

JOHAN AND HANS

PLAY: Deck the Stage!
 GENRE: Comedy
 TIME: 2:50

DESCRIPTION

Two brothers, Johan and Hans, talk about their Christmas Tree traditions.

Note: Lines continued with a '...' should sound like one continuous sentence.

ACTING HINTS

This scene is all about pace and timing. The lines should flow from one character to another seamlessly.

From an emotional standpoint, focus on the competition between the boys. Why does each feel that they must come out on top?

Are the brothers twins, or is one older than the other? How does that affect the piece?

JOHAN and HANS come downstage. They match each other step for step, as if they don't want the other to get ahead.

JOHAN & HANS: Every year my brother and I...

JOHAN: Partake in a competition...

HANS: To choose the family Christmas tree.

JOHAN: It's been our job...

JOHAN & HANS: Since we were seven years old.

HANS: We go with our Papa to the tree farm.

JOHAN: We each pick out a tree and he chooses the winner.

HANS: It used to be...

JOHAN & HANS: In the beginning...

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HANS: That we would decide on a tree together.

JOHAN & HANS: But that was impossible. *(each referring to the other)*
 He's so competitive.

JOHAN: It's horrible.

JOHAN & HANS: He always has to have his way.

HANS: So now we get Papa to choose.

JOHAN: I have five wins and Hans only has four.

HANS: Johan always says he has five and I only have four.

JOHAN: He is such a sore loser.

HANS: The year that we were twelve I had double pneumonia and
 Mama would not let me go to the tree farm, even though I said I
 could go.

JOHAN: I picked the tree, Papa cut it down. It counts.

HANS: It does not count.

JOHAN: It counts!

JOHAN & HANS: He always gets like this. He always has to have his
 way. He's impossible.

HANS: The morning of the trip is always bright and crisp and clean.

JOHAN: I arise extra early to make sure I have all of my equipment at
 hand.

HANS: Sturdy boots!

JOHAN: Strong gloves!

HANS: Binoculars for the scouting!

JOHAN: Tags to mark the trees.

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JOHAN & HANS: One year, he tried to claim a tree that I had clearly sighted first!

HANS: Now a tree cannot be claimed until it has a tag on it.

JOHAN: It's all his fault.

JOHAN & HANS: He's so competitive.

They both take a deep breath in.

JOHAN: We stand at the entrance to the tree farm...

HANS: Breathing in the cool, crisp, morning air.

They both breathe in.

JOHAN & HANS: Our breath makes tiny clouds of mist which fogs up our glasses. *(They both wipe their glasses)*

JOHAN: Papa must set us off at exactly the same time.

JOHAN & HANS: He always tries to cheat.

HANS: Johan's foot is over the line!

JOHAN: Hans' body is too far forward!

HANS: Inevitably Papa tells us to settle down or...

JOHAN & HANS: He will pick the first scrawny broke bristle spruce he can find and leave us for the dogs!

JOHAN: That Papa.

JOHAN & HANS: What a sense of humour.

They both chuckle for a moment. Then they both breathe in again.

JOHAN: We prepare.

HANS: We wait for the hand to go down.

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JOHAN: The air is silent.

HANS: There is nothing but Papa's hand...

JOHAN: And the trees.

JOHAN & HANS: WE'RE OFF!

The two start running in place. They are frantically searching for the best tree.

JOHAN: Trees to the left!

HANS: Trees to the right!

JOHAN: Faster!

HANS: Faster!

JOHAN: Ah ha!

HANS: Bah!

JOHAN: Too small!

HANS: Too tall!

JOHAN: Too fat!

HANS: Too puny!

JOHAN: Too old!

HANS: Too new!

JOHAN: Too much like the one we had last year.

JOHAN & HANS: I must find the perfect tree! I can't let him beat me!

HANS: Beautiful pines.

JOHAN: Lush foliage.

HANS: Green as emeralds.

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JOHAN: Ah ha!

HANS: Ah ha!

JOHAN: AH HA!

HANS: AH AH!

They take in a deep breath and jump up and down for joy.

JOHAN & HANS: Every year it is so exhilarating! I can hardly wait!

JOHAN: And I know...

HANS: Without a shadow of a doubt...

JOHAN: That...

HANS: The winner...

JOHAN & HANS: Will be me!

HANS: Me.

JOHAN: Me.

HANS: Me!

JOHAN: ME!

JOHAN & HANS: He is so impossible! He always has to have his way!

The two cross their arms in frustration and stand with their backs to each other.

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CAPULET AND MESSENGER

PLAY: Romeo and Juliet
adapted by Craig Mason

GENRE: Comedy

TIME: 1:50

DESCRIPTION

This scene comes from a modern adaptation of Shakespeare's classic tale. Capulet prepares to send out invitations to his masked ball. He and his servant have some difficulty determining who should be invited and who shouldn't.

ACTING HINTS

This is a slapstick scene. Think about the physicality you can add to the dialogue. It might be helpful to watch some performers known for physical comedy such as the Marx Brothers or Mr. Bean.

Keep the social status of the characters in mind: Capulet is clearly the boss – come up with exaggerated postures and actions that show he is in charge. Conversely, the servant is clearly lower-class. How can you show this? How does he speak and move? Does he grovel a lot in the scene?

CAPULET enters with a list in his hand.

CAPULET: Where is my servant?

The MESSENGER enters from the other side of the stage. He's not paying attention to CAPULET at all.

MESSENGER: Dum da do. Dip da dee. La di doh.

CAPULET: Servant! *(he gestures frantically)* Servant!

MESSENGER: Dippy da do.

CAPULET: Servant I say!

The MESSENGER slowly makes his way over to CAPULET. Very, very slowly.