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CONCORD
THEATRICALS

I, JOAN

by Charlie Josephine

SAMUEL FRENCH

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I, JOAN was first produced by The Globe in August 2022. The performance was directed by Illinca Radulian, and Sarah Dickenson was the dramaturg. Movement direction and choreography by Jennifer Jackson. Set design by Naomi Kuyck-Cohen. Music composed by Laura Moody. Music performed by Joley Cragg, Hannah Dilkes, Hanna Mbuya and Kiyomi Seed. Stage Managers were Felix Dunning, Carol Pestridge and Rachel Middlemore. Assistant Director was Joanna Pidcock. Design Associate was Hazel Low. Costume Supervisor was Laura Rushton. Casting Director was Becky Paris. The production was supported by Gendered Intelligence and All About Trans. The cast was as follows:

JOAN . . . . . Isobel Thom
CHARLES / MAURICE . . . . . Jolyon Coy
DUNOIS / TOURAINE . . . . . Jonah Russell
THOMAS / DELAFONTAINE . . . . . Adam Gillen
MARIE / COURCELLES . . . . . Janet Etuk
YOLANDE / MANCHON . . . . . Debbie Korley
MAN ONE / SOLDIER THREE / BISHOP / BEAUPERE . . . Kevin McMonagle
MAN THREE / SOLDIER TWO / LOYSELEUR . . . . . Esmonde Cole
MAN TWO / SOLDIER ONE / CLERK . . . . . Baker Mukasa
JOAN'S ARMY ONE / CAUCHON . . . . . Anna Savva
JOAN'S ARMY TWO / GRIS / GIRL . . . . . Natasha Cottriall
JOAN'S ARMY THREE . . . . . Roseanna Anderson
JOAN'S ARMY FOUR . . . . . Joe Henry
JOAN'S ARMY FIVE . . . . . Azara Meghie

CHARACTERS

JOAN – They/Them. Seventeen years old. AFAB, nonbinary, working class. Strong and sweet, tender and brave. ADHD is part of their superpower.

CHARLES – He/Him. The Dauphin, then, thanks to Joan, the King of France. Early thirties. Charismatic and powerful. Restless and hungry.

DUNOIS – He/Him. One of many men to overcome. Thirty-plus years old. An excellent soldier. Seasoned veteran. Hard-faced but kind eyes. Written in a northern accent, just cus it felt right.

THOMAS – He/Him. Joan's only possible friend. Working class. Mid-twenties. Intelligent, charming, eager to please.

MARIE – She/Her. Queen of France, but never crowned. Charles' wife. Mid-twenties. Lieutenant of the king with power of attorney. Feminine and powerful. Heavily pregnant.

YOLANDE – She/Her. Duchess of Anjou and Countess of Provence. Finances all operations. Fearsome, gorgeous, powerful. Mid-forties. Marie's mother.

MAN ONE – He/Him. One of Charles' courtiers. A stalwart, and stubborn, he served Charles' father.

MAN TWO – He/Him. One of Charles' courtiers. Aristocratic, charming, a tactician.

MAN THREE – He/Him. One of Charles' courtiers. A junior, eager to learn, keen for action.

DANCER ONE – She/Her. A widow, numb, and needing a spark of inspiration.

DANCER TWO – She/Her. A young woman, unhappily married, praying for hope.

CAUCHON, DELAFONTAINE, GRIS, TOURAINE, MANCHON, LOYSELEUR, COURCELLES, BEAUPERE, CLERK – The men who put Joan on trial. All doctors, masters and bishops. Some could be played by Joan's Army in Act II.

JOAN'S ARMY – She/They/He. Dancers, untrained but confident in their bodies. Sometimes referred to as 'Dancer' when speaking. AFAB, young, queer and fierce as fuck.

Also there's lots of Soldiers and Men at court. Usually numbered to help delineate between actors. Some could be played by Joan's Army in Act II.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

/ indicates a fast run onto the next line, almost an interruption.

/.. indicates where a word can't be found, and the actor does something physical to express themself. It could be a small, pedestrian gesture or a big, abstract movement.

. on its own line indicates where a character should have a line, but is choosing not to speak.

All the actors multi-role, except the actor playing Joan.

THANK YOUS

Thank you to Sean Holmes, Ilinca Radulian, Michelle Terry and Jessica Lusk for believing in me enough to give me this gig. Thank you Sarah Dickenson, brilliant dramaturg, for your fizzy brain and your big heart. Thank you Morgan Llyod Malcolm for always holding the door open behind you. Thank you Dr Will Tosh for your queer history knowledge and guidance. Thank you Jonathan at The Agency for your care and patience and humour. Thank you to Gendered Intelligence and All About Trans for your collaboration and support. Enormous personal thanks to Trans Plus, Spectra, Exceptional Individuals and NHS England for helping me blossom this summer. Thank you Mum for your fierce love. Thank you beautiful Jessica for yours. Thank you to all the queer elders for showing me the way, and to all the beauitful bois for being my fuel.

PROLOGUE

*(***JOAN** *climbs up onto the big, empty stage. They look at us, taking everyone in. They smile.)*

JOAN. Trans people are sacred. We are the divine. We are practising our divinity by expressing authenticity. By enjoying our multiplicity. Elevating our humanity, finding the unity hidden inside community, remembering our collective connectivity fuels courageous creativity, unlocking the blessed spiritually that we all seek, yeah, this shit's about to get spiritual. Setting aside all religiosity, we'll focus instead on more of a, street God, if you will. A God for the queers, and the drunks, and the beautiful fuck-ups. A God for the Godless. A God for you, if you want, tonight. Because tonight? Is a celebration. Is a holy communion, for saints and sinners and everyone in between. We offer you restitution. We offer you revolution. We offer you love. I am here, to share my story, to receive God, and to offer you love.

And yeah, I'm fucking frightened. I'm seventeen! But I have a job to do that's bigger than me. You see, I was born into a world on fire, a world at war. The men have been fighting for eighty years or more. I mean, *eighty*, *years*, and still nowhere near peace?! An insignificant life was my destiny, small, quiet. A nobody from nowhere, a poor farm girl with nothing but a list of duties and expectations. Work hard, marry a man, bear children, die quietly. I always suspected, secretly, that I might be destined for more, but I hardly dared hope. Then suddenly? A miracle occurred! Some unexpected divinity, a moment of love, pure, deep Love! Zzzwoam!

Sudden alignment with Creativity herself, and I'm blessed with a calling, with a purpose far greater than my mind can hold alone. Clarity and confidence like I've never known. God lit a fire in my belly and I'm burning, I am burning, I am *burning* with possibility! I have a vision of Infinite Grace! Of Limitless Expansion! Of Delicious Fluid Freedom, of Liberation, of Joy! And I pray we *all* have the courage to be open to the Infinite, because none of us fit these man-made boxes, none of us fit them at all!

I mean, it's an *honour* to be a human! It's a *beautiful* thing!

So yeah, I'm scared, but really I'm honoured to be here. I honour all who came before, who made it *possible* for *me* to be *here*. So for them, and for me and for you, I'll be brave.

Because my story has been told a thousand different times, a thousand different ways, by everyone but me. Men have told my story, of course. They've grabbed the pen and made it their own as men are want to do. You see, men write stories, about men, for other men. Call them examinations of mankind. Meaning examinations of man. Forget to be kind, forgetting that their kind isn't the only point of view, that there's other ways to see, to be. Yeah, men have written about me, a lot. And most of the words they chose were wrong. It's embarrassing really, how much they've all missed the point. The erasure is pure violence of course, but also, honestly? It's fucking embarrassing.

Truth is, queerness is magic, pure magic! We are beautiful, and powerful, and for that we are killed. The violence is real. We all know how my story ends. So yeah, thank you, for letting me grab this beginning moment here with you. Thank you for being here. Thank you for kindness, for giving me courage.

I am Joan. This is my story. This is my Truth. And this, is my band.

(Loud music. The world spins. Musicians and **MEN** *flood the stage.* **JOAN** *disappears.)*

ACT I

Scene One

(The music and the **MEN** *settle into stillness and silence. 1428, Chinon, France. Stuck inside with nothing to do. The boredom is unbearable.)*

CHARLES. Oh god I'm bored!

(The **MEN** *are shocked but try to hide it.)*

I said I'm *bored*! ...Oh! Why is life so dull? ...Thomas?

THOMAS. Yes sir?

CHARLES. Why is life so dull?

THOMAS. I, I don't know sir.

CHARLES. Oh God you're boring too! This is all *so boring*! So boring it's almost interesting! How is that possible? As if it loops back on itself?!

(The **MEN** *sneak looks at each other.* **CHARLES** *groans.)*

Boring boring Boring Boring BORING! Ugh! So bored am I, that it's become appealing to consider chewing my own arm off! At the very least for something to do! Something to feel!

MAN ONE. *(Impatient.)* Sir!

CHARLES. What?

MAN ONE. Forgive me, sir but we are, *at war*!

CHARLES. I know! And who knew that being at war was so dull?! Can't we go and, fight, someone, anyone?!

MAN TWO. We have limited resources sir /

CHARLES. I know!

MAN TWO. The English have fresh reinforcements!

MAN ONE. Nearly three thousand men /

MAN TWO. Which brings their number to a total strength of possibly /

MAN ONE. Ten thousand or more!

CHARLES. I know! I know I know I know! I have been informed. And the repetition is terribly dull… Can't we at least leave this place? Even the name of it is ugly. Chinon. Chinon. *Chinon*. Chin /

MAN ONE. Sir! Please, focus!

CHARLES. Focus on what? Give me something to focus on! Please, I beg you!

MAN ONE. Sir! You are the Dauphin!

CHARLES. Yes! Though God only knows why.

MAN TWO. You are *chosen*! You have a Great Responsibility to lead the Good people of France /

CHARLES. Lead them where? There is nowhere to lead them! The situation is hopeless!

MAN TWO. Sir, please! Keep the faith!

CHARLES. What faith? *What, faith?!*

MAN TWO. Sir! I must say I am shocked!

MAN ONE. Yes, as am I! We can all see what Great burden you carry sir /

MAN TWO. But you *must* make a decision!

MAN ONE. Yes, and quickly! We've been waiting here for *months* now, whilst the English are advancing /

MAN TWO. And our people are dying /

CHARLES. Yes, yes!

MAN ONE. We've offered you many solutions sir, and you've yet to make a decision.

MAN TWO. What are our orders?!

CHARLES. I /.. I /..

*(***CHARLES** *doesn't know. The* **MEN** *look to each other, horrified and frustrated.)*

Thomas?

MAN ONE. Sir! Might *I* suggest, as I have, *many* times before now, that we /

MAN TWO. Withdraw to the East!

MAN ONE. Excuse me /

MAN TWO. As *I* have suggested, over and over /

MAN ONE. No /

MAN TWO. For *months* now! Withdraw to the East and re-group /

MAN ONE. No, no sir /

MAN TWO. Which will strengthen our position in the South!

MAN ONE. Sir, I speak now, with *all* my years of experience! The time has come, we *must* consider a treaty!

MAN TWO. Treaty?! Traitor!

MAN ONE. How dare you?!

MAN TWO. We shall *never* sign a treaty with our enemy!

MAN ONE. I have been at court longer than you have been alive!

MAN TWO. Exactly! Stale old man!

MAN ONE. Ex-*cuse* me?!

CHARLES. Oh please! Quit squabbling! It's terribly dull.

MAN TWO. Sir, sir I promise you /

MAN ONE. Sir, I served your father! And I can assure you, he would never, *never* /

CHARLES. *(Suddenly serious.)* Do not speak of him. Do not, speak of him.

MAN ONE. *(Apologetic.)* Sir, forgive me! I spoke out of /

CHARLES. You know not what you speak of. So your every word fails to capture the truth of it, fails to even come close.

MAN ONE. Yes sir. I'm sorry sir /

CHARLES. My father was a mad man. His madness more terrifying than you'll ever know. He truly believed he was made of glass. Did you know that? Feared he would shatter if he were touched.

MAN ONE. I, I heard rumours as such /

CHARLES. The rumours aren't nearly wild enough, believe me. /.. The things I've seen? /.. And then my mother? My, *mother*! If you can call her that. She /.. Thomas!

THOMAS. Sir.

*(***THOMAS** *rushes over to* **CHARLES. CHARLES** *holds him tight and strokes his hair. The other* **MEN** *can't look at them, or can't look away.)*

CHARLES. She cast me out! Into the streets Thomas!

THOMAS. Yes sir.

CHARLES. Like a peasant boy! Running through Paris all night in my pyjamas?! Oh the shame, the shame!

*(***CHARLES** *squeezes* **THOMAS** *tight, genuinely scared. Then pushes him away and neatens himself.* **MAN ONE** *and* **TWO** *stare, horrified.)*

But come, gentlemen! What's done is done! He chose his son-in-law over his true son, and she abandoned me. So I am disinherited. *Illegitimate.* Oh what a cruel word that is. *Illegitimate!*

MAN ONE. Sir, please, do not speak this way!

CHARLES. Why not? It is the truth, I am rejected!

MAN ONE. No!

CHARLES. Ridiculed!

MAN ONE. Nonsense!

MAN TWO. The people love you!

CHARLES. They *laugh* at me!

MAN TWO. No sir!

CHARLES. I am the laughing stock of France. Ugh! I should be King! Thomas? I should be King?!

THOMAS. Yes sir! Yes, and you shall be.

CHARLES. How?

THOMAS. I don't know sir. I won't lie to you.

CHARLES. No, no I don't believe you would. You're too honest for your own good, Thomas. Which is exactly why I plucked you from the gutter! You're not like these other men, these Great Thinkers, you get things done!

(The **MEN** *glare at* **THOMAS**, *who shuffles uncomfortably.)*

THOMAS. Sir.

CHARLES. Oh let's run away together Thomas! You and I. Leave these dusty chaps to their endless scheming.

THOMAS. *(Amused.)* Where shall we go sir?

CHARLES. Reims! Get me to Reims! Where French Kings are crowned and the streets are paved with gold!

THOMAS. I wish I could sir. Your coronation there would be a beautiful thing to witness.

CHARLES. That it would… Paris? Get me to Paris at least? You know I do love Paris.

MAN TWO. We can't sir. The English have taken Paris!

CHARLES. What?!

MAN TWO. The English now occupy most of Northern France, sir. Meanwhile the Burgundians gain ground in the South.

MAN ONE. Bastard Burgundians! Traitors!

CHARLES. Oh when does it end? Nearly ninety years of war, and still no end in sight? Thomas?!

(Everyone stares at **THOMAS**.*)*

THOMAS. We need a miracle.

CHARLES. Is that it? We wait for a miracle? Marvellous.

(Silence. Stale quiet.)

Argh! Please! Someone suggest *something*, to relieve one's mind from this hellish dull nothingness before I burst into flames! I want adventure! I want entertainment! Oh entertain me Thomas!

THOMAS. Yes sir. What would you have me /

CHARLES. Oh no don't *ask* me! Don't ask what! Just *do*! Entertain me man!

*(***THOMAS** *is shoved up to his feet. He stares, unsure what to do. He tries something, anything, he fails.* **MAN THREE** *bursts in, and* **THOMAS** *is relieved.)*

THOMAS. Oh thank god /

CHARLES. What is it?

MAN THREE. Sir! There is news, spreading fast among the common people, pleasing to the ear for it brings fresh courage to flagging spirits, new possibilities of hope so tantalising to the brokenhearted that it journeys quickly from tongue to tongue like wildfire!

CHARLES. Yes? What is it?

MAN THREE. There is a young woman, a simple maid, born in Domrémy. She travels here now, claiming to be chosen by God, to carry a message to you, yourself sir. She claims that God Almighty has called upon her, to lead an army, to save France!

MAN ONE. Goodness!

MAN TWO. Well the woman must be mad!

MAN ONE. Or a witch!

MAN THREE. So I thought myself! And yet the people flock to her, *hungry for hope*! She attracts more and more followers from each city she passes through. There is now a crowd following her every move and /

CHARLES. A crowd?

MAN ONE. A clump is probably more accurate sir, a, a cluster /

MAN TWO. A handful, no more, of simple folk, village people /

MAN ONE. Idiots! Foolish and fickle!

MAN TWO. They'd follow anyone anywhere!

CHARLES. Yes, well, the people do need *someone* to follow.

MAN ONE. Then how fortunate they are to have *you*, sir!

MAN TWO. Yes! The true King of France /

CHARLES. Not yet crowned. And the people do love a crown.

MAN THREE. There's more.

CHARLES. Go on.

MAN THREE. The crowds follow her, the the small, *small* group of *handful* of people /

CHARLES. Go on!

MAN THREE. They follow her sir, across war-torn country, and sing her praises. She journeys on horseback, for ten days now, or more.

CHARLES. Well, what of that? Why burst in here, all breathless, with urgent tales of girls on horseback? What is your purpose man?

MAN TWO. Yes! What of it? What of her?

MAN THREE. She's here.

CHARLES. Here?

MAN THREE. At the gate.

CHARLES. Now?!

MAN THREE. Now! Urgent to speak with you!

(This kicks up a ruckus among the **MEN.***)*

CHARLES. Quickly! My robe! Put away these things! Quickly!

MAN ONE. Sir! You're not seriously considering meeting with her?!

CHARLES. Of course! This is the most exciting thing that's happened all year! My palms are sweating! Look! Actual moisture! For the first time in *months*! That's how under stimulating your company has been.

MAN ONE. Yes sir.

CHARLES. This strange visitor, a girl on horseback? Yes! It's positively thrilling!

MAN TWO. But sir! She could be a fraud!

MAN ONE. Or a mad woman! An assassin!

MAN TWO. Or a witch!

MAN ONE. Or the devil himself!

CHARLES. Or a monster from the deep dark depths of foolish man's imagination?! She's a *girl*! A simple *maid*! I want to meet with her.

MAN THREE. She was sent by Baudricourt.

MAN TWO. Baudricourt?!

MAN THREE. She has somehow convinced him. Stood outside his castle for *days* until he finally met with her. And then he became, so enraptured, by her testimony that he approved her journey here. Nay he supported it, he gave her his horse!

MAN TWO. Well the man must have been drunk!

MAN ONE. He does enjoy a drink.

CHARLES. Nevertheless I trust his judgement. And would be greatly surprised if he sent me a witch. *(To* **THOMAS.***)* Where is my robe?!

*(***THOMAS** *goes to find it.)*

MAN ONE. Sir, I must *insist* you reconsider /

MAN TWO. For your own safety /

MAN ONE. For the good of The People!

CHARLES. Oh! Must I always consider the good of The People? Can I not for a moment consider *myself*? *My* needs? *My* desires? I desire *adventure* and here it is! And yet you deny me it?!

MAN TWO. Deny you not, but protect you much sir /

CHARLES. From a *girl*?! Come now. I hardly need protection.

MAN ONE. We cannot be certain!

MAN TWO. It's too great a risk!

MAN ONE. Sir I must *insist*!

*(***CHARLES** *bats them away and pulls* **THOMAS** *aside.)*

CHARLES. Thomas?

THOMAS. There is a risk, sir, to your safety.

CHARLES. How annoying.

THOMAS. Such is the weight of responsibility, sir.

CHARLES. Ugh! I know! I just, oh, how I long sometimes, to be someone else, even just for a day!

THOMAS. Well, that's not a bad idea sir.

CHARLES. What's not?

THOMAS. Disguise yourself as another. Let another man play the part of Dauphin. And take the attack if there be one.

CHARLES. Brilliant!

*(***CHARLES** *turns to the* **OTHERS**.*)*

I am persuaded, that there can come no harm from granting an audience to this maid. However, to be secure, we're going to play a little game. We're going to pretend I am a simple man, a servant even. And someone else will play the part of me. Our young lady guest will be none the wiser and I shall be able to watch her in safety.

(The **MEN** *applaud.)*

Now, who would like to be me?

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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