

THE MESSENGER: THE STORY OF JOAN OF ARC

by

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and

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FADE IN:

EXT. CHURCH - DOMREMY - DAY

FADE UP on ripples on the surface of a puddle. Slow PAN UP: the water becomes placid, and in it we see the reflection of an inverted CROSS on the top of a small church. We move across the little churchyard and in through the open doors.

INT. CHURCH - DOMREMY - DAY

Utter simplicity -- stone walls, rough-hewn wooden benches, primitive saints in the stained-glass windows -- chickens peck among the straw that covers the earthen

floor.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOX - CHURCH - DAY

A little wooden grill slides open and the friendly face of the village PRIEST peers at us. He glances about, perplexed.

PRIEST

Is anybody there?

A small hand appears -- then the face of a girl aged about 10, peering up at him through the grill. The Priest smiles a trifle wearily.

PRIEST

You know I'm always happy to see you, Jeanne, but to keep coming here twice, three times a day...

JEANNE

I need to confess.

PRIEST

But you already confessed this morning...

JEANNE

I need to confess again.

PRIEST

So... alright. What terrible sin have you committed since then that can't wait till tomorrow to be forgiven?

Jeanne climbs up on the prayer-stool to be tall enough to look the Priest in the eye.

JEANNE

I saw a poor monk without shoes so I gave him some.

PRIEST

There's no sin in charity, Jeanne.

JEANNE

They weren't my shoes. Mine were too small.

PRIEST

Whose were they?

JEANNE

My father's.

PRIEST

I'm sure he'll forgive you.

JEANNE

He already did, but I want God to forgive me too.

PRIEST

Jeanne -- if we were to ask forgiveness all the time, we'd spend our whole life in church.

JEANNE

Is that bad?

PRIEST

(perplexed)

Well no, but... Jeanne, are you happy at home?

JEANNE

Oh yes... very.

PRIEST

And your mother -- everything's fine with her?

JEANNE

Oh yes, she's... wonderful.

FLASH: we see Jeanne's peasant MOTHER, sitting by the fire, sewing. Their home is little more than a hovel -- a low, dark cave of a place, traversed by a huge beam.

PRIEST

Good, good. And your sister... Catherine -- she's still your best friend?

JEANNE

Oh yes, my sister's just... she's... wonderful.

FLASH: Jeanne's sister CATHERINE (18) sits near her mother, spinning wool.

PRIEST

And what about your other friends... you don't like playing with them?

JEANNE

Oh yes, I play with them... lots...

FLASH: Jeanne is battling against some reeds with a wooden stick under a full noonday sun. Not far away, a group of kids are in the shadow of a huge tree, playing. One of them watches Jeanne in the distance.

What's she doing? KID #1

Playing. KID #2

Resume on the Priest.

PRIEST
So... everything sounds...
wonderful?

JEANNE
Yes, it is.

PRIEST
Then... why are you here so often?

JEANNE
I feel safe here. And it's where I
can talk to him.

PRIEST
Him?

JEANNE
Well, I try and talk to him, but
mostly he's the one who does the
talking.

PRIEST
Who is this "he"?

JEANNE
He never says his name.

PRIEST
What... does he... look like?

FLASH: a little boy of 8, sitting on a throne in a
clearing in a wood.

JEANNE
Beautiful.

PRIEST
And what does he say to you?

FLASH: the Boy points solemnly at us, but says nothing.

JEANNE
He says... he says I must be good...
and help everyone... and take care
of myself. Do you think he's coming
from the sky?

PRIEST

Perhaps... but wherever he comes from, I think you should listen to him, because it sounds like he's giving you very good advice.

The Priest smiles, and Jeanne beams back at him. He blesses her...

PRIEST

Ego te absolvo, in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, Amen.

EXT. CHURCH & STREAM - DAY

Jeanne runs from the little church, the weight of her sins now happily off her shoulders. Her reflection skips across a little stream, then on through a meadow of cowslips and buttercups and up the sloping hillside beyond...

EXT. MEADOW & WOOD - DUSK

A hazy, summer dusk -- pollen floating in the shimmering air... Jeanne swirls between the high elms, happy and carefree -- it's all a little surreal -- are those church bells in the distance? Or cow bells? Or merely the SOUND of insects?

Jeanne swings round faster and faster, then tumbles over, laughing, and lies on her back. She's dizzy and out of breath. Above her, the clouds seeming to swirl as though she were still spinning round...

The SOUND of the bells slows down, deepening... Her face moves into shadow. Although not distinguishable as words at this stage, there's an urgent whisper in the wind... a strange echo that will eventually resolve into a call "Jeanne...!"

Presently Jeanne turns and sees something glinting in the long grass. A SWORD. The background SOUND of the bells grows ominous. A shooting star silently flashes across the sky -- then scores of them. She gets to her feet and picks up the heavy sword. It's growing darker -- colder -- the leaves have turned to autumn brown, now blown about by a gust of wind.

Presently she sees a WOLF approaching, slowly but straight toward her -- then two, three -- finally the whole pack. She grips the sword, but can't use it -- too heavy, too frightened. As the wolves approach, she closes her eyes...

The wolves pass either side of her, as though oblivious to

her presence. When she opens her eyes, they have passed, and are now heading along the forest track.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Jeanne follows the wolves along the track. They're heading toward a red glow, visible beyond the trees. The wolves disappear over a ridge, though all we can see for the moment is the red sky beyond. But as Jeanne reaches the edge, we move up with her to see...

... her village in the valley below, ablaze.

EXT. DOMREMY VILLAGE - NIGHT

Panic -- screams -- crashing timbers -- animals stampeding -- wolves drag corpses from gutted buildings -- and through the midst of the tumult tears Jeanne, still dragging the sword she found. She runs inside a farm cottage...

INT. JEANNE'S HOME - NIGHT

The low, dark building we saw earlier -- now empty, lit by the fires of the houses on the far side of the street. Jeanne runs in, searching about --

JEANNE

Mother...?

No response. She begins to panic -- runs through into a smaller room beyond, calling out --

JEANNE

Catherine?!

Suddenly a door swings open and a hand reaches out -- Jeanne screams, then turns to see her elder sister, CATHERINE, who's been hiding in a cupboard...

CATHERINE

Jeanne!

Catherine embraces her, hugging her in relief --

CATHERINE

Are you alright? Did they hurt you?

JEANNE

No no, I'm fine, really...

CATHERINE

I was so worried -- we've all been looking for you! The English are

everywhere! O thank you, lord!

She hugs her again -- then freezes, hearing the SOUND of horses, the clanking of armor. But Jeanne hasn't heard...

JEANNE

I was in church...

Catherine glances about, ears tuned...

CATHERINE

Really?

JEANNE

I was talking to the priest, and do you know what he said to me?

Catherine puts her hand across Jeanne's mouth --

CATHERINE

Shhh... tell me later...

She hears the drunken laughter getting closer...

CATHERINE

Quick -- hide in here...

JEANNE

What about you?

CATHERINE

Don't worry about me -- just stay in here... and don't move!

JEANNE

But where are you going to be?

CATHERINE

I'll be right here... I promise.

Catherine quickly lifts Jeanne inside the cupboard, locks the door, then turns to confront THREE hefty ruffians calling themselves soldiers. The biggest and ugliest has a jet black beard.

BLACKBEARD

Now that's what I call booty!

Blackbeard turns back to his comrades, who are sharing out a roast chicken between them. Catherine picks up the sword dropped by Jeanne as Blackbeard swaggers up to her...

BLACKBEARD

A woman with a sword?

(to his comrades)

Hey, take a look at this --

Frenchmen are such cowards that
they've left all the fighting to
women!

CATHERINE

If that's God's will, then so be it!

Blackbeard's comrades start tucking into their food,
leaving Blackbeard to his pleasure.

BLACKBEARD

Fine with me. I love women.

He undoes his buckle. From her POV behind the cupboard
door, Jeanne can just about see Blackbeard's face through
a crack. Catherine raises the heavy sword as Blackbeard
advances, then brings it sweeping down. But he intercepts
it effortlessly, grasping the blade as though it were a
twig...

BLACKBEARD

Oh... now you've hurt my feeling...

He puts his hand around her throat, rips off her little
wooden cross, pins her against the door, then, with a
lecherous roar, plunges his face on her...

Jeanne is terrified. Blackbeard has his tunic down and is
attempting to gain entry -- Catherine tries to scream --
he slams his hand over her mouth -- she bites it --
Blackbeard howls... with laughter. Now his juices are
really moving. Catherine squirms against the door,
twisting and turning --

BLACKBEARD

Hold still, bitch. How can I do it
if you keep wriggling about?

He picks her up by the throat, lifts her clear off the
floor by several inches, then rams the sword clean through
her gut and the door behind her, the blade just missing
Jeanne.

BLACKBEARD

There, that's better.

With a grin at his comrades, Blackbeard resumes his
intercourse with the lifeless Catherine. Behind the door,
Jeanne is suffocating with terror.

The little wooden necklace lies on the floor in f.g. as
Blackbeard pulls up his pants and turns to his comrades --

BLACKBEARD

Your turn.

EXT. CHURCHYARD - VILLAGE - DAY

The little village church is no more than a smoldering pile of rubble -- among it, the twisted stained-glass of an angel. Corpses are piled up alongside a warren of shallow graves, awaiting committal. The Priest passes by each grave in turn, administering hasty last rites, then moving onto the next while a harassed grave-digger fills in the last.

Jeanne stands by a shallow grave, now wearing her sister's wooden cross and grazing fixedly at her body, wrapped in linen and awaiting interment. Her parents and other adults stand nearby, but at Jeanne's level we only see them from the waist down.

MAN #1 (O.S.)

We shouldn't be doing this by daylight... it's too dangerous.

MAN #2 (O.S.)

You're right -- the English are still around -- I can smell them...

MAN #3 (O.S.)

When is the king going to do something?

MAN #1 (O.S.)

He's good for nothing...

MAN #2 (O.S.)

Yeah... we can't even be sure he really is a king...

(whispering)

I heard someone say he's a bastard...

MAN #1 (O.S.)

With a mother like that? I wouldn't be surprised... she's such a whore...

WOMAN (O.S.)

Can you show some respect? We're burying our children. You should be praying instead of cursing...

MAN #2 (O.S.)

That's just about all we can do.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Yes... because only God can help us.

Now the Priest scurries over, hurriedly mumbles the last rites in Latin, then moves on to the next grave. Jeanne's family have their eyes closed in prayer, and it is only

Jeanne who sees the Grave-digger nudge the corpse into the shallow grave with his foot. He shovels in the earth, then moves on. The Father puts his hand on her shoulder.

FATHER

Listen, Jeanne... your Uncle and Aunt are taking you to their house for a few weeks... just to give us time to rebuild what we can.

Jeanne looks at him blankly, her thoughts too deep for tears.

EXT. VILLAGE & ROAD - DAY

Jeanne sits on the back of a small hay-wagon. Her Uncle and Aunt are up front, eyes on the barren, devastated countryside ahead, while Jeanne gazes fixedly on the road behind. From her POV: the receding figures of her parents, gradually merging with the dusty landscape.

INT. DAXART'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A large, low room, almost identical to Jeanne's house: a bare, earthen floor with chickens running about, and a huge cave of a fireplace. The Aunt doles out soup from a cauldron -- first to her husband, then to Jeanne.

DAXART

Lord, we give thanks for the food you have given us. Teach us always to love this land, and to save it from those who seek to destroy it. Amen.

Jeanne says nothing -- noted by Daxart. His wife nudges him with a gesture to let her be.

INT. DAXART ATTIC - NIGHT

Daxart opens the door to an attic room, his wife standing behind him with Jeanne. She wanders into the room, tidy but sparse, and sits on the edge of the bed. Daxart looks a little put out.

DAXART

So... good night then.

The Aunt understands Jeanne better than her husband, and leads him from the room.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS - NIGHT

The Daxarts share the communal sleeping area with a couple of goats and a mangy dog. Daxart is settling down to sleep, but his wife lies awake.

AUNT

What's going to happen to her?

DAXART

She'll be fine. She'll grow up... find a good man... make him some children. Don't worry -- she's been hurt, but she'll survive. Tomorrow she'll be as right as rain, you'll see.

INT. DAXART ATTIC - DAY

Daxart opens the door to the attic. Jeanne has not moved: she's still sitting on the bed like the day before.

JEANNE

I want to see a priest.

INT. VILLAGE CHURCH - DAY

Christ, crucified in stained glass. A silver cup is raised in blessing...

The local PRIEST, much older than the one at Domremy, lowers the cup, filled with wine in preparation for the Mass. The Daxarts enter the church at the far end, with Jeanne between them. The Priest is expecting her.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOX - DAY

Jeanne sits in the shielded darkness of the confessional box. She clutches at her little wooden cross and at last begins to cry.

PRIEST

I heard about your sister, and I... understand your pain...

JEANNE

Why did she have to die?

PRIEST

Only God knows the answer to that.

JEANNE

I know Jesus says to love our enemies but I can't -- I just want the English to burn in hell for ever and ever!

PRIEST

I realize your anger, Jeanne, but we must learn to forgive. It's hard, but revenge will never bring about peace.

JEANNE

Then what will? And what will bring her back? And why did she have to die in the first place instead of me? Why didn't he take my life instead of hers? It was my fault -- I was late -- she gave me her hiding place...!!

PRIEST

Jeanne... calm down...! Calm down, Jeanne!

Jeanne breaks off, trembling, tears pouring down her cheeks.

PRIEST

I don't pretend to know God's will, but I am sure of one thing -- the Lord always has a good reason. Perhaps he saved you because he needs you... for some higher calling. So... as long as you answer that call, your sister will not have died in vain.

Jeanne calms down. She stares at the Priest for a long moment, and her look becomes very deep and intense.

JEANNE

I don't want to wait for his call.

PRIEST

Jeanne, be patient.

JEANNE

I want to be with him always...

PRIEST

Soon you'll be able to take the Holy Mass, and as you eat of his flesh and drink of his blood, you will be at one with him.

JEANNE

I want to be at one with Him now.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

On the open road, with Jeanne sitting on the back of Daxart's wagon. It's a grey, lowering, dismal sort of day. The Daxarts are up front, talking in low voices.

DAXART

What did he say?

AUNT

He says we must bring her to church whenever she wants.

DAXART

Hmmm... easy for him -- he's not the one that has to do the bringing.

Behind them, the wagon is empty. Jeanne is long gone.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The rain pours down in torrents -- Jeanne runs...

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

... down the deserted road -- into the church...

INT. VILLAGE CHURCH - DAY

... and up the aisle to the altar. She grabs a jug of wine, pours some into the chalice -- holds it up high as the Priest did, then gulps it down. The wine cascades from her mouth like blood as she gazes up at the stained glass image --

JEANNE

I want to be with you now!

INT. DAXART HOUSE - DAWN

Daxart sits bolt upright, awaking from a nightmare. It's early morning, his wife still asleep beyond him.

INT./ EXT. DAXART ATTIC/POV OF FIELD - DAWN

Daxart opens the door to Jeanne's room. Empty, the bed unslept in. He walks in -- hears something. Looking out of the window he sees --

Jeanne in the distance, playing be herself. Daxart smiles.

EXT. HOUSE & FIELD - DAWN

Jeanne pauses, her stick poised in mid-air --

SUBLIMINAL FLASH --

-- a real sword impales a soldier through the stomach --
another sword slices through chain-mail -- and a severed
head encased in metal spins lose from armored shoulders...

EXT. HOUSE & FIELD - DAWN

Jeanne looks at Daxart.

JEANNE

I'm playing.

Once again Jeanne raises her stick-sword -- the head of a
sunflower is violently decapitated --

INT. CHINON - STATE ROOM - DAY

-- and a sword swishes down, trying to hack someone in the
leg. But it is only a wooden sword, and its wielder a
mere boy of five. This is young Prince LOUIS, practicing
his nascent swordsmanship on the castle GUARDS.

VOICES and approaching footsteps alert the Guards, who
quickly stand to attention as a door is swung open...

GUARD

The Dauphin!

Louis takes advantage of the Guards forced immobility, and
jabs one of them in the leg... he lets out a muffled "Ow!"

The Dauphin CHARLES VII enters, followed by his courtiers.
They include the bloated REGNAULT, Archbishop of Rheims,
and Georges de la TREMOILLE -- a sly and devious diplomat.

CHARLES

Louis, shouldn't you be learning
your lessons?

LOUIS

I don't want to learn, I want to
fight!

CHARLES

You will, you will. But for now,
you must learn... at least to wipe
your nose.

Charles (who speaks with a slight stutter) affectionately
wipes his son's nose with a corner of his shirt. Beyond

them, a young soldier, Jean d'AULON, arrives with a scroll.

AULON

A letter for His Majesty.

Tremoille takes it, opens the seal and begins to read.
Charles hands over Louis to a courtier...

TREMOILLE

Another one from this girl calling
herself the Maiden of Lorraine.

Charles snatches it somewhat testily from Tremoille...

CHARLES

I can read for myself, you know.

While Charles reads, Tremoille turns aside to Regnault --

TREMOILLE

She pretends she's been sent by God!
These charlatans -- it's a pity
there isn't enough wood to burn them
all!

CHARLES

She says she'll be here tomorrow...!

TREMOILLE

You mustn't see her, my lord. We
know nothing about her... we don't
even know if she is from Lorraine.

CHARLES

What difference does it make where
she comes from?

TREMOILLE

If she comes from Burgundy it makes
a difference. It might be a trap...
(takes back letter)
Look... Signed "X". What sort of
name is "X"? Or must we conclude
that a messenger of God can't even
write her own name?

REGNAULT

My lord Tremoille is correct. She
says she hears voices... she may be
a sorceress... a witch...

CHARLES

(snatching back
letter)

Regnault -- you see witches
everywhere. She's just a peasant...

a peasant who cares for her king.
Look... all she wants is to help me
win my crown... and permission to
fight for me.

TREMOILLE

Not exactly.

(takes back letter)

She wants you to give her an army --
at your expense. Bearing in mind
that your mother stole every last
piece of gold in the treasury, I
fail to see how you can afford such
an adventure.

CHARLES

(snatches back
letter)

I can see her if I want to. I mean,
with half of France in the hands of
the English, what have I got to
lose?

TREMOILLE

The other half.

REGNAULT

You mustn't see her, my lord. She
may be an instrument of the devil.

YOLANDE (O.S.)

Well... I think you should.

All eyes turn to the window, where Yolande has been
standing with her back to the room, reading a little book.
Her right-arm is standing beside her -- RICHMOND, his face
hideously disfigured by battle scars.

CHARLES

Ah, Yolande... and what makes you
think the exact opposite of my two
most trusted advisors?

Yolande smiles, though hardly a devoted smile. Mild
contempt would be more accurate.

YOLANDE

Because I care about you. Come here.

Charles walks over. He has his shirt undone. Yolande
buttons it back up.

YOLANDE

Your health and happiness has always
been my first concern, Charles...
ever since you were a little boy --
and I think I know you better than

your own mother...

CHARLES

You think?

YOLANDE

Mmmm. Yes. I know for example the sickness that plagues your heart. I know how painful it is for you... to have loved a father... without ever knowing if he really was yours.

CHARLES

W-w-what has that got to do with this Maiden?

YOLANDE

Who better than a messenger from God to give answers to your questions?

CHARLES

You really think she's been sent... by God?

YOLANDE

You're a fine judge of character, Charles. It'll take you less than five minutes to expose her if she's a fake. But if she's not -- then she will give you your answers... and place the crown on your head.

Charles shines at the prospect, but Tremoille and Regnault look less than happy.

TREMOILLE

With respect, my lady, I think it's going to take more than just a simple peasant girl to...

YOLANDE

I'm not interested in what you think, Tremoille -- or even what I think. It's what simple people think that matters, and the fact is that simple people up and down the country are already talking about her. Now you know what simple people are like, always ready to believe any old prophecy... like this one about a virgin from Lorraine saving France...?

(hands Tremoille the book)

And now this girl comes along -- from Lorraine -- and suddenly there's a spark of hope in their

simple minds. We shouldn't
disappoint them. If they believe in
her -- if she can put back the fire
in our army -- then I believe in her
too.

EXT. CHINON - LONG SHOT - NIGHT

Moving torches gallop toward us -- a FLAME flares through
foreground with a whoosh, PANNING ROUND as soldiers ride
toward the distant castle of Chinon -- a gloomy great
silhouette, rising against a bloody sunset...

INT. CHINON - GREAT HALL - NIGHT

Celebrations after a hunt. Troubadours play -- a whole
tree trunk is burning in the vast chimney. A Page comes
running into the big room and hurries excitedly over to
Charles.

PAGE

She's coming, your majesty... with
an armed escort!

CHARLES

Alright, alright -- calm yourself.

TREMOILLE

Your majesty, I urge you not to see
this woman. It all reeks of a
Burgundian trap!

CHARLES

My astrologers assure me that the
hour is p-p-propitious -- Leo, with
Virgo rising. Have you ever noticed
on the astrological chart how the
Virgin is next to the Lion?

TREMOILLE

Supposing she's an assassin?

CHARLES

Tremoille, I'm not even king yet...
who'd want to assassinate me?

Looking around at his courtiers? They all would.

EXT. CHINON COURTYARD - NIGHT

A FLAME swirls in the darkness -- the urgent clatter of
horses hooves -- steaming breath in the cold night air --
the SOUND of festivities coming from the castle walls
beyond -- the horses are reined -- one whinnies as

SOLDIERS jump down onto the cobbles -- a dark cape wraps about a figure...

INT. CHINON - GREAT HALL - NIGHT

Another page boy bursts in --

PAGE #2

She's arrived, my lord! She's in the guards' room.

CHARLES

So... I suppose I'd better make a decision.

Charles glances between Tremoille, Regnault and Yolande, but -- either by accident or will -- none are looking his way. He sighs deeply to the dashing, open-faced young soldier we saw earlier, Jean d'AULON...

CHARLES

Oh dear, why is life so complicated? Sometimes I really wish I could be someone else.

AULON

That's a good idea, sire.

CHARLES

What do you mean?

AULON

Let someone else pretend to be you, and see if...

CHARLES

... if she can find me? -- That's a brilliant idea! If she's really been sent by God she'll discover the trap, and if she's an assassin she'll kill the wrong man!

(to the page)

Bring her up!

Charles turns to a coterie of ARMY CAPTAINS, standing aside and aloof from the courtiers whom they evidently despise.

CHARLES

My dear Captains, I've had a brilliant idea! We're going to have a little game. Now... let's pretend my throne is empty. Who wants to be the king?

They all put up their hands...

CHARLES

Now there's a heart-warming sight!
So let's see... which one of you
could possibly pass as king?

He turns to the Duke of ALENCON, 25, strikingly handsome
in his bright, gilded armor.

CHARLES

Ah, Alencon, my noble duke, my royal
cousin -- so fine, so brave, so rich
-- so very rich -- so far-too-rich
to be the King of France. Everyone
knows I'm the poorest man in my
kingdom.

He turns to GILLES de Rais: a dark, glamorous seducer,
dressed in black armor with a ring through one ear.

CHARLES

Gilles de Rais... Marshal of
France... formidable to men,
fascinating to women, feared by all.
You'd be perfect to sit on my
throne... so perfect that you might
like it too much for my own piece of
mind.

Charles turns to the bearded La Hire.

CHARLES

Ah, La Hire -- my angry captain...
the bravest in France -- scarred by
a dozen wars, but with heart and
stomach for a dozen more. You could
pass for the king...

LA HIRE

Damn bloody right I could!

CHARLES

... until you opened your mouth. No
one with a tongue like yours could
pass as the King of France.

The other Captains laugh heartily.

CHARLES

Ah well... it looks as though it's
going to have to be me after all...
But... wait a minute...

Charles spots the shy Jean d'Aulon. Unlike the other
court toadies, Aulon is a quiet, honorable man.

CHARLES

Why not you -- Jean d'Aulon? The only man who's poorer than I am, and so the only man I can trust. Dignified, honorable, wise... what more could we ask of a king?

AULON

My lord, I'm not sure that...

Charles takes his coat and puts it around Aulon's shoulders.

CHARLES

My dear Aulon, to you it shall befall the honor of impersonating the royal blood!

AULON

Majesty, I can't...

CHARLES

Why, are you not ready to die for your king?

AULON

Of course I am, it's just that...

CHARLES

Good. Until then, feel free to live like a king!

Laughter -- then the sound of approaching excitement.

CHARLES

Hurry, hurry -- on the throne...

INT. CORRIDOR - CHINON - NIGHT

Armored feet clank along a stone corridor --

INT. GREAT HALL - CHINON - NIGHT

Charles unceremoniously dumps Aulon on the throne...

AULON

Sire, you know how bad I am at this sort of game.

CHARLES

So... pretend it's not a game.

Charles abandons Aulon and disappears among his courtiers. A pair of PAGE BOYS swing open the doors: the courtiers turn expectantly; Aulon tries to pose as the king.

From the Court's POV, a girl of 17 enters the great hall, dressed in a grubby tunic, with long hair tied back beneath a hood. There could not be a more striking contrast than the sophisticated, opulent, yet cowardly courtiers and this naive, rough girl, almost childlike in her simplicity, and yet so focused, so confident, so secure in her mission, with a courage that radiates conviction, and is contagious.

The courtiers step back to form a narrow channel as she moves into the great hall. Yolande marks the effect her presence has on the court, smiling at their bemused gazes.

Jeanne passes the Archbishop, who defends himself by sprinkling holy water in her path. Tremoille oils his way toward her with a can-I-help ingratiating smile...

JEANNE

I have come to see the Dauphin.

Tremoille nods obsequiously, ushering her toward Aulon, who is now visibly uneasy. Jeanne stops in front of him. Aulon gazes at her. Jeanne scans him a couple of times, looks at him stonily. Then smiles. Aulon melts, his cheeks blushing hot. Jeanne cocks her head, like an inquisitive child.

JEANNE

Who are you?

Aulon stammers in response...

AULON

I'm... I'm... I'm...

TREMOILLE

... His most gracious majesty
Charles de Valois, Dauphin of
France...

She gives Aulon another smile.

JEANNE

I can see you are a good man, but
you're not the Dauphin.

(to Tremoille)

I'm sorry to insist, but we have no
time to lose. I must see the
Dauphin. Where is he?

TREMOILLE

He's here.

(a gracious gesture)

Find him yourself.

A brief pause, then Jeanne takes up the challenge. She moves on, examining the faces acutely. Although a few of

the wimpoled ladies find her simple peasant dress amusing, most are caught like moths in her flame. She notices the Three Captains (La Hire, Alencon and Gilles de Rais) edging closer together, as though shielding someone beyond.

Jeanne approaches them -- they draw closer together, but now we can see Charles, overtly curious, yet anxious to remain hidden. His inquisitiveness wins -- but as Jeanne walks up to him, the Three Captains spring in front of her, swords drawn, the tips pressing at her throat...

JEANNE

There's no need to be afraid, sire.

CHARLES

I'm... I'm not the king...

JEANNE

I know you're not yet -- but you will be, soon.

Charles makes a gesture, and the soldiers cautiously sheath their swords.

CHARLES

H-h-how did you know who I am?

ALENCON

Her voices, of course...

GILLES

"That's him" they said, "The one with the big nose and bags under his eyes."

They laugh -- whereupon Jeanne rushes at Charles and flings herself on her knees, embracing him round the ankles.

Charles screams -- the 3 Captains redraw their swords -- the court gasps -- then Charles gestures the Captains to back off.

JEANNE

My gentle Dauphin, I bring you good news.

Charles puts out his hand to her, allowing her to rise. She draws close to him, whispering...

JEANNE

It is a message from the King of Heaven. For you -- and you only.

Jeanne speaks with such conviction that it seems unnecessary to doubt her. Her mesmeric effect on Charles

is being noticed by his courtiers. He hesitates a moment, then --

CHARLES

Follow me.

He leads her from the room. Tremoille hurriedly follows them. Charles turns round in the doorway, barring him further access.

TREMOILLE

Your majesty, I really think you...

CHARLES

My dear loyal Tremoille, I know I can count on you...

TREMOILLE

... as always, majesty...

CHARLES

... to ensure our privacy. I need to talk to her. Alone.

Tremoille looks non-plussed.

TREMOILLE

As you wish, majesty.

Charles disappears with Jeanne.

Tremoille's ire at being barred is mollified by blocking the path of Yolande.

TREMOILLE

He needs to talk to her. Alone.

INT. CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBER - DAY

Jeanne is seated facing Charles in front of a huge fire. As the scene unfolds, their faces draw closer and closer. Her voice is soft and sweet, but her conviction is absolute.

JEANNE

I was about eight years old. It was a beautiful spring day. I was in the forest taking a short cut home when the wind started blowing in the trees -- such a strange sound -- almost like words -- as if someone was calling...

FLASH: The little BOY seen earlier is seated on his chair in the middle of the field, pointing his finger at us --

INT. CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBER - DAY

Charles is intrigued...

JEANNE

The second time was many years later. It was autumn, and I was coming back from church when suddenly the same violent wind started to blow again...

EXT. FIELD - SFX - DAY

FLASH: The wind lifts Jeanne (17) from the ground, spins her forward and flattens her on her back, her arms outstretched, Her face gazing upward at the sky...

JEANNE (O.S.)

Everything was moving so fast -- the wind -- the clouds -- I couldn't move! Then suddenly a shape appeared in the middle of the sky...

The fast-moving CLOUDS resolve themselves into the shape of a face... the face of an OLD MAN. He opens his mouth wide, radiating a shaft of sunlight that strikes Jeanne, still lying in the field. The old man's mouth seems to form the word "Jeanne", but the sound that emanates is so vast that we can't be sure.

Suddenly the mouth snaps shut, releasing a huge FLASH OF LIGHT --

INT. CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBER - DAY

-- Charles jumps back, startled yet totally absorbed. Jeanne's eyes sparkle with tears --

JEANNE

I was so frightened... he was so -- so here...

FLASH: The Boy is still sitting in his forest seat, but now he is a beautiful young Man, pointing his finger at Jeanne --

JEANNE (O.S.)

I realized then that he had chosen me, but I didn't understand what it was I had to do...

Jeanne's eyes sparkle with intensity...

JEANNE

What was my mission? To help my country? But how could I do that? I was only a poor girl who knew nothing about riding or making war... so I decided to wait and not to speak to anyone about it.

CHARLES

You did well...

JEANNE

I didn't wait long. One day I was going to Mass, like I do every day, when the same strange wind started blowing again...

INT./ EXT. CHURCH - SFX

The double doors of a church are blown open by wind coming from inside -- right in front of Jeanne! Surreal shafts of light criss-cross the interior from the stained-glass windows, illuminating Jeanne in myriad hues and colors.

She sways uneasily as the central stained-glass window above the altar starts to warp and undulate, like heat waves creating a mirage. The image of a beautiful archangel slowly comes to life, stepping out from the window frame, then moving toward Jeanne...

JEANNE

Everything was suddenly made clear to me. God was finally calling me. He had a mission for me -- a message to deliver...

The Archangel opens his arms to Jeanne as though to embrace her. She drops to her knees, opening her arms and -- FLASH --

INT. CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBER - DAY

Charles is in suspense, his face sweating...

CHARLES

... and what... what did he say?

JEANNE

He said that I have to save France from her enemies and give her back to God, and He told me that I -- Jeanne -- will lead you to the altar at Rheims to be crowned King of France.

Charles slowly releases the breath he's been holding --

and the brimming tears run down his cheeks. Jeanne takes his hand and places it on her own damp cheek...

JEANNE

All you have to do now is put your trust in me.

Jeanne kisses his hands, and Charles is almost overcome with emotion. He seems, for the first time, utterly defenseless, like the little hurt boy that he is.

CHARLES

I trust you, Jeanne -- I do -- and I envy your certainty, but how can I be certain that I have the right to call myself king when I don't even know who my father is. My mother can't even remember... I -- I need to know...

Jeanne gazes at him a moment, then places her hands either side of his head and draws him slowly forward until both their foreheads are touching...

FLASHES:

A series of too-perfect images:

- 1: A BELL comes crashing down on top of us --
- 2: The ROYAL BANNER flies triumphantly in the wind --
- 3: English CAPTAINS throw down their weapons and kneel in submission before Charles --
- 4: Huge city GATES swing open, releasing a jubilant crowd who welcome the King in triumph --
- 5: CHARLES kneels in Rheims Cathedral --
- 6: Bejeweled HANDS place the CROWN of France on his head --

INT. CHINON - KING'S CHAMBER - DAY

Jeanne's hands hold Charles' head, as though she has just crowned him. For Charles, the fantasy has become reality.

JEANNE

Do you really believe that God would let all this happen... if you were not the true King of France?

INT. CASTLE - GREAT HALL - DAY

The Courtiers talk among themselves, nervously awaiting Charles to rejoin them. Presently the door opens and Charles emerges, followed by Jeanne. He is a man transfigured. Tremoille looks anxious. Charles glances at them, their expectant eyes awaiting his verdict. He leads Jeanne across to Aulon.

CHARLES

Jeanne, this is -- in fact -- my loyal friend and finest archer, Jean d'Aulon. Jean... I place her in your care. Find her suitable lodgings -- here -- in the castle... and guard her with your life.

AULON

Yes, my lord.

JEANNE

I don't need lodgings if we're to be marching on Orleans...

CHARLES

Orleans has held out for six months. I don't suppose a few days will make much difference. Take some rest.

Jeanne follows Jean d'Aulon from the Great Hall, watched in silence by his courtiers. As soon as she's gone, the whole room is filled with the myriad buzz of opinion. Gilles gives Charles the eye...

GILLES

She certainly cast a spell on you.

Charles draws his three Captains aside.

CHARLES

She'll cast her spell on everyone if she's given half a chance... and we must ensure that she gets that chance.

The Captains look astonished.

CHARLES

Can you imagine the effect it will have on the English -- to see a girl riding at the head of our army?

LA HIRE

Yes. They'll be bleeding wet themselves! Laughing.

GILLES

We're not your favorite captains anymore??

CHARLES

No -- I mean yes! -- of course...

ALENCON

Charles... you want to give the command of our army to a -- woman??

CHARLES

Of course not! You're the ones in command, as always... but if she can put back the fire in our soldiers, then maybe you, my dear Captains, will be able to raise the siege of Orleans. What do you think?

GILLES

Brilliant idea... but to be really effective, why not send a whole army of virgins?

LA HIRE

That'll put fire in my soldiers!

The Captains laugh -- at Charles' expense.

CHARLES

Please, my friends... you know me... you know how certain I am about everything, but -- maybe for the first time in my life I -- I don't know why -- but I feel I have to trust her... and now I'm asking you -- I'm begging you -- to trust me...

INT. ROOM - CHINON CASTLE - DAY

Jeanne blows the dust from a wooden crucifix, then replaces it above a bed. Jean d'Aulon has brought her to a small room in one of the castle's turrets: clean, plainly furnished, but hardly hospitable. Jeanne inspects the room while Aulon stands by the door.

AULON

Listen, please accept my apologies for... you know, me pretending to be the... well it wasn't really my idea... well, yes it was my idea but...

JEANNE

Do you think I could have some water?

Jeanne smiles sweetly, catching Aulon off guard.

AULON

Yes, of course... water... anything else?

Two page boys run into the room, carrying luggage, water, washing bowl and some food. They are LOUIS and RAYMOND, both 13, as inseparable as they are loyal. Jeanne looks up, then sits on the bed, testing the horsehair mattress.

JEANNE

I would like some fresh straw.

AULON

Louis... water and fresh straw!

Louis goes running off.

JEANNE

And I would like to see a priest.

AULON

Now?

JEANNE

Yes. I didn't confess today.

AULON

Right.

(to Raymond)

Raymond... a priest.

Raymond goes running off.

JEANNE

I shall also be needing a war horse -- mine is too slow -- and armor -- and a good sword -- and an artist to make me a banner.

AULON

Now?

JEANNE

Better today than tomorrow.

AULON

Well... uh -- this might take a little time -- but let me see what I can do.

He's about to leave when Jeanne adds --

JEANNE

I also need someone who can read and write.

AULON

This I can do.
 (Jeanne looks
 surprised)
I was studying at the University of
Paris -- till the English invaded
it.

JEANNE
I thought you were an archer?

AULON
Yes, I am. I'm an archer who can
read and write. Who do you want to
write to?

JEANNE
The King of England. I want to give
them the chance to leave Orleans in
peace before I get there.

Aulon just stares at her.

INT. GUARD HOUSE - CHINON - DAWN

Raymond hands a rolled parchment to a Rider, already
mounted and waiting...

EXT. CHINON CASTLE & MEADOW - DAWN

The Rider gallops over the drawbridge and away.

EXT. CHINON - TERRACE - DAY

Tremoille stands on a terrace before Chinon, watching the
rider heading down the dusty highway.

TREMOILLE
I can't believe you let her send
such a letter...

Charles is a short distance away, watching Jeanne in a
meadow below the castle, swishing a stick from side to
side.

CHARLES
She's going to do it.

Tremoille exchanges a worried glance with Archbishop
Regnault, who is standing behind Charles.

REGNAULT
Sire, it's going to take more than a
letter to drive out the English.

TREMOILLE

An army for instance...

CHARLES

My captains have sworn their support.

TREMOILLE

No doubt your captains will fight for your fine cause -- but what about the ordinary soldier? They don't fight for causes these days. They fight for money. Who's going to pay them?

YOLANDE (O.S.)

I am.

Yolande moves forward, accompanied by her daughter Mary (Charles' wife) and grandson, young Louis.

CHARLES

You will??

YOLANDE

For the sake of France, Charles.
And for the sake of my grandson.

She pats Louis on the head.

TREMOILLE

With respect, my lady -- the Archbishop and I have begun delicate negotiations with the Burgundians. If we can bring them over to our side...

YOLANDE

Negotiate by all means, but from a position of strength. If the English take Orleans, there'll be nothing left to negotiate -- the rest of the country will be theirs.

TREMOILLE

My lady, it would be the height of folly to let this... child... lead our army in the king's name without first verifying her true motives.

REGNAULT

Tremoille is right. This girl must be subjected to a rigorous examination by the Doctors of the Church at Poitiers. We need to be absolutely certain that she is not an instrument of the devil.

CHARLES

How can anyone be absolutely certain about anything? Our intuitions are sometimes our best counselors...

REGNAULT

We must listen to Mother Holy Church before listening to our intuitions.

TREMOILLE

Wait... she claims to be a virgin... Well that's something we can examine -- and be absolutely certain about.

Charles hesitates -- turns to Yolande, who looks somewhat uneasy at the suggestion.

YOLANDE

Why not?

Charles looks across to Jeanne in the distance, still playing with her stick. Suddenly she swipes at a bulrush, violently decapitating its head. Charles looks worried.

CHARLES

Let's find out.

INT. POITIERS UNIVERSITY - ROOM - NIGHT

A big, spacious room, into which files a procession of TEN DOCTORS of THEOLOGY and TEN NOTABLES, walking two-by-two. They divide either side of CAMERA, then halt and about-turn, facing inward with military precision. Two PAGE BOYS set up screens in front of the two rows, preventing them from viewing Jeanne, who is standing on a low table between the rows, wearing a laced-up robe.

Now a procession of NUNS form up behind the table. Two of them step forward, on cue, then proceed to loosen the laces of Jeanne's robe and roll up the hem. Meanwhile an old HAG is washing her hands.

With Jeanne suitably prepared, the old HAG stands in front of her. Two little Girls slip in a special stool and the old HAG squats down, enabling her to look between Jeanne's legs. Only women are privy to this ritualistic inspection; the men remain standing behind the screens.

Yolande waits with the disfigured Richmond near a window. The old Hag is certainly taking her time, and Yolande is getting decidedly nervous...

RICHMOND

(whispering)

What if she's not?

YOLANDE

I'll kill her myself...

A few tense moments -- then the ancient HAG announces with great solemnity...

HAG

There is no sign of corruption or violation. She is intact.

... to Yolande's visible relief.

INT. COUNCIL ROOM - POITIERS UNIVERSITY - DAY

A dark, musty council room, where theologians and learned doctors of the Church sit in wooden tiers, examining Jeanne. Archbishop Regnault is among them. So too is Jean d'Aulon -- but he as a silent, albeit supportive observer.

Jeanne stands in the center of the room, hands folded, as though on trial. She's evidently been here many hours.

INQUISITOR #1

And... what exactly was this -- "vision" -- wearing?

JEANNE

I don't remember.

INQUISITOR #2

Was it wearing a crown?

JEANNE

I saw no crown.

INQUISITOR #3

Well, was it naked?

The Court have a good chuckle.

JEANNE

Do you think that God can't afford to give him clothes?

An audible reaction, somewhere between amusement and admiration. A deadpan scribe carefully writes down both questions and answers in a large, vellum-bound book.

INQUISITOR #1

Did this -- vision -- give you anything -- an object, like a ring, or a rosary or anything -- by which we can verify your claim?

JEANNE

He gave me good advice.

INQUISITOR #4

During your childhood, did you have any sort of military experience?

JEANNE

No.

INQUISITOR

Are you practiced in the skills of swordsmanship?

JEANNE

No. But I'm good with a stick.

A murmur of laughter, though not from us.

INQUISITOR #4

Do you know what a Dijon Culverin is?

JEANNE

No.

INQUISITOR #4

It's an item of artillery. How do you expect to raise the siege of Orleans if you are ignorant about modern artillery?

JEANNE

The road to Orleans is long, and I have good captains with me. I will learn fast, believe me.

The Inquisitor and his colleagues whisper in a huddle. Regnault remains unconvinced, and indicates his strong reservations. Finally the Chief Inquisitor addresses Jeanne.

CHIEF INQUISITOR

We would like to believe you Jeanne, but we feel that if God were to want us to believe in you, he would have sent you with a sign as proof that we should believe in you. We cannot advise the King to entrust you with the army merely on your assertion. Can't you do something? Or show us something? Some sign to prove that you are sent by God?

JEANNE

Sire, I did not come here to preform tricks. You are all much cleverer

than I am -- me, I don't know A from B -- but this much I do know: that while the people of France lie bleeding, you sit around in your fine clothes trying to deceive me -- yet all you're doing is deceiving yourselves. You say you are men of God, yet you can't see His hand in having guided me safely through five hundred leagues of enemy country to bring you His help? Is that not proof enough? Or do you want still more signs? Give me command of an army, take me to Orleans, and there you will see the sign I was sent to make!

Aulon can barely restrain himself from applauding. The Chief Inquisitor reaches his decision, raises his gavel and --

EXT. LES TOURELLES - ORLEANS - DAY

-- down comes a mallet, SLAMMING out a safety wedge which releases a CATAPULT -- and a huge boulder flies across the river in the direction of Orleans...

EXT. BATTLEMENTS - ORLEANS - DAY

A LOOK-OUT spots the incoming missile -- yells out --

GAMACHE
45-er, nor-nor-west -- straight at us!

INT. DUNOIS' HQ - ORLEANS - DAY

DUNOIS is alone, writing a letter at a small table --

DUNOIS
Which side's that?

GAMACHE (O.S.)
Window side...!!

Dunois realizes he's near the window and dives for cover just as the massive boulder plummets through the ceiling, demolishing the table where he'd been sitting seconds before, and leaving a huge hole in the wall.

Dunois emerges from under a large table, dusting himself. He looks thin, haggard and exhausted after six months of siege.

Suddenly a young soldier -- Poton de XAINTRAILLES -- comes bursting in, ignoring the mess...

XAINTRAILLES

My lord Dunois... I have wonderful news! -- finally -- he's sending her to us -- thanks be to God -- we're saved -- it's wonderful!

DUNOIS

Calm yourself, Xaintrailles. Now slowly. Who has finally done what?

XAINTRAILLES

The Dauphin -- he's sending us food -- and supplies -- and an army -- led by Jeanne -- the maiden from Lorraine -- isn't it wonderful?!

DUNOIS

(deadpan)

Yes, it's a miracle.

XAINTRAILLES

And it's not the first one! They say she saved a little boy who was dying of...

DUNOIS

Xaintrailles...! Don't talk to me about miracles...

(pointing to hole in floor)

If I was still sitting there waiting for a miracle, I'd be dead now.

Anyway...

Dunois looks up at the sky, now visible through a hole in the roof.

XAINTRAILLES

But... don't you think we should at least... go and... welcome her?

DUNOIS

(sighs)

As long as she brings food and supplies, she'll be welcome.

EXT. RIVER BANK & POV OF ORLEANS - DAY

The walled city of Orleans stands in the distance on the far side of the river Loire. CAMERA CRANES DOWN to find Dunois, Xaintrailles and a small escort of soldiers, waiting atop a ridge where they're evidently been for some time.

GAMACHE

I can't believe they're sending a woman.

DUNOIS

Maybe they never sent anyone.

TRAVELING SHOT: Horse's hooves galloping...

GAMACHE

I wonder what color dress she'll be wearing?

TRAVELING SHOT: Horse's breath steaming...

GAMACHE

I'll wager red -- how about you?

DUNOIS

Blue...

TRAVELING SHOT: Stirrups press into the horse's flanks...

DUNOIS

... with a blue ribbon in her hair to tie up Talbot!

TRAVELING SHOT: the horse's eyes, wild and dilated...

DUNOIS

Does anyone know if she even knows how to ride a horse?

TRAVELING SHOT: horse's legs at the triple gallop...

XAINTRAILLES

She knows...

THEIR POV: a white banner sweeps into SHOT -- then a knight clad in shining white armor. The knight raises his visor to reveal -- Jeanne, her face gleaming with sweat, eyes blazing. Dunois is speechless.

JEANNE

Were you sent by Lord Dunois?

DUNOIS

Yes... they were.

JEANNE

Good. Where are the English?

DUNOIS

Everywhere. Where is the food?

JEANNE

It's coming -- I rode on ahead. I have to speak with the Captain of the English army... his name's Talbot...

DUNOIS

I know...

JEANNE

Good. Can you bring me to him?

DUNOIS

He's on the other side of the river.

Now La Hire and Gilles de Rais ride into view...

JEANNE

So who gave the order to bring me to this side of the river??

LA HIRE

(calling to Dunois)

Hey, my friend! I'm glad to see your ugly damn face again!

JEANNE

La Hire, I'm warning you -- don't swear!

LA HIRE

Sorry Jeanne...

(to Dunois)

Did you both meet already?

DUNOIS

Well... sort of...

GILLES

(to Dunois, smiling)

She's quite something, huh?

LA HIRE

Jeanne, let me introduce the king's half brother, the dogged Lord Dunois.

JEANNE

Then, Lord Dunois, show me the way to the other side of the river...

She starts to move as Jean d'Aulon rides up --

DUNOIS

Wait, wait...

JEANNE

For what?

DUNOIS

Because... because -- I mean -- the English have a broad sense of humor, but... I mean, you don't understand... to them you're a witch, working for the devil. What makes you think they'll listen to you?

JEANNE

Because if they don't, I'll raise such a war-cry against them that they will remember us forever!

DUNOIS

Well. I'd love to see that, but after taking counsel with my captains, I felt it would be better to first bring the food into the city, then wait till Alencon arrives with reinforcements before doing anything.

JEANNE

You may have been with your counsel, but I've been with mine, and I'm telling you, God's counsel is wiser than yours, and he's telling me to speak to the English -- now!

DUNOIS

(matching her anger)

Fine -- go now if you want, but not with me! You may have a duty to God but I have a duty to my people, and my people are starving! So right now I'm going to take the food back to the city, and if you can please calm down, and let me accompany you to Orleans, it will be my honor to welcome you.

Gilles smiles at Jeanne's evident frustration.

EXT. EAST GATE - STREET & SQUARE - ORLEANS - DUSK

The battered east gate of Orleans swings open, and a convoy of wagons enter the town, guarded by soldiers. Jeanne and the Captains are on horseback, the remainder on foot.

A group of hungry children spot the arrival, their eyes widening at the sight of the food: beef, mutton, chickens, sacks of grain, barrels of salted fish...

But most of the citizens are too starved and too weary to show much excitement; hollow-eyed and emaciated, they have the expressionless faces of concentration camp inmates. La Hire is sickened at the sight...

LA HIRE
Jesus Christ... the goddamn English
will pay for this!

JEANNE
They will -- and so will you if you
go on swearing like that.

By the time the little procession has reached the main square, a CROWD has gathered. Sluggishly they make way for Jeanne and Dunois to ride between them...

Now the interest in Jeanne begins to warm up -- the CROWD press in on her. Slowly at first, but with increasing fervor, the pressure builds as the crowd try to touch her.

CROWD
Bless us, Jeanne...! Save us!

EXT. JEANNE'S HOUSE - ORLEANS - NIGHT

Soldiers push back the crowd, allowing Jeanne to reach a large gabled house. As she dismounts, a woman runs forward --

WOMAN
Jeanne! Bless her -- touch her!

The woman holds up her BABY for Jeanne to touch.

JEANNE
Touch her yourself... your touch is
just as good as mine.

WOMAN
But... you've been sent by God!

JEANNE
So has everyone.

Jeanne turns sharply away and walks inside the house, followed by Aulon and the others.

INT. HQ - ORLEANS HOUSE - NIGHT

A frustrated Jeanne marches into Dunois' new war-room. Dunois enters, followed by his Captains, and is happy to see a model of Orleans...

DUNOIS

La Hire, Gilles -- let me show you something...

The Captains go into a huddle, leaving Jeanne smarting. She looks out of the window, where the crowd is still trying to catch a glimpse of her.

JEANNE

Who do they think I am?!

AULON

Jeanne, calm down. You can't blame the people -- they've been hearing all about you for weeks.

JEANNE

There's nothing to hear -- I haven't done anything. And why haven't I done anything?

(turning to the
captains)

Because none of you will listen to me!!

She shouts in frustration, and Dunois and the other captains swing round. Dunois waits for the echo to die away.

DUNOIS

Would you like to join us? We're about to discuss the campaign...

Jeanne walks over, still vexed. Using the model, Dunois continues his situation briefing.

DUNOIS

From here, Talbot has spread his forces between these forts up here, but in the last few days it seems -- according to our scouts -- that some troops have been deployed to this fort here -- which makes me think that this is where they'll be launching their attack from...

Dunois points to St. Loup -- a smaller fort to the east.

GILLES

I would have thought they'd have attacked from here, where Talbot is.

DUNOIS

I doubt it. From here they won't be able to utilize the river, whereas over here the current will be with them.

LA HIRE

What about this huge pile down here?

DUNOIS

That's the Tourelles. The English were planning to launch an attack from it, but then we broke down the bridge, which should keep them quiet for a while. My hunch is, the attack will come from St. Loup.

He pauses, then turns to Jeanne, somewhat apprehensively.

GILLES

And... what does Jeanne think?

JEANNE

I don't think. I leave that to God. I'm nothing in all this, I'm just the messenger.

DUNOIS

So... what is the message?

JEANNE

We offer the English a last chance to return home in peace. If they refuse, we recross the river and attack them here -- at the Tourelles.

They all look astonished. Gilles grins.

DUNOIS

Jeanne, that really makes no sense at all. The Tourelles is virtually impregnable... besides, if we're on the other side of the river attacking the Tourelles, what's to stop Talbot attacking the city from the north?

JEANNE

God.

GILLES

God... why of course -- we'd forgotten about him! Strange, I don't seem to remember seeing him at Agincourt.

LA HIRE

Damn right!

GILLES

Oh, but I forgot! It was a

Sunday... that explains it. God's day off.

They all laugh, apart from Aulon and the page boys.

JEANNE

You know, I feel a great sorrow for you, because you're laughing now, but by tomorrow night some of you will be dead and having to repeat your jokes in front of God.

DUNOIS

Jeanne, with respect -- we can't just attack the Tourelles like that -- it's a very complicated matter and...

JEANNE

What complicated about it? All you have to do is do what you're told -- what could be simpler than that? I'm the drum on which God is beating out his message -- beating so loudly it's bursting my ears -- but you're all so full of your own voices, you're deaf to His!

AULON

Jeanne, be patient...

Jeanne turns on him --

JEANNE

"Be patient, be patient"... is that the only advice you can ever come up with?? I've shown more patience than a dozen saints!

DUNOIS

Jeanne, you have to understand -- it's not easy for us -- I mean for our pride -- to suddenly be usurped by a -- well, with all due respect, by a... girl.

JEANNE

Ah, so that's it. To you I'm just a girl.

DUNOIS

Jeanne, put yourself in my shoes for a moment -- how would you feel, if you were me?

JEANNE

Knowing what I know? Enormous

gratitude.

Jeanne turns and heads for the door. La Hire nudges Gilles as she approaches --

LA HIRE

One hell of a girl, huh?

As she passes, Jeanne slaps La Hire right across the face --

JEANNE

I warned you!

-- and walk out, slamming the door behind her. The others stare after her, while La Hire nurses his cheek.

GILLES

(to La Hire)

I do love her when her fire gets well and truly stoked!

LA HIRE

Me too...

A pause, then the door at the other end of the room bursts open and in walks the expansive Duke of Alencon.

ALENCON

Hello my friends! What a journey, but we made it! Back together again... let's have some fun!

He rubs his hands in anticipation, then notes his comrades' expressions, still recovering from Jeanne's outburst.

ALENCON

Did I miss something?

INT. JEANNE'S BEDROOM - ORLEANS HOUSE - NIGHT

Jeanne draws her sword with a terrifying scrape as though about to kill someone, slices something in f.g. -- and a chunk of black hair falls to the ground.

JEANNE

So what if I'm a girl...?

(cuts another chunk)

You need to look like a man to drive out the English?

(and another)

Fine... let's look like a man!

Aulon grabs her by the wrist to take the sword from her --

AULON

Jeanne, stop it!

JEANNE

How dare you stop me doing God's will!

Aulon wrestles to get the sword from her --

AULON

He didn't tell you to cut all your hair off...!

JEANNE

How dare you tell me what God tells me to do!

AULON

Alright, whatever -- but since He's not going to come down and cut it himself, at least let someone cut it properly!

He finally manages to grab the sword from her...

AULON

Raymond -- bring me scissors!
Louis -- fetch that mirror!

The two page boys hop to it, but when Louis brings the mirror, Jeanne slaps it from his hand...

AULON

Jeanne, stop getting so angry about everything...! Calm down!

Jeanne stares at him.

JEANNE

I am calm. It's God who's angry. I need to send a letter. Now.

Aulon looks at her.

INT. HQ - ORLEANS HOUSE - NIGHT

Dunois reads the parchment that Aulon hands to him...

JEANNE (V.O.)

To you, Henry King of England, and to you, Duke of Bedford who call yourself Regent of France, obey the King of Heaven and abandon your siege...

Dunois can scarcely believe it. He hands it to Alencon...

JEANNE (V.O.)
... give back the keys to the other
towns you have taken, and go back
home to your island...

Equally bemused, Alencon hands it to La Hire...

JEANNE (V.O.)
To you Lord Talbot, I beg you as
humbly as I can beg you, for the
sake of the lives of your soldiers,
do not bring about your own
destruction...

La Hire whistles with admiration and hands it to Gilles.

JEANNE (V.O.)
Surrender to me, Jeanne the Maiden,
who is sent here by God, and she
will make peace with you...

Gilles grins, and hands back to Aulon, who looks to Dunois
for an answer. Dunois gives a vague nod of the head...

EXT. BROKEN BRIDGE - ORLEANS - NIGHT

As Jeanne's letter continues, Aulon walks across the
broken stone bridge that once connected the city to the
south bank of the Loire. Two-thirds the way across, the
bridge ends abruptly, leaving a yawning gap between us and
the fortress of the Tourelles.

JEANNE (V.O.)
... but if you do not heed my
warning, then we shall raise such a
battle-cry as there has not been
heard in France for a thousand
years!

Aulon takes the arrow to which Jeanne's letter is already
tied, places it in the bow -- takes aim and fires...

EXT. TOURELLES - ROOF/COURTYARD - NIGHT

The arrow lands in wooden planking. An English soldier
with a flaming red beard yanks it out, gives it a cursory
glance, grins, then clammers down to the courtyard below
where soldiers are busily trimming the branches from
freshly-felled trees. Redbeard hands the letter to an
English captain, Glasdale...

JEANNE (V.O.)
This is the third and last time I
will write to you...

Glasdale reads it, and gives his response.

EXT. BROKEN BRIDGE - ORLEANS - NIGHT

Aulon is still waiting at the end of the broken bridge.

JEANNE (V.O.)

If you are still here at noon, I
warn you that you will hear from me
to your very great destruction.
Please give me your answer speedily.

Redbeard yells out from the top of the Tourelles...

REDBEARD

Go fuck yourself!

INT. JEANNE'S BEDROOM - ORLEANS HOUSE - NIGHT

Aulon hesitates, then softly opens the door. He tiptoes into the room, looks at Jeanne, then at Louis, who has fallen asleep with the scissors still clasped somewhat dangerously to his chest. Aulon gently removes them. As he places them on the table, Jeanne murmurs in her sleep, but without opening her eyes.

JEANNE

What did they say?

AULON

Uh... they said... they will think
about it.

JEANNE

Good.

AULON

But... to be honest... I don't think
they'll leave tomorrow.

Jeanne is almost asleep again...

JEANNE

I can't wait... for tomorrow...

Aulon sits in a chair nearby, gazing at Jeanne, who now looks even younger, with her hair shorn short like a boy.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - ST. LOUP - DAWN

SMASH CUT into the fury of battle -- swords hacking through armor, whirling maces smashing visors, blood spurting from severed limbs... Among the combatants:

Dunois, Alencon, La Hire and Gilles...

INT. JEANNE'S BEDROOM - ORLEANS HOUSE - DAWN

Jeanne suddenly sits bolt upright, eyes wide. Aulon is still asleep in his chair where we last saw him.

JEANNE
French blood is spilling!

Aulon awakes as she leaps to her feet, strapping on her breast plate and gauntlets...

AULON
What's going on?!

JEANNE
They've started the battle without me!

She tips the two page boys onto the floor...

JEANNE
Oh, my boys -- why didn't you wake me up?! Come on, hurry up -- Raymond, saddle my horse -- there's a battle to fight and a war to be won!

Raymond runs off and Aulon takes his place, helping Louis to buckle on Jeanne's armor. She rushes off, leaving Louis to assist Aulon with his own armor...

EXT. HOUSE & STREET - ORLEANS - DAWN

Jeanne runs out of the house to where Raymond is standing with her horse. She mounts it and canters off...

INT. JEANNE'S BEDROOM - ORLEANS - DAWN

Still buckling on his own armor, Aulon spots Jeanne's furred white banner leaning against the wall...

EXT. HOUSE & STREET - ORLEANS - DAWN

Jeanne suddenly remembers she's forgotten her banner. She turns her horse about and canters back, screaming out --

JEANNE
My banner! I forgot my banner!

Aulon appears at the window, holding her banner --

AULON

Jeanne... here!

Jeanne circles about and canters forward...

JEANNE

Throw it!

Aulon throws it down to her. She catches it with one hand, turns and gallops off down the street, the white banner streaming out behind her.

EXT. EAST GATE - ORLEANS - DAWN

The Guard above the main gate sees the French army approaching in full retreat. He calls down...

GUARD

Open the gates!

EXT. STREETS - ORLEANS - DAWN

Sparks fly as the hooves of Jeanne's horse strike the flint cobblestones, swift and clean...

EXT. ST. LOUP VALLEY - ORLEANS - DAWN

... unlike the hundreds of hooves pounding through mud and mire in the opposite direction.

EXT. EAST GATE - ORLEANS - DAWN

Jeanne reaches the gates as they are swung open, and the first of the retreating troops make it back to the city -- among them, La Hire and Gilles de Rais...

JEANNE

What happened? Who gave the order to attack?

LA HIRE

God knows, but it was a bad idea!

JEANNE

(to Gilles)

Were the men confessed? Where are the priests?

GILLES

(out of breath)

We didn't take them... we wanted to be fast... wanted to make a surprise attack...

Dunois rides up and Jeanne assails him --

JEANNE

Dunois... was it you who ordered the attack? Answer me?!

DUNOIS

Can we -- uh -- discuss this later?

JEANNE

Sooner is better than later!

Jeanne charges forward, into the confused ranks of retreating French soldiers. Dunois thinks she's gone crazy --

DUNOIS

Come back... you'll be killed!

But Jeanne's not listening. She's been waiting long enough for this moment, and now she has it, there's no going back. She stands in her stirrups and shouts out --

JEANNE

Follow me and I will give you victory!

La Hire is the first to change his mind, riding up behind Jeanne like Attila the Hun as she gallops forward into the path of the retreating French. Now the Duke of Alencon joins them, and soon the whole army has turned about -- an immense tidal wave of energy rolling back across the valley...

EXT. ST. LOUP FORTIFICATIONS - ORLEANS - DAY

... toward the astonished English. One moment they were pursuing their hapless enemies, but now an avenging angel bears down on them, sunlight glinting off her armor. They start racing back toward their own fortifications: the bastille St. Loup -- a great fortress amid a network of trenches and tunnels...

The French army is finally behaving as a single organism whereas the English cohesion fragments into shards of individual panic -- every man for himself! They regard Jeanne as a sorceress, and terror spreads like cancer among their ranks. They turn and flee back to their own lines, only to be bombarded by a fusillade of their own missiles, poorly aimed at the French.

Soon the St. Loup tower is ablaze, the English are forced to abandon their fortress... and the French finally get to celebrate their first victory within living memory.

Jeanne has become an object of worship and veneration, and the soldiers crowd about her, cheering her as their savior. Presently Dunois rides up with his Captains...

DUNOIS

It's a great victory, Jeanne... your victory. But we must follow it through and pursue the English back to Talbot's camp... unless of course you have another good idea?

Jeanne closes her eyes a moment... then smiles at Dunois.

JEANNE

We return to Orleans... across the bridge, at the Tourelles.

GILLES

But the bridge has been pulled down!

JEANNE

The English are rebuilding it.

DUNOIS

How do you know?!

FLASH: Jeanne and her army are silently moving through a forest. From her POV, she notices hundreds of fresh trees-stumps...

JEANNE

You have been with your counsel, and I have been with mine.

EXT. TOURELLES COMPLEX - ORLEANS - DAY

The English are moving up the stripped trees we saw earlier from the Tourelles courtyard toward the broken bridge. Glasdale surveys the operation with satisfaction.

EXT. TOURELLES - POV FROM ROOF - DAY

Redbeard and the other English Guards on the roof of the Tourelles spot Jeanne's army in the far distance. Redbeard calls down to Glasdale...

REDBEARD

Glasdale! Looks like the froggie whore's coming to pay you a visit.

EXT. MONASTERY - ORLEANS - DAY

Jeanne rides at the head of the army, flanked by Dunois, La Hire, Alencon, Gilles, Aulon, Xaintrailles. They halt

in front of a ruined monastery to the south of the Tourelles. Jeanne gives instructions for the placement of artillery...

JEANNE

Position the long-bows over there,
crossbows over there -- and set up
Dijon Culverins either side of those
trees...

DUNOIS

The wind will be against us...

JEANNE

The wind will be with us!
(to the Captains)
Do as I say.

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

The English take up their positions along the ramparts of the battery -- a massive, square fortification, surrounded by a deep, empty moat.

Jeanne rides forward to the edge of the dry moat, her banner billowing in the breeze, and addresses the English...

JEANNE

Glasdale, can you hear me? You who
call me a whore, I pity your soul
and the souls of your men. Yield
now to the King of Heaven, and go
back to your island...

GLASDALE

And you, go back to Hell!

Jeanne turns and gallops back to the French soldiers as Glasdale turns coolly to Redbeard --

GLASDALE

Don't kill her till I've had my fill
of her!

-- and walks back to the Tourelles.

The French have established a temporary headquarters. Dunois is drawing a map in the dirt and is preparing a battle plan with his Captains...

DUNOIS

Let's plan this attack a little more
carefully than this morning...

GILLES

Good idea!

JEANNE (O.S.)

(calling)

My fine soldiers...!

Dunois turns to see Jeanne, standing before the army...

JEANNE

This morning, God gave us our first victory, but that was nothing compared to what he is ready to give us now. I know you are tired and hungry, but I swear to you in the name of the King of Heaven that even if these English were hanging from the clouds by their fingertips, we shall tear them down before nightfall...! Now, my brave soldiers... let those who love me follow me!

With a valiant cry, a thousand soldiers tear forward behind Jeanne. Dunois is speechless. Gilles lays a sympathetic hand on his shoulder.

GILLES

You were saying?

Jeanne rides at full tilt down into the dry moat, and for the next few minutes, the air is thick with the tumult of battle. As each successive wave swarms across the moat, so they are met by a fusillade of English flame and steel from the battery above. But the French respond with equal fervor: the Dijon Culverins deployed by Jeanne now rain an aerial bombardment of boulders down upon the English, while their arrows darken the sky above...

Jeanne reaches the base of the battery. She leaps down from her horse and starts to climb one of the ladders being thrown up against the wall... but is suddenly struck by an arrow from the rampart above. She reels -- the ladder sways -- and Aulon catches her in his arms as she falls back to earth. Redbeard is jokingly furious --

REDBEARD

Hey, you just killed my woman!

The English laugh and jeer, but the French are in dismay at the sight of their Jeanne, unconscious, lying in Aulon's arms, with the arrow wedged deep above her breast.

EXT. MONASTERY BEHIND TOURELLES - DAY

Aulon, La Hire and Xaintrailles carry her to the ruined monastery while the two page boys follow anxiously behind.

INT. ST. AUGUSTINE MONASTERY - DAY

They enter the shell-shattered sanctuary of a gothic chapel where Aulon directs them to lay Jeanne against the wall. In the distance we can hear the muffled sounds of war, but in here it is strangely quiet.

The great war-lords stand in a semi-circle, pathetically wringing their hands, like the seven dwarves bereaving the stricken Snow White. The sight of tears trickling down La Hire's scarred cheeks is as touching as it is pathetic. Aulon wipes her brow, leaning in very close to feel her pulse and whether her mouth exhales breath. He turns to Raymond, who stands close by with Louis --

AULON

Go and find the physician... I saw him with the supplies.

Raymond races off...

GILLES

We have to take out the arrow now.

AULON

It's in so deep -- I'm afraid she'll bleed to death if we pull it out...

LA HIRE

There must be something we can do for her for Chrissakes!

GILLES

(sarcastic)
Yes. We can pray.

LA HIRE

Good idea...

La Hire turns and directs his pledge to the broken stained-glass image of Christ above the trashed altar...

LA HIRE

I swear I'll never swear again in my life if you save her life! But I'm warning you, if you let her die, then you're the biggest...

JEANNE

Don't swear...

Jeanne stirs, her eyes beginning to open...

LA HIRE

He heard me!

AULON

Jeanne... we thought we'd lost you!

JEANNE

Not so... easily. Why aren't you...
fighting...? go on... we're almost
there...

AULON

Jeanne, you've been badly wounded...

JEANNE

No, it's... it's nothing, it's...

Speaking provokes a sudden stab of pain. She tries to clutch the arrow, but Aulon stops her. He peels back her shirt, exposing the bloody wound above her pale breast.

GILLES

It's an arrow, and it's in deep...

AULON

You must stay still till the
physician arrives!

LA HIRE

Physicians are a waste of time.
You'll have more luck with this
charm of mine... it saved my life at
Agincourt!

JEANNE

I'd sooner die than use magic!

AULON

Jeanne, you will die if that arrow
stays in you much longer...

Jeanne suddenly seizes the arrow and yanks it out of her body. Blood spurts -- the suddenness and violence of her action catches the men unaware, and it's a moment before Aulon can stem the flow with his hand. Jeanne looks at the arrow before throwing it aside...

JEANNE

At least this one won't bother us
any more. Now let's get back to the
fight!

She tries to get up... and collapses, grabbing Aulon...

AULON

Jeanne... please... you must stay
calm... you must rest... please!

He lays her back down. Jeanne whispers to him,

intimately.

JEANNE

Alright... I promise to rest if you
promise... to go back to the battle.

AULON

I promise...

Jeanne smiles -- then suddenly collapses...

LA HIRE

Oh shit! Jeanne... don't die!

La Hire breaks off as Raymond arrives back with the
Physician...

AULON

Quickly... do something!

The Physician kneels beside her and listens for any sound
of life. All the Captains crowd closer and closer, and as
we too move closer, we hear the sound of deep breathing,
almost a snore.

PHYSICIAN

She's sleeping. Like a baby.

La Hire and the others sigh with relief.

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DUSK

Dunois surveys his army's attempt to storm the English
battery. It is now dusk, and without Jeanne the battle
has become a half-hearted affair. He turns to a trumpeter
as Aulon comes running up...

AULON

Jeanne's alive!

DUNOIS

Good.

AULON

We have to press home the attack!

DUNOIS

(to the Trumpeter)

Sound the retreat...

AULON

But I promised Jeanne we'd fight on!

DUNOIS

I made no such promise. Sound the
retreat for the night!

AULON

But that was her order!

DUNOIS

I'm fed up with taking her orders.
She swore she'd defeat the English
before nightfall, instead of which
she goes and plays the fool and gets
herself nearly killed! Look at the
mess we're in! That's her mess, not
mine...! We're worse off than if
she'd never come at all!

(to the Trumpeter)

... now do as I say and Sound the
Retreat!

The Trumpeter obeys and signals the evening wrap. The English jeer and whistle from their impregnable battery as the French head back up the sloping sides of the moat.

INT. ST. AUGUSTINE MONASTERY - DUSK

Jeanne lies asleep inside the ruined church, guarded by her two page boys. A small fire burns nearby to keep her warm, but she is shivering...

EXT. ORLEANS - JEANNE'S NIGHTMARE - NIGHT

She suddenly awakes with a start, then gets up and goes to the fire. She kneels down... puts her hands in the flames... and scoops up a handful of ash. She paints her face with the black ash, like a native warrior, then stands back up, turning to face a small army...

JEANNE

My brave soldiers, do you believe in
God?

The Army cries out "Yeesssss!"

JEANNE

Then let God's punishment be done:
Eye for eye...

... and a sudden FLASH of lightning transforms some of her men into skeletons...

JEANNE

... tooth for tooth...!
(another flash)
... burn for burn...!
(another flash)
... life for a life!

... a final FLASH, and her whole army is now a seething swarm of SKELETONS. With a curdling cry of vengeance they race forward, passing either side of her...

Jeanne turns to see the skeleton army heading across a bizarre bridge and onto the moonlit battery, flowing either side of the 8 year-old BOY she saw in the woods as a child. Intrigued, Jeanne follows him, but by the time she reaches him, the boy has disappeared. The skeletons have also vanished, to be replaced by an army of little English boys in man-sized armor, heading toward a distant figure.

The boy-soldiers are being welcomed by the beautiful MAN Jeanne saw earlier. He smiles at her, extending his arms in a Christ-like gesture of embrace...

As Jeanne approaches him, others turn to welcome her -- Aulon, Dunois, Alencon... finally La Hire, holding out his arms --

LA HIRE

Jeanne, come here my friend, my soldier... in my arms!

La Hire scoops her up into his bear-like arms and swings her round... suddenly, over his shoulder she spots a familiar figure: her dead sister.

JEANNE

Catherine??

She breaks from La Hire and runs to Catherine, throwing her arms around her and sobbing with joy...

JEANNE

Catherine... oh, Catherine -- I knew you wouldn't leave me...!

They stand for a moment, embracing each other, while La Hire and the other Captains applaud Jeanne's victory. The beautiful young MAN approaches them, but we now see that he has a sword clasped behind his back...

Catherine's face contorts in pain. She slumps forward, the sword in her back. Beyond her, the beautiful MAN has transformed into the grotesque Blackbeard, who roars with laughter as Jeanne holds her dying sister...

CATHERINE

Avenge me... avenge me...!

A circle of fire forms around them, with skeleton soldiers dancing in the flames...

Blackbeard's echoing laugh is gradually superimposed by real laughter and a familiar voice...

REDBEARD (O.S.)
Hey... Frenchies... what happened to
your precious angel, huh?

EXT. TOURELLES - FRENCH CAMP - DAWN

All is quiet, the troops lie sleeping. Redbeard calls through the mist from the raised drawbridge spanning the dry moat linking the battery to the French camp --

REDBEARD
Frenchies, you hear me? What
happened to your little virgin?

Jeanne is awake. She listens to Redbeard...

REDBEARD
I'll tell you what happened... we
sent her back to Hell so she can go
fuck with the Devil!

Now Jeanne is caressing her horse while Redbeard taunts...

REDBEARD
What are you going to do, Frenchies?
Why not come out and fight? Or are
you too busy praying to bring your
witch back from the dead? Do you
hear me?

Suddenly Jeanne emerges from the mist, riding her horse and brandishing her banner --

JEANNE
I hear you! May God forgive your
blasphemy... but I never can!

She turns and disappears back into the mist.

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAWN

Redbeard blinks in amazement. He turns to another soldier --

REDBEARD
Go and wake up Glasdale...!

EXT. TOURELLES - FRENCH CAMP - DAWN

Jeanne rides along the columns of sleeping soldiers...

JEANNE
Come on -- wake up -- sound trumpets

and to horse!

The dazed and sleepy French drag themselves from their straw beds. Dunois emerges from his tent, bleary and half-naked...

DUNOIS

What's going on?

JEANNE

We're taking back the Tourelles!

INT. TOURELLES - TURRET ROOM - DAWN

The Guard shakes Glasdale awake...

GLASDALE

What's happening?

GUARD

My lord... the French witch just came back from the dead.

Glasdale hauls himself from his bed.

EXT. TOURELLES - FRENCH CAMP - DAWN

Jeanne supervises her men as they push a huge siege tower toward the dry moat. She rides over to Aulon...

JEANNE

Get all the men to horse and ready to follow...

Aulon goes as Dunois hurries over...

DUNOIS

Jeanne, what are you doing with that... you've got it back to front...

JEANNE

I know what I'm doing, so either lend a hand or go back to bed!

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAWN

Redbeard watches in bewilderment as the siege machine starts to materialize through the mist...

REDBEARD

What the hell she's playing at...?

EXT. TOURELLES - TURRET - DAWN

Glasdale is equally perplexed, gazing out from his garret window across the battery. An archer is by his side.

GLASDALE
Crazy bitch... she doesn't even know
how to use it...

EXT. TOURELLES - DRY MOAT/BATTERY - DAWN

The French wheel the enormous siege tower toward a wooden lip above the dry moat. The drawbridge is firmly raised on the far side. Redbeard's complacent expression changes as he suddenly realizes what's about to happen...

REDBEARD
Oh shit...

He backs away as the machine reaches the lip. Suddenly it topples forward, crashing down on top of the raised drawbridge and demolishing it beneath its enormous weight...

EXT. TOURELLES - TURRET - DAWN

From his elevated viewpoint, Glasdale watches in horror as Aulon leads the French cavalry across the siege machine bridge that now spans the dry moat, giving them access to the battery...

GLASDALE
Raise the drawbridge!

The Archer passes Glasdale's order along -- a chain message that reaches the gate-keeper, who promptly starts to turn the winch...

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

As the French swarm onto the battery, Redbeard and his soldiers turn tail and race back toward the second drawbridge into the Tourelles...

REDBEARD
Wait for me!

The bridge is already being winched up... Redbeard is the first to reach it... with a desperate leap he manages to grab the lip of the bridge and scramble over...

EXT. TOURELLES - COURTYARD - DAY

... rolling down into the sanctuary of the Tourelles on the far side.

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

His comrades are less fortunate, and are slaughtered by the advancing French.

Jeanne urges her troops forward, her white banner billowing in the breeze, but with the drawbridge raised, there is no way for them to enter the Tourelles. The English hurl fresh insults -- and bombards -- from the battlements above, and the French are forced to take cover behind two ruined buildings on the battery.

Jeanne rides across to a ruined barn where several carts are stacked with felled tree-trunks. She spots La Hire...

JEANNE

Prepare these as battering-rams!

LA HIRE

What's the use? The drawbridge is up!

JEANNE

Not for long...

Under a hail of English arrows, Jeanne rides back across the open battery to a ruined house on the other side. She sees Aulon and dismounts...

JEANNE

The king said you're his finest archer...?

AULON

Well...

JEANNE

Come with me...

INT. RUINED HOUSE - TOURELLES - DAY

Jeanne leads Aulon through the ruined house to the far end, where a window overlooks the river-moat that separates the battery from the Tourelles.

JEANNE

You see those wooden beams...?

Jeanne points to the two beams supporting the chains of the drawbridge further along...

JEANNE

I want you to set them on fire!

INT. TOURELLES - TURRET - DAY

Glasdale spots Jeanne running back across the battery. He summons his Archer, pointing her out...

GLASDALE

Kill her.

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

Jeanne leaves the ruined house and spots Gilles standing with Alencon. As she approaches, Gilles spots the archer in Glasdale's window far above, taking aim.

JEANNE

Gilles -- fetch the Dijon Culverins
and place them over there...

Jeanne turns her back -- the Archer fires -- Gilles holds up his shield -- the arrow strikes it -- and Jeanne turns back, unaware that he has just saved her life.

JEANNE

Clear?

GILLES

Perfectly.

Gilles heads off, leaving Alencon looking left out.

ALENCON

And me... what can I do?

JEANNE

Um... round up the horses and keep
them safe...

ALENCON

Good idea.

Leaving Alencon to his task, Jeanne rides off...

... and THUMP! a flaming arrow lands in one of the
drawbridge beams.

EXT. TOURELLES - COMPLEX - DAY

An English soldier peers down to see both beams ablaze...

SOLDIER

Fetch some water!

The command is passed down the line -- a bucket is lowered into the river and hauled back up -- the bucket rushed up stone stairs to the soldier on the battlements...

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

Meanwhile Jeanne returns to Dunois and La Hire --

JEANNE
Stand by with the battering-rams...

DUNOIS
We need another ten minutes...

JEANNE
The bridge won't wait!

LA HIRE
Leave it to me...

Back on the battlements, the bucket of water is passed up to the Soldier, who tries to pour it over the edge and onto the blazing beam. Aulon spots him from below and fires a flaming arrow -- it pierces the soldier, who pours the water on himself, extinguishing the flames...

EXT. TOURELLES - COMPLEX - DAY

TIGHT SHOTS: hands wind the handle of a bobbin -- a device is activated -- a lever thrown -- a grille slides sideways...

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

The beams collapse -- the support chains give way -- and the drawbridge comes crashing down. Beyond it is a portcullis, but to La Hire's exuberant volunteers this is no barrier. Carrying buckets of flaming oil, they charge forward...

... but as they race across the drawbridge, a sudden volley of high-velocity arrows discharge from the lower apertures of the portcullis, felling them before they even get halfway across the bridge.

EXT. TOURELLES - COMPLEX - DAY

The English cackle with delight at the sight of the dying French writhing in the flaming oil. Redbeard -- in charge of the multiple balista -- orders the device to be reloaded, then yells through the upper portcullis...

REDBEARD

Hey, what happened to the whore?
Sorry... virgin!

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

Dunois views the massacred soldiers lying on the bridge amid the dying flames. Jeanne is about to mount her horse...

REDBEARD
Send her over here and she won't
stay a virgin for long!

DUNOIS
Jeanne, don't do it! Just stop and
think for once! Don't you see? The
gate's a trap... and he's the bait!

Redbeard roars with laughter as Jeanne yells back --

JEANNE
I take pity on your soul,
Englishman!

EXT. TOURELLES - COMPLEX - DAY

Redbeard checks the reloading of the balista...

REDBEARD
What the matter? Frightened of a
little English stuffing?

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

Jeanne gently puts her arm around her horse's neck, whispering to it...

JEANNE
We must both be brave...

She kisses it lightly, then grabs her banner from Louis, calling out to the others --

JEANNE
When you see my banner touch the
door, the fortress is ours!

... and away she rides, across the drawbridge, still piled with the slaughtered men from the first attack.

REDBEARD
... and... fire!!

Another volley of arrows discharges from the portcullis

and Jeanne's horse collapses. The English cheer...

INT. TOURELLES - TURRET - DAY

From his garret window high above, Glasdale sees Jeanne spread-eagled next to her dead horse on the drawbridge below. He turns to his servant with a grin...

GLASDALE
This time she won't be back.

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

Aulon gapes in horror... but then suddenly Jeanne is back up on her feet again. Gripping her banner, she dashes forward toward the portcullis, implanting it just as Redbeard opens a little sliding grille -- Jeanne jabs her banner through --

EXT. TOURELLES - COMPLEX - DAY

... impaling Redbeard's skull on the far side! His body crumples to the ground, wedged between the base of the portcullis and the balista.

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

Jeanne runs back across the drawbridge, crying out...

JEANNE
The place is ours!

EXT. TOURELLES - COMPLEX - DAY

Inside the Tourelles, the English try to operate the reloaded balista. But Redbeard's corpse is wedged so tightly that they can't move it...

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

Jeanne moves aside as La Hire and his men heave the carts laden with tree-trunk battering-rams across the bridge...

INT. TOURELLES - TURRET - DAY

Glasdale has seen enough...

INT. TOURELLES - DAY

... He tears down into the courtyard, mustering soldiers as he goes --

GLASDALE

To arms! To arms!

With a triumphant battle-cry, the French charge their battering-ram into the portcullis...

EXT. TOURELLES - COMPLEX - DAY

... demolishing it like matchwood, then storm inside the fortress. Glasdale cries out to his troops --

GLASDALE

Soldiers... In the name of the king,
I want you to kill these French dogs
until there's none left!

The English troops swarm either side of the broken portcullis, forcing most of the French back onto the battery...

EXT. TOURELLES - BATTERY - DAY

La Hire lets out a blood-curdling, primeval war-cry and charges forward to meet the English wave head on. Jeanne is caught in the middle, buffeted from side to side by a sea of heaving, sweating, bleeding bodies...

In this melee it is impossible to know who is friend or foe, and the images become so blurred that we and Jeanne are soon lost in a mist of dust and noise...

EXT. TOURELLES - DREAM - DAY

FLASH: our eyes are momentarily blinded by the sun... and when we return, we find Jeanne in the middle of the battery, but now totally alone, weaving her sword through the air in SLOW MOTION as she once did with her stick...

EXT. FIELD - DREAM - DAY/NIGHT

FLASH: Jeanne is still weaving the air with her sword, but she is now a little girl of eight, playing in the field we first saw her in. The small BOY looks at her, smiling...

FLASH: Jeanne continues to play, but is now 17, and the boy is now a young MAN, still smiling. He calls out to her.

MAN

Jeanne... what are you doing?

JEANNE

Playing...

She sweeps her sword and decapitates a flower. Blood flows from the stalk... Jeanne looks at it, more in childish curiosity than astonishment or horror. She looks at the sword, the blade now streaked with blood...

MAN

Jeanne... what are you doing?

Jeanne pauses, looks at him steadily... and suddenly notices that blood is trickling down his face. A SHAFT OF LIGHT blazes, wind billows... and suddenly it's winter, the trees naked, heavy with snow...

MAN

What have you done to me, Jeanne?

Jeanne looks horrified. The Man puts his hands to her face, gazing deep into her eyes...

MAN

What have you done to me?

JEANNE

I -- I -- I...

EXT. TOURELLES - COURTYARD - DAY

Jeanne is screaming at Aulon, who is gripping her blood-splattered face as the Man did...

AULON

Jeanne, calm down, do you hear me?
Are you alright?

JEANNE

Yes...

AULON

It's over, Jeanne. We won, just as you said!

Jeanne looks about her in a daze. La Hire strides over, arms extended, extravagant as always --

LA HIRE

Jeanne, come here my friend, my soldier... in my arms!

Jeanne starts laughing -- she can't believe it...

JEANNE

We... won?!

LA HIRE

Won?! Such a small word will never do! This is victory, Jeanne, this is... glory!

He scoops her up in his bear-like arms like an ebullient lover, both laughing in the moment. He slowly turns her around, breathing in a great lungful of air and savoring the smell of what Jeanne now sees over his shoulder: the entire courtyard, knee-deep in bodies and bits of bodies -- including the gallant Xaintrailles.

Jeanne too can smell the reek of fresh, warm gore. Her laugh turns to a cry of anguish. La Hire sets her back down...

LA HIRE

Jeanne -- what's the matter??

Jeanne is utterly horrified... her legs tremble... amber liquid trickles down her armor...

JEANNE

You call this... glory...? All this... this blood... this smell of...

LA HIRE

... the smell of victory, Jeanne! Mmmmmmm! I love it!

JEANNE

It's not possible...

Jeanne sees a French soldier of meager wit, hauling a dying English soldier onto his knees for some obscure purpose.

GILLES

You look disappointed... Isn't this what you wanted?

JEANNE

No... not like this...

GILLES

For weeks you've been asking for this... well now you have it!

The Soldier is about to smash the Englishman's mouth with a mace. Jeanne snaps out of her momentary stupor and races across, stumbling over the dead bodies...

JEANNE

Stop it! What are you doing?

SOLDIER

Nothing... just taking his teeth.

JEANNE

But you can't just kill a man for his teeth!

SOLDIER

Why not? He has good teeth...

JEANNE

Because... because you just can't!

GILLES

Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth...

Jeanne ignores the laconic Gilles...

SOLDIER

Besides, what about these...?

JEANNE

That's different... I mean... we were fighting for a... for a cause!

Gilles grins, but La Hire looks genuinely bemused at Jeanne's behavior. The soldier shrugs, unimpressed.

SOLDIER

Not me. He's my prisoner... I can take his teeth if I want to...

He is about to smash the teeth...

JEANNE

No!

She throws herself in front of the startled Frenchman.

JEANNE

Take mine instead -- here -- smash mine first!

LA HIRE

Jeanne... get up... this is ridiculous...

JEANNE

If you kill him, you kill me!

GILLES

Jeanne... let him do it. One more dead body's not going to make any difference, so who cares?

JEANNE

I care! And I care because God
cares! All life is precious to God
-- even his -- even yours and
mine...

LA HIRE

Jeanne... the man hasn't been paid
for six months -- that's his only
reward. Let him take a few teeth...

JEANNE

A few teeth... that's the price of
his life?

SOLDIER

Yeah...

JEANNE

Here -- take this instead.

She wrenches a ring from her finger and flings it at the
soldier.

JEANNE

He's mine now.

Jeanne cuts the Englishman's bonds...

JEANNE

Now you... get out.

The English soldier doesn't wait for further prompting.
Gilles claps...

GILLES

Bravo! What about all the other
hundreds of prisoners? Do we let
them go too?

JEANNE

Maybe... I don't know... but first
we have to confess...

INT. AUGUSTINE MONASTERY - DAY

Jeanne marches her blood-splattered captives into the
church and up the aisle toward the rubble-strewn altar.
She sees a terrified Franciscan PRIEST and grabs hold of
him...

JEANNE

Please... we have to be confessed...
all of us... now! I know it's not
normal custom, but sometimes... you
know... we have to make an exception
and... and today is an exception...

The Priest looks confounded. Jeanne turns to the Captains.

JEANNE

He's going to confess us. Kneel!

All but La Hire kneel, although their armor is stiff at the joints.

LA HIRE

Jeanne, if you don't mind... I'll stay standing... this armor... it's a nightmare to get back up...

JEANNE

I said, kneel!

Jeanne raises her sword and brings the flat blade whacking against the back of his legs. La Hire crumples, and Jeanne turns to the Priest...

JEANNE

Please... we're ready... begin!

The Priest is totally lost... he begins to mumble a few words in Latin just as a soldier burst in --

SOLDIER

(breathless)

The English... they're forming up... thousands of them... on the far side of the river...

The Captains look anxiously at Jeanne. She hesitates a moment, then gazes up at the battered crucifix on the altar and closes her eyes in prayer...

EXT. NORTH PLATEAU - ORLEANS - DAWN

Jeanne opens her eyes. It is dawn, and two silent armies are drawn up facing one another: four thousand Englishmen on the left, two thousand Frenchmen on the right. They have barely had time to recover from the Tourelles, and the lust for battle is gone. We sense that this is going to be a blood bath that nobody wants.

Franciscan monks move among them, sprinkling them with holy water in final absolution. The battle lines are too far apart for the English to see any details, but the sight of massed soldiers kneeling before an invisible God is an awesome spectacle.

Jeanne and the Captains are mounted, facing the English.

DUNOIS

Well...? Shall we go?

JEANNE

Not yet.

DUNOIS

The English won't wait.

Jeanne hesitates...

JEANNE

I'll go.

AULON

Jeanne, no...

But Dunois silences him, indicating to Gilles that he should accompany her.

JEANNE

Alone.

Dunois is again obliged to comply, and Gilles hangs back.

From the English lines, we see a small, solitary figure emerge from the massed ranks of French soldiers.

Jeanne moves halfway between the two armies. The English soldiers watch her, mesmerized, while their captains remain motionless.

In the middle of the field, Jeanne halts. From the French POV she looks dangerously vulnerable. The English commander -- TALBOT -- draws up alongside his Captains, watching her with grey eyes and an expression of stone. Only we see that Jeanne is crying. She rubs the tears away.

JEANNE

I have a message for your King
Henry. It is a message from God.

The English stand silent.

JEANNE

Go home... Go now, in peace. If you
don't go now, you will be buried in
this field. I've seen enough blood
for today, but if you want more, I
can't stop you. I can only warn you
that it will be your blood, not
ours.

Talbot whispers something to one of his Captains. He withdraws to pass the message on. Jeanne -- and her French captains -- try to gauge the English mood.

JEANNE

I'm waiting for your answer.

Now the English Captains start moving along their flanks. Something's about to happen. Dunois and the French watch in dismay as the English flanks move aside, exposing their dreaded archers. Jeanne closes her eyes, tears brimming.

JEANNE

Please, Lord... don't... don't let
this happen... don't leave me...

The English archers take a step back, their cavalry move slowly forward, then turn to their right, the men letting them through. Dunois turns to La Hire...

DUNOIS

Never wait for miracles. Stand by
to attack...

The serried ranks of English infantry close in, then halt. We're ready for the worst, and it takes Jeanne -- and us -- a full twenty seconds to realize what is happening: the English are leaving. First the cavalry, then the infantry, finally the archers themselves.

Jeanne cannot believe her eyes. She burst out laughing and crying at the same time. The French captains gape in astonishment. Finally La Hire can contain himself no longer --

LA HIRE

By God and all the saints... now
that's what I call a bloody miracle!

The French burst into jubilation...

INT. CHINON CASTLE - DAY

As the cheering builds, we see a Messenger race along a corridor and burst into the throne room. Charles slowly rises on hearing the joyous news, clapping his hands in delight -- not least at the discomfort of Tremoille and Regnault. But Yolande shares his enthusiasm, although we sense that the news comes as no great surprise.

INT. ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

The cheering continues as another Messenger races along a similar stone corridor and bursts in on the haggard Duke of BEDFORD. He is the English regent, and is in council with several others, including the Bishop of Beauvais -- one Pierre CAUCHON. As Bedford hears the news, the cheering FADES. He rises from his chair...

BEDFORD

I want that girl. I want her
burned.

EXT. STREET - RHEIMS - DAY

The crowd goes wild as Jeanne rides through the streets of Rheims, carrying her banner in triumph. She is followed by Aulon and her two page boys, and is accompanied by soldiers who do their best to hold the ecstatic crowd at bay. At the far end of the street: a magnificent cathedral.

INT. VESTRY - RHEIMS CATHEDRAL - DAY

Backstage pandemonium as Charles is readied for his imminent coronation. A glamorous Gilles tries to help him into his ermine robe; Tremoille stands with Archbishop Regnault, adjusting his gold-trimmed cloak. An ancient BISHOP -- palsied and pushing 80 -- stands by, hands a-trembling.

CHARLES

It's too tight -- where's the seamstress? And that...
(pointing to crown)
... that's meant to be a crown?
Don't you have something more -- more regal?

A young Priest is holding the dowdy crown...

PRIEST

The English took the real one...

CHARLES

I asked for a grandiose coronation, and this is what you give me? This whole thing's going to be a complete fiasco...!

BISHOP

Sire, we were only given three days to prepare -- three days! -- Why, your father's coronation took three months!

Charles turns to Tremoille --

CHARLES

He's probably right -- let's call a delay...

TREMOILLE

There's no time, sire -- we can't

hold up the ceremony... there's no telling when the English might come back... they're only ten leagues away...

CHARLES

Let them come! Let them see who's the true king of France!

Further away, Dunois is examining himself in a looking-glass. He is standing with Gilles de Rais, both resplendent in their armor, now cleaned and polished...

DUNOIS

It's been muddy for so long, I forgot how good it looked when cleaned up...

LA HIRE

Did you remember to clean up what's inside as well?

Dunois ribs him with his elbow, both laughing. In another corner, Alencon is fast asleep.

Charles is still grumbling...

CHARLES

Those damn English... we should be doing this in Paris... in Notre Dame -- much more prestigious -- and twice as big as this one!

Yolande, who has been standing quietly in the shadows with Richmond, steps forward...

YOLANDE

It is the sacred place that matters, Charles -- not the size. Am I correct, Bishop?

BISHOP

Oh yes, my lady. All true kings of France must first be anointed in our great cathedral of Rheims... with the holy oil of Clovis... for it was within these very walls that Saint Remy received the sacred oil from Heaven, brought to him by a white dove for the anointing of King Clovis...

TREMOILLE

Yes, yes -- well let's just get on with it, shall we?

GILLES

... before the English turn up and
spoil everything.

CHARLES

They wouldn't dare!

GILLES

I wouldn't be so sure. It only
takes one of them -- in disguise --

Gilles pulls a sharp dagger -- Charles looks petrified...

GILLES

... with a good dagger... that's all
it takes...

Gilles lifts the dagger... and snips a loose thread from
Charles's shoulder...

GILLES

... to ruin the whole thing.

Gilles sheaths his dagger, but Charles is now panicking.
He glances at those around him as though one of them might
be a spy. Gilles moves away, and Charles turns to his
pages --

CHARLES

Hurry up!

Further away, the Bishop's assistant Canon hurries in,
holding a small jar --

CANON

Your Grace, there can be no
anointing!

BISHOP

What in heaven's name are you
talking about?

CANON

The holy oil of Clovis -- it's all
gone!

The ancient Archbishop can scarcely believe his ears. He
peers inside the little jar just as Yolande arrives with
Richmond...

BISHOP

Gone?? But that's impossible --
it's magic oil... I mean miraculous
oil -- it can never be exhausted...

CANON

Look for yourself!

The Canon offers it to the Bishop, but Yolande intervenes...

YOLANDE

Problem?

He hands her the little jar...

BISHOP

I don't understand... the holy oil of Clovis... it was quite full the last time I saw it...

YOLANDE

And when was that?

BISHOP

Well... at the coronation of King Charles VI...

YOLANDE

Thirty years ago? I'm not surprised it's gone...

BISHOP

No no, you don't understand -- this is no ordinary oil -- this is miraculous... this oil was brought from heaven by a white dove to crown King Clovis in this... very... cathedral...

Yolande has moved away, to be replaced by the hideously-scarred Richmond. The Bishop's voice trails as he sees Yolande beyond him, taking an oil lamp from the wall and pouring a little oil into the jar.

BISHOP

W-w-what are you doing?!

YOLANDE

Performing a miracle.

Richmond curtails any protest with a toothy grin.

There's a growing SOUND of excitement coming from beyond. Finally Jeanne appears in the doorway, carrying her banner and followed by her faithful page boys, Louis and Raymond. La Hire nudges Alencon awake as she passes, giving an admiring whistle.

CHARLES

Ah, Jeanne... come here...! This whole coronation idea of yours is a fiasco... nothing is ready...

JEANNE

... You look wonderful...

CHARLES

... and my crown doesn't fit and...
(breaking off)

Really??

She looks up and down, appraising him...

JEANNE

You look like a king.

Charles melts. TRUMPETS SOUND from the great Cathedral beyond...

INT. RHEIMS CATHEDRAL - DAY

Two tiers of boys sing in plainsong as Charles enters through a small door and into the vastness of the crowded Cathedral. It is filled to capacity, with Jeanne's comrades-in-arms filling the front pews like eager fans, straining for a glimpse of her.

Tremoille waddles behind Charles, with Regnault, Yolande and Richmond in tow. Next, the two page boys -- and then at last the main attraction as far as this congregation is concerned -- the crowd lets out an audible gasp as Jeanne enters in her white armor, carrying her proud, war-scarred banner and escorted by Jean d'Aulon.

La Hire is so moved at the sight that he has to wipe away big soppy tears (for sentimentality was ever the flip-side of cruelty). Alencon and Dunois likewise gaze at their adored one, though Gilles is perhaps more taken with the cherubic choir boys...

Jeanne trembles with emotion. This is the peak of her career, and she knows it, and she's making the most of it. As the little procession reaches the nave, all but Charles filter aside. He walks forward alone to where Archbishop Regnault is standing -- a few paces -- then stops, turns -- and holds out his hands to Jeanne.

The crowd gasp with approval at the unprecedented gesture... La Hire briefly claps, before being dug in the ribs by Gilles... but the kingly act provokes jealous looks from Regnault and Tremoille...

Jeanne hesitates, then is almost willed on by the crowd into joining Charles. She stands a little aside as he kneels. Regnault sprinkles the Holy Oil on his sovereign's head...

REGNAULT

With this sacred oil, blessed by the
hand of God the Father Almighty, we

do anoint thee Charles Valois...

Regnault breaks off: there's a commotion at the back of the cathedral. Charles looks around -- anxious faces turn -- soldiers draw their swords -- is it the English??

Bored by the ceremony, young Louis has been kicking legs again, and one of the guards is nursing a bruised shin. With all eyes suddenly upon him, Louis flushes -- and is quickly taken in hand by Yolande. After the brief interruption, Regnault continues...

REGNAULT

... we do anoint thee Charles
Valois, Sovereign Lord and King of
this great kingdom of France,
charging that ye defend the faith of
our Mother Holy Church so long as ye
shall live...

It could almost be the marriage ceremony. Jeanne watches in tears, trembling with emotion as the Archbishop takes the crown and holds it above Charles' head, then slowly, slowly lowers it...

As he does so, an eerie SOUND, like a bullet in slow-motion coming straight at us... followed by a cry from Jeanne...

EXT. PARIS WALLS - ST. DENIS - DAY

Jeanne gasps -- sways...

Torrential rain, sweeping across the grey, mud-filled moat in great curtains. She's standing on the bank above the moat, looking across at the massive city walls where ladders have been set up. Aulon catches up with her...

AULON

Jeanne...! Are you alright?

JEANNE

Yes. Yes, I'm fine...

(yelling out)

We need more brushwood!

(to Aulon)

Why are you staring at me like that?

AULON

Because there's an arrow in your leg.

She looks down and there it is, poking out her leg: an arrow has penetrated her armor.

JEANNE

So there is...

She hadn't realized -- and doesn't seem that bothered.

JEANNE

... but that's no reason for you to stop. You can still climb a ladder, can't you? So go on then... climb!

Aulon looks across at the endless ladders, disappearing into the mist and smoke at the top of the gigantic wall. Jeanne calls out to her page, Raymond --

JEANNE

Raymond! Over here!

Raymond hurries over...

JEANNE

Pull it out.

Raymond looks terrified --

JEANNE

Pull it out!

Raymond grips the arrow while Jeanne gazes across at one of the ladders laden with Frenchmen. As he pulls it out, the ladder falls back, plunging the soldiers to their deaths. Jeanne gasps in pain...

La Hire and Gilles are further along the bank...

GILLES

This is no good!

LA HIRE

No good? This is a disaster!

Gilles stumbles along the bank to Jeanne...

GILLES

Jeanne... The men are exhausted!

JEANNE

I know, but so is the enemy -- they're falling back -- Paris is ours...!

GILLES

Jeanne... we're not enough...

JEANNE

So... bring up the reinforcements!

GILLES

Reinforcements? Where??

Jeanne waves vaguely behind her --

JEANNE

Right behind us -- Dunois with
another then thousand men!

GILLES

Jeanne, look behind you.

JEANNE

Never look behind -- only ahead!

Gilles grips her by the shoulders, forcing her to turn and look behind. At most, a hundred bedraggled soldiers, limping amid the carnage in the moat. Jeanne stares at them.

GILLES

Do you know how to count?

JEANNE

Of course I do? Bring them up!

GILLES

Jeanne... that is not ten thousand reinforcements -- that is one hundred very loyal but very tired soldiers.

JEANNE

But... where is Dunois... where are the men the king promised me?

GILLES

He never sent them... Don't you understand? He doesn't want this war anymore... he has his crown now, that's all he ever wanted...

JEANNE

But my voices... they promised me...

GILLES

To hell with your voices -- it's time to face facts! We have nothing to do here... none of us... not even you. You should go home, Jeanne.

Jeanne stares at them, in shock.

JEANNE

You don't believe me anymore?

LA HIRE

We still believe in you, Jeanne. If it were up to me, I'd chase every goddamn Englishman into the ocean.

But it's not up to us anymore --
it's up to the king...

Jeanne looks at him, suddenly furious --

INT. CHINON CASTLE - CORRIDORS - DAY

-- Jeanne storms along a corridor, her two page boys doing their best to catch up with her...

INT. CHINON CASTLE - CHAMBER - DAY

She bursts in on Charles, who is cavorting in a bath-tub with a few frivolous females.

CHARLES

Well, this is an unexpected pleasure. Ladies, let me introduce you to the celebrated Jeanne...

The damsels titter...

JEANNE

Get them out of here!

CHARLES

Now hold on -- you're not captain here... on the battlefield perhaps, but not in the royal bedchamber!

JEANNE

Why did you betray me? Paris was ours for the taking! All I needed was another few hundred men... Why did you take back the army you gave me?

CHARLES

Gave you? Well now, I wouldn't quite put it like that...

JEANNE

(bluntly)
So how would you put it?

CHARLES

Well... we are, of course, enormously grateful for your past efforts, but your task is done. Now it's time for negotiation... and after many months of skillful work, our dear Tremoille is about to seal a treaty with our Burgundian friends who will no longer lend their support to the English. You see, my

dear Jeanne... as it is written in the Bible, "to everything there is a season: a time for war, and a time for peace"...

JEANNE

Peace will only be got from the English at the end of a lance!

CHARLES

Why do you have to be so bloodthirsty? Do you enjoy it? All that blood and noise and pain? Diplomacy is far more civilized... far safer... and far cheaper...

Jeanne angrily holds out a fistful of letters --

JEANNE

I have letters here from towns under siege -- Compiegne, Provins, Melin -- where the people are starving, begging God on their knees to help them... and I'm here to answer their prayers -- and you want to stop me? France does not belong to you, Charles -- she belongs to God. And if you won't help me save her, I shall do it alone!

Jeanne slings the letters in his face and marches out of the room. Charles turns to the girls with a weary sigh.

CHARLES

If only she would just go home.

INT. CORRIDOR - CHINON - DAY

Aulon reaches the door to a chapel to find it guarded by Louis and Raymond.

RAYMOND

You can't go in.

AULON

Get out...!

INT. CHAPEL - CHINON - DAY

Aulon enters to find Jeanne crumpled by the altar. He kneels beside her.

AULON

Jeanne... the king has ordered us not to ride with you anymore.

JEANNE

So... what am I supposed to do now?

Aulon hesitates.

AULON

What do your voices say?

Jeanne pauses... a long moment, whether or not to confide. Finally, and with a bleakness not sensed in her before...

JEANNE

They've abandoned me... like everyone.

AULON

What... what do you mean?

JEANNE

It's been weeks since they spoke to me. Since the coronation... no signs... nothing...

AULON

Maybe their silence is a sign...? Maybe it's a sign to go home?

JEANNE

It's not time yet. My mission is not over yet. There is still more I must do before I can really -- finally -- go home.

AULON

But how do you know that these -- these voices aren't really just -- well, you.

Jeanne stares at him in bemusement -- then suddenly laughs...

JEANNE

Well of course they're me! That's how God talks to me. If you listen hard enough, even you can hear him. Everyone can hear him.

AULON

But I hear so many voices... one voice saying one thing, another voice saying the opposite -- love your enemy, kill your enemy -- what is good, what is evil...?

JEANNE

All you have to do is stop talking

and just listen.

AULON

But how do you know what you hear is the truth?

JEANNE

I don't know it. I feel it.

AULON

You make it sound so simple...

JEANNE

The truth is always simple... it's you, Jean, who's making things complicated.

AULON

Me?! It's not me, it's God who makes everything complicated! If he's all-powerful, why not let the English stay on their island in the first place? And why let this war go on for a hundred years? And why send you out to fight when a girl like you should be at home with your family? Why, why?!

JEANNE

So... even you don't believe in me anymore...

AULON

Jeanne... I believe in you... more than anyone...

Aulon's hand touches Jeanne's hair. He leans forward, as though being drawn by her eyes and mouth...

AULON

I... I just wish I could... I want to... to help you...

The moment is a little too intense. They gaze at each other, then Jeanne suddenly pulls away...

JEANNE

If you really want to help me, there's one thing you can do.

AULON

Tell me...

JEANNE

Tell the king to give me more men.

Jeanne goes, leaving Aulon alone, deliberating.

EXT. CHINON - DAY

Jeanne and her pages mount their horses and ride off...

INT. CHAMBERS - CHINON - DAY

Aulon walks through a small antechamber and is about to knock at a door when he pauses, hearing familiar voices.

TREMOILLE (O.S.)
We have to stop her, your majesty.
If she raises her own army and
attacks the Burgundians at
Compiègne, all my months of painful
negotiations will have been in vain!

Aulon draws closer, shocked at what he hears...

REGNAULT (O.S.)
Tremouille is right. She behaves as
though she were God! It's high time
she found out who's really in
command.

INT. KING'S CHAMBERS - CHINON - DAY

Regnault, Tremouille and Yolande coil about Charles like serpents. Charles looks at them all.

CHARLES
It's true. There's only one king...
people need to be reminded of that.
Nevertheless... Jeanne has done so
much for us...

YOLANDE
I assure you, Charles, the Maiden
has no greater admirer than myself.
But whatever our personal feelings,
we cannot allow her to conduct her
own private war. For the sake of
the kingdom, it is imperative that
you stop her going to Compiègne...

CHARLES
I... I can't stop her.

TREMOILLE
Well if you don't, I'm sure the
Burgundians will be happy to oblige.
If they capture her at Compiègne...

REGNAULT

... no one can blame us.

CHARLES

I... I don't know... it'll sound like we... betrayed her...?

TREMOILLE

Noooo!

REGNAULT

Good heavens no!

TREMOILLE

Never!

YOLANDE

Don't worry, Charles. If God is still with her, she will be victorious. We're not her judges... we're just spectators. Let her go to Compiegne, as you let her go to Orleans, and let God decide her fate.

CHARLES

But... her army's so small now...

YOLANDE

Then her faith will have to be bigger.

Yolande gives Richmond a significant look.

INT. CHAMBERS - CHINON - DAY

Aulon can scarcely believe what he has heard!

INT. AULON'S ROOM - CHINON CASTLE - DAY

A table smashes against a stone wall... a chair splinters in fragments. Aulon is in a frenzy, smashing up furniture.

EXT. CHINON CASTLE - DAY

Aulon rides out from the castle...

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

Jeanne and her meager band of soldiers have paused for food. Aulon makes his way through the trees -- and finds Jeanne a little apart from the others, with her two page boys...

AULON

Jeanne... I need to speak to you.
(pointedly)

Alone.

Jeanne glances at him a moment, then nods for Louis and Raymond to leave.

JEANNE

Did the king listen to you?

Aulon blushes... clears his throat...

AULON

Jeanne, I... I love you, Jeanne. I
love you and... I want to marry you.

Jeanne is a little taken aback, but is genuinely touched.

JEANNE

That's not what I asked... Why do
you want to marry me?

AULON

You listen to your voices, I listen
to my heart.

Jeanne looks at him a beat.

JEANNE

What did the king say?

AULON

He said that... he's making a treaty
with the Duke of Burgundy and...

JEANNE

It's a trap! They're buying time
till they can bring over more
soldiers from England!

AULON

Did your voices tell you that? You
told me you hadn't heard them for
months...

JEANNE

No, but...

AULON

Or maybe it's Jeanne who's in a trap
-- her own trap -- a downward spiral
that she can't stop?

JEANNE

Did you come back to marry me or to

insult me?

AULON

To marry you.

A beat... then she looks away.

JEANNE

I will ask my voices... if they come back one day. Meanwhile... I'm going to Compiègne.

AULON

Jeanne... I have been hearing voices -- and believe me, those voices left me in no doubt that you must not go to Compiègne!

She looks at him a moment, knowing that he speaks the truth.

AULON

Jeanne... I believe in you -- but can you believe in me for once? Don't go... even if you don't want to marry me.

JEANNE

I would like to marry you. But I have already promised myself... to God.

AULON

But... you've done so much for God as it is... can't you do something for yourself for once -- for Jeanne?

JEANNE

But it is what I want.

AULON

To be killed in battle?

JEANNE

If God wants me to win, he will find a way. And if he wants me to die... if he wants me back... then that's fine too. Then I'll be with him forever.

She has a dreamy, faraway look -- one with which Aulon cannot compete.

AULON

Will you at least let me stay with you?

JEANNE

It would not be the same without
you.

EXT. COMPIEGNE - BATTLEFIELD - DAY

SHARP CUT to a Man being felled by a cudgel. We are in the middle of the battle, and things are not going well for the French. The citizens and their MAYOR watch anxiously from the draw-bridge and the town walls. Nearby stands a familiar face: the battle-scarred Richmond. The Mayor and Richmond exchange a glance that chills...

Jeanne is struggling to keep her banner aloft... then a cry from close by, and to her horror she sees Raymond collapse with an arrow in his breast. His faithful companion Louis races to his side, throwing his arms around him.

Jeanne jumps down from her horse, but by the time she reaches him, his eyes are closed. Louis looks up at her, tears brimming. Aulon rides up alongside Jeanne...

AULON

We must sound the retreat!

JEANNE

Not yet!

With the enemy bearing down, there's no time to pause...

EXT. COMPIEGNE - WALLS & POV OF BATTLEFIELD - DAY

From high on the town walls, the Mayor surveys the distant battle. Richmond is standing a short distance away. He gives him a sign. The Mayor turns to a Guard.

MAYOR

I can't risk the town's safety.
Raise the drawbridge.

EXT. COMPIEGNE - BATTLEFIELD - DAY

As Jeanne rides back with Aulon, she spots Richmond beyond the drawbridge inside the town. There's a brief exchange between them, a locking of eyes. Jeanne turns to Aulon...

JEANNE

Get back inside the town and see if
the English are attacking from the
other side!

AULON

But... why... what's the point?

JEANNE

Do as I say!

AULON

I want to stay with you...

JEANNE

That's an order!

Aulon looks almost shocked. He backs away, then turns his horse about and rides back across the drawbridge and into the town. Seconds later, the drawbridge begins to rise, and Jeanne is trapped.

She tries to fight her way clear of the advancing English, but they encircle her. She lashes out with the flat of her sword, trying to keep their swords and lances at bay. The noose tightens -- her horse starts to panic... but strangely there's a smile on her face, as though she sees the end coming, this end that she so desires: to die on a battlefield in penance for the blood shed in her name.

Suddenly a BOLT slices through BONE --

-- and Jeanne's horse collapses from under her. She rolls to the ground, springing back to her feet as the English close in. Again she flays the air with her sword, but it becomes heavier and heavier as her energy finally begins to drain.

A huge iron ball smashes her sword in two -- now she has no weapon but her fists. Yet still she lashes out, like a fox cornered by hounds. Another blow -- she falls to the ground, her face gazing up. Her eyes soften, and again that smile --

Her POV: High above the dust and smoke and flame of battle -- a little patch of blue...

EXT. FIELD - SUMMER - DAY

... and Jeanne falls into the field of her childhood.

JEANNE

My Lord...

-- the sky brightens -- the SUN dazzles -- space/time dilates... with her arms wide open, Jeanne offers herself to the skies --

JEANNE

Take me...!

Nature starts to consume her, integrating her as a part of the whole... clouds, seasons and wind become one in an

apocalyptic ballet... grass, flowers and roots consume her... the camera suddenly pulls back so fast and far that within seconds the earth has become a revolving sphere in the darkness of space...

FLASH: the sphere now becomes a four-dimensional torus, a fluid, dynamic ring, evolving in and out of space...

FLASH: the torus blinks, and the dark center becomes a BLUE EYE, the same diameter as Jeanne's. overwhelmed by this vision. A shadow of a MAN clutching a mace is reflected in the blueness...

SHARP CUT to the Man as he slams her... WHAM!

BLACK. Then a zillion stars evolve from the darkness, slowly rotating inversely toward a central point as though returning to the origin of space/time in one single dimensionless point of light -- which then suddenly EXPLODES...

At the same moment a HUGE EYE blinks open -- the EYE of Jeanne...

INT. COMPIEGNE - PRISON - NIGHT

Jeanne's eyes search a darkness that gradually resolves into the grim, dank confines of a dungeon. She sits bolt upright, as though awakening from a nightmare.

She is on a wooden bed, her face bruised and tumefied. A few inches away is a MAN, one side of his shaved head catching a sliver of light. He's laughing at her.

MAN

I can't believe it... your romantic vision of death, with all that grass growing everywhere... I must admit, you have a great imagination. Or maybe not great enough. Death is much more simple...

FLASH: A dead body lying in the silent forest, a trickle of blood running from his mouth...

MAN

... after a few months it gets more interesting...

FLASH: Same shot, only now the body is wriggling...

FLASH: The body is now reduced to skin and bones...

MAN

... then -- after a year -- it finally becomes romantic...

FLASH: The same spot in the forest, but now there is no sign of the body.

Jeanne shakes her head...

JEANNE

Who... who are you...?

MAN

I am that I am.

(beat)

You don't like my face?

(evidently not)

Maybe you prefer this one...

His face melts into the little boy, sitting on a throne in the middle of the wood. She gazes at him in bewilderment --

MAN

Too young maybe? How about this one?

The boy becomes the young man she saw in the forest. Jeanne is breathless. The Man is invading her most secret memories.

MAN

Better, no...? But incomplete.

Suddenly his face is flooded with blood, like the image of the man she saw during the battle of Orleans...

Jeanne SCREAMS, covering her face...

JEANNE

Get thee behind me. Satan!

The Man smiles, unaffected by her outburst.

MAN

Who are you to even think you can know the difference between good and evil? Are you God?

JEANNE

No... no... I'm just a messenger...
He needs me... a higher calling...

Suddenly the man starts to bellow -- the walls tremble -- the bellow becomes a roar... clouds boil behind his head...

MAN

HOW CAN YOU BEGIN TO IMAGINE THAT
GOD, THE CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND
EARTH, THE SOURCE OF ALL LIFE, COULD

POSSIBLY NEED -- YOU?

Jeanne can no longer stop her tears...

JEANNE

I don't know... I thought...

MAN

YOU THINK GOD ISN'T BIG ENOUGH TO
DELIVER HIS OWN MESSAGES?

JEANNE

I don't know... please... tell me
I'm dead...

MAN

WHO ARE YOU TO DECIDE IF YOU SHOULD
LIVE OR DIE?

JEANNE

I... don't know... what do you want
from me?

MAN

Nothing. I'm here to set you
free...

The Man holds up his hand as though in judgment --

A hand slams across her face --

-- and she wakes up, nursing her hot cheek. In front of
her: the rough English guard who just struck her.

GUARD

(angrily)

I said, smile! You have visitors.

The door opens, and a smart delegation arrives in her
cell, led by a thin reed of a man, the Duke of BURGUNDY
and his right-arm, DIJON.

GUARD

His Grace the Duke of Burgundy.

Jeanne stares at him, confused...

BURGUNDY

So... here is the famous Jeanne...
Savior of Orleans... terror of the
English? You look pretty ordinary
to me...

JEANNE

Am I... am I dead?

BURGUNDY

Dead you're worthless, darling.

JEANNE

Where... where am I?

BURGUNDY

Guess.

She looks about her dismal confines...

JEANNE

My king will pay any ransom you ask.

BURGUNDY

Your king? Ah yes, of course...
What's he going to pay me with?
Cows? Chickens? I prefer gold, and
the English have plenty. I wonder
how much they'll pay... to have the
Witch of Orleans in their clutches?
Those English are so arrogant, they
can't accept the idea of being
defeated by a peasant girl... it has
to have been the devil's work.

JEANNE

God defeated the English, not me.

BURGUNDY

And God who allowed you to be
caught?

Jeanne hadn't thought about that before.

BURGUNDY

Personally I don't believe in God,
and I don't believe in the Devil
either. That's why I'm never
disappointed.

(to Dijon)

Sell her.

INT. CHINON CASTLE - DAY

Aulon goes to see the King in his chamber and hands him a
heavy sack. Tremoille and Regnault are present, as
always.

AULON

Here... to help pay Jeanne's ransom.
All the Captains gave what they
could, as well as the citizens of
Orleans and the other towns she
saved...

CHARLES

Very generous of you all. How much?

AULON

10,000 gold crowns.

From their expressions, this is clearly an enormous amount.

CHARLES

10,000... that's a lot... but I fear not enough. But it will be my pleasure to make up the difference.

(to Archbishop
Regnault)

Your Grace... I place you in charge of this... sensitive negotiation.

INT. OFFICE - DUKE OF BURGUNDY'S CASTLE - DAY

Burgundy's right-arm -- DIJON -- turns to his Assistant.

DIJON

They send a Bishop to negotiate?
That's a good sign. Let him in.

It is not Archbishop Regnault who enters, but another ecclesiastic swaddled in the rich robes of his office: the Bishop of Beauvais, one Pierre CAUCHON.

CAUCHON

Good day, sir. I trust my honorable Duke of Burgundy is feeling well?

DIJON

He's feeling wonderful.

CAUCHON

Thanks be to God.

DIJON

And your Duke? The Duke of Bedford?

CAUCHON

Not so well, I regret to say. This business with the Maiden... it's caused him endless grief and torment. That's why he's entrusted me with the task of... shall we say...

DIJON

Buying her?

CAUCHON

This word is -- regrettably appropriate for the situation. In

fact what we -- the Church -- wish to do is determine whether or not this girl is sent by God, as she claims. You understand that we cannot allow just anybody to abuse God's name in this manner...

DIJON

I understand. How much?

It is that other man of the cloth, Regnault, who answers.

REGNAULT

5,000 gold crowns.

DIJON

That's not a lot.

REGNAULT

It is all his majesty can afford. He has even donated his very own personal savings. His majesty will greatly appreciate a gesture of good will in this delicate negotiation between our two families.

DIJON

I know... but the English want her very badly, and I have to tell you that they are proving much more generous.

REGNAULT

May I, without offending you, inquire how generous?

DIJON

20,000 gold crowns.

Regnault's rival cleric Cauchon looks aghast.

CAUCHON

20,000?! But... I heard King Charles was... financially embarrassed.

DIJON

Don't look at the cost, look at what it brings. What is your last offer?

REGNAULT

8,000. We can't raise more... We can only place ourselves at the mercy of your generosity.

DIJON

I must offer to the Duke. I will

give you his answer tomorrow.

INT. PRISON CELL - BEAUREVOIR - DAY

A Burgundian Soldier shakes Jeanne to wake her up.

SOLDIER

Hey, wake up... get yourself
ready... you're leaving!

Jeanne opens her eyes as Cauchon enters her cell, dressed in ecclesiastical robes. He stands in front of her, flanked by two monks. At the sigh of the churchmen, she brightens.

JEANNE

Oh, thank you Lord!
(to Cauchon)
I'm so glad to see you! I need to
confess... I haven't been confessed
since Easter... or been to Mass...
Will you hear me now?

CAUCHON

I will hear you... but not now, not
here.

JEANNE

Who are you?

CAUCHON

Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais.
As you were captured in my diocese,
the duty of conducting the trial
falls upon me.

JEANNE

Trial? What trial??

CAUCHON

Your trial, Jeanne. On a charge of
heresy.

JEANNE

But... the King -- my king -- didn't
he pay my ransom?

CAUCHON

It seems that the English care more
about you than the French.

JEANNE

The English??

CAUCHON

Yes. They paid your ransom...

tomorrow you will be transferred to
their great castle at Rouen.

The door slams shut, and she is left alone. Jeanne is
utterly distraught. She looks round the bleak cell, then
moves over to a small window... just wide enough for her
to squeeze through.

EXT. LEDGE - BEAUREVOIR - NIGHT

Jeanne clammers out onto a narrow ledge, high above the
frozen moat below. Only a fool -- or one bent on suicide
-- would hazard such a leap.

VOICE (O.S.)

Need some help?

The Man we saw after Compiegne is once again behind her.

JEANNE

What are you doing out here?

MAN

I might ask you the same question.

JEANNE

I... I'm leaving... I can't take
anymore...

MAN

And what exactly is it that you
can't take anymore of?

JEANNE

Everything! Prison -- humiliation
-- being abandoned and betrayed by
everyone -- I can't stand it anymore
-- I'd rather die!

MAN

You'll be dead soon enough anyway,
so why be in such a hurry? Why not
face up to your lies? It's your
lies you can't stand anymore...

JEANNE

I... I never lied!

MAN

If you were true to yourself... if
your faith was firm, you wouldn't
need to run away from yourself like
this...

JEANNE

I am true -- to my Lord, the King of

Heaven. He knows how much I love him -- that's all that matters to me...

MAN

How can you pretend that you love God when you're about to throw away the most precious thing he gave you? Life is a gift, you should know that by now Jeanne -- a gift from God. You know what He'd say to you, if He was here? "What are you doing to me, Jeanne?"

Jeanne is lost, exhausted, numbed. She gazes into the void, contemplating the fall...

JEANNE

You're right... I shouldn't do that.

The Man suddenly pushes her so that she nearly falls...

MAN

That's too easy. One minute you want to die, the next you want to live...

(again pushes her)

Do you think that life is a toy that can be played with and then broken when you don't want it anymore?

JEANNE

No, no... I'm just so tired, and lost, and... I didn't realize what I was doing!

He pushes her again...

MAN

Oh? And just because you realize now, everybody else should forgive you?!

JEANNE

I don't know -- I don't care anymore -- I just want to be at peace!

MAN

Oh, so you don't want war anymore? You want to be at peace? You want to be able to change your mind anytime you feel like it and expect everyone to go along with it?

JEANNE

I don't understand. What do you want from me?

MAN

I told you already... I'm here to
set you free...

Again the Man pushes her! This time she loses her
balance, and with a startled cry falls from the ledge --
plunging down, down -- and crashing into the frozen
moat...!

Two castle GUARDS on watch are alerted by the SOUND of
splintering ice...

Jeanne is drowning, barely able to cling to the broken ice
around her. The first Guard to reach the moat tests the
surface with his foot...

GUARD #2

Don't try -- you'll fall through!

The First Guard lies flat to spread his weight, then
crawls toward Jeanne...

GUARD #1

Good God, it's the prisoner!

The Second Guard glances up at the tower ledge far
above...

GUARD #2

If she jumped from up there, she's
dead for sure! forget it...

The First Guard reaches the edge of the hole just as
Jeanne disappears beneath the water. He plunges in his
hand and grabs her hair, pulling her head back above the
water...

INT. CORRIDOR - CHINON CASTLE - DAWN

Aulon races along castle corridors until he reaches a
door, guarded by two burly Guards...

GUARD

The king is occupied...!

AULON

Out of my way!

INT. THRONE ROOM - CHINON CASTLE - DAY

Aulon bursts into the room to find Charles, Regnault and
Tremoille in conversation...

CHARLES

My dear Aulon...
(dismissing Guards)
That's fine...

AULON
Jeanne's been badly injured! She
jumped from the top of a tower into
a frozen moat!

Charles shivers at the thought.

CHARLES
It's a miracle she's not dead!

AULON
We have to do something before she
tries it again! I beg of you, my
lord, don't let her down... let me
organize an escape...

CHARLES
Jean, it's... it's not so easy...

AULON
But not impossible... Gilles and La
Hire are ready to risk everything to
save her...

CHARLES
Jean... me dear, loyal Jean... why
do you want to oppose the will of
God? Jeanne wanted to go to
Compiegne -- we let her -- she got
caught. Then, on my personal
orders, Regnault proposed 30,000
crowns for her ransom, and once
again the answer was no. And now
you say she tried to escape, and the
answer is still no. Jean, open your
eyes -- can't you see the hand of
God in all this?

AULON
No. I see the hand of Tremoille,
and Regnault, and Yolande, and
you... and they are dirty hands.

REGNAULT
How can you speak such treachery
when his majesty has done everything
to try and save her?

AULON
Because I was at this door when you
planned to betray her... and I was
at Compiegne when she was betrayed.

Charles, Tremoille and Regnault are speechless. Tremoille breaks the silence --

TREMOILLE

Guards! Arrest this traitor!

The Two Guards turn on Aulon, who readily dispatches them with his sword. Tremoille hides behind Charles just as Aulon pins the King with the tip of his sword against his windpipe. It would now be an easy matter for Tremoille to push Charles onto the tip of Aulon's sword.

AULON

What do you fear most now... my sword?

(eyeing Tremoille)

... or his hands?

CHARLES

Tremoille... don't. Please...

Tremoille hesitates a beat. Still holding the tip of his sword at Charles' throat, Aulon motions to Tremoille...

AULON

My sword is long enough for both of you.

Sweating now, Tremoille eases himself from behind the King's back. Charles exhales with relief.

AULON

I have always been loyal and true to you, but my allegiance is now at an end. From now on, my loyalty belongs to Jeanne...

... and Aulon runs from the room, leaving Charles, Tremoille and Regnault in a state of shock.

EXT. CHINON CASTLE - DAY

Aulon gallops away from the castle...

EXT. ROUEN CASTLE - DUSK

The great castle of Rouen, vast and bleak, silhouetted against the dusk.

INT. ROUEN CASTLE - CORRIDOR - DUSK

A Guard leads a group of wealthy-looking visitors along a dank, dark corridor.

GUARD

... so don't say I didn't warn you!
Don't touch her whatever you do --
don't even stretch out your hand or
she'll have one of your fingers off
sooner than spit at you!

WOMAN #1

As savage as that, is she?

GUARD

Savage? She's a monster! At
Orleans they say she drank her
victim's blood!

WOMAN #2

Oh, it's too horrible!

The woman's escort takes advantage of the situation...

MALE

Don't worry, my sweet -- I'll have
my sword at the ready...

They reach the door, and the Guard fumbles for the right
key. The Duke of Bedford brings up the rear, escorting
his wife Anne, who is visibly pregnant...

DUCHESS

Don't you think this visit is a
little... inappropriate?

BEDFORD

My dear, it's our duty... she's our
guest!

The Guard unlocks the door, and the Group cautiously
enter.

INT. JEANNE'S CELL - ROUEN CASTLE - NIGHT

The visitors glance about, but the cell appears empty --
until they look up. An iron cage is hanging from the
middle of the ceiling. In the center of the cage is a
body, dressed in rags and curled up like a wounded animal.

BEDFORD

Wake her up so we can see her face!

The Guard takes his cudgel and pokes her through the bars.

GUARD

Hey, wake up... we got noble guests
-- don't disappoint them -- turn
round!

He prods her in the ribs, and she turns to avoid further pain. Her face is swollen, her mouth parched, her eyes full of grief. The Duchess is stunned...

GUARD

Now she's sleepy but you wait and see -- any moment now and she'll start speaking to her devils, and then she'll get to yelping like a wolf in heat! The other night she made her cage spin round so fast we thought she was going to fly away!

WOMAN

Oooo... she gives me creeps...

GUARD

Do you want her to stand up so you can get a better look?

DUCHESS

No. But get her out of this cage and give her a decent bed.

The Guard looks stunned. The Duchess turns to her husband.

DUCHESS

I'm sorry, but this child is being treated like an animal! Don't you think that whatever her crimes may be, she deserves a little more of our charity?

BEDFORD

(whispering lightly)

She's not a child, my dear -- she's a witch.

INT. COURTROOM - ROUEN - DAY

Cauchon enters a large, gloomy courtroom and sits down, surrounded by clerics, assessors, doctors of theology and other churchmen.

CAUCHON

Let the prisoner be brought in.

The door opens and Jeanne is led in, her wrists and ankles fettered, her face pale and drawn. She stands in the center of the room, isolated, alone. A scribe dips his quill in the ink and prepares to write on a blank sheet of parchment.

CAUCHON

Our most serene and Christian King

Henry the Sixth, King of England and France, has handed this girl over to us, accused of a number of heretical deeds, to be tried in a matter of faith.

Jeanne is hustled closer to Cauchon, who leans forward, peering at her intently.

CAUCHON

Take the Holy Gospels in your hand and swear to tell the whole truth concerning everything you will be asked.

JEANNE

I don't know what you're going to ask me questions about. You may ask things that I won't want to answer.

Jeanne's boldness takes everyone somewhat by surprise.

CAUCHON

You will swear to tell the truth about whatever you are asked.

JEANNE

I will willingly swear to tell the truth about earthly things, but as for my revelations, I've never told anyone except my king... Charles the Seventh... the one and only king of France.

There is murmured dissension among the judges. We now see that the Duke of Bedford is also in the room, together with a small coterie of English observers. Cauchon is impatient.

CAUCHON

You must take the oath! Not even a king, would refuse to take an oath to tell the truth in a matter of faith.

JEANNE

I will willingly swear to tell you what I am allowed to tell you, but as to the rest, even if you threaten to cut off my head, I still won't tell you.

Cauchon looks confused -- and aware that his authority is slipping. The judges and theologians are getting agitated.

CAUCHON

So... begin by telling us your name
-- assuming you're allowed to tell
us that much?

JEANNE

My name is Jeanne. My little cross
I had round my neck was taken away
from me. I would like to have it
back.

The Duchess touches the gold cross she has around her
neck.

CAUCHON

Show us a little more cooperation
first. Where were you born?

JEANNE

In a village called Domremy.

CAUCHON

How old are you?

CAUCHON

Nineteen... or thereabouts...

CAUCHON

Were you baptized?

JEANNE

Yes. In the church at Domremy.

CAUCHON

Recite the Lord's Prayer.

JEANNE

Not unless you hear my confession.

Cauchon is getting impatient.

CAUCHON

Jeanne, listen to me very carefully.
We are all men of faith, and we
shall earnestly strive for the
salvation of both your soul and body
as though it were our own. We do so
in the name of our Holy Mother
Church, who never closes her arms to
those who would return to her. But
we cannot help you unless you submit
to our learned judgment and
authority. Take heed of this
charitable admonition, for if you
persist in refusing our help, then
we shall have no choice but to
abandon you to the secular powers,
and I think you know well enough the

punishment that would await you. So now... will you please recite Our Lord's Prayer?

JEANNE

Not unless you hear my confession.

The clerks and judges grow agitated, though we sense a few are already beginning to warm to her, not least the Duchess.

CAUCHON

Jeanne -- be careful -- you're not helping yourself by refusing to submit to our judgment...

JEANNE

And you be careful, you who claim to be my judges, for you too will be judged one day...!

The court explodes in protest, with cries of "Blasphemy!" "She's possessed!" "An infected limb!" "Sorceress!" Cauchon hammers on the table to restore order, calling out --

CAUCHON

Guards! Take the prisoner away!
Clear the room!

Armed Guards hustle the clerics from the room while Jeanne is led away, watched by the Duke and Duchess of Bedford...

Bedford turns to his aide (Buck) --

BEDFORD

I count on you to have it done.

BUCK

Uh... to have what done?

BEDFORD

I want her burned.

BUCK

As you say, sir.

INT. ANTECHAMBER - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

The assessors look extremely uncomfortable, not least Pierre Cauchon, who does his best to conceal it.

CAUCHON

Well... in the future I think we should conduct our enquiries in private -- away from public pressure

-- so we can all be more... level-headed...

ASSESSOR #1
I think the church should wash its hands of this whole business.

ASSESSOR #2
Let the English burn her if they want to... why does it have to involve us?

Buck enters the room as an old Priest walks over...

CAUCHON
Because it's... it's our clear duty to root out heresy wherever it occurs.

(to the Old Priest)
Father Vincente... you are the most venerable among us, what do you think?

OLD PRIEST
I think this trial is a masquerade, and I won't be part of it anymore. I am willing to be her judge, but not her executioner. This young girl seems courageous and pious... she deserves to be well judged.

The Old Priest walks toward the door...

CAUCHON
That's what I'm trying to ensure!

OLD PRIEST
The verdict comes at the end of a trial, Cauchon, not at the beginning. I am going back to Rome, to give me report to our Holy Father the Pope.

CAUCHON
This is ridiculous! Now I'm the one who's on trial and being judged?!

OLD PRIEST
Yes... exactly as Jeanne predicted.

The Old Priest heads for the door, followed by the other two. Buck calls out to the Guards...

BUCK
Arrest them!

CAUCHON

What are you doing? This is an ecclesiastical court -- you have no right to do this!

BUCK

Rouen is in English territory. I have the right to do anything I like.

(to guards)

Take them away.

Ignoring their protestations, the Guards hustle them away, leaving the others in a state of high anxiety.

INT. CELL - ROUEN CASTLE - NIGHT

Jeanne is in her cell, facing the wall and frantically scratching it with her nails. She is engraving a cross, and her nails are covered with blood...

She is now kneeling in front of her cross, racing through The Lord's Prayer as though on the run from the Devil...

JEANNE

Our father who is in heaven hallowed be thy name thy kingdom come in earth as it is in heaven forgive them that lead... forgive us that lead them... as we forgive them that... oh God, don't cut yourself off from me like this... I don't know what I'm meant to say or not say anymore... I don't even know what to think... oh, God, I'm so lost... don't abandon me like everyone else... please, I beg of you... at least say you can hear me...! Tell me you hear me...! Why won't you answer me? Please, I beg of you -- ANSWER ME!

Suddenly "the Man" comes out of the wall, kneeling in front of her and violently hitting his forehead against hers --

MAN

Why were you yelling like that?!

JEANNE

What are you doing here?

(urgently)

Please... leave... you can't stay here...

MAN

Why? Are you waiting for someone

else?

JEANNE

Yes!

MAN

Who?

Jeanne hesitates...

JEANNE

My... visions...

MAN

They're going to come and visit you
in here?

JEANNE

Yes... that's what I pray for...!

MAN

I want to see that. Do you mind if
I stay... on the side? I won't
bother you.

JEANNE

No, no -- you can't stay or they
won't come!

MAN

Why not?

JEANNE

Because... I have to be alone!

He smiles regretfully.

MAN

They won't come anyway.

JEANNE

What do you mean, they won't come?

MAN

Why would they?

JEANNE

Because! Because I've always been
faithful to God, and I've followed
everything he said... and I've done
everything he asked me...

MAN

God asked you to do something?

JEANNE

Yes... lots of things!

MAN

You mean God said, "I need you,
Jeanne?"

JEANNE

No, but... he sent me so many signs!

MAN

What signs?

JEANNE

Like... like the wind... and the
clouds... and... the bells... and
what about that sword lying in the
field... that was a sign...!

MAN

No. That was a sword in a field.

JEANNE

But... it didn't just get there by
itself.

MAN

True -- every event has an infinite
number of causes -- but why pick one
rather than another? There are many
ways a sword might find itself in a
field...

FLASH: A group of soldiers on horseback trot across the
field of Jeanne's childhood. The last soldier's sword is
coming loose, and ends up falling into the long grass...

MAN

Seems a perfectly valid
explanation... but how about this
one...

FLASH: Two young children are hurrying with the sword
when an old man calls them from far away --

OLD MAN

Hey, you little devils -- come back!

The two children drop the sword in the long grass (in the
same spot as before) and run off...

MAN

But then again, there are other
possibilities...

FLASH: A man is being chased across the field by a couple
of English soldiers out looting. His heavy sword is
slowing him down -- he flings it into the long grass...

MAN

... or even faster...

FLASH: The same man running across the field is suddenly hit by an arrow from nowhere. He drops the sword in the long grass, but manages to stagger off into the forest...

MAN

... and that's without counting the inexplicable...

FLASH: A man crosses the field. For no apparent reason whatsoever, he drops the sword and keeps on walking...

MAN

Yet from an infinite number of possibilities, you had to pick this one...

FLASH: A peel of thunder -- clouds swirl -- a familiar wind stirs the long grass -- a fabulous shaft of light illuminates the patch -- the sword slowly descends from the heavens and lands gently in the grass. Mission accomplished, the shaft of heavenly light disappears.

Jeanne is bewildered...

MAN

You didn't see what was, Jeanne.
You saw what you wanted to see.

... speechless.

INT. SMALL COURTROOM - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

We are now in a smaller, more intimate courtroom. The Duchess of Bedford is at the back, shielded behind the theologians and doctors of the church. Beaupere is questioning Jeanne: a cooler man than Cauchon.

BEAUPERE

This... "voice" that you say appears to you... is it an angel? Or a saint? Or does it come from God?

Jeanne is still in shock from her encounter with the Man.

JEANNE

I won't tell you more about that.
I'm more afraid of displeasing Him than not answering you...

BEAUPERE

You're afraid of displeasing God when telling the truth?!

JEANNE

No...

BEAUPERE

Did God forbid you to tell the truth?

JEANNE

No. But my revelations were for the King of France, not for you.

D'ESTIVET

When you saw your king for the first time, was there an angel over his head?

JEANNE

If there was, I didn't see it...

D'ESTIVET

Then why did your king believe in you without any proof?

JEANNE

Go and ask him yourself.

CAUCHON

Jeanne, you are not helping yourself. If you don't answer our questions properly, your refusal will be taken into account.

JEANNE

These questions have nothing to do with your trial.

CAUCHON

I assure you they do. So... answer me... when was the last time you heard this voice?

JEANNE

Not long ago...

CAUCHON

When exactly? A day, a week -- when?

JEANNE

Last night.

This takes the assessors by surprise. Cauchon leans forward.

CAUCHON

What were you doing when the voice came?

JEANNE
Praying.

CAUCHON
The voice was in your cell?

JEANNE
Yes.

CAUCHON
What did it tell you?

JEANNE
Many things...

CAUCHON
Did it give you advice?
(Jeanne hesitates)
Good advice?

Jeanne hesitates...

JEANNE
Go onto the next question.

BEAUPERE
Good advice for the French, not for
the English! Do you think God hates
the English?

JEANNE
I don't know, but you're all men of
the church... why not ask Him
yourself?

Cauchon tries to continue, but another theologian -- JEAN
MIDI -- gets in first.

JEAN MIDI
Do you consider yourself to be in a
state of grace?

Jeanne looks perplexed... a beat...

JEANNE
Go on to the next question.

Cauchon seizes his opportunity...

CAUCHON
Tell us, Jeanne... do you often hear
this voice?

JEANNE
Yes...

CAUCHON

Is it here? Now? In this room?

Jeanne slowly looks at the assessors, staring at each in turn. They all look acutely uneasy, holding their breath...

JEANNE

No.

Relief from the assessors, but Buck is far from happy.

INT. ANTECHAMBER - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

Buck paces in front of Cauchon and a dozen clerics.

BUCK

Who's running this trial, you or her? I can't believe it! This wretched girl -- how dare she speak to us like that?

CAUCHON

She's loyal to her king... it's only to be expected that she...

Buck explodes with fury --

BUCK

There is only one king of France and that's our liege Lord Henry the Sixth! It is written in black and white in the Treaty of Troyes -- that you French bastards signed!

Buck presses a digit against Cauchon's sweaty forehead.

CAUCHON

I understand your impatience, but if you want this trial to be acknowledged as legal we must follow correct procedure and...

BUCK

To hell with procedure! We paid a bloody fortune for this slut, and we can do whatever the hell we like with her, whether the church likes it or not -- is that clear?

CAUCHON

But if this trial seems fixed, I fear you'll have the very opposite result to the one you want...

BUCK

We want her burned as a witch!

CAUCHON

But in order to do so, the church must first prove her heresy, or else you'll be burning a martyr...

BUCK

Well then? Start proving... or else the church will have another martyr!

Buck storms out, slamming the door behind him.

INT. SMALL COURTROOM - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

Instruments of torture are brought into court by the Executioner, who lays them out with due ceremony.

D'ESTIVET

You told us about the appearance of this... voice. What exactly did you see? Part of it... or all of it?

JEANNE

His face.

D'ESTIVET

Does he have hair?

JEANNE

Yes.

D'ESTIVET

Is it long and hanging down?

JEANNE

I'm more interested in what he says, not what he looks like.

D'ESTIVET

But if the devil were to take on the physical appearance of a saint or an angel... or a man... how would you recognize him? By what he said?

JEANNE

Go on to the next question.

D'ESTIVET

That's enough! You will answer the question... or face the consequences!

A beat... the Executioner readies...

JEANNE

If you were to tear me limb from limb and make my soul leave my body, I would tell you nothing more. And if I did say anything, then afterward I would simply say that you dragged it out of me by force. Now... please... go onto the next question.

INT. SMALL COURTROOM - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

CUT TO another session...

JEAN LE MAISTRE

Who told you to wear men's clothes?

JEANNE

The clothes are not important...

JEAN LE MAISTRE

You also cut your hair short like a man, and in the Bible it clearly states that it is an abomination for a woman to pretend to be a man! It proves your desire to deceive...

JEANNE

It was just... more convenient as I was among soldiers...

JEAN LE MAISTRE

So you think you did well to cut your hair and dress as a man?

JEANNE

I... submit to Our Lord.

JEAN LE MAISTRE

But will you also submit to the decision of the Church?

JEANNE

It seems to me that the Church and Our Lord are one and the same. Why must you complicate what is so simple?

Jean Le Maistre looks at Cauchon for help.

CAUCHON

Let me clarify things for you, Jeanne. On the one hand there is the Church Triumphant, that is to say God, his saints, and the souls that are saved. And then there is the Church Militant, that is to say

our Holy Father the Pope, the
cardinals, the prelates of the
Church, the clergy, and all good
Catholic Christians. Moreover this
Church, when assembled, is guided by
the Holy Spirit and therefore cannot
be in error. That is why we ask you
to submit to the Church Militant...
that is to say, us.

JEANNE

So it is the Church Militant that
refuses to confess me, and so
prevents me from being a good
Christian?

Cauchon bridles his temper.

CAUCHON

It is for us to determine whether
you are a good Christian, not you.

JEANNE

I am sent by God, and I submit all
my words and deeds to His judgment.
Or do you think that you are better
judges than He is?

INT. SMALL COURTROOM - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

... and another session...

MAITRE MAURICE

When you were taken prisoner at
Compiègne, did you have a horse?

JEANNE

Yes... a half-steed... white.

MAITRE MAURICE

Who gave you that horse?

JEANNE

My king.

MAITRE MAURICE

How many did he give you?

JEANNE

Five steeds and a few hackneys...

MAITRE MAURICE

As much as for a Lord? What an
honor! Did your king give you other
wealth apart from horses?

JEANNE

No.

MAITRE MAURICE

What about all those dresses you were given... silk dresses weren't they?

JEANNE

Yes, I was given a few, but I never had time to wear them...

MAITRE MAURICE

Still, pretty wealthy for a peasant girl wouldn't you say?

JEANNE

And you look pretty wealthy for a servant of God, wouldn't you say?

Maitre Maurice looks uncomfortably about him. She's right.

BEAUPERE

Is it true that you launched an attack on Paris?

JEANNE

I tried to.

BEAUPERE

It was on a Sunday, wasn't it?

JEANNE

I don't remember. Maybe.

BEAUPERE

Do you think it was a good idea to launch an attack on a holy day?

JEANNE

I don't know...

BEAUPERE

And didn't you order the citizens of Paris to surrender the city in the name of the King of Heaven?

JEANNE

No... I said "Surrender in the name of the King of France"...

BEAUPERE

That is not what is written in the evidence... look for yourself!

Beaupere thrusts a document in her face...

JEANNE

I can't read.

BEAUPERE

Ah, yes, I forgot... God sent us an illiterate peasant to carry out such an important mission! Do you think that God made the right decision, to take an ignorant girl to save the kingdom of France?

JEANNE

I leave the answer to God.

Beaupere is exasperated. A sly-looking Theologian speaks up.

JEAN MIDI

Tell us, Jeanne... why did you jump from the tower at Beurevoir?

JEANNE

I had been sold to the English. I'd rather die than fall into their hands.

JEAN MIDI

Did your voice tell you to jump?

JEANNE

No...

JEAN MIDI

So when you jumped, you wanted to kill yourself?

JEANNE

No...!

JEAN MIDI

How can you deny it when you just said "I'd rather die than fall into the hands of the English"...?

JEANNE

That's now what I meant...

JEAN MIDI

Do you not know that suicide is a very grievous sin? No one is allowed to destroy the life that God created!

JEANNE

I know, but that's not the way things happened...

JEAN MIDI
You mean it was not of your own free
will that you were on the ledge?

JEANNE
Yes, but...

JEAN MIDI
And you didn't jump of your free
will?

JEANNE
No!

JEAN MIDI
(making fun of her)
Oh? Perhaps someone pushed you
then?

They laugh. Jeanne lowers her head.

INT. SMALL COURTROOM - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

Yet another weary session...

BEAUPERE
Do you have a sword?

JEANNE
Quite a few.

BEAUPERE
Didn't you also carry a banner?

JEANNE
Yes...

BEAUPERE
Which did you prefer, your banner or
your sword?

JEANNE
I was forty times more fond of my
banner than my sword.

BEAUPERE
And why was that? Did it have some
particular value or power?

JEANNE
No, it's just... a sword is a
weapon.

BEAUPERE
And?

JEANNE

And so I... I prefer my banner.

BEAUPERE

Why?

JEANNE

To avoid killing anyone.

BEAUPERE

Are you saying that if you had not been carrying your banner you'd have killed more people?

Jeanne is losing her confidence...

JEANNE

No, of course not... I never killed anyone...

BEAUPERE

Then perhaps the temptation to kill would have been stronger... too strong perhaps...?

JEANNE

No! I warned the English to go back home -- I begged them not to force us to fight -- they knew the defeat I would bring on them... why didn't they listen to me?

BEAUPERE

We have numerous witnesses who can confirm that you were not always carrying your banner...

JEANNE

Yes, probably... maybe...

BEAUPERE

So sometimes you were carrying just your sword?

JEANNE

Yes, but...

BEAUPERE

Did you use the sword that you held in your hand?

JEANNE

No, I... I held it up to...

BEAUPERE

You held up your sword and

flourished it about in the air?
Like this?

JEANNE

Yes, maybe... I don't remember...

BEAUPERE

... so you were in the middle of the
battlefield, with your sword in your
hand, waving it above your head...
charging against the enemy,
screaming and yelling... fighting
for your life... and you want us to
believe that in the middle of all
this excitement you never killed
anyone?

JEANNE

No, I... I never killed anyone!

MAN (O.S.)

I can't believe you can lie like
that!

INT. JEANNE'S CELL - ROUEN CASTLE - NIGHT

Jeanne's fetter is once again attached to her chain, and
she's walking in circles, trying to escape "the Man"...

JEANNE

I'm not lying, I... I can't
remember... leave me alone!

MAN

Oh? You can't remember? Let me
help your memory...

FLASH: an Englishman is skewed during the battle of
Orleans...

JEANNE

No! I don't want to know anymore!
Leave me alone! I didn't kill that
man!

MAN

Oh no? How about this one?

FLASH: another English soldier is killed...

MAN

Or this one?

FLASH: ... and another...

JEANNE

Stop, stop... I can't remember! The battles were all so confusing... there was so much smoke, dust, noise... I was being attacked on all sides, so... maybe... perhaps I fought back but it was only to defend myself...

MAN

So your memory's coming back?

JEANNE

Yes... yes! And now you tell me why God let all these battles happen in the first place... if he's so powerful... he said he's "the creator of heaven and earth, the source of all life..." he could have easily stopped all this blood and misery? Why didn't he?

MAN

Is he the one who spread all this blood and misery?

JEANNE

No, but... why didn't he stop it? Or did he get pleasure, watching us killing each other in his name?

MAN

In His name??

JEANNE

Yes! We fought and killed in His name... the King of Heaven!

MAN

Really?

FLASH: Jeanne is seated in her saddle before Orleans, raising her standard with the cry --

JEANNE

Let all who love me follow me!

Back in Jeanne's cell:

MAN

"Let all who love me follow me"...
Where does God get mentioned?
(Jeanne is cornered)
Come on Jeanne, be honest. You fought for yourself, in your name.

JEANNE

I... I was defending myself as best

I could! Everyone has the right to defend themselves, don't they? Or should I have let myself be killed?

MAN

No, no, you did fine. I'd even say well done. Besides, most of the ones you killed probably deserved it, don't you think?

JEANNE

No, I do not think so. I don't think that killing each other will ever bring peace.

MAN

I agree...

FLASHBACK: Jeanne telling Charles --

JEANNE

Peace will only be got from the English at the end of a lance!

The Man looks at Jeanne, who is becoming unnerved...

MAN

I don't agree. Why do you have to keep changing your mind all the time?

JEANNE

Why are you doing this to me?? Do you get pleasure from hurting me?

MAN

Ah, pleasure... that's a difficult word to define. When does the pain end and the pleasure begin...? When did your pleasure begin with that sword in your hand...?

JEANNE

I never took pleasure in hurting anyone?

MAN

Really?

FLASH: In EXTREME SLOW MOTION, Jeanne's face contorts -- a look of madness as she sweeps a sword across the SCREEN...

JEANNE

Nnnnoooooooooo!

Jeanne covers her face with her hands, sobbing in despair.

JEANNE

Help me... please... set me free!

The Man seems genuinely compassionate...

MAN

You will be, Jeanne. You will be.

INT. HALLWAY - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

A hooded Priest moves along the hallway, stopping in front of the Guard. He shows him his "pass" -- a heavy seal. The Priest is Aulon in disguise. The Guard looks at the seal...

AULON

I'm replacing Father Demaury. He's become very sick...

GUARD

It's amazing how many people have become suddenly very sick since the beginning of this trial... it must be this witch casting spells on them. Burn her!

No doubt Aulon would like to stab the Guard right there, but thinks better of it...

AULON

I'll do my best.

Aulon enters the court room...

INT. COURTROOM - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

-- and sits on a bench, doing his best to look inconspicuous. He guardedly glances at Jeanne who seems to be asleep on her feet. Beaupere is whispering to Cauchon, document in hand. Beaupere beckons to the Guard...

BEAUPERE

Wake her up.

The Guard pokes Jeanne in the ribs. She seems almost used to this kind of treatment, but is weaker. Aulon seethes with impotent rage, hidden behind his hood.

JEAN MIDI

So... let us summarize your situation. You refuse to submit to the authority of the church militant by taking an oath; you made an

assault on Paris on a Sunday; you hurled yourself down from the tower at Beurevoir, and you persist in wearing male dress... I ask you again: do you believe that you are in a state of grace?

Jeanne takes a deep breath...

JEANNE

If I am not, may God bring me there.
If I am, may He keep me there.

The admiration of the assessors is almost tangible.

INT. ANTECHAMBER - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

Buck sweeps everything off the table in a fit of anger.
Alone with him, Cauchon looks troubled.

CAUCHON

Calm down, my lord, I beg you!

BUCK

How can I calm down when I'm made the laughing-stock of the whole court?! I've had enough!

CAUCHON

Be patient, my lord... you've seen how it is. This girl has a way with people... but everyday we're making progress...

BUCK

So long as this bitch remains alive, our armies refuse to fight! Don't you understand? They want proof that God is on their side... and the only way they're going to believe that is when they see her being burnt as a witch!

Buck takes a mug and pours himself some wine, but the carafe is empty...

CAUCHON

It is not for us to burn her, my lord. That is your prerogative.

BUCK

... and your prerogative is to find her guilty...

CAUCHON

But we can't do that unless she

admits to blasphemy...

BUCK

Well what are you waiting for?
You've got a castle full of racks
and ropes and pulleys: go and
torture the bitch!

Cauchon takes out his own personal hip-flask, his hand
visibly trembling as he pours Buck some liquor.

CAUCHON

You won't be able to drag anything
from her that way. You also must
realize that many of my colleagues
are... well, scared...

BUCK

Scared of a girl?

CAUCHON

Scared to make a mistake. Supposing
she's right... supposing she really
has been sent by God??

Buck narrows his eyes.

BUCK

Whose side are you on, Cauchon?

CAUCHON

I'm on the side of our Mother Holy
Church. Besides, a confession under
torture will never convince anyone
of her guilt.

BUCK

Well find some other way! Be
creative. Tell them she fucks the
devil... Hmm, not a bad idea... why
can't you say that? Sounds good to
me... and who can prove she doesn't?

Buck drains the liquor.

CAUCHON

One small problem, my lord. The
girl is a virgin.

Buck has a horrible glint in his eye.

BUCK

That is a very small problem.

INT./ EXT. JEANNE'S CELL/COURTYARD - ROUEN - DAY

Jeanne is smoothing food into the cross she scratched into the wall. She does it with great care, as though painting. The Man appears in the background, watching her.

MAN

What are you doing?

Jeanne is delighted and relieved to see him...

JEANNE

I -- I cleaned up my room, look...
and I said my prayers... all of
them... and...

MAN

What are you doing on the wall?

JEANNE

I'm trying to make my cross look
more beautiful...

MAN

What for?

JEANNE

Because... because I don't know what
else to do to please him.

MAN

Do you think this cross will protect
you?

JEANNE

No, I...

Jeanne looks helpless. The Man smiles, turns and looks out of the window...

MAN

Look at them... with their beautiful
cross...

Far below in the courtyard, a Priest is blessing a dozen soldiers and their wooden cross.

MAN

... The sight of priests blessing
entire armies before they go off to
kill each other never ceases to
amaze me. And that these massacres
should be recorded as acts of faith
in God's name...

(no reaction from
Jeanne)

And they think that making a
beautiful cross or building a

cathedral will wash away their
sins... ridiculous! Just like that
priest who accused you of fighting
on a Sunday. Did God give
permission to kill each other for
the rest of the week?

In the courtyard, the soldiers mount their horses...

JEANNE

"Love your enemies"...

MAN

(a satisfied smile)

Good. But "love your enemies"...
body and soul.

Jeanne nods, knowing the truth but still not prepared to
admit it.

JEANNE

My voices... my voices... do you
think they will ever come back?

MAN

I don't think so.

JEANNE

Are you going to leave me too?

MAN

Yes... of course... when you don't
need me anymore.

JEANNE

Are you sent by God?

FLASH: to Jeanne at Orleans...

WOMAN

But you've been sent by God!

JEANNE

So has everyone...

Back to the Man:

MAN

So has everyone...

Jeanne looks at him -- then at her cross -- then back at
the soldiers in the courtyard below. With a lusty cry,
they set off at a gallop, blessed and ready for battle...

JEANNE

There's nothing for me to do here
anymore... I don't belong here I

want to be with Him now...

MAN

Do you think you are ready?

Jeanne stands up... comes and kneels before him, kissing his hands.

JEANNE

Yes I am.

MAN

Are you willing to follow all His commandments?

JEANNE

Yes...

MAN

... to love your enemy as much as you love yourself?

Jeanne hesitates a moment -- a short amount of time, but enough for a lie to slip in...

JEANNE

Yes. I'm ready now.

The Man smiles.

MAN

Let's see.

She hears approaching footsteps... the SOUND of keys jangling... a lock turns --

-- and the three SOLDIERS walk into the room. The first one has a familiar black beard.

BLACKBEARD

Now that's what I call booty!

He is none other than her sister's rapist and murderer. Jeanne reacts in terror...

JEANNE

Oh no...

BLACKBEARD

(undoing his belt)

We thought you must be pretty bored in here, so we've come to liven you up a bit... right, lads?

JEANNE

Please -- don't do it -- don't hurt me --

BLACKBEARD

Of course not, sweetheart... if you
promise to do as I say...

Blackbeard caresses her cheek and tries to force her legs
apart, but she resists -- whispers imploringly...

JEANNE

Where are you? Don't leave me...
please...

BLACKBEARD

Hey, come on... open up...!

His two comrades egg him on. Jeanne struggles even
harder, and Blackbeard suddenly becomes violent. He grabs
her by the throat, thrusts her against the bed and tears
off her clothes. Jeanne suddenly goes berserk, yelling
and thrashing like a cornered animal.

BLACKBEARD

Stop screaming like that! You'll
wake up the whole bleedin' castle!

Blackbeard clamps his hand over her mouth, whereupon
Jeanne summons hidden reserves of strength, and in a
sudden surge manages to clamp her chains around
Blackbeard's neck... she presses down on the chains,
choking him, strangling him...!

The two other soldiers come to Blackbeard's rescue and
manage to haul her off. Blackbeard gropes his throat,
then belts her across the face...

BLACKBEARD

Ah, so you want to play it rough?
Good... I like it better that way!

He pulls out a knife and starts to tear at her clothes
while the two others hold her down. Jeanne struggles for
her life -- yelling, spitting, biting, scratching --

Blackbeard is too excited to pay any attention. Nor does
he notice the door open and the Duchess enter with the
Guard.

DUCHESS

Stop that at once! That's an order!

But to Blackbeard, it could be Jeanne speaking. The
Duchess, in her nightgown, grabs Blackbeard by the
shoulders...

DUCHESS

I command you to stop, in the name
of the King!

The mention of the King jolts Blackbeard to attention...

DUCHESS

Leave her alone, do you hear? Come on, get out!

The three soldiers back sheepishly away...

BLACKBEARD

We were just having a little fun, that's all, keeping her company.

DUCHESS

Men like you are the cause of our country's dishonor!

BLACKBEARD

We were serving our country... just obeying orders, ma'am...

The Duchess doesn't want to hear more...

DUCHESS

Go on, get out of here!

The Guards hustle the three soldiers from the room, but not before Blackbeard has mumbled --

BLACKBEARD

See you later, angel.

The soldiers leave and the Guard bolts the door behind them. Jeanne curls up on her bed, destroyed, humiliated, lost. The Duchess caresses her face and doesn't know what to do to comfort her. The Guard brings a blanket -- probably his.

JEANNE

Thank you...

She wraps the blanket round Jeanne, and presses the little cross back in her hand.

DUCHESS

This won't happen again, I give you my word.

INT. ROOM - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

The Duchess storms into a room where Cauchon is talking with Bedford and Buck. She walks up to him...

BEDFORD

And... What a pleasant surprise...

... and slaps him across the face as he has never been slapped before.

DUCHESS

You should know that each humiliation you inflict on this woman, you inflict on all women, including yours my lord.

BEDFORD

Wha... what on earth are you talking about?

DUCHESS

If you send anymore of your soldiers to Jeanne's cell... I will kill them myself.

The Duchess turns and sweeps past Cauchon, leaving Bedford staring at Buck who looks decidedly embarrassed. Bedford turns to Cauchon...

BEDFORD

I'm giving you one more day.

Then he turns and leaves.

EXT. CEMETERY OF ST. OUEN - DAY

A masked Executioner stands beside a stake, piled high with faggots. Jeanne, her hands bound, stands nearby, facing a podium filled with the usual assembly of priests and prelates, headed by Cauchon. He rises to address Jeanne.

CAUCHON

Jeanne, my very dear friend in Christ, we, your judges and assessors, desirous of reaching a true and lawful verdict, submitted a transcript of your trial to the University of Paris in order to obtain their opinion. After careful consideration, the learned scholars have concluded with us that you have committed many grievous sins, and I ask you to listen most carefully to their opinion as contained in these articles.

Cauchon hands a manuscript to one of the assessors, Canon Pierre Maurice, then resumes his seat. Among the monks we spot Aulon, who slowly tries to make his way toward Jeanne.

MAURICE

Article One. You have said that from an early age you have had revelations from the blessed saints and angels, that you have seen them with your own eyes, and that they speak to you. As to this article, the learned scholars have declared that these claims are untrue, pernicious and evil, and that all such revelations are superstitious, and proceed from the devil.

The Duke of Bedford and his English peers are in a separate stand, guarded by English soldiers. The cemetery walls and the branches of trees beyond are crowded with spectators...

The English are impatient to carry out sentence, but Maurice is not a man to be intimidated. Jeanne seems hardly aware of what is being said...

MAURICE

Article Two. You said that by God's command you have continually worn men's clothes, and that you have also worn your hair short, without nothing...

From Jeanne's POV, Maurice's drone FADES, and the crowd seems to disappear. She whispers in agony...

JEANNE

My lord... don't abandon me... where are you? Is this what you want? You want me to burn? To burn without being confessed...? I'll do anything you want... but don't leave me...

Jeanne is completely alone in the middle of the cemetery. Only the graves, the stakes, and the moaning wind...

JEANNE

Don't leave me here... please... don't leave me alone!

Suddenly the crowd is back, with Maurice droning on.

MAURICE

Finally, Article Twelve. You have said that you are not willing to submit yourself to the judgment of the Church Militant, but only to God. As to this Article, the scholars say that you have no comprehension of the authority of the Church, that you have

perniciously erred in the faith of God, and that you are a child of superstition, a wanderer from the Faith, an invoker of demons, a sorceress, an idolater and a heretic!

Maurice resumes his seat while Chatillon approaches Jeanne.

CHATILLON

Jeanne, we once again admonish, beg and exhort you to cast out and recant your erroneous beliefs, and return into the way of truth by submitting yourself to the authority of our Mother Holy Church by signing this recantation.

Jeanne looks at the parchment in confusion...

JEANNE

If the church wants me to say that my visions are evil, then I don't believe in this church and I submit myself to the judgment of God!

Chatillon throws up his hands in despair. Bedford is brimming with anticipation. He calls out to the Executioner:

BEDFORD

Perform your office!

The Executioner turns to Jeanne, but before he can take hold of her, Cauchon strides over --

CAUCHON

Wait!

Cauchon grabs the document from Chatillon and holds it up to Jeanne...

CAUCHON

Jeanne, I beg of you... sign!
(Jeanne looks dazed)
In God's name, don't you understand? I'm trying to save you! If you don't sign, the English will burn you to death! Is that what you want??

JEANNE

No... I want to be confessed.

Cauchon hands her a quill. The English are getting agitated, heckling Cauchon to hand her over, but the

spectators in the trees and on the wall are urging her escape the pyre by signing. Jeanne begins to waver...

CAUCHON
Sign this, and I will confess you
myself if you want.

JEANNE
And may I go to Mass?

CAUCHON
As often as you like -- now, please
-- for the love of God -- sign!!

Again Jeanne looks about for the Man... but sees only the Executioner, waiting to conduct her to the stake.

CAUCHON
Sign, and you'll be free from your
chains... free from the fire,
Jeanne... now... sign!

The Crowd begins to chant... Sign, sign, sign! Aulon, who has managed to get closer, joins them...

AULON
Sign, Jeanne -- sign!

Bedford is in a panic as Jeanne takes the quill and makes her mark -- a wavering cross at the bottom of the parchment. The Crowd cheers, Aulon is ecstatic... but their voices go silent as the Man once again appears from behind Cauchon.

MAN
You know what you just signed,
Jeanne? You just signed away my
existence... For you I'm a lie, an
illusion.

(Jeanne is horrified)
You see? In the end, you were the
one who abandoned me...

JEANNE
No...

... the Man a smile of faint regret and disappears.
Jeanne turns to Cauchon...

JEANNE
Please... may I have it back...

CAUCHON
You have nothing to regret...

She tries to grab it from Cauchon, but soldiers pinion her.

JEANNE

I didn't mean it! I didn't know
what I was signing! You tricked
me...!

CAUCHON

Silence her!
(soldier clamps hand
over her mouth)
Take her away...!

The Soldiers hustle her away as Cauchon walks back to the podium. Aulon is relieved, and yet strangely apprehensive. Cauchon hands the Duke the document signed by Jeanne.

CAUCHON

There... she has recanted, and we
accept her repentance, for the
church never closes her arms to
those who return to the fold. She's
yours to do whatever you want with
her, but the church has nothing to
do with it anymore. She's your
prisoner -- your martyr -- not ours.

Bedford can't answer as the Duchess is next to him.

INT. DUNGEON - ROUEN CASTLE - NIGHT

Jeanne is flung into a filthy dungeon. Buck appears in the doorway and flings male clothes in her face.

BUCK

Here... in case you want to get
dressed -- try these for size!

JEANNE

He promised I'd be confessed... and
go to Mass... and be free from these
chains...!

BUCK

We never promised you anything! But
this much I can promise you... that
you won't be leaving this dungeon
till the day you die!

The Guards laugh, slamming and bolting the door behind her. Jeanne sinks to her knees in grief and anguish...

EXT. ROUEN CASTLE - DAWN

Dawn is breaking beyond the distant castle...

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Cauchon is alone, lost in his thoughts. A young monk runs in, out of breath...

MONK

My lord Bishop... come quickly...!

EXT. COURTYARD - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

Cauchon and the Monk hurry across the castle courtyard. Aulon sees them pass, anxious at their apparent concern...

INT. DUNGEON - ROUEN CASTLE - DAY

Cauchon arrives in Jeanne's dungeon, out of breath. It is full of people: Bedford, his Aide, priests and soldiers.

BEDFORD

Ah, Cauchon... come to see for yourself? Well, take a look.

Beyond them stands Jeanne, her back to us, dressed as a man.

BEDFORD

You see? Dressed as a man again! Her touching repentance didn't last very long, did it. The Bishop of Senlis was passing by and was on hand to witness her very evident relapse.

CAUCHON

And by what miracle did these clothes find their way in here?

BEDFORD

Not a miracle, my dear Cauchon... an evil spell! This girl is a witch, and tomorrow she will burn for it!

(to Buck)

Have the stake prepared in the market place...!

Jeanne doesn't say a word. She stands with her back to us, gazing up at the dim crack of light bleeding in through the high window-slit. Bedford exits with the others, leaving Cauchon alone with Jeanne.

CAUCHON

I don't understand, Jeanne... why did you do it? Why?

JEANNE

And you? Why did you lie? You
promised I could be confessed...

CAUCHON

I know, Jeanne... it was the only
way to save you from the fire!

JEANNE

It's not my body I want to save.
It's my soul.

Jeanne turns round, and we see that she is strangely calm,
as though a great weight had been lifted from her. She
kneels before Cauchon...

JEANNE

I ask only one thing... to hear me
in confession...

CAUCHON

I -- I can't Jeanne... I can't hear
your confession... I'm sorry...

He hurries out of the cell. A Guard locks the door behind
him, and Jeanne is alone. But not for long. The Man
materializes and sits next to her...

MAN

Do you really want to confess,
Jeanne?

(Jeanne nods)

I'm listening.

He turns his back, as the Priest did in the confessional.

JEANNE

I have committed sins, my Lord -- so
many sins. As a child, the only way
I could help my people was to pray.
So I prayed to God and his saints.
I prayed more and more, and gave God
all my love... but isn't it said
that God helps them who help
themselves? So I helped myself...
and I saw signs... the ones I wanted
to see -- and I fought, out of
revenge and despair. Yes, I was
proud -- stubborn -- selfish -- and
cruel... I was all the things that
humans believe they are allowed to
be when they're fighting for a
cause.

The Man smiles a little, satisfied sigh.

MAN

You think you are ready now?

JEANNE

Yes, my lord.

MAN

Let's see.

As he disappears, she hears a noise... turns round and sees a Guard in the doorway...

A beat, then the Guard topples forward to the floor, blood oozing from his mouth. Behind him stands a Priest. He pulls a sword from the Guard's body, then throws back his hood. It is Aulon. He runs to Jeanne and takes her in his arms...

AULON

Jeanne... thank God!

He quickly sets about removing her chains from her ankle...

AULON

We must hurry -- I took care of the guard, but others are coming...!

Jeanne gently caresses his hand...

JEANNE

I am ready now...

AULON

Just give me a moment and then you'll be free...

JEANNE

I'm already free...

AULON

(preoccupied)

Yes yes... any moment... you're always so impatient...

Jeanne puts her hand on his to stop him wasting his time.

JEANNE

My gentle Captain... I'm staying.

AULON

I -- I don't understand...

JEANNE

One day you will.

AULON

You don't know what you're saying.
You're going to leave this place,
Jeanne -- you're going home -- or
whatever you want -- you're going to
be happy, and have children, and...

She caresses his face with both hands, smiling at him
gently. Aulon continues to talk, but his eyes are
beginning to brim with tears... he knows it's useless,
that Jeanne has made her decision...

AULON

... and maybe the king will give you
some money, and a little land, and a
title even...

(smiling through his
tears)

... wouldn't that be a fine thing?
You, a lady of title!

JEANNE

I'm staying, Jean.

AULON

No, you must come, Jeanne -- we need
you -- so much has happened since
you left... I have a new horse now,
a white one, just like yours... and
La Hire hardly swears at all
anymore...

(crying)

You can't stay -- they'll burn you!

JEANNE

I'm not afraid of the fire anymore.
It will purify me...

AULON

Jeanne, you can't leave us like
this!

Jeanne smiles at him...

JEANNE

I am at peace now, my gentle
friend... at peace with myself.

She speaks gently, but with resolution: there is no going
back, and Aulon knows it. He hears the distant SOUND of
soldiers approaching...

Aulon takes Jeanne's face in his hands and kisses her on
the lips. A full kiss, the only one and the last one, one
which Jeanne neither encourages nor resists.

JEANNE

You must go.

She says it gently but urgently. With tears welling, Aulon tears himself from her sight and disappears. Jeanne is left alone, strangely calm and serene. Slowly she raises her finger-tips to her lips... touches them softly...

The Man emerges from the darkness, carrying an ornate Cross on a long pole, bearing an effigy of the crucified Christ.

MAN

Ego te absolvo, in nomine Patris, et
Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, Amen...

He stands in front of her, raising the Cross above...

EXT. ROUEN MARKET PLACE - DAY

... Jeanne, who looks up to see the crucifix rising against a clear blue sky, now held aloft by a Priest. She is bound to the stake, her head shaved. At the base of the pyre, the EXECUTIONER sprinkles the faggots with oil...

EXECUTIONER

Don't worry, it's going to be
fast... I used plenty of dry wood so
there'll be lots of smoke... but
don't forget to breath fast and
you'll be dizzy before the flames
even get to you...

A great CROWD has assembled in the market place. On a podium is the Duke of Bedford, trying to remain impassive. Beside him, the Duchess can barely contain her emotions. Further along stands Cauchon, his eyes lowered, not wanting to see.

Still disguised as a monk, Aulon stands close to the pyre, tormented and torn between revenge and despair...

Bedford makes a sign to the Executioner, who then takes a torch and sets fire to the brushwood. Flames erupt, and Jeanne's breathing quickens. As thick smoke rises, the Priest begins to cough; his eyes water, and he can no longer hold up the cross to Jeanne's sight. She begins to panic, her eyes wildly searching...

JEANNE

... the... cross... show me the
cross... please...

The Priest struggles to hold it up, but the choking smoke drives him back.

JEANNE

Where... where are you...?

Jeanne is filled with panic... the Priest is bent double with coughing and can get no closer...

JEANNE

... please... the cross!

Suddenly Aulon rushes forward, grabs the cross from the Priest and boldly defies the smoke and flames, risking his life as he holds it high for Jeanne...

Finally the cross is visible to her, rising above the flames into a clear blue sky. Her anxiety melts, her eyes fill with tears of hope as she gazes up at the cross...

As her eyes close, the image of the cross becomes engulfed with flames... until the smoke finally fills the SCREEN, plunging it into darkness...

CUT TO

BLACK.

THE END