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CONCORD
THEATRICALS

WANDERLUST

by Nick Payne

SAMUEL FRENCH

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FIRST PERFORMANCE

The first performance of *Wanderlust* took place on 9 September 2010 at the Royal Court Theatre, Upstairs with the following cast and creatives:

JOY RICHARDS	Pippa Haywood
STEPHEN MOORE	Charles Edwards
ALAN RICHARDS	Stuart McQuarrie
CLARE WALSH	Siân Brooke
TIM RICHARDS	James Musgrave
MICHELLE MCCULLEN	Isabella Laughland
NEIL WATERS / WAITER	Howard Ward

Director	Simon Godwin
Writer	Nick Payne
Designer	Robert Ines-Hopkins
Lighting	James Farncombe
Sound	Alexander Caplen

CHARACTERS

JOY RICHARDS, 45
ALAN RICHARDS, 45
TIM RICHARDS, 15
MICHELLE MCCULLEN, 15
STEPHEN MOORE, 45
CLARE WALSH, 26
NEIL WATERS, 51
WAITER

1. Joy.

JOY He told me that semen was good for me.

He was after a blowjob.

He said that he had read that semen contains a hormone that can help fight depression.

I said that's ridiculous.

I've just brushed my teeth I said. It's late.

He said if I'm not careful, it'll close up.

I said, pardon?

He said that he had read that it can narrow if underused.

Vaginal atrophy he said it's called.

I said can you stop talking please, this is becoming offensive now.

I'm just telling you what I read he said.

I'm just telling you what I read.

2. Joy's Office. Day.

JOY *and* **STEPHEN**.

JOY Hello, I'm Dr. Richards.

STEPHEN Stephen.

JOY *and* **STEPHEN** *shake hands.*

JOY Do take a seat.

STEPHEN Sorry, it's.

This is probably going to sound a bit strange, but.

It's Joy, isn't it?

JOY That's right.

STEPHEN You probably won't remember me, but.

Stephen. Stephen Moore.

We were at school together.

JOY Yes. God, yes, of course.

STEPHEN We used to live—

JOY Of course, no, I remember.

I remember.

STEPHEN Small world.

JOY Yes.

Well, anyway, please.

How can I help?

STEPHEN It's actually a little embarrassing.

I'm reasonably confident I've got thrush.

JOY Okay.

STEPHEN Googled it.

JOY I see.

STEPHEN There's been a kind of. Discharge. I suppose. Is the term.

Discharge.

JOY I see.

STEPHEN And it's sore. And there's also a kind of.

I think on Wikipedia it described it as "cream cheese like".

JOY Okay.

STEPHEN Under my foreskin. A cream cheese like—

JOY Well. That all sounds.

Why don't we.

Probably the best thing to do is if we.

STEPHEN ?

JOY Take a look.

STEPHEN Absolutely.

JOY Probably the best thing to do is to—

STEPHEN No, no, no, absolutely.

Beat.

JOY It tends to be easier without the trousers.

STEPHEN Course, course, sorry, course.

STEPHEN *removes his trousers and* **JOY** *examines* **STEPHEN***'s penis.*

JOY Thank you.

STEPHEN *puts his trousers back on.*

Well, as you say, it does indeed look as if you have.

Thrush.

STEPHEN Bugger.

JOY It's perfectly treatable though so you mustn't worry.

If you were worried though, we could always take a swab?

STEPHEN A swab.

JOY Yes. From your penis.

STEPHEN From my.

JOY From your penis, that's right. We could also take a swab from your—

STEPHEN Penis.

JOY From your penis, that's right.

We could also take a swab from your penis just to double check.

STEPHEN Up to you really.

What do you think?

JOY My honest feeling is that it very probably is, as you say, that it very probably is—

STEPHEN Thrush.

JOY That it very probably is thrush, yes.

But you're more than welcome of course to come back in a couple of weeks if it hasn't cleared up.

STEPHEN A couple of weeks.

JOY That's right.

STEPHEN If it hasn't cleared up, I could come back and you could take a swab?

JOY That's right, you could come back and we could take a swab.

Beat.

STEPHEN Sounds great.

JOY Good.

JOY *writes* **STEPHEN** *a prescription.*

Two to three times a day, for no more than two weeks.

And you simply want to rub it into the affected areas.

STEPHEN How much?

JOY Sorry?

STEPHEN How much should I rub in?

JOY No more than the size of a pea.

STEPHEN So no more than the size of a pea should be rubbed in, under my. Under my.

JOY Underneath your foreskin, that's right.

STEPHEN Well that's fantastic. Really.

Thank you.

JOY You're welcome.

Beat.

STEPHEN And it's been lovely to see you again.

STEPHEN *moves to go, stops.*

I hope this doesn't sound.

But.

If you were. Free, at some point.

For a.

I really would love to hear all about how you've been getting on.

Anyway, I'll.

Exit **STEPHEN**.

3. English Department Office. Day.

ALAN.

Enter **CLARE.**

CLARE Hello, Alan.

ALAN Hello, Clare.

CLARE Have you got a minute?

ALAN Of course.

CLARE You're not about to head off?

ALAN Just finishing a few bits and pieces.
Everything alright?

CLARE The weirdest thing just happened.

ALAN Oh really?

CLARE I was looking for a pencil sharpener and I went into 7LW.

ALAN Okay.

CLARE I thought it was empty. 7LW.
I thought it was empty so I just wandered straight in.

ALAN Okay.

CLARE But, Neil, from IT, wears those funny cardigans, he was.
Well it turned out that he was in the room.

ALAN *isn't perhaps entirely sure where the story is going.*

Alan, he was masturbating.

ALAN What?

CLARE I wasn't really sure what to do?

ALAN Masturbating?

CLARE Yeah.

ALAN You're sure?

CLARE He was making a sort of grunting sound.

ALAN Oh my God.

CLARE And his shoulders they were, you know, they were kind of moving up and down.

I mean he was really going for it.

ALAN Clare, I am so, so sorry.

I thought they had filters?

CLARE How d'you mean?

ALAN The computers, I thought they had—

CLARE No, that was the thing, sorry: he wasn't even using a computer.

ALAN He wasn't using a computer?

CLARE No.

It was thick.

ALAN Pardon me?

CLARE The magazine. This thing he had on the desk in front of him.

It looked like an Argos catalogue.

ALAN An Argos catalogue?

CLARE In terms of its depth.

ALAN In terms of its depth?

CLARE In terms of its depth, yes, it looked a lot like a fucking Argos catalogue.

Beat.

ALAN Are you alright?

CLARE I think it was just the weird noise more than anything.

ALAN Clare I really am very sorry.

CLARE Hardly your fault is it.

ALAN Can I get you something to drink?

CLARE What do you think we should do?

ALAN Well—

CLARE I mean I guess maybe one of us should speak to Janet?

Don't you think?

ALAN Well.

I'm sure you're probably right, but, it might be worth just—

CLARE What?

ALAN Well I know that Neil and his wife have been having a bit of *(He's reluctant to say)* ...

CLARE Go on.

ALAN Trouble.

CLARE Trouble?

ALAN At home.

In the.

In the bedroom.

I'm not really sure that I should be—

CLARE No, please. My lips are sealed, I promise.

ALAN Well about a week or so ago, Neil came to see me and he asked if he could use the spare bedroom at my house for a night or two.

CLARE Wow.

ALAN I had to say no, of course, but.

It seemed fairly serious.

CLARE D'you think they're separating? Neil and his wife I mean.

ALAN I wouldn't like to say.

CLARE Poor Neil.

ALAN Yes.

CLARE Still I think it's important that we at least tell someone. Don't you?

ALAN No, of course, you're right, I do.

Why don't I have a bit of a word with him? Neil. First.

And if I feel we need to involve someone else, then, well, that's what we'll do. How does that sound?

CLARE Okay.

ALAN Good.

And, again, Clare, I really am very sorry.

CLARE No, thank you. I appreciate that.

4. Joy and Alan's House, Bedroom. Night.

JOY *and* **ALAN**.

ALAN Can you remember Neil?

JOY Sorry?

ALAN Neil Waters. Head of IT, can you remember who he is?

JOY When would I have met him?

ALAN His wife, Alison, she cooked us a goose.

JOY A goose?

ALAN They're a little older, slightly old fashioned I suppose and, yes, we went round to their house for dinner and she cooked us a goose.

JOY It's not ringing any bells, I'm afraid.

ALAN It doesn't matter whether you specifically remember the goose or not, the point I'm trying.

It doesn't matter.

JOY No, go on, what?

ALAN Clare walked in on Neil masturbating in 7LW.

That was the point I was trying to make.

JOY What?

ALAN No word of a lie.

JOY What did she do?

ALAN She came and told me.

JOY And what did you do?

ALAN I said let's have a think.

JOY What was he looking at?

ALAN She wasn't sure.

JOY Do they not have filters?

ALAN He wasn't on a computer.

JOY He wasn't on a computer?

ALAN No.

Clare said it was some kind of book. A catalogue maybe.

JOY A catalogue?

ALAN Maybe. She wasn't sure.

Beat.

JOY Who's Clare?

ALAN What?

JOY Clare, who is she?

ALAN She's a teacher. She's new.

JOY You said her name as if I should know it?

ALAN Did I?

JOY You just seemed to drop it in.

"Clare".

ALAN I suppose I just assumed you'd met at some point.

JOY Have we?

ALAN I don't know.

Maybe.

TIM *(offstage)* Mum?

JOY Do we have a filter?

Alan, does the laptop downstairs have a filter?

ALAN I don't think so, no.

JOY So Tim could be looking at anything?

ALAN Tim has his own laptop.

JOY As a whole though, this house—

ALAN No we don't have any kind of filters.

JOY Should we?

ALAN Up to you.

JOY It doesn't worry you?

ALAN Not particularly, no.

JOY He could be looking at anything.

ALAN He's a fifteen year old boy.

If we suddenly start saying, no porn for you—

JOY He is looking at pornography then?

ALAN I've no idea, but—

JOY Maybe one of us should have a talk with him about it?

ALAN What?

JOY Maybe one of us should have a talk with him? About pornography.

ALAN By one of us you mean me?

JOY Not necessarily, no.

But I suppose as his father, and as a fellow male, I thought perhaps—

ALAN If you, if you want me to have some kind of. Talk, with him, about sex, then of course I will. That's no problem at all.

But if you want to me to ask him whether or not he watches pornography on his laptop, then I have to be honest with you, Joy, I feel a little uncomfortable about doing that.

JOY Whatever for?

ALAN Would you feel comfortable talking to him about that sort of thing?

JOY Of course. I'm his mother.

ALAN There we are then.

JOY What does that mean?

ALAN It means I think we've sorted that one out then.

TIM *(offstage)* Mum?

JOY Yes?

Enter **TIM**.

TIM Have you seen my trainers?

JOY Which ones?

TIM My white ones.

JOY I don't think so, no, sorry.

Have you tried the back door?

TIM Yeah.

JOY *and* **ALAN** *are staring at* **TIM**.

What?

JOY *and* **ALAN** *shake their heads.*

Night.

Exit **TIM**.

JOY Have you ever looked at pornography on our laptop?

ALAN What?

JOY Have you ever looked at pornography on the laptop we have downstairs?

ALAN Joy.

Beat.

Of course I have.

Joy, of course I have.

But I don't have a subscription or anything like that.

And I always clear the history.

JOY I think you need to let someone know.

About Neil.

I think it's important that it doesn't pass by unnoticed.

5. Joy's Office. Day.

JOY.

Enter **STEPHEN**.

STEPHEN Hello again.

JOY Stephen.

STEPHEN I'll be quick.

JOY I'm sorry, but you can't—

STEPHEN I've been waiting. The lady at the desk said you might be taking lunch soon.

JOY There are people with appointments—

STEPHEN Would you come for a drink with me later on this evening?

JOY Stephen—

STEPHEN I said yesterday, I just think it would be really lovely—

JOY I'm sorry, but there are people waiting.

STEPHEN I'm married.

JOY I'm sorry?

STEPHEN If that's what you're worried about I mean.

I have no desire to.

As a friend, that's all.

One drink.

JOY It's the middle of the day?

STEPHEN Not now.

Tonight.

JOY *hesitates ever-so-briefly.*

Tonight.

As soon as you're finished.

An hour, tops.

JOY Will you let me have a think about it?

STEPHEN Of course.

JOY Do you have a number that I could contact you on?

STEPHEN Don't you have it?

JOY No—

STEPHEN You have my file, Joy.

JOY People's files are—

STEPHEN It's a joke, I'm joking.

JOY We can't just ask for those though.

STEPHEN I was joking.

JOY I can't just go to Lesley and say—

STEPHEN I'm sure—

JOY That's not really how it works.

STEPHEN May I?

STEPHEN *writes his mobile telephone number on* **JOY***'s prescription pad.*

I recommend that you call this number at least once a day.

Beat.

That was a—

JOY There are people waiting.

STEPHEN *moves to go, stops.*

STEPHEN I didn't mean to scare you.

It's just really wonderful to see you again.

6. English Department Office. Day.

CLARE.

Enter **ALAN.**

ALAN Hello, Clare.

CLARE Oh hiya.

ALAN Good day?

CLARE Usual mix of shame and rage.
You?

ALAN So, so.

CLARE Everything alright?

ALAN I spoke to Neil.

CLARE How did it go?

ALAN It didn't go terribly well to be perfectly honest with you.

CLARE Oh no, what did he say?

ALAN He got very defensive.

CLARE Defensive?

ALAN *(nods)*

CLARE About what?

ALAN All sorts of things.

CLARE Like what?

ALAN His private life. His marriage. He really did get quite angry.
He almost started to cry at one point.

CLARE To cry?

ALAN Things at home are worse than I thought.
He said he's been sleeping in his car.

CLARE His car?

ALAN He's been using an old picnic blanket as a duvet.

CLARE Oh my God. Maybe he needs to take some time off?

ALAN Yeah *(nods)*.

CLARE Look. I really do think you did the right thing.

Anyone else would have just gone straight to Janet.

You mustn't worry.

ALAN Yeah.

CLARE I mean it.

ALAN Thank you.

CLARE And I mean the funny thing is, I don't know why he doesn't just use the toilet like the rest of us?

ALAN Come again?

CLARE Neil.

ALAN ?

CLARE What're you up to now?

ALAN How do you mean?

CLARE Are you off home, do you fancy a drink?

ALAN I hadn't really thought about it.

CLARE I'll probably be finished in about ten minutes or so.

ALAN Ten minutes.

CLARE If you'd rather get going—

ALAN No, no, no.

CLARE It just suddenly occurred to me it's the least I could do.

ALAN Well. Okay.

CLARE Great.

7. Michelle's Bedroom. Early Evening.

TIM *and* **MICHELLE.**

TIM Can I ask you something?

MICHELLE I don't know, can you?

TIM ?

MICHELLE Was a joke.

TIM Oh.

MICHELLE You said—

TIM Right, yeah, no.

MICHELLE Anyway.

TIM It's more a favour.

You know Jenny Talbot?

MICHELLE Sort of.

TIM I'm sort of thinking about asking her out.

As in, go out, with me.

MICHELLE Okay.

TIM But. Well.

S'pose I'm conscious she's older.

MICHELLE Sixth former.

TIM Yeah well I s'pose it's something I'm really conscious of.

MICHELLE Okay.

TIM Yeah, well.

Don't really know how to say this, but.

You're pretty experienced.

MICHELLE I'm what?

TIM Experienced.

MICHELLE Experienced?

TIM Yeah.

As in.

Well you know what I mean.

It.

MICHELLE It?

TIM Sex and stuff.

MICHELLE Sex and stuff?

TIM I know it sounds weird—

MICHELLE It does a bit, yeah.

TIM But I s'pose I just. You know.

She's older.

I'm young.

And, you know, I'm not exactly.

But I'm assuming she's gonna—

MICHELLE She's only a couple of years older than you, Tim.

TIM Still.

MICHELLE She's hardly gonna expect fireworks.

TIM Still.

MICHELLE So what's the favour?

TIM It's gonna sound really weird, but.

MICHELLE Go on.

TIM I wondered if we might be able to.

If you might be able to help me.

MICHELLE How do you mean?

TIM Well.

I was, wondering, if you, we, if you might be able to.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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