

IT'S GOOD FOR YOU

by

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Cast:

Jacob Porter..... Male, mid-20s.

Angelique..... Female, 20s-60s. An Angel of Death.

Time: The present.

Place: Mid-air, 20 feet below the deck of the Golden Gate Bridge

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(Lights up on open space, about 20 feet below the deck of the Golden Gate Bridge. Jacob has just jumped, but is suspended in space and time. Angelique is watching from the side, holding a clipboard. Jacob cannot see her.)

JACOB

Ahhh! No no no! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I...

(Notices his situation)

What the hell?

(Looks up)

What. The. Hell?!?

(Looks down)

Oh my God.

(Tries to reach bridge above him, but cannot)

Come on. Come on!

Please. I don't want to die.

What the hell is going on!?

ANGELIQUE

(Becomes visible)

I wouldn't do that if I were you, darlin'.

JACOB

Ahhh! Who the hell are you?!

ANGELIQUE

A word of advice, *cooyon*. Someone in your situation shouldn't be using the h-word as much as you are.

JACOB

But...but...oh my God.

ANGELIQUE

(Consults clipboard)

Jacob Porter?

JACOB

Yes. Who are you?

ANGELIQUE

Je m'appelle Angelique.

JACOB

Juhmapelle?

ANGELIQUE

No, that's...you've never studied French, have you?

JACOB

No.

ANGELIQUE

Angelique will be fine, darlin'.

JACOB

Are you an angel?!

ANGELIQUE

How did you know?

JACOB

The name sort of gives it away.

ANGELIQUE

That's what my boss always says.

JACOB

Wow. I don't believe it. I mean, I learned all about angels and stuff in church growing up, but to see an actual angel. Right here. Sent to save me in my hour of need.

ANGELIQUE

Actually—

JACOB

I thought that church stuff was a lot of crap. But don't worry! I promise I'll go to Mass every Sunday after this.

ANGELIQUE

Good. But—

JACOB

And every Holy Day of Obligation. And I'll go to confession. I'm so sorry I jumped. I really am.

ANGELIQUE

(Consulting clipboard)

Merde!

JACOB

What?

ANGELIQUE

I'm five seconds early.

JACOB

Huh?

ANGELIQUE

You haven't hit the water yet. We're not supposed to pull the target out of Time until the actual moment of death.

JACOB

Wait...what sort of angel are you?

ANGELIQUE

Why now?!

(To Jacob)

Please don't file a complaint!

JACOB

With who?

ANGELIQUE

Not that that would make any difference. Not with Constantine.

JACOB

Excuse me...what are you talking about?

ANGELIQUE

Don—my boss—Don is retiring as AOD.

Don would always overlook stuff like this, but if Constantine replaces him...

(Beat)

Never mind, *petit garçon*.

JACOB

I don't understand. What's an "AOD"?

ANGELIQUE

You don't need to worry about that.

JACOB

AOD? Angel of...oh my God!

ANGELIQUE
Now, darlin', don't get excited.

JACOB
Are you...the angel of...of...

ANGELIQUE
Death?

JACOB
Yeah.

ANGELIQUE
No.

JACOB
Well, then, what—

ANGELIQUE
Not *The* Angel of Death. That's my boss. I'm a sub-Angel of Death.

JACOB
Stay away.

ANGELIQUE
I mean, technically we all have the same title. But Don—his real name is Abaddon, but everyone calls him Don—Don is the one who shows up in all the paintings. And, as I said, he's retiring.

(Beat)
We should get this over with.

JACOB
No!

ANGELIQUE
Actions have consequences, *cooyon*. For both of us.

JACOB
I promise! I promise! I don't want to die.

ANGELIQUE
You did a moment ago.

JACOB
I'm a fool. Losing my girlfriend. Getting fired from my job. All that is fixable. I can see that now.

ANGELIQUE

Yes, yes. That is all *très* trivial compared to the problem that is before you now.

JACOB

Exactly.

ANGELIQUE

Every person who jumps off the Golden Gate Bridge says exactly the same thing.

JACOB

Really?

ANGELIQUE

I'll see you in five seconds.

(Prepares to snap fingers)

JACOB

Wait wait wait! What about Constantine?

ANGELIQUE

What about him?

JACOB

Is he also a...you know...

ANGELIQUE

Yes.

JACOB

Could I talk to him? Maybe he'd be willing to—

ANGELIQUE

(Laughs)

Oh, *cooyon*. You're so cute. No. You don't want to talk to Constantine. He's not nearly as nice as I am. And now that I've messed this up...

(Beat)

At one point, Constantine and I were both in the running to replace Don. But I'll never be AOD with another one of these on my record. And the first thing Constantine will do, after he gets the job, is demote me. Probably to be guardian angel to some religious hermit somewhere. Do you have any idea how extremely dull that is?!

JACOB

I'm sorry.

ANGELIQUE

Oh, it's all right, *mon petit chou*. For you. Though not so much for San Francisco. Constantine likes earthquakes. Quite a bit.

Ready?

JACOB

Well...what if I don't die?

ANGELIQUE

Darlin', the odds of surviving, especially with your heart condition, are very, very small.

JACOB

Heart condition?

ANGELIQUE

(Consults clipboard)

By the way, you have a heart condition.

JACOB

So just transport me back to the bridge.

ANGELIQUE

That really would get me in trouble.

JACOB

Well, you're never going to get a promotion with that attitude.

ANGELIQUE

I beg your pardon?

JACOB

If you want a promotion, you need to be aggressive. Break the rules.

ANGELIQUE

Really.

JACOB

Maybe we could help each other.

ANGELIQUE

How could you help me?

JACOB

Uh...

I'm thinking... (Beat)
 (Angelique prepares to snap fingers)
 Wait wait wait! I know! A rebranding!

ANGELIQUE
 Of what?

JACOB
 Death!

ANGELIQUE
 Really, *cooyon*.

JACOB
 Sure, why not? It's like...the Death card in Tarot. It doesn't actually mean "death". It means "transformation."

ANGELIQUE
 That's a playing card.

JACOB
 Rather than having near-death be a transformative experience for those few who, by chance, experience it, why not make it into a more general experience.

ANGELIQUE
 And use you as a test case?

JACOB
 Exactly. Just make sure I don't die, and I promise that I'll live a rich and fulfilling life. I'll be a better person. I'll go to church. Give to charity.

ANGELIQUE
 You could be nicer to your younger brother.

JACOB
 I'll let Jason borrow my truck whenever he needs it.
 (Angelique looks at him)
 And I'll stop making fun of his sculptures.

ANGELIQUE
 Well...

JACOB
 Come on. What do you have to lose?

ANGELIQUE

There are worse things than being a guardian angel, *cooyon*. Still...it might work. We wouldn't want to do it all the time.

JACOB

No. Of course not.

ANGELIQUE

Maybe once every fifteen, twenty years or so? People would nearly die, an AOD would save them, but not before they've had a profound, life-changing experience.

JACOB

It would be good for people. Oh!

ANGELIQUE

What?

JACOB

I have your slogan: "Death. It's Good For You."

ANGELIQUE

I could tell them saving you was the plan all along.

JACOB

They'll respect your boldness.

ANGELIQUE

Don did invent the new Death card, so I suppose—

JACOB

Your boss invented the "transformation" meaning of the Death card?

ANGELIQUE

Yes! It used to mean, well, just "death". But Don had this idea, and it took off.

JACOB

Then you have to do it. Save me. Say you used the Death card as inspiration. Don will love it.

ANGELIQUE

Constantine hated the new Death card. He's very literal.

(Beat)

He'll be so mad if this works.

JACOB

So you'll do it?

ANGELIQUE

Yes. Yes I will. Oh! I could do what's-her-name...

(Flips through clipboard)

Carmela. I could do Carmela Sanchez next—

JACOB

Wait...who?!

ANGELIQUE

She lives in Mexico City. I'm supposed to take her eight seconds from now. But I bet if she survives that auto accident, she'll finish that novel she's been working on. What the hell. I'll do it!

(Beat)

Oops. I mean. *Oui*, I'll do it.

JACOB

Wait! What about me?!

ANGELIQUE

Don't worry, *cooyon*, I'm going to save you too. But you should learn Spanish. Her novel will be worth it.

JACOB

Heart condition. Mass. Be nice to Jason. Learn Spanish.

ANGELIQUE

And promise me you'll get your bipolar disorder looked at as well.

(Beat. Consults clipboard)

By the way, you have bipolar disorder.

JACOB

I promise.

ANGELIQUE

Très bien.

(Readies to snap fingers)

Ready?

JACOB

Wait...you're going to put me back on the bridge, right?

ANGELIQUE

I'm not the Angel of Quantum Physics, darlin'. You jumped. That happened. The only difference is, now I'll make sure you survive.

JACOB

But I thought—

ANGELIQUE

Don't worry. I promise you'll be fine. You shouldn't be in the hospital for more than a month. Maybe six weeks. *Au revoir!*

(Angelique snaps fingers. Jacob screams and "falls" offstage)

JACOB

Ahhhhhh!!!!

(Lights down)

THE END