

Acting Edition

Yoga Play

by Dipika Guha

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|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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YOGA PLAY was commissioned and first produced by South Coast Repertory, with support from the Time Warner Foundation, in Costa Mesa, California on April 21, 2017. The performance was directed by Crispin Whittell, with sets by Se Hyun Oh, costumes by Kathryn Poppen, lighting by Adam J. Frank, sound by Crick S. Myers, and projections by Lianne Arnold. The production stage manager was Bradley Zipser. The cast was as follows:

JOAN	Nike Doukas
RAJ	Dileep Rao
FRED	Tim Chiou
ROMOLA / ENSEMBLE	Lorena Martinez
BERNARD BROWN / ENSEMBLE	Jeff Marlow

CHARACTERS

JOHN DALE – Founder of Jojomon, fifties, like an aging rock star

JOAN – early fifties, white, American

RAJ – mid-thirties, South-Asian, American

FRED – mid-thirties, Singaporean

ROMOLA – mid-twenties, Latina, American

GURUJI* – early forties/fifties

MR. KAPOOR* – Raj's father, early sixties, shouty, upper-class North Indian accent

ALAN CARR* – BBC News reporter, a bit nasal, classic BBC cadence

MRS. KAPOOR** – Raj's mother, early sixties, heavy upper-class North Indian accent

LUCY** – Jojomon employee, mid-twenties, highly-educated, American

NOOYI** – Joan's secretary, early/mid-twenties, over-keen, American

LAUREN LILLY CLARK ROSE** – Jojomon brand ambassador, American

*played by the actor playing **JOHN DALE**

played by the actor playing **ROMOLA

SETTING

Jojomon HQ, Southern California.

A high-end yoga studio, Southern California.

And the internet.

TIME

The present.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Doubling

The actor playing John Dale also plays Alan Carr, Mr. Kapoor, and Guruji. The actor playing Romola also plays Lucy, Nooyi, Mrs. Kapoor, and Lauren Lilly Clark Rose.

Punctuation

A slash (/) signals overlapping dialogue.

(Text in parentheses) is spoken aloud as an aside, or alternatively as a comment made *sotto voce*.

Production

There are some moments where the actor playing Lucy or Lauren Lilly Clark Rose overlaps with Nooyi. Since all these parts are played by the same actor, in production, you may cut the moments of overlap – or make the choice to pre-record Nooyi's voice.

ACT I

1.

(Jojomon HQ.)

(JOAN, RAJ, and FRED sit around a conference table, reading from documents. Behind them on Skype is company founder and Jojomon legend, JOHN DALE. He's snacking.)

JOAN. Jojomon is up 16.85% from 12% in the last fiscal year. Top-line growth's expected to come in between 9 and 13%, with revenues in the range of 1.97 to 2.02 billion dollars. Revenue gains will be spurred by same-store sales growth in the mid-single digits as well as e-commerce sales, which we anticipate will be higher.

(JOHN takes a big swig from a Jojomon water bottle.)

...Our stock's price-to-earnings multiple is at thirty-three, eleven points higher than that of the S&P 500 index.

(JOHN spills on his shirt and ducks out of sight.)

Operating income rate has shrunk 540 basis points to 14.2%, while both excess inventory and operating expenses have risen. So as you probably can tell, I have some thoughts about that.

John? Are you there?

JOHN. *(Popping back up.)* Yeah, sorry... I just spilled something down my...sorry...
I'm here.

JOAN. I'd like to place our attention on yoga apparel development, marketing, and supply chain investments. R&D has been working very hard and I'm excited by what / we've come up with.

JOHN. Can I just...can I just interject here Joan?

JOAN. By all means.

(JOHN inhales deeply.)

JOHN. I can just feel already Joan, that we, the company, this...precious family are safe in your hands. Not that we weren't with Brad. You know, as men, our intention is never to disparage women, so when Brad said quote "that it was the size of women's thighs that were making the Kayala fabric transparent not the fabric itself," what he was talking about was something...much more circumstantial than essential, you know?

(No one knows what that means.)

...I just, I'm sorry, Brad, Brad and I were very close, and you know, I'm still adjusting...

(JOAN looks at RAJ and FRED, who indicate that she should keep going.)

JOAN. I understand John. Shall I continue?

JOHN. Oh yeah yeah – of course.

JOAN. Before I share this with the company / I wanted –

JOHN. The family.

JOAN. The...family. I want to share with you the vision that we...

JOHN. SIT.

(JOAN looks baffled.)

STAY. Down. No... DOWN.

(JOAN looks offended.)

There's a goo gurl...there's a goo girl...

(A yippy bark in the background.)

RAJ. Is uh Sappho with you John?

JOHN. Oh she just goes everywhere with me don't ya Sapph...
she luuuvves the beach, she just, sorry she's just so cute
when she puts her paws out like that, like a judge!

FRED. John hi, it's Fred. Joan is just talking about our new
idea.

JOHN. Right... Joan! Please. Go ahead.

JOAN. I'll be brief. I'm very proud to present to you our
new concept fabric, Joyon.

Inspired by best-selling author Marie Kondo's "if it
sparks joy" motif, Joyon follows the very same, very
simple premise; our clothes, no matter who you are,
where you're from or what *size* you are, will from the
moment you touch them, spark *joy*.

Joyon is a powder-keg mix of premium cotton, Lycra,
and nylon. When the participants of a control group
experiment we ran were asked which item of clothing
most sparked joy, every single one chose Joyon. The
slow-release organic lavender activated by water made
our participants want to hold on to their clothes even
after a sweaty yoga class led by our very own brilliant
brand ambassador Lauren Lilly Clark Rose.

JOHN. Lauren yay!

I love Lauren! Wasn't she out in – in...

FRED. Boulder.

JOHN. I think I took a class with her in...

FRED. Boulder

JOHN. ...Boulder I think...

FRED. The Rockies.

JOHN. Up in the Rockies I think. What was it called Fred?

FRED. Inana?

JOHN. No...

RAJ. Let me look it up...

*(RAJ and FRED both get out their cell phones
and scroll madly.)*

FRED.

Shambhala Rain.

RAJ.

Shambhala Rain.

JOHN. That's it. Lauren had just got back from a month with Iyengar...

FRED. (*To JOAN.*) (Founder of Iyengar yoga.)

JOHN. ...All he did was talk about pranayama...the mystery of the breath... (*Sadly.*) Little did we know that his was about to cease...

JOAN. We've shipped the samples to Bangladesh and after several in-depth talks with them, feel we'd like to offer Lotus Ltd the contract.

JOHN. Who?

JOAN. Lotus Ltd.

FRED. (*Helpfully.*) They're in Dhaka.

JOHN. Never heard of them.

JOAN. Turnaround is quite impressive. California could be stocked in three weeks, Hong Kong two, London four.

JOHN. Uh-huh...

JOAN. But I want to stay true to the grassroots marketing that has been so fundamental to our success and that Brad –

JOHN. Oh Brad...

JOAN. ...Was instrumental in implementing. We'll do a secret launch in three weeks through local reps in our communities where our brand ambassadors will model Joyon in favored local yoga studios. We're having them do an intense social media blitz before we launch officially on the East Coast and overseas.

JOHN. Retail?

JOAN. 200 for the yoga pants.

90 for t-shirts.

80 for underclothing.

250 for mats, / 50 for water bottles and –

JOHN. It's high Joan...

JOAN. Yes it's high but our customers / know that –

JOHN. I don't know...it's high –

JOAN. You have to see it within the context of our industry. As a country, we spent ninety-seven billion dollars

on athleisure last year. Jeans sales were down, as you well know, for the first time in a decade. We're the only industry experiencing this kind of growth and frankly it's because of your good work – and of course Brad's –

(An audible sigh.)

Listen, this whole issue with Brad...

JOHN. Hurts my heart.

JOAN. I have a solution. I want us to carry size twelve.

(A strange, strangled noise involuntarily escapes JOHN.)

It is important to me that all women feel included. So long as our sizes stop at eight, we are excluding a vital potential customer / base.

JOHN.

RAJ.

FRED.

Family.

Family.

Family.

JOAN. Family...base.

JOHN. How can I say this... Help me here Fred.

FRED. Oh no I agree with Joan.

RAJ. Me too.

John, I think our brand is robust enough to stretch, as it were, in this direction.

JOHN. It's not that I...agree with Brad, Joan... But just think...

Actually let's just...let's breathe together...

In...

(JOAN looks at RAJ for help, but both RAJ and FRED have closed their eyes; they instinctively reach their hands for her.)

Out...

In...

(JOAN looks deeply uncomfortable.)

When you hear me ring a soft bell I want you to imagine yourself as a young child...then put this child in your heart, hold her tenderly...

(The sound of a soft bell.)

JOHN. ...Now give her a little snuggle...there it is. Are we all feeling better?

RAJ. Yeah...

FRED. *(Clearing his throat.)* Totally (sorry, cleaned out some phlegm.)

(JOHN chuckles knowingly.)

JOHN. I know what's happening here. After all the damage we men have done, it's time that men got out of the way, I see that. But our brand Joan, is *aspirational*. I just want us to consider the kind of message we're sending if we were to run in plus sizes I just / think that –

(JOAN hits the mute button momentarily.

JOHN doesn't know and continues to talk animatedly.)

JOAN. (Size twelve is not plus-size – someone tell him.)

RAJ. Nope.

FRED. Unwise.

(JOAN unmutes JOHN.)

JOHN. ...Alienate the core members of our family who have been with us / from day one.

JOAN. I hear you John, I really do. But it is difficult to stand by the idea that these products create joy if you can't get them on.

JOHN. What are the projections?

JOAN. 68 million –

JOHN. Well –

JOAN. In the first quarter.

(A stunned moment.)

JOHN. *(Fully reversing.)* Ultimately all of this is about creating deep happiness, creating value in people's lives.

You're a talented gal Joan. Your TED Talk on female leadership was beyond educational!

JOAN. Thank you.

JOHN. Are you feeling better Joan?

(A moment.)

JOAN. It means a lot to me to be here...to be working again.
And you know, I'm...I'm very grateful to you John.

JOHN. Let me tell you this, the real reason for our success...

FRED. (Marketing.)

JOHN. Authenticity.

FRED. (Right, authenticity.)

JOAN. I couldn't agree more. And now I think we should
expand this mission to include women in a variety of
sizes.

JOHN. ...

Yes. All right. Okay.

JOAN. Okay?

JOHN. Yes. Okay.

JOAN. That's wonderful!

JOHN. Who's out there in Bangladesh?

RAJ. Lucy and Neil arrived in Dhaka two days ago.

JOHN. They having fun?

FRED. As far as we can tell. Notwithstanding heat and
culture shock.

JOHN. Isn't Neil Bangladeshi?

RAJ. In the same way I'm Punjabi.

From Delaware.

JOHN. You're both from Delaware? What are the chances!
He's so skinny. His immune system looks so compromised
to me. I tried to get him to play golf. How's the old
backswing Raj?

RAJ. Good good, Fred and I are getting out to Oak Creek
this weekend.

JOHN. Gosh that sounds like fun. How's your mother Fred?
Is she well?

FRED. Better John – and even better now I'm sending more
money home ha ha!

JOHN. How's your practice Joan?

JOAN. Oh. It's – it's going well

JOHN. Uh-huh. It can be challenging I know. Joan, when I get back, we're going to have to do some serious vinyasa together. Really get into rhythm.

JOAN. Uhm-hm. That sounds...wonderful. Can't wait.

JOHN. Meanwhile, I'm tuning off. Four weeks, no phone, no internet, no nothing. I'm leaving it all in your capable hands.

NO LICKING SAPPHO.

THAT'S RUDE.

(A click.)

(JOAN looks a bit rattled.)

RAJ. All right!

FRED. Bring on the celebration smoothies!

JOAN. I still don't know / when you're kidding.

RAJ. He's kidding.

FRED. I'm kidding. Congratulations team!

RAJ. Masterful, Joan.

FRED. Big shoes to fill and I have to say, you're filling them so nicely.

JOAN. Raj, call Lucy about Bangladesh...

RAJ. Right, yes.

(He goes to leave.)

JOAN. Actually, no, no – wait.

RAJ. What?

JOAN. Is there something we're...

I feel like there's something I've overlooked.

(FRED hands his iPad to JOAN.)

FRED. Well, here's my list.

Brand management has the latest.

Ad campaign's approved.

JOAN. We have all the information from the focus groups?

RAJ. Yeah we've got all that.

(JOAN's breathing starts to shorten.)

JOAN. I just – I don't know...

I guess the first month in any job's always crazy huh?

(FRED checks his watch.)

RAJ. You want to go home and practice?

JOAN. Uh...no. I think I just...maybe, no, no, yes.

Call Lucy.

FRED. Are you okay?

JOAN. I just need some fresh air.

(RAJ and FRED go to leave.)

RAJ. Hey, Joan – congratulations.

We're lucky to have you.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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