CONCORD THEATRICALS SAMPLE PERUSAL

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CONCORD
THEATRICALS

MALINDADZIMU

by Mufaro Makubika

SAMUEL FRENCH

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MALINDADZIMU premiered on 17 September, 2021 at Hampstead Downstairs in London. The performance was directed by Monique Touko, with designer Zoë Hurwitz, lighting by Matt Haskins, and sound by Max Pappenheim. The cast was as follows:

FAITH . . . . . Shyko Amos
HOPE . . . . . .Kudzai Mangombe
LOBENGULA / FOREMAN . . . . . Sifiso Mazibuko
SPIRIT MEDIUM / DOCTOR / LABOURER . . . . Tendai Humphrey Sitima
GOGO . . . . . .Natasha Williams

CHARACTERS

HOPE – female, black, fifteen/sixteen years old, British Nottingham accent

FAITH – female, black, early forties, Zimbabwean, a naturalised British citizen

DOCTOR – male, a medical doctor

GOGO – an old woman, a remnant of a past not too long ago.

FOREMAN – male, labour manager

LABOURER – male, seasonal hired help

LOBENGULA – male, a spirit manifest, a king from the past

MEDIUM – male, a spirit medium, a traditional healer

TIME

Now.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

A slash (/) represents an interruption.

An ellipsis (...) represents a trail in thought or uncertainty.

Stage directions are in italics.

Beat < Pause < Silence

For a company of five black performers, three women and two men.

ACT I

One

(A hospital room, Nottingham.)

*(***DOCTOR** *reads a chart.)*

*(***HOPE** *is in a bed, looking at him.)*

DOCTOR. What happened Hope?

(Silence.)

Hope?

HOPE. I had to do this presentation in class.

DOCTOR. A presentation?

HOPE. About yourself, who you are.

(Pause.)

DOCTOR. What does this have to do with what happened?

HOPE. That's what I'm trying to explain to you.

(Beat.)

DOCTOR. Alright.

Go on then.

HOPE. I didn't mean to.

DOCTOR. You didn't mean to do what?

HOPE. I knew it back to front.

The work I had done.

(Beat.)

I knew it.

And…

DOCTOR. You might have been stressed.

(Beat.)

Maybe even anxious?

HOPE. That's not it.

DOCTOR. What is it then?

HOPE. I'm trying to tell you.

DOCTOR. Alright.

(Beat.)

Tell me.

HOPE. I don't know.

That's the thing.

I don't know how to explain it.

How to tell you.

(Pause.)

DOCTOR. Can you try?

Help me to understand.

(Beat.)

Please?

(Pause.)

HOPE. Have you ever felt like lost?

And then something pulls you.

Finds you.

Calls you.

Like it's been looking for you?

Only you alone.

DOCTOR. I guess.

Sure.

(Beat.)

I understand.

HOPE. Really?

DOCTOR. I'm from the Islands.

Feel like that when I've not been back a while.

My wife says I start to feel like that.

Sad.

(Beat.)

Is that it?

Is that how you're feeling?

HOPE. How can I miss something I don't know?

I was born here.

DOCTOR. I don't understand.

HOPE. I saw something.

A man.

DOCTOR. Saw something?

HOPE. This figure.

He was not wearing much.

Like this leather thing.

He just appeared out of nowhere.

DOCTOR. Like a hallucination?

(Silence.)

HOPE. Can I go home?

DOCTOR. It's not that simple.

HOPE. I want to go home.

DOCTOR. We pumped your stomach.

(Beat.)

Can you tell me why you took all those pills?

HOPE. Can I go home, please?

DOCTOR. Not yet.

HOPE. Why not?

Don't I have rights?

DOCTOR. We have to wait for your mother.

HOPE. Did you tell her what happened?

DOCTOR. No, but /

HOPE. I don't want you tell her.

DOCTOR. Hope /

HOPE. What did you tell her?

(Beat.)

DOCTOR. Only that you were found unconscious.

HOPE. School's probably told her.

DOCTOR. That doesn't matter now.

(Pause.)

HOPE. Do you think she'll be mad?

DOCTOR. You don't have to worry about that.

HOPE. You can't tell her about the pills.

DOCTOR. Hope /

HOPE. I don't want her to know.

DOCTOR. I think /

HOPE. Promise.

DOCTOR. I /

HOPE. It's my choice, right?

(Beat.)

To tell her.

You can't tell her if I don't want you to.

DOCTOR. Yes.

If you don't want me to.

I can't tell her.

(Beat.)

That is your right.

I'm your doctor.

I won't tell her about the pills if that's what you want?

But I really /

HOPE. That's what I want.

(Pause.)

DOCTOR. Did you try to kill yourself?

*(***HOPE** *laughs.)*

HOPE. That's stupid!

(Beat.)

Why would I do that?

DOCTOR. I'm not judging you.

This is not what this is.

(Beat.)

If you need help, we can get that for you.

HOPE. To make me feel better?

DOCTOR. That's right.

HOPE. Thought the pills were supposed to do that?

DOCTOR. People react differently to medication.

(Beat.)

We can look to put you on something stronger.

Something to stop you seeing things.

(Beat.)

If that's what you want?

HOPE. Yes.

That's what I want.

Something stronger.

DOCTOR. Are you sure?

We could /

HOPE. That's what I want.

(Pause.)

DOCTOR. Alright.

We can do that.

(Beat.)

Today could have been very different.

You were lucky someone found you when they did.

(Beat.)

We might not be having this conversation now.

Do you understand what I'm saying?

HOPE. I'm still here though.

Live and kicking!

Ta-da!

DOCTOR. This is serious Hope.

*(**FAITH** rushes into the room.)*

FAITH. Hope!

HOPE. I told them not to call you.

*(**FAITH** hugs **HOPE**.)*

*(**FAITH** holds her like that for a while.)*

FAITH. I was so worried.

HOPE. I'm fine.

FAITH. You're in a hospital.

HOPE. Don't fuss!

FAITH. It's my job to fuss.

(Beat.)

HOPE. I'm alright.

FAITH. I didn't know what to think.

HOPE. You didn't have to come.

FAITH. What are you talking about?

HOPE. You didn't have to miss work.

I told them not to call you.

FAITH. This is the only place I would be.

I could be.

*(***FAITH** *still holding onto* **HOPE**.*)*

HOPE. You can stop now.

FAITH. Is she alright Doctor?

DOCTOR. She'll be fine.

FAITH. What happened?

DOCTOR. Could I have a private word?

FAITH. Sure.

(Beat.)

I'm right here darling.

I'm just talking to the doctor.

HOPE. Don't worry, I won't listen!

Even though you're talking about me while I'm here.

*(***HOPE** *puts in earphones.)*

*(***FAITH** *and* **DOCTOR** *aside.)*

DOCTOR. I've been looking after Hope.

FAITH. Is she alright?

DOCTOR. She's fine now.

(Beat.)

FAITH. Now?

DOCTOR. She's fine.

FAITH. What happened?

DOCTOR. I've been trying to find out.

(Beat.)

Can I ask you something?

FAITH. Sure.

Anything.

(Beat.)

DOCTOR. Has Hope been having any problems?

FAITH. Problems?

DOCTOR. With her medication.

FAITH. Is that what caused her to collapse?

(Pause.)

DOCTOR. I wondered if she had said anything to you?

FAITH. Like?

DOCTOR. Anything.

(Beat.)

FAITH. Nothing.

She hasn't said anything.

DOCTOR. Nothing specific.

I thought you might have had an idea.

(Pause.)

FAITH. What aren't you telling me?

(Beat.)

DOCTOR. Hope might have started hallucinating.

FAITH. What?

DOCTOR. It's something she brought up.

FAITH. I don't understand.

DOCTOR. It could be medication.

Maybe we could try something stronger.

FAITH. Stronger?

DOCTOR. Different.

I had broached the subject with Hope.

FAITH. At the start they said she'd get better.

DOCTOR. That's what we want.

FAITH. Which means she isn't.

DOCTOR. That's not what I'm saying.

FAITH. That's exactly what you're saying.

DOCTOR. It can /

FAITH. You're not helping her.

DOCTOR. We're trying.

FAITH. She doesn't look like she's getting better.

(Beat.)

What am I supposed to do?

DOCTOR. We'll get it right.

We'll get her better.

(Beat.)

I think we can discharge her today.

(Beat.)

I'll be around later before you leave.

See you Hope.

FAITH. Say thank you to the doctor.

(Silence.)

Hope, take those things out!

*(***HOPE** *reluctantly takes out her earphones.)*

HOPE. Thank you.

FAITH. I apologise for that.

She's never like that.

*(***DOCTOR** *exits.)*

You gave me such a fright.

*(***FAITH** *hugs* **HOPE**.*)*

HOPE. You're squeezing me.

*(***FAITH** *lets her go.)*

(Silence.)

FAITH. What happened?

HOPE. Everyone's fussing over nothing.

FAITH. How can you say that?

HOPE. I fainted.

That's it.

(Beat.)

FAITH. You were unconscious.

HOPE. I'm fine.

Everyone's being dramatic.

FAITH. Tell me the truth.

HOPE. I have.

(Beat.)

FAITH. That's not what the doctor said.

HOPE. What did he say?

FAITH. Nothing.

That's the thing.

He wouldn't say anything.

HOPE. Because there's nothing to say.

FAITH. I'm trying to understand what's going on.

HOPE. I didn't have breakfast.

That's it.

(Silence.)

FAITH. You can tell me anything.

HOPE. You won't stop.

FAITH. Whenever.

HOPE. I want to forget today and go home.

FAITH. You know that, right?

HOPE. Yeah, I know.

FAITH. Talking helps.

HOPE. It wouldn't help.

FAITH. What wouldn't help?

HOPE. You wouldn't understand.

FAITH. Try me.

HOPE. Can we just go home?

FAITH. Hope.

(Beat.)

Look at me.

If you don't tell me I can't help.

Are you listening?

HOPE. I am.

You're the one not listening.

*(***HOPE** *puts her earphones in.)*

FAITH. Don't do that.

*(***FAITH** *pulls out the earphones.)*

I'm talking to you.

HOPE. What do you want?

FAITH. The truth.

That's all I want.

HOPE. I feel sad.

And don't know why.

FAITH. It's a disease.

HOPE. Even that word.

FAITH. What word?

HOPE. Disease.

Like there's something wrong with me.

FAITH. There's nothing wrong with you.

HOPE. Then why do I feel like this.

FAITH. I don't /

HOPE. Is that the truth you want to hear?

FAITH. I under/

HOPE. I'm taking a pill for that.

FAITH. That's to make you better.

HOPE. Why don't I feel better?

*(***HOPE** *puts her earphones in again.)*

FAITH. I told you stop doing that.

HOPE. I don't want to talk anymore.

FAITH. Hope!

*(***FAITH** *pulls out the earphones.)*

What do you want me to do?

What can I do to make you feel better?

I'll do anything.

Anything.

(Beat.)

HOPE. I just want to go home.

Is that alright?

Can we go.

(Beat.)

Please?

FAITH. It's me and you, right?

(Beat.)

HOPE. Yeah.

FAITH. Faith and her Hope?

*(***HOPE** *puts her earphones in again.)*

*(***FAITH** *alone.)*

(The moment overwhelming.)

Two

(A farmhouse on a farm on the outskirts of the city Bulawayo in Zimbabwe.)

*(***FAITH** *and* **HOPE.***)*

*(***HOPE** *has her bags packed.)*

FAITH. What are the bags for?

HOPE. They're mine.

FAITH. Going somewhere?

HOPE. I'm not staying here.

(Beat.)

FAITH. Where are you going?

HOPE. Back to Nottingham.

FAITH. I see.

(Beat.)

Where are you going to stay in Nottingham?

HOPE. With Melissa and her family.

FAITH. And they know you're coming?

HOPE. Melissa says it's okay.

FAITH. And her mother?

(Silence.)

HOPE. I want to go home!

FAITH. This is home Hope.

You wanted to go home.

HOPE. Is that a joke?

(Beat.)

FAITH. It was.

I'm sorry for making light of the situation.

HOPE. So you bring me to Africa?

FAITH. Brought.

(Beat.)

HOPE. What?

FAITH. Brought you back to Zimbabwe.

Brought you home.

*(***HOPE** *is clearly frustrated.)*

HOPE. You're unbelievable!

FAITH. Brought you back.

That's how you say it properly.

HOPE. Not your student.

FAITH. Didn't say you were.

HOPE. Trying to make a point.

FAITH. And I'm helping you do that.

HOPE. Don't treat me like a kid.

FAITH. I'm not.

When something is wrong, it's wrong.

Trying to help you.

HOPE. By teaching?

Right now?

FAITH. Correcting.

Not teaching.

There's a difference.

HOPE. What's the fucking difference?

FAITH. Hope!

HOPE. You always do this.

FAITH. I don't like you swearing in front of me.

Don't like you swearing at all.

HOPE. Can't believe you did this.

FAITH. Doing this.

HOPE. Whatever.

FAITH. Brought you back home.

HOPE. Home is Nottingham.

FAITH. This is home.

HOPE. Your home, not mine.

FAITH. This our home now.

HOPE. I think you've lost your mind.

FAITH. I've never been clearer.

HOPE. Do you hear yourself?

FAITH. This was the right thing to do.

(Pause.)

HOPE. What about me?

FAITH. It's all about you.

HOPE. What about what I want?

FAITH. You want what I say.

HOPE. That's fascist!

(Pause.)

FAITH. Fascist?

(Beat.)

Do you even know what that means?

HOPE. You're being selfish.

FAITH. I'm your mother.

HOPE. Do I not have a say?

FAITH. This is for both of us.

HOPE. I didn't want to come.

FAITH. I'm sorry.

It's done.

(Beat.)

We can't go back.

HOPE. What about school?

FAITH. They have schools here.

HOPE. African schools?

FAITH. Yes.

African schools.

(Beat.)

What's wrong with an African school?

HOPE. I liked my school.

FAITH. Really?

HOPE. Yes.

FAITH. The same school you were found unconscious in?

HOPE. But /

FAITH. The last time I checked you were African as well.

HOPE. I'm British.

FAITH. Yes, and Zimbabwean.

(Pause.)

HOPE. How are we going to live?

FAITH. Growing things.

HOPE. I mean survive.

Make money.

FAITH. Farming.

HOPE. You're not a farmer.

FAITH. That's why I bought this place.

HOPE. You're a teacher.

FAITH. That's how the last owners made money.

HOPE. They were farmers!

FAITH. So will I.

HOPE. What do you know about farming?

(Beat.)

FAITH. I'll learn.

HOPE. You'll learn?

FAITH. Yes.

HOPE. Where at, farm school?

(Beat.)

FAITH. Really clever.

HOPE. I mean it.

FAITH. Don't be sarcastic.

HOPE. I'm serious.

FAITH. We belong on this land.

HOPE. We belong in Nottingham.

FAITH. We'll be fine.

HOPE. Don't be naïve.

(Beat.)

It doesn't suit you too.

(Pause.)

FAITH. Are you done?

HOPE. I have friends.

FAITH. I know.

HOPE. I miss my friends.

FAITH. You can call them.

HOPE. It's not the same.

(Beat.)

FAITH. You'll make new friends.

HOPE. I don't know anyone here.

FAITH. You haven't left the house.

HOPE. I don't want to make new friends.

(Beat.)

Why do you hate me so much?

FAITH. Don't be so dramatic.

HOPE. Honestly.

FAITH. You're being silly.

HOPE. Don't say that.

Don't call me that.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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