



# CHAPTER 11

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## MEET JOHN DOE

Aug beamed as he walked/limped across the showroom floor. He smiled at the salespeople and staff that he knew. The salespeople and staff on the floor smiled back. The salespeople knew and liked him. Aug came off as a stable and mature offset to some of Jocelyn's antics. Well, normally stable. Any decked-out male who had been decked in the eye doesn't appear as stable.

The staff really didn't care that much about J's antics. In fact, they kind of welcomed them. What else would one expect from car salespeople? The antics also drew in customers to see both the sow and the show, and the hardest part of selling a new car is getting customers into the showroom. Jocy did her part, and she helped, instead of hindering, their sales. She was happy to help other salespeople increase their commission. The male and female customers were either thrilled or shocked by her activities in the showroom. If the customers were turned off by what they saw, their eyes were averted to the product at hand ("Just ignore it"). If they were turned on by it, they ate it up and wanted more.

Aug made it to the coffee area. He poured himself a cup of joe and also procured a chocolate-covered donut. The receptionist could barely look him in the eye. Her youth and immaturity made seeing a relationship such as Aug and Jocelyn shared a source of titillation beyond compare for her.

Island car dealership pulls out all the stops for the customers. Discount on haircuts are offered. Customers can buy gasoline at a discount from the dealership. A gym for pumping iron has been built for customers to work out in while waiting for vehicles to be fixed. And a small theater exists where classic movies are shown to keep other customers entertained while they wait.

Aug happened to enter the theater as *Meet John Doe* started. He groaned. The start of the movie dismayed him because the film was a black-and-white movie. Aug had a distaste for black-and-white films. This distaste had been fostered by seeing *It's A Wonderful Life* every Christmas when he was younger. It was not a "wonderful life." All the angels in the world cannot appease the loneliness a parentless child feels during the whole holiday period when the child has no direct family to celebrate with.

The more he watched though, the more he became engrossed in the flick. Parallels and opposites relative to his current situation appeared in his mind.

John Doe was a fictional character who was going to commit suicide on Christmas Eve to protest the love gone out of the world. He was created by a fake letter to the editor of a newspaper by a female reporter who had just been axed. The reporter was Ann although she could have been named And. Ann was a modern woman for the Depression era, and she struggled with the concept of "anding." The letter dealt with how love and neighborliness had gone out of the world. How the state of civilization had fallen. How we live in a modern world of social and political injustice. The letter was signed, "John Doe." The fake letter was published.

The public bought into the con. The struggling newspaper found they were playing with dynamite. Fireworks were provided for all. Unto them a savior was born. The savior was John Doeism. It is always so easy for the public to find personal relief trying to save a single person versus saving mass quantities of people. It is always so easy to find personal belief in a single person versus belief in oneself. Belief is abdication and absolution from responsibility.

The John Doe con expanded into John Doe societies. John Doe societies expressed a philosophy that all we need to do is to change how we act toward one another and the problems of the world will go away. Except that there ultimately needs to be a powerful person with the vision of salvation for all John Does to follow. The John Doe con surreptitiously expanded into John Doe societies

organized to ultimately elect a wealthy industrialist to the office of president of the United States.

The industrialist headed a cabal of the wealthy. The cabal observed the charisma that John Doe possessed over the public. Media charisma is a conniving tool that can be used to an advantage. The charisma of John Doe both could not and could be purchased. The initial love of John Doe by the public could not be purchased. But the manipulation of the love and the personality of John Doe could be purchased. The purchase price is the price of belief.

Gary Cooper played the out-of-work nobody hired to be John Doe. He was warned by his friend the Colonel not to play along with the game. That playing the con game will eventually chew him up and spit him out. If you play the game, you become a helot. A helot is a person with a bank account. Once you have a bank account, then your heels need a lot and a lotta heels come after you. And that is what happens to John Doe. John Doe is the world's greatest stooge.

All John Doe wanted was a loving wife and a good life and a family. But he had a decision to make. He could sell his principles and accept that path as the only life he has to live, or he can do what he believes to be right. Accepting one path means a fine home and money to live in public happiness. Public happiness did not mean personal happiness. He could not happily live with himself as a tool for others. His choice was to expose the con. But in exposing the con, he exposes himself as a fraud, and the public turns on him. He decided to do what is right. He decided to commit suicide on Christmas Eve as John Doe had originally said he would do.

All John Doe had ever wanted to be was a good family man. For this prodigal son, it had not worked. Life got in the way.

Aug aspired to have a happy family life. His parents had not been too close to each other, and his cousins had all viewed him as the kid whose parents were killed. Year after year, he watched family get-togethers by seemingly everyone else while he did not get to enjoy this feeling. He was a mutt. He was a John Doe in the world.

The attempt to start a family tragically failed. He met Laurie during his senior year in college. She was modeling for promotional photos for local advertising campaigns when they met. She thought he was cute, and he was knocked out by

her wit and charm. Their marriage and move to Florida and the start of Trove had been the happiest of times for him.

Laurie's blackouts began shortly after that. Her heart would not speed up when physical exertion began. Her head would lay limp on her shoulder during her waking periods. Despite this, they tried to have children. They were unsuccessful. Life got in the way.

Besides the failure to have a family, to further his life, he bought into the con. He enjoyed the life it had brought him, but the con came with a price. The price was Jack Dough.

Aug thought he had escaped the political and social injustice of the world. He played the game and was rewarded. He enjoyed the lifestyle. And now he was to be rewarded again by being set up to take a fall. Some people who play the game end up on top, and some are made to fall on their swords. He had escaped nothing.

Well, Aug was not going to fall on his sword for nothing. Maybe he was planning to commit suicide like John Doe planned to. Maybe he wouldn't get the wealthy industrialist. But he wouldn't go down alone.

He now realized that no one could ever have a simple life. He was deluded by himself. It was a delusion like all the other *ism* delusions. Capitalism, socialism, fascism, communism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Islamism, and all the other *isms* in the world are necessary delusions in the process of evolution toward individualism. There is always an "I" in every *ism*. The *ism* promoted feeds the benefit of the individuals promoting their *ism*. A proclivity for following other *isms* leaves one vulnerable to the schism of *ism* through myopism. Aug knew that every other *ism* but individualism was jism.

*Jack Dough*, he thought. He realized now that the nom de plume was a play on the name of John Doe. How phony but how fitting a con for a con man? Aug felt that he personally was more of a John Doe than Jack Dough ever would be. Yet he knew that in the end, both of their strings were ultimately pulled by wealthy industrialists. And he had to accept that they were both being told to take the terrible tumble.

Aug watched and waited and wondered to himself. Just what could be keeping Jocelyn so busy? He was also more curious than ever: would the doughboys ever meet?