



Confessions
of a
**Demented
Housewife**



The
Celebrity Year

'Witty and definitely
one to make
mothers smile'
Woman's Way

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Confessions of a Demented Housewife
by
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Annual review of life goals

Have made enormous progress in my spiritual growth since last year. In fact, I have achieved such a high level of self-awareness that I may no longer need to watch *Dr Phil* every morning. (A huge breakthrough.)

Life lessons learnt in past twelve months

- (a) *Other people cannot complete me.* Having a semi-affair with Lone Father from the mother-and-toddler group was a big mistake – especially as he turned out to be a love-rat who had no real feelings for me. Luckily I have not thought about him or his saucy sex texts in weeks. Instead I have made peace with his manipulative two-timing ways and wish him well in all his future endeavours – such as writing a ridiculous tell-all book about his secret liaisons with a married housewife.
- (b) *Joe is the perfect husband and I must appreciate him more.* It was very handy when he blamed himself for forcing me into the arms of another man, then forgave me when I wrongly accused him of romping with his secretary in L.A.

Plus he bought Mum and Dad's old house so we now have a private country retreat, just like Madonna and Guy. (Range Rover and tweed flat caps to follow).

- (c) *Chicken-fillet push-up bras and false acrylic nails are apparently the key to a man's heart.* Lone Father's new lover/muse, Marita, swears by them.

Goals for next twelve months

- Find my Core Self. (NB Investigate what this actually involves and whether doing anything practical to achieve life goals is absolutely necessary.)
- Reignite the passion between Joe and me. We may have moved to a whole new relationship level after our recent rocky patch but we must make sure not to stray off the path of marital harmony and bliss again. (NB It will probably be important to avoid engaging in inappropriate mother-and-toddler group liaisons at all costs. It may also be crucial to invest in skimpy new underwear sets and ditch all well-washed granny pants that come to the navel ASAP.)
- Ensure that Katie and Jack are emotionally secure and intellectually challenged at all times. Specifically, make sure they both settle into the education system without serious incident. (NB Jack violently attacking his playschool teacher with a Magic Marker counts as a serious incident.)
- Help Very Best Friend Louise accept her impending single-mother status and act as a maternal mentor. This should be easy – we have become much closer after the little spat we had when she prioritized her relationship with a total loser over her decades-old friendship with me. Our new-found closeness may be helped by the fact that the total loser, a.k.a. her ex Steve, dumped her and high-tailed it like a bat out of hell once he got wind of her

surprise pregnancy. It may also have helped that she has packed on a disproportionately large amount of weight for a first pregnancy and now looks frumpy and hard-done-by instead of groomed and polished to within an inch of her life. *And* she will probably develop stretchmarks in unusual places – so we have much more in common than we ever did before.

- Persuade Mum and Dad that relocating to a plush five-star resort in Portugal was an unwise decision and that they would be much happier back here, looking after their grandchildren like normal pensioners. (NB Do not entice them home until we have taken an extended break in the sun ourselves.)
- Keep Joe's mother, Mrs H, at arm's length – should be quite easy as she'll have no real excuse to drop by for coffee unannounced now that both children will be at school. (NB May consider installing hi-tech surveillance CCTV outside house just in case).
- Learn to love my body. Luckily the size-zero obsession is on the wane and there have been loads of celebs-in-bikinis specials in *Heat* with really unflattering pics of unsuspecting A-listers letting it all hang out on the beach. Which means that the pounds I packed on over the summer are nothing to be embarrassed about. (Bonus: smock tops are hot for autumn/winter so I no longer have to worry about exposing my jelly belly over the waistband of my knock-off Rock and Republic jeans.)

It looks like quite a lot when it's written down, but if I got through last year's little difficulties, I'm sure I can easily achieve it all.

1 September: Back to School

Hectic morning. If it continues like this I don't think I'll make it to half-term (worryingly, only eight weeks away, according to the handout from school – which cannot possibly be right).

Skidded up to the school gates just before nine and saw all the other mothers huddled round, whispering among themselves as a massive Range Rover Sport, with blackened windows, pulled away from the kerb.

'What's up?' I asked, wondering why they seemed so shell-shocked.

'It's Angelica Law,' a mother breathed, looking like she needed a stiff drink. 'Her little boy started today.'

'Who's Angelica Law?' I was mystified.

All the other mothers tittered in disbelief.

'Only the wife of James Law,' one piped up. 'The gorgeous American actor? He's here to shoot the new Noel Jordache film so they've relocated to Dublin for the year.'

My heart almost stopped. The son of a properly famous person, not just a Z-list celeb, was going to be in Katie's class, maybe even sitting beside her. This was big. This was HUGE. How had I not known about it? I should have been in serious celebrity training all summer, preparing to dazzle a real A-lister with my wit and glamour. Instead, I'd been lounging around eating Doritos all day and counting the hours until the kids were back at school.

'If we're lucky we'll get to see him in the flesh,' another mother was saying.

'Oh, God.' Someone sighed. 'I hope so – he's sex on legs.' Then they all dissolved into girlish giggles.

Called Joe on the way home to tell him the amazing news.

‘I hope the school’s going to take the necessary precautions,’ he said, sounding worried.

‘What do you mean “precautions”?’ I asked. Maybe he thought we were going to be frisked every morning for hidden cameras or secret recording devices – just like they do at *Hello!* celebrity weddings to stop guests leaking gossip to the press.

‘Well, if this actor guy’s such a big shot, his child could be ripe for kidnapping. The school will have to be very security-conscious. Does he have a bodyguard?’

‘Ooh, I don’t know!’ I said, thrilled at the very idea that a six-foot SAS muscleman in dark glasses could be sitting in on class every day, a walkie-talkie and a Smith & Wesson in his pockets.

I hung up the phone, floating on cloud nine. Having the real-life child of a superstar around will be fantastic. Now all I have to do is cultivate a friendship with celebrity Mom Angelica Law and get myself invited to the best parties in town. May well have to sex up my wardrobe just in case she takes an instant shine to me. Polo-necks and bootlegs will definitely not cut the mustard on *E! Red Carpet Style*.

PS Called Louise to fill her in on the latest celeb-watching news but it went to voicemail. Was probably for the best – suspect she wants to pin me down about being her birth partner and I’m kind of regretting agreeing to it.

2 September

Hung around the school gate for a bit, trying to spot celebrity Mom Angelica Law, but eventually admitted defeat when the playground emptied and I was the only one left. Went home and decided to watch a snippet of *Oprah* before I

tackled finding my Core Self. Was sorry I did – nearly choked on my mid-morning snack when a grim doctor snapped on an extra long pair of rubber gloves, then casually laid a diseased bowel on a slab so that he, Oprah and the studio audience could have a really good look at it. They then proceeded to talk about how farting is a natural condition and vital for good health. I was appalled. It put me right off my blueberry muffin.

Felt a bit down in the dumps for the rest of the morning, but tried to remind myself that I should be giddy with excitement that I am now free to do *whatever I want* for three whole hours every day. The possibilities are endless. Maybe I could become a bestselling author – everyone knows those chick-lit novels are dead easy to write. Or I could start hosting at-home lingerie parties and make serious cash.

To distract myself, devised my grand plan to befriend Angelica. Am desperate to get a good look at her close up – word at the school gate is that she has the skin of a teenager and the booty to match.

Project Angelica

- Hang around school gate, looking glamorous and approachable. (NB May need to invest in chemical peel and/or tummy tuck ASAP.)
- Engage wife of A-lister in casual chit-chat. (NB Avoid controversial topics, such as Betty Ford visits or recreational drug use.)
- Impress her with my wit and charm. (NB Think of something interesting and educated to say. Do not mention borderline obsession with celeb-and-cellulite exposés in *Heat*.)

- Become her sole confidante. (NB Reassure her that I would be the perfect red-carpet date and would never upstage her at an awards ceremony – show her my bingo-wing arms, if necessary, to prove the point.)

Am sure this approach can't fail to impress her – she'll probably be delighted that a real-life civilian is trying to befriend her.

3 September

Spent ages skulking about at the school gates again today, hoping to put my ingenious plan into action, but apparently Angelica drops off her little boy on time every morning (which is a bit anal, if you ask me) so I'd missed them again.

'She's very down-to-earth,' another mother said smugly, when I asked casually if she'd seen her. 'She chatted to me for ages this morning. Brandon, her little boy, is coming to mine for a play date tomorrow.'

Was furious that the jockeying for position of VBF to the celebrity mum had already started. But then I decided that the other mothers have no real hope of competing against me. Once Angelica realizes I'm one of her own, they won't stand a chance – bet none of *them* knows all the names of Brangelina's children or has almost every back copy of *Heat* in existence.

Mrs H popped round for coffee mid-morning.

'Isn't it great for you now that Katie's at school and Jack's at playschool,' she said primly, munching a biscuit. 'You'll have much more time to keep the house in order now you're free in the mornings.'

Refrained from beating her over the head with the Jaffa

Cakes box. Cleaning the house from top to bottom every day is not on my agenda in any shape or form. This is the year I will finally find myself and my Intrinsic Values. Vacuuming definitely does not count as an Intrinsic Value.

PS Oprah is top of the Forbes Rich List. Apparently she's worth a zillion million. Obviously the fart talk is working just fine for her.

4 September

Have decided that the only way to cope with craziness of school mornings is to run a tight ship and take no prisoners. Children need a solid, dependable routine with lots of rules – that hunky male child psychologist on telly is always saying so. (Also, if I get to the school gates before nine, I may have a decent chance of meeting Angelica Law.)

Rules for a stress-free morning

- Have all children's clothes washed, ironed and ready to go the night before. (NB Bonus points will be awarded for ironing underwear.)
- Prepare nutritious packed lunches and store them neatly in a fridge that has been bleached to within an inch of its life. (NB Slicing carrots and apples in an attractive way will fool gullible children into thinking they are as much fun as Fruit Winders.)
- Present porridge as a viable breakfast option. Discourage yummy choccie cereals and high-sugar fruit drinks – these are unwise choices that contribute to destructive

behaviour and should be avoided at all costs. (NB Do not feed to the dog instead.)

- Ban all TV before school – too much high-impact stimulation can lead to disharmony in the morning hours. (NB Ignore full-scale meltdown that occurs when children realize *SpongeBob SquarePants* is no longer an option at six a.m.)
- Have children in car a full twenty minutes before leaving time, then engage in a calm, educational discussion about topics of the day on the road. (NB Discussions of the merits of Power Rangers as opposed to Ninja Turtles is not recommended.)

Feel much better now that I have a foolproof plan to follow. Am sure that yummy TV child psychologist would be delighted with me. Wonder if he needs a model family to film and judge other dysfunctional families by. Must investigate.

5 September

Calm morning routine not going according to plan. Am now regretting emailing yummy TV child psychologist and offering ourselves for filming purposes. Must remember not to be so impulsive in future.

Revised rules for a stress-free morning

- Try to reason with Jack that getting out of bed at five a.m. is not necessary. Bribe him with age-inappropriate baby bottle of milk, if need be. (NB Try to block from my

mind that the use of baby bottles increases the likelihood of ear infections and speech disorders in older children – what do those pesky child experts know anyway?)

- Bribe Katie to stay in bed for an extra half-hour by promising she can purchase a new Bratz micro-mini and matching cropped top in the centre.
- Once children are up, try to persuade them that eating breakfast is not a waste of valuable cartoon-watching time.
- Convince them that porridge does not look like puke and that it is a very nourishing breakfast option.
- Argue that watching *Playhouse Disney* while eating jam doughnuts is not a reasonable way to start the day.
- Try to locate clean clothes. If desperate, recycle yesterday's grubby specimens. It is acceptable to remove ground-in paint stains from jeans, etc., with fingernails and to use a tea-towel to rub dirt from Jack's knees if necessary.
- If children refuse to wash, giving them a wipe with the same tea-towel is allowed.
- If children refuse to have hair brushed, do not panic. Dishevelled, just-out-of-bed look *à la* Kate Moss is very 'now'.
- Putting fleece on over PJs is OK but it is crucial to put on real shoes instead of slippers (matching pair preferable). To look perky and awake, apply bronzing powder in swift deft strokes to pallid complexion. Use shimmer eye-shadow to accent. (NB Remember to remove yellow pus from eyes beforehand.)

- Drive to school like a lunatic on acid to make it before the bell goes. Paste fake Hollywood smile on face before disembarking at the school gate, just in case Angelica Law is about.

PS Have discovered that half-term is definitely only eight weeks way. Am considering writing to the Minister for Education demanding a rethink of the primary-school timetable. Surely it will be very disruptive to yank children out of school when they will only just be getting used to the routine? Also, am very concerned that I'm expected to entertain them for another whole week so soon after the summer holidays.

6 September

Angelica Law waved at me today! Was stumbling blindly out of the school gate still half asleep when a massive 4 x 4 careered towards me at high speed. Looked up in the nick of time to see Angelica waving frantically and beeping the horn energetically to get my attention. She was wearing massive designer sunglasses that covered most of her face – but it was definitely her: her bone structure is so exquisite it can't be mistaken. I leapt out of her way and fell to the path as she zoomed by. Feel quite smug. She's bound to choose me as her best friend and confidante now that I'm on her radar. It was almost worth getting run over.

Called Louise to fill her in on latest dramatic developments but before I could launch into the very exciting news about my near-fatal brush with Angelica, she cut across me. 'I'm so *booooo!*' she moaned. 'This weather's killing me.'

'Em, it's only about fifteen degrees,' I ventured, not wanting

to antagonize her—her temper has been unpredictable lately.

‘It may as well be thirty-five,’ she hissed angrily. ‘I’m so fucking uncomfortable. You should try being six months pregnant in the middle of summer – it’s torture.’

Refrained from telling her that I had actually been pregnant twice, and that summer is officially over. Louise believes she’s the only woman to have been ‘with child’. Ever. In the history of the world. Also, her pregnancy hormones seem to be playing havoc with her emotions. If she’s not crying, she’s ranting and raving. (And using very vulgar language to boot. Jack heard her say the F-word three times last week. It took me ages to convince him she’d been saying ‘foot’.)

Suspect she may be in dire need of an intensive anger-management course, but I’m too afraid she might beat me over the head with her genuine Louis Vuitton handbag to suggest it.

‘You are *so* lucky,’ she went on, sounding as if she could quite cheerfully strangle me. ‘You spent the whole summer chilling out in the country while I was stuck in this godforsaken office. If one more person asks me when this baby is due I will suffocate them.’

Was about to joke that it would be simple to suffocate anyone, with her unnaturally large bump and enormous pregnancy boobs, but could hear a distinct wobble in her voice and knew she was morphing from angry woman into sobbing woman and that any joking would lead to waterworks. ‘You’ll be going on maternity leave soon, Louise,’ I ventured, hoping, she’d cheer up a bit. ‘Then you can come round to mine every morning and we’ll have lots of coffee and biscuits.’

‘Great – so I can pile on another ten pounds and look even more like a beached whale than I do at the moment,’

she cried. ‘I can barely see my feet as it is.’ She sounded really despondent. ‘Anyway, I’d better go, I have a board meeting in five minutes.’

‘OK, I’ll call you tomorrow,’ I said, guiltily relieved I could escape, and deciding that now was not the right time to mention the new celebrity in town.

‘Well, I might call you later,’ she replied. ‘We need to start talking about doing those Lamaze classes.’

Hung up feeling panicky. Why did I ever agree to be Louise’s birth partner? OK, so she is my VBF, and the father of her unborn baby has abandoned her, but I had to be knocked out to deliver my two – I’ll never cope with seeing her give birth. Especially since she wants an all-natural delivery with as little medical intervention as possible. Hopefully this will change when she realizes how mind-bogglingly painful giving birth is. Luckily, I’ll be on hand to demand multiple epidurals and gas masks on her behalf from hunky obstetricians.

7 September

Confided in Joe that I was nervous about being Louise’s birth partner. ‘I just don’t know if I can handle it,’ I said, digging anxiously into a tub of Rolo ice-cream. ‘Louise has very high expectations, you know. What if I do something wrong? What if I drop the baby when it’s coming out?’

I was in serious mental anguish at the prospect.

‘Has her baby started to kick yet?’ Joe asked dreamily, his face going all soft and squishy.

‘Um, yeah, I think so,’ I said, wondering what that had to do with anything.

‘Ah, I used to love that – didn’t you?’ He chortled.

‘Remember? Jack used to kick so hard when you were lying in bed that the duvet cover would move.’

‘Yeah, I remember,’ I said, giggling, ‘and you’d pat my tummy and tell him to go back to sleep.’

‘And he’d kick even harder!’

We laughed together. Jack still loved kicking – except now it was the living daylights out of his sister instead of my insides.

Then Joe looked at me, a funny expression on his face. ‘They were great times,’ he said softly.

‘Yes, they were,’ I said, touched he remembered them with such affection. ‘Isn’t it amazing how they’ve grown?’

I smiled fondly at him. But then Katie bounded into the kitchen and threw herself to the ground, gasping and screaming hysterically and ruined the tender moment.

‘Daaaad!’ she wailed, ‘Jack just peed all over my new Bratz DVD!’

8 September

Mrs H called round. ‘I have some big news for you Susie,’ she said, looking delighted with herself.

‘What’s that?’ I asked, doubting it was true. Unless you’d stop the presses for a five-euro win at the bingo leagues, that is.

‘David’s coming for a weekend visit next month!’ Her eyes shone with excitement.

‘That’s great,’ I said, wondering why Second Son David was paying her a flying visit – usually he only came home from London for Christmas.

‘Yes, it is, but there’s a lot of work to be done,’ she said solemnly, biting into a mini-muffin and whipping her to-do

list from her pleather handbag. ‘I’ll have to get the entire house wallpapered from top to bottom.’

‘Do you really think that’s necessary?’ I said. ‘I’m sure he wouldn’t want you to go to any trouble.’

‘Oh, it won’t be any trouble,’ she said. ‘Sure isn’t your Joe very good with his hands – he’ll be able to do the lot in no time. Anyway, I don’t want to disappoint David. He’s very up on his interior design, he’s always glued to those home-improvement shows.’

She took another bite of muffin, plucked a paint chart from her handbag and smoothed it out on the table. ‘And you’ll never guess,’ she whispered, glancing furtively over her shoulder, as if the entire country was eavesdropping on our conversation, ‘he’s bringing a friend with him. But it’s top secret, so I really shouldn’t tell you.’

She looked at me hopefully, obviously dying for me to beg her to spill the beans.

I perked up. This *was* news. ‘A friend?’

‘Yes, I can’t say too much about it, but it’s a famous celebrity.’

‘Really?’ I was intrigued. Celebrities were ten-a-penny, these days, it seemed.

‘OK, then, if you insist on knowing,’ she gushed excitedly, ‘it’s that weatherman from Toxic TV. You know, the really handsome fellow – he was in *Dancing on Waterskis* last year. Well, David’s *very* good friends with him.’

Better friends that you probably know, I thought, wondering if David was ever going to admit to his mother that he was gay.

‘By the way, you’ll never guess who I met in Tesco this morning,’ Mrs H went on, ‘That Angelica What’s-her-name. You know, the wife of that famous actor.’

‘You met Angelica Law?’ I was dumbfounded.

‘Yes, and very nice she was too. She was in the biscuit aisle trying to decide whether to get the Jaffa Cakes or the Kimberley biscuits. I told her that if she wanted a taste of the real Ireland she should go for the Kimberley’s – you can’t beat them with a nice cup of tea.’

I sucked in my breath, not believing what I was hearing.

‘She was so grateful for the advice she offered me a lift home. Such a nice girl and very down-to-earth. Anyway, I must fly, dear, I have so much to do.’

She waddled off, her to-do list and paint chart under her arm.

PS Am furious Mrs H has somehow managed to befriend a real-life celebrity with so little effort. It’s so unfair.