The Trial of Joan of Arc

Anonymous
(1431)

Joan [to her inquisitors]: When I was thirteen years old, I had a voice from God to help me govern my conduct. And the first time I was very fearful. And came this voice, about the hour of noon, in the summertime, in my father's garden. ... I heard the voice on the right-hand side ... and rarely do I hear it without a brightness. ... It has taught me to conduct myself well, to go habitually to church. ... The voice told me that I should raise the siege laid to the city of Orleans ... and me, I answered it that I was a poor girl who knew not how to ride nor lead in war.

Jean Pasquerel [priest, Joan's confessor]: "On the morrow, Saturday, I rose early and celebrated mass. And Joan went out against the fortress of the bridge where was the Englishman Classidas. And the assault lasted there from morning until sunset. In this assault ... Joan ... was struck by an arrow above the breast, and when she felt herself wounded she was afraid and wept. ... And some soldiers, seeing her so wounded, wanted to apply a charm to her wound, but she would not have it, saying: "I would rather die than do a thing which I know to be a sin or against the will of God." ... But if to her could be applied a remedy without sin, she was very willing to be cured. And they put on to her wound olive oil and lard. And after that had been applied, Joan made her confession to me, weeping and lamenting."

Count Dunois: "The assault lasted from the morning until eight ... so that there was hardly hope of victory that day. So that I was going to break off and ... withdraw. ... Then the Maid came to me and required me to wait yet a while. She ... mounted her horse and retired alone into a vineyard. ... And in this vineyard she remained at prayer. ... Then she came back ... at once seized her standard in hand and placed herself on the parapet of the trench, and the moment she was there the English trembled and were terrified. The king's soldiers regained courage and began to go up, charging against the boulevard without meeting the least resistance."

Jean Pasquerel: "Joan returned to the charge, crying and saying: 'Classidas, Classidas, yield thee, yield thee to the King of Heaven; thou hast called me 'whore'; I take great pity on thy soul and thy people's! Then Classidas, armed from head to foot, fell into the river of Loire and was drowned. And Joan, moved by pity, began to weep much for the soul of Classidas and the others who were drowned in great numbers." ...

Credits: Regine Pernoud, Joan of Arc, By Herself and Her Witnesses (New York: 1966), 30, 90-92.