

sAiNt jOaN
(burn/burn/burn)

By
Lisa Ramirez

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sAiNt jOaN (burn/burn/burn) received its world premiere at the Oakland Theater Project on November 12th, 2021, directed by Michael Moran with the following cast:

BELL.....Success Ufondu
ANGIE.....Metsehafe Eyob
SABRA.....Daniela Cervantes
MAY.....Charlotte Ying Levy
JEAN DARK.....Romeo Channer

STAGE MANAGER: Phred Swain Sugarman
LIGHTING DESIGN: Dr. Stephanie Anne Johnson
SET DESIGN: Karla Hargrave
COSTUME DESIGN: Lisa Ramirez
SOUND DESIGN: Elton Bradman
FIGHT DIRECTOR: Dave Maier
MANAGING DIRECTOR: Colin Mandlin
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR: Ashley Munday
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR: Simone Finney
DRAMATURGY: Morgan Jenness & John Wilkins
PHOTOGRAPHY: Carson French
VIDEOGRAPHY: Adam Elder
MUSIC COMPOSITION: Bekka Fink

CAST:

BELL - 17, Black. Lives near Lake Merritt in Oakland.

ANGIE - 16, Black, younger sister of Bell. Lives near Lake Merritt in Oakland.

SABRA - 18, Guatemalan American. Lives in Fruitvale, Oakland.

MAY - 16, Taiwanese/Jewish American. Lives in Crocker Highlands, Oakland.

JEAN DARK - 17, French/Jewish American. Gender queer. Adopted. Lives in Piedmont, Oakland. (*Pronounced John Dark.*)

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SETTING:

Inside a storage warehouse in a factory that makes both religious and trendy votive candles. May 26, 2020. Evening. The night of the George Floyd Protests. The height of the pandemic. Oakland, California. A darkness has fallen over the land. A collective grief. Sounds of protest, police sirens echo outside.

sAiNt jOaN (burn/burn/burn) is a chamber piece that alternates between a realistic and an avant-garde performance style, merging stories, timelines and themes that don't necessarily match up against each other in real time. It is an attempt to combine the past and present to discover what reverberations come to light. Although we will be alternating between theatrical styles, the piece should be played relentlessly and without pauses unless indicated in the script. These are teenagers. Pacing is fast. They step on each other's thoughts, finish or change each other's sentences, interrupt constantly. Throughout the play we hear the soundscape of outside violence, arrests, continued or far away chants so that it's clear that they are in hiding. The play takes place over the course of one night with moments of time travel through the past.

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PROLOGUE

Darkness. After a moment of silence, the flickering of a lone candle, then the sound of whispers. Slow, soft hums and fragments of song weave together with the flickering. The candle goes out. Silence. Elsewhere in the warehouse, candles randomly flicker and go out with the sound of whispers. It's like a call and response between sound and light, as if the warehouse comes to life when it's closed. The sound of whispers morphs into a cacophony of voices, cathedral bells, battle cries in French, the sound of drums and the galloping of horses charging. The volume increases, until it reaches a crescendo, then we hear a voice-over.

V. O. Jean D'Arc, that's Joan of Arc in English was born in January on the night of 6th the feast of the epiphany, that's the twelfth day of Christmas in the year 1412 in a small village in France. For years after her birth the Farmers in the village told the story of the night she was born...

(We are now in present time. The sounds of protest outside, cries, chants, drums. A strobe light flickers, and five teenagers run through the space, as if they are outside in the mayhem. The sounds of protest turn into sounds of terror. Police sirens, footsteps running, glass breaking, anti-police screams, a rally gone awry. The dialogue below is simultaneous and repetitive. Each actor repeats their line over and over until the crescendo reaches a peak and there's a blackout.)

BELL. Angie! Angie! Angie! Angie! Angie! Angie! Angie! Angie!

ANGIE. My phone! My phone! My phone! My phone! My phone!

SABRA. Shit! Shit! Shit! Shit! Shit! Shit! Shit! Shit! Shit! Shit!

MAY. I can't! I can't! I can't! I can't! I can't! I can't! I can't! I can't!

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(The chaos escalates until it reaches a crescendo- then- blackout. We hear MAY'S voice screaming in the darkness.)

MAY. I can't see!!!

(The lights come up on the candle warehouse. Everyone is recovering from running away from the rally. May is hunched over with her hands over her eyes.)

MAY. *(Cont'd.)* I can't see!!! *(SABRA helps May settle, then runs to her backpack to grab some water. She holds May's head back pours it over her eyes and pats it with a bandana.)*

SABRA. Okay- Okay- Okay- Okay -Okay- Okay. Here's some water. I'm going to pour this over your eyes.

MAY. Owwww! Let me know when you're going to pour it- don't just pour!

SABRA. Sorry- sorry- sorry!

MAY. Arghhhh!

SABRA. It's going to help.

MAY. It burns!

SABRA. It'll stop.

MAY. I shouldn't have come. I shouldn't have come at all!

SABRA. Okay- one more time. One more time. I'm going to pour it.

MAY. I should have stayed home!

SABRA. Okay-One- two- three- *(Sabra holds May's head back and pours water.)*

MAY. Aaaaaahhh!!!

SABRA. Sorry. Sorry. Lemme dab it a little- *(Sabra pulls a bandana out of her pocket and touches May's eyelids with it.)*

SABRA. Okay?

MAY. Okay.

SABRA. You good?

MAY. I'm okay.

SABRA. You sure? *(May aggressively grabs the bandana.)*

MAY. Yes! Just- just- let me- let me- breathe a little. You're kind of all ON me...

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(Sabra snaps at her and walks away.)

SABRA. You do it then! *(May dabs her own eyes, then slowly opens them. They look at each other. Pause.)*

SABRA. Yeah?

MAY. Yeah.

SABRA. Better?

MAY. A little.

SABRA. Okay. Good.

MAY. Thanks.

SABRA. Yup.

MAY. Sorry- I-

SABRA. It's cool.

MAY. I just- freaked out a little. *(From the opposite side of the warehouse, ANGIE sings the old disco song, Freak Out by Chic.)*

ANGIE. Ahhhhhhh- FREAK OUT! Les Freak- C'est chic.

BELL. Stop!

ANGIE. FREAK OUT! Les Freak- C'est chic.

BELL. *(To Sabra.)* Damn. That was some immediate assistance- Red Cross shit!

SABRA. Thanks. *(BELL removes her mask.)*

BELL. Alright- mask check.

SABRA. What?

BELL. On or off?

MAY. On.

ANGIE. Off.

BELL. The CDC says we're not at risk now.

(They all remove masks in their own time. Everyone is catching their breath and taking in the warehouse, getting situated. JEAN walks around, taking it all in. They see the candles flicker as we hear a voice over.)

V.O. On the night Joan was born- all of the animals in all the barns and stables in the village erupted in sounds. And I quote, "Each animal in its own tongue so loudly that everyone in the village was kept awake." *(Jean still sees the candles flicker. No one else does.)*

JEAN. What is this place?

SABRA. Candle factory.

JEAN. Whoa.

BELL. Factory?

SABRA. The factory's next store.

JEAN. Cool.

SABRA. This is the storage area-

JEAN. Alright.

SABRA. Where they ship everything from.

ANGIE. Like Amazon?

BELL. But candles.

SABRA. My mom works here.

BELL. Like the Amazon of candles.

MAY. Amazon sucks.

BELL. Yup.

SABRA. Which is how I know the code-

JEAN. (*Jean puts their arms in the air.*) The CODE!

SABRA. She always forgets it so-

ANGIE. Lucky for us.

BELL. Lucky for us.

SABRA. I know it. The numbers by heart so...

JEAN. Look at all these-

BELL. (*To Sabra.*) Thanks for-

JEAN. SAINTS!

BELL. Letting us in.

ANGIE. Yeah thanks.

BELL. For the shelter.

JEAN. (*Jean full on imitates Bob Dylan singing Shelter From the Storm.*)

"Come in she said I'll give you shelter from the storm."

BELL. From the storm?

JEAN. Dylan.

ANGIE. What?

JEAN. Bob Dylan.

ANGIE. Right.

JEAN. Excellent lyrics.

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BELL. Whatever.

JEAN. Highly relevant.

MAY. My mom likes Bob Dylan.

JEAN. Who doesn't?

BELL. *(To Angie.)* She trippin'

ANGIE. I was thinking that.

JEAN. *(Jean continues to look around and begins reciting names of the Saint Candles.)* Saint Martha-

SABRA. You guys were at the protest, right?

JEAN. Saint Lucy-

BELL. Hell yeah.

JEAN. Saint Francis-

ANGIE. She dragged me here.

JEAN. Mary the Blessed Virgin-

BELL. Shut up.

JEAN. Saint Bernadette-

ANGIE. You shut up!

JEAN. Saint Jude-

BELL. It was my idea- you jumped at the chance to get out.

JEAN. Saint Veronica-

ANGIE. Whatever.

JEAN. Teresa of Avila-

MAY. Is she really going to read off every candle?

JEAN. Guadalupe-

BELL. *(To Sabra.)* We couldn't just stay home.

JEAN. Saint Joan-

SABRA. Same.

JEAN. Saint Anthony-

ANGIE. I saw that video of George Floyd's daughter and I was like-

BELL. I showed you that!

ANGIE. Whatever.

SABRA. It was everywhere though.

MAY. We had to show out.

SABRA. Same.

JEAN. Jesus Christ-

BELL. What about Black Jesus?

JEAN. Huh?

ANGIE. Black Jesus?

JEAN. What about him?

BELL. Any Black Jesus' up there?

JEAN. *(Jean looks around.)* Uhhhhh...

BELL. Since you're reciting the *entire* inventory of this place.

JEAN. *(Jean finds the "trendy" candle area.)* Obama?

BELL. Obama!

ANGIE. Black Jesus! *(Bell and Angie crack up laughing.)*

JEAN. Stacy Abrams?

BELL. Stacy Abrams!

JEAN. Kamala?

ANGIE. Kamala! *(The candles flicker, the sound of whispers.)*

JEAN. *(Jean falls to their knees in a panic.)* Did you? Did you guys?

Did you see that?

MAY. See what? *(The whispers and the flickering of the candles stop.)*

JEAN. Nothing.

BELL. Okay.

MAY. See what?

JEAN. Nothing!

SABRA. We should introduce ourselves.

JEAN. *(Jean does a full-on imitation of Mick Jagger's, "Sympathy for the Devil".)* Please allow me to introduce myself. I'm a man of wealth and taste.

I've been around for a long- long year. Stole many a man's soul and faith...

BELL. That's random.

ANGIE. Sooo random!

SABRA. How do you guys know each other? Cuz, like, I only know her.

(Referring to May.)

BELL. *(To Jean.)* Could you not? Or do it over there? *(Jean continues whisper singing the rest of the song and dancing like Mick Jagger.)*

SABRA. You guys' just kind of slipped in-

BELL. Let's uh-

SABRA. Under the gate.

BELL. *(To Jean)* Hey- we're gonna introduce ourselves. *(Jean is in their own world dancing.)*

MAY. We should like- drop our socials.

BELL. Okay.

ANGIE. My phooooone...

BELL. *(Imitating Angie.)* My phooooone...

ANGIE. Stop!

BELL. *(Imitating Angie.)* Stop!

ANGIE. I lost my phone!

BELL. I know- I was there! *(Bell pulls her phone out of her pocket.)*

ANGIE. How would you feel if you lost your phone!?!

BELL. Stop! *(Bell looks at her phone for texts.)* Oh man. From Mom.

“WHERE ARE YOU?----WHERE ARE YOU?----WHERE ARE YOU?
ARE YOU DEAD?”

ANGIE. Call her!

BELL. No!

ANGIE. Call her! You have to call her!

BELL. Stop!

ANGIE. Give me your phone!

BELL. Stop it!

ANGIE. She's gonna be- she's gonna be- she's gonna be-

BELL. Stop!

ANGIE. She's gonna be SO mad!

BELL. This is why I didn't want you to come!

ANGIE. You know she is!

BELL. Just go home then!

ANGIE. I can't!

BELL. Call an Uber!

ANGIE. I can't- my phone!!!! *(In a huff, Angie moves to another area of the warehouse.)*

BELL. I'll call one then. God!

SABRA. You think you're gonna get an Uber now?

BELL. Right.

SABRA. Good luck with that.

BELL. (*Angie is in the corner crying.*) That's right young lady. You just sit over there in the corner. You are on a "time out." (*Bell laughs.*)

ANGIE. SHUT UP!

BELL. Manners sister! (*To the others.*) Where were we?

MAY. Dropping our socials.

BELL. Right.

MAY. Which ones do you guys like?

BELL. Mostly Insta-

ANGIE. I like Tick Tock. For the visuals.

SABRA. Or Snap.

BELL. Snap?

ANGIE. Snap chat stupid!

SABRA. That is my least favorite word. Don't call her-

ANGIE. She's my sister!

BELL. It's fine.

SABRA. I hate that word.

MAY. Me too.

BELL. She's just bitter cause she lost her phone!

SABRA. Right.

MAY. I'm an only child so-

BELL. Ohhh...

MAY. Conflict for me is-

BELL. That explains a lot.

JEAN. I'm also conflict adverse.

BELL. You gonna sing a song about it?

JEAN. Good one.

ANGIE. I wish I was an only child!

BELL. No talking- you're on a time out!

ANGIE. Shut up!!!!

SABRA. Let's just do Insta for now.

BELL. Dope.

JEAN. (*Mocking them.*) Instaaa!

ANGIE. Insta?

BELL. What do you care?

ANGIE. Insta??

SABRA. It's easier.

BELL. You don't even have a phone!

ANGIE. Insta is lame.

JEAN. Social media is lame.

SABRA. Yeah but-

MAY. Better than Facebook.

BELL & ANGIE. Ewww- Facebook!

JEAN. All of it sucks.

SABRA. Everybody has Insta.

JEAN. The great distractor.

BELL. Facebook is for OLD people.

JEAN. The brainwasher.

ANGIE. They should call it, "Old age" book.

BELL. "Senior" book.

ANGIE. Seriously.

MAY. "Ancient" book.

SABRA. For the ancients!

JEAN. YAWN.

ANGIE. Our mom uses Facebook.

BELL. She's all like- "Oh my god! So and so from High School just-

BELL & ANGIE. *(In an exaggerated mom voice.)* Requested my friendship!"

MAY. *(May looks at her phone.)* Shit. My mom's texting.

SABRA. Mine too.

BELL. Okay- okay- okay- *(To Sabra.)* You go.

SABRA. Okay my handle is- @CactusRebel

BELL. Cactus?

SABRA. Yeah, so don't get too close!

BELL. Ouch.

MAY. My phone's dying.

SABRA. Anybody have a charger?

JEAN. Nope.

SABRA. Lemme look. *(Sabra walks around looking for a charger in an outlet.)*

JEAN. Pull the plug man.

BELL. What?

JEAN. On social media.

MAY. No one HAS a plug.

BELL. Where did that come from?

JEAN. Free yourselves.

ANGIE. My phoooooone...

JEAN. (*Jean approaches Angie.*) Hey. Friend.

ANGIE. I lost my phone.

JEAN. My condolences.

ANGIE. I just got it- for my birthday!

JEAN. (*Jean pulls a phone out of their pocket.*) You can use mine.

ANGIE. Really?

JEAN. Yup.

ANGIE. You don't need it?

JEAN. Nope.

ANGIE. For real?

JEAN. You can keep it.

ANGIE. (*Angie takes the phone.*) For real?

JEAN. For real.

(*The candles flicker. The sound of whispers. Jean freaks out a little.*)

JEAN. You saw that right?

ANGIE. What?

JEAN. (*Jean tries to listen.*) Shhhhhhhh!

ANGIE. I'm not talking.

JEAN. You hear that?

ANGIE. What?

JEAN. (*The sound and candles stop. Jean tries to play it off.*) Nothing.

MAY. Phone died.

BELL. Mine's about to. (*To Sabra.*) You find a charger?

SABRA. Nope. (*Bell spends the last few moments on her uncharged phone. Pause.*)

ANGIE. I'm hungry.

BELL. Oh my god. Stop!

JEAN. That I can help with.

BELL. What?

JEAN. *(Jean runs to their backpack and pulls out a bunch of vegan Lara Bars.)* Ask and ye shall receive. *(They toss a couple out to each person.)* For you- and you-

SABRA. Cool!

JEAN. And you-

MAY. I love these.

JEAN. Good- I can't stand them.

JEAN. And you.

BELL. "Lara" Bar? What are these?

ANGIE. "Lara" made them.

BELL. Stupid.

MAY. Yay. Vegan.

JEAN. Bleh.

MAY. I'm vegan.

JEAN. My mom's vegan.

BELL. *(Bell and Angie make faces while chewing. Lara Bars are gross.)*
These are uh...interesting.

ANGIE. Very interesting. *(Long pause. Everyone's chewing. Bell finally spits hers out.)*

SABRA. Oh my god- I was starving.

MAY. Me too.

JEAN. I have more if you want.

BELL. That's okay.

ANGIE. We're good.

JEAN. My mom puts like a hundred and fifty in my backpack. Like every day.

ANGIE. Why?

JEAN. Cause one time I fainted in- like- preschool or something- so she worries about my blood sugar- constantly.

SABRA. My mom's a feeder too.

JEAN. Like 24/7.

SABRA. But not with these.

JEAN. She shops at Costco-

MAY. Costco is everything that's wrong with this country.

SABRA. Exactly.

JEAN. Then dumps everything she buys into my backpack.

MAY. My mom's a feeder.

BELL. What is that even?

SABRA. Someone who's always shoving food in your face.

BELL. Isn't that what moms do?

MAY. Yeah but-

BELL. Like what they're supposed to do?

MAY. My mom like force feeds me- like I'm a goose and she's making foie gras-

JEAN. (*Jean laughs.*) Foie Gras. Brilliant.

SABRA. Ewww.

MAY. But then- she's always- like on a diet. She hates carbs. She's seriously afraid of them.

SABRA. Dieting is so like- year 2000- or 90s even. Like trying to-

ANGIE. Or 80's!

SABRA. To achieve this unattainable standard of beauty-

BELL. No- no- no- I heard in the 80's you didn't even need to diet- it was all disco and cocaine-

ANGIE. (*Angie is googling.*) And supermodels.

SABRA. Trying to distract us-

ANGIE. I wish I was alive then.

MAY. No, you don't.

SABRA. To weaken us-

BELL. You do not wish you were alive then!

ANGIE. I do!

SABRA. To keep us preoccupied. So, we don't really notice what's happening in the world.

MAY. It's the male gaze.

JEAN. The male gaze!

SABRA. Right??

JEAN. (*Jean high fives Sabra.*) Boom.

MAY. I'm glad I was not around then.

ANGIE. Oh my god I wish I was alive then. I do- I do- I do. Don't hate me but I'm obsessed. (*Angie shows them Studio 54 photos on her phone.*)

BELL. What?

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ANGIE. Like hanging out at Studio 54 until all hours- not going to sleep until morning. Or noon even.

BELL. I have never heard this from you!

ANGIE. Like before aids- and addiction-and crack- and all that bad shit came through.

BELL. Do not share that with too many people!

ANGIE. Why? *(Angie wanders off with the phone.)*

MAY. I have no desire to go back in time.

SABRA. Me neither.

ANGIE. I do.

(The candles flicker again. Whispers turn into a cacophony of voices/sound. Jean runs to a corner of the warehouse.)

V.O. There is no record of what Joan looked like as a young girl. We do know that she had a bright red birthmark behind her right ear. Some speculate that it was that seemingly meaningless mark which probably caused her to die.

(Back to real time. Only Jean heard the voice over or saw the candles flicker.)

BELL. I just realized I don't know any of your names.

ANGIE. You know mine.

BELL. Duh!

SABRA. Introductions!

MAY. Old school style.

SABRA. In person.

BELL. Okay- name- where you're from-

MAY. Preferred pronouns-

JEAN. I'm down with that.

SABRA. Land acknowledgements-

BELL. That's not old school.

ANGIE. That's *new* school.

BELL. Can you see Grandma doing preferred pronouns?

ANGIE. Or land acknowledgements? (*Bell and Angie imitate their grandma.*)

BELL. “What do I have to acknowledge? This is my land! I bought this house back in...”

ANGIE “The olden days...” (*They crack up.*)

SABRA. Okay, I’ll go. I’m Sabra. Uh... (*Slight pause.*) She/her/hers. Raised in Fruitvale- Oakland. Which was home to the Ohlone people. Pass.

BELL. Bell. Named after the great Bell Hooks. If you don’t know her you should look her up, like now.

MAY. Pronouns?

BELL. What?

MAY. What are your pronouns?

BELL. Oh. She/her/hers. Same- Oakland- Ohlone. Pass.

MAY. I’m May, or Mèimè. That’s what my mom and grandma call me. She/her/hers. Oakland. Ohlone land. Crocker Highlands.

BELL. “Cracker” Highlands.

MAY. I know.

ANGIE. She fancy.

MAY. (*To Angie.*) Your turn. I mean- pass.

ANGIE. Okay...I’m Angela or Angie. Named after...guess.

BELL. Angela Davis! Black Panther heroine. Duh.

ANGIE. That is so rude Bell!!!

SABRA. Let her talk!

ANGIE. Thank you. Um- yeah...what else? She/her/hers. Oakland. Ohlone land. Lake Merritt. Which- definitely wasn’t there back then cuz it’s fake- it’s not a real lake.

BELL. It’s not fake. It’s a tidal lagoon. And the Bay isn’t really a bay but an estuary.

ANGIE. I’m talking right now!

BELL. So talk!

ANGIE. Let’s see. What else? Um... (*Slight pause.*) I’m shy. I’m a naturally shy person. And- this pandemic has-

BELL. Don’t say it!

ANGIE. What?

BELL. The “P” word.

SABRA. Pandemic?

BELL. (*Bell makes a game show noise.*) AHHHHHHHH!!! You're out. No- no- no- no- no. I refuse to give it power. Can we just all agree that we will use any other P word when referring to the- You know what?

ANGIE. Like I was saying!!!! I am naturally shy. And the uh- the uh- the uh- Pandemonium?

BELL. (*Approving.*) Ding- ding- ding- ding- ding. Yesssssss!

ANGIE. The pandemonium has made it worse. So. Okay. Someone else go. Pass.

BELL. (*To Jean.*) You.

JEAN. Me?

BELL. No- the other you. Go.

JEAN. The other you. That's funny. That's actually pretty loaded.

BELL. What?

JEAN. Using the word other. "The OTHER you."

BELL. Just go. Go!

JEAN. No- it's just- if you knew me you would not have made that crack. But you don't so-

BELL. I don't know what the hell you're talking about-

JEAN. You know- you interrupt a lot.

ANGIE.

She does! (*To Bell.*) Stop interrupting!!! (*To Jean.*) Sorry- go!

JEAN. I'm gonna pass.

BELL. What?

JEAN. On my name.

ANGIE. What?

BELL. Whatever.

SABRA. Where you from?

JEAN. Born in Oakland- well- Berkeley- technically.

BELL. Figures.

ANGIE. (*To Bell.*) Stop it!

BELL. Bezerkley.

JEAN. But- Oakland- was raised in Oakland.

SABRA. Where?

JEAN. Piedmont.

ANGIE. Fancy.

BELL. Bougie.

JEAN. On the unceded territories of Chocheyno and Ramaytush Ohlone peoples- Pass.

BELL. Say your name again?

JEAN. I didn't.

BELL. Huh?

JEAN. Exactly.

ANGIE. Why?

JEAN. They/their/them. (*Jean sits and pulls out a book.*)

BELL. What's that?

JEAN. Book.

BELL. Duh. Lemme see. (*Jean shows Bell the book.*) Jeen De Orc?

JEAN. (*Jean corrects her.*) Jean D'Arc. Like "John."

BELL. Sounds like jaundice.

ANGIE. It does. What kind of name is Jean D'Arc?

JEAN. French.

ANGIE. You French?

JEAN. Partly.

BELL. You do not look French.

JEAN. I'm Jewish.

SABRA. (*To Bell.*) What does that mean-

ANGIE. I thought you said you were French.

SABRA. You don't "look" French.

JEAN. There were a lot of Jews in France.

MAY. I'm Jewish too.

BELL. Yeah right.

MAY. I am. Half.

JEAN. That's cool.

MAY. Thanks.

BELL. (*Bell realizing who Jean's book's about.*) Wait- wait-wait- That's Joan of Arc!

JEAN. Jean D'Arc-

BELL. I just did a report on her. It's Joan. Not Jean. JOAN of Arc.

JEAN. Whatever. *(Jean stands and very proudly opens their shirt to show their homemade/sharpie drawn JEAN DARK tattoo on their chest.)* I- uh- Just got this.

BELL. Yeah? Where'd you get that?

ANGIE. Bell. Don't.

JEAN. Tattoo place. In Berkeley. *(No one believes them but they're going along with her.)*

MAY. Uh...Cool.

SABRA. That's tight.

JEAN. I put my own personal spin on it. *(Jean points to each word.)* Jean- and then- Dark.

SABRA. *(Kind of laughing at Jean.)* Wow. That shit is valid.

MAY. I want one.

SABRA. Me too.

MAY. But like- a real one.

BELL. Wait- wait- wait. Lemme see that.

JEAN. *(Jean points to the words and explains.)* See? J-E-A-N. One word. Then- D-A-R-K. Other one.

ANGIE. Jean Dark?

JEAN. Yeah.

BELL. But you're not.

JEAN. What?

BELL. Dark.

ANGIE. No, she's not.

MAY. They!

ANGIE. No, they're not

BELL. Lemme ask you- why "Dark?"

JEAN. It's derivative-

BELL. What?

JEAN. Of "D'Arc." Jean D'Arc. Jean Dark is my version.

BELL. But you're not.

JEAN. Not what?

BELL. Dark. You're not dark.

JEAN. What?

BELL. You're like as white as white can be.

JEAN. A lot more to darkness than skin color

BELL. Oh- you did not just try to “whitesplain” what the word “dark” means to me. As if I don’t know all the different meanings of the word.

ANGIE. (*Angie googles on her phone.*) Dark. One. Devoid or partially devoid of light: not receiving, reflecting, transmitting or radiating light.

BELL. Angie stop!

ANGIE. Two...

BELL. I am trying to make a point.

ANGIE. Wholly or partially black.

JEAN. So make your point.

SABRA. Yeah- make your point.

BELL. Okay. So. We’re Black.

JEAN. Yes.

BELL. That is dark. Or d-a-r-k like you say. That’s Black.

JEAN. Yes.

BELL. That is Black.

JEAN. It is.

BELL. And like- I don’t know if you’ve seen the news lately or-

JEAN. Yes?

SABRA. What’s your point?

BELL. My point is- you have to be careful with the words you use.

JEAN. I agree.

BELL. My point is- Black lives matter.

JEAN. I know that.

MAY. We know that.

SABRA. Of course they do.

BELL. No- no- no- no- no. Not “Of course they do.’ Which is- essentially a brush off. Let me finish. Black lives matter. That’s why we’re here or were there- out there marching.

ANGIE. Protesting.

BELL. Marching. For George Floyd.

ANGIE. Alan Blueford.

BELL. For Oscar Grant.

ANGIE. Yvette Henderson.

BELL. Ahmaud Arbery.

ANGIE. Eric Garner.

BELL. George Jackson.

ANGIE Freddie Gray.

BELL. Breonna Taylor.

ANGIE Natasha McKenna.

BELL. Nate Wilks.

ANGIE Trayvon Martin.

BELL. Shall we go on? Cause there's a very long list of- innocent Black people-

ANGIE. Killed by-

BELL. MURDERED by cops.

JEAN. I know.

MAY. We know.

SABRA. Give it a rest.

BELL. Give it a rest?

SABRA. That's why we're here.

BELL. *(To Jean.)* You were marching right?

(More candles flicker. The sound of whispers with music/ far away church bells. Jean breaks away from the group and begins whispering along, as if they are communicating with another realm.)

JEAN. The bells- the bells- I hear their voices in the bells...

V.O. When she was just 13, she began hearing voices. These voices frequently came around noon. And almost always on sunny bright days.

JEAN. Today, when they rang. They sounded- they sounded- they were jangling they were not like bells at all.

V.O. The voices said. "God has spoken. God has an assignment, a plan for you."

(The whispers fade. The candles stop flickering. Jean comes back into the conversation more disoriented this time. Everyone stares at them.)

JEAN. Sorry. I was- I was just- what did you say?

SABRA. She asked if we were marching.

sAiNt jOaN (burn/burn/burn)

JEAN. Oh. I was not marching tonight- but I have in the past-

BELL. See?

JEAN. I am- I am- I am-

(The sound of louder whispers. Jean rapidly whispers along with the cacophony of voices and sound. The sound from outside is accelerating during this moment. Many candles flicker now. Only Jean sees or hears it.)

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