

JASON

But

JO

I wanted us to do it together! Like I said in my voicemail?

JASON

Who listens to fucking voicemail?

SUSAN

I KNEW IT.

JASON

What?

JO

What?

SUSAN

You have Jon's eyes ... Christ, his whole goddamn face! I confronted him about it, a couple of times, but he just laughed it off, so I let it go.

(slowly)

Jason, how long have you known?

JASON

Mom told me the week after my 13th birthday.

SUSAN

FIVE YEARS? Jo?

JO

She told me as she left for Japan. Jon has known since before Jason was born.

SUSAN

Oh this is fucking perfect. Susan Connor, the clueless wife that *had a clue*, but was gaslighted by HER WHOLE FAMILY.

JO

Angela and Jon were afraid of what you'd do. We all were.

SUSAN

(sheepishly)

Jason, are you afraid of me?

JASON

You can be a little scary. But, I nagged Mom for years to tell you. God, you remember last Christmas, when I fucked up royally, and called him *Dad* ... instead of .. Uncle Jon?

SUSAN

I remember he cried. (*beat*) Guess you all a good laugh at my expense!

JASON

Aunt Suzy ... please don't be pissed at me.

SUSAN

Oh Jason, if it hadn't happened we wouldn't have you. And I wouldn't trade you for *anything*. I just don't understand why Jon would carry such a secret all these years. He knows he can tell me anything.

JO

Angela swore us to secrecy. She thought she was doing what was best for everybody. Susan, if it helps ...

SUSAN

... it's why she was coming to see me.

JO

She and Jon had planned on telling you then. It's also why ..

SUSAN

.. they ignored each other at family gatherings. Hell, THAT is always the first clue. I really am an idiot.

JASON

I don't know about that, but I **do** know Mom would want you to forgive us.

SUSAN

I already have, it was a long time ago, and I haven't exactly been the dutiful wife, we've had an open relationship for years. Even boinked his cousin so I guess we're even. Jason, darling, when you're older I'll explain /

JASON

I know about open relationships, I'm 18 ... and I go to Princeton, or at least I did.

SUSAN

You can transfer to UCLA ... or just hang with me at the beach, meet some pretty California girls, have open relationships and enjoy life of the rich and famous.

JASON

So ... what do I call you, now that ... you're my Aunt Step Mother and Jon is my ... Uncle Dad?

SUSAN

We'll sort it all out .. after I call Lesley Stahl, she'll love this. And Jo, pack your bags, you're moving to Malibu.

JO

I thought you'd never ask. What about Jon?

SUSAN

Jon will submit to whatever I want, for the rest of his life. Oh this is fabulous. Now call Simon & Schuster and tell them we won't take a dime under ten million. I'm in charge now.

END OF PLAY