



**Sample Pages from  
Competition Scenes: Duets**

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Scenes  
From  
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# COMPETITION SCENES: DUETS

EDITED BY  
*Lindsay Price*



**Theatrefolk**

Original Playscripts

*Competition Scenes: Duets*

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Edited by Lindsay Price

*Romeo and Juliet* adapted by Craig Mason

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# Scenes for Two Women



## EMILY AND MADELINE

**PLAY:** Body Body  
**GENRE:** Drama  
**TIME:** 4:30

---

### DESCRIPTION

Emily sits in her bedroom preparing for a date. She is 18 years old and, on the surface, is very sure of herself. Madeline, her younger sister, enters tentatively. She is 16.

### ACTING HINTS

Madeline and Emily do not get along. It takes a great deal of courage for Madeline to approach Emily; reflect this in how Madeline moves and speaks.

Emily seems like she's in control but her eating disorder indicates this is not so. Choose a moment in the scene to show that loss of control.

We learn later in the play that Emily dies from her eating disorder.

---

*MADELINE hovers at the doorway to EMILY's room. She moves forward and back as she decides whether she's going to enter.*

EMILY: What do you want?

MADELINE: Nothing.

EMILY: Then go away. I'm busy.

MADELINE: You have a date tonight?

EMILY: *(as if stating the obvious)* Yes. Do you? Of course you don't. Another Friday night at home. How boring. Don't pick your face like that. You'll get scars.

MADELINE: Sorry. Are you seeing Gord?

EMILY: Frankie. Gord was too... *(she makes a vague distasteful gesture with her hand)*

MADELINE: Oh.

## EMILY AND MADELINE

EMILY: What do you care? Are you keeping score?

MADELINE: No. I... I wanted to ask you a question.

EMILY: You want to ask me something.

MADELINE: Yes.

EMILY: This isn't a facts-of-life question, is it? I have neither the time nor the inclination to explain sex to you.

MADELINE: I just wanted to know... does it hurt?

EMILY: Does what hurt?

MADELINE: Throwing up.

EMILY: What on earth are you asking me for? Do I look like an expert on vomiting? You're such a lummoX. A great big hulking lummoX. No wonder you never have a date.

MADELINE: (*fast, bursting out*) Lola Mittler called you "Upchuck" in the bathroom today.

EMILY: What?

MADELINE: I was in the stall and she was talking to someone, I don't know who, and she said her sister was on the same floor as you in your dorm and they were laughing about how you think you're keeping it a secret but everybody knows. You're Upchuck Emily and how could you think you're fooling anyone when you disappear after dinner? That's what she said.

EMILY: Patty's just jealous. I went out on a date with a guy she's been drooling over. She's jealous and she made up something to make me look bad. What would I need to throw up for? I've never had a problem with my weight, have I?

MADELINE: No.

**EMILY AND MADELINE**

EMILY: Do I look sick? Do I look like I have a problem? Do I?

MADELINE: No.

EMILY: No. Patty lied to her sister and told her to make sure you overheard. Lola must have known you were in the stall. That's all there is to it. Just a bunch of lies to make me look bad. Vicious lies. Just wait until I see Pudgy Patty again. I'm gonna look so good her eyeteeth are going to fall out of her head.

MADELINE: I heard you on Sunday.

EMILY: Heard what?

MADELINE: Sunday after dinner. I heard you. And tonight. Ten minutes ago. And during spring break you said you were sick but I -

*EMILY gets up and crosses as if she is looking to see if anyone is in the hall. Satisfied no one is there, she drags MADELINE centre stage.*

EMILY: What are you doing, spying on me?

MADELINE: I'm not, I'm not!

EMILY: What are you doing?

MADELINE: Nothing.

EMILY: What do you want?

MADELINE: Nothing. Nothing. You're hurting me!

*EMILY lets go of MADELINE roughly. MADELINE rubs her arm.*

MADELINE: My bedroom is right next to the bathroom. I'm not deaf.

EMILY: Have you told anybody?

MADELINE: No.

EMILY: Have you said anything to Mom and Dad?



## EMILY AND MADELINE

MADELINE: No.

EMILY: Don't worry about it. It doesn't concern you.

MADELINE: I'm not worried.

EMILY: You're not going to say a word about this. If you tell anyone, I'll just deny it. No one believes you anyway.

MADELINE: I don't want to tell anyone. I'm not going to tell.

EMILY: (*she looks at MADELINE*) If you're not going to tell, why are you here?

MADELINE: I wanted to know how you did it.

EMILY: Why?

MADELINE: Because.

EMILY: Because why? (*MADELINE doesn't answer*) Because you want to?

MADELINE: I don't know. (*pause*) I can't lose weight. I try and I try but nothing works. I always screw it all up. I hate being fat.

EMILY: You're not terribly fat.

MADELINE: Everyone says I'm never going to be as skinny as you and I just thought...

EMILY: You'd never have the nerve.

MADELINE: I do to! I could do it.

EMILY: You kneel in front of the toilet. You stick your finger down your throat -

MADELINE: I can't do that! I'll gag.

EMILY: That's the point.

**EMILY AND MADELINE**

MADELINE: I can't.

EMILY: Suit yourself.

MADELINE: Do you do it a lot?

EMILY: Of course not. It's a quick fix that's all. A problem I take care of. There's something in my stomach and I get rid of it. Easy as pie.

MADELINE: But you're nowhere near fat.

EMILY: And I'd like to keep it that way.

MADELINE: Are you bulimic?

EMILY: Don't be stupid. What would make you say that?

MADELINE: Isn't that what bulimics do? Throw up?

EMILY: It doesn't hurt me. I know what I'm doing.

MADELINE: It doesn't hurt? It's ok for you?

EMILY: You better start growing up real fast. College is going to eat you alive. You think high school is so easy. All you have to do is be nice to the teachers and they give you good grades. Last semester I sat in a room of 500 and the teachers didn't even know our names. They didn't care if you were nice. They expect you do to all this work. You have to keep your grades up. And there's always more work. And there's no "Mom" to tell you do to anything. No one to nag you, no one to tell you to eat properly. Who's gonna know if you eat French fries for dinner every night? I've always been able to eat what I want. I hate it. Hate it! (*there is a pause as she collects herself*) Want to know a secret? You can't tell Mom or Dad...

MADELINE: I promise.

EMILY: I went into a modeling agency last week.

**EMILY AND MADELINE**

MADELINE: You're going to be a model?

EMILY: Wouldn't that put Patty Mittler in a tizzy. Modeling will be a lot more fun instead of sitting in stuffy classrooms all day long.

MADELINE: Why did you do it on Sunday?

EMILY: What? Oh... aren't you full of questions. The modeling agency said I have to lose 10 pounds and then one of the agents will meet with me. It's practically a done deal. They oooohed and awed over my bone structure and my skin. You need to start taking better care of your skin. If you keep picking those zits you'll get scars.

MADELINE: I guess it's ok as long as you don't hurt yourself.

EMILY: You are such a bizarre child. Where's my lipstick?





# Scenes for One Man and One Woman



## JAKE AND BEEBEE

**PLAY:** The Bright Blue Mailbox  
Suicide Note

**GENRE:** Drama

**TIME:** 3:20

### DESCRIPTION

Jake has learned that his best friend Ken tried to commit suicide and he's having trouble dealing with the information. He goes to a crisis centre for some help and is surprised to see Beebee working there. In their circle of friends, Beebee is the flaky space cadet. Here she seems like a different person.

### ACTING HINTS

Neither Jake nor Beebee is happy to see the other. Explore the shock of the moment when they see each other for the first time.

It's easier to understand Jake's reaction because he's always known Beebee to be flighty. But why is Beebee upset? Why does she want to keep her job a secret? Why does she present herself to her friends as a space cadet?

Jake is frustrated in this scene. He's dealing with his guilt over not helping his friend, and Beebee won't give him any answers.

*JAKE enters the crisis centre. He approaches the back of a girl, who is dealing with a client.*

JAKE: Excuse me. Is this the crisis centre?

*BEEBEE turns.*

BEEBEE: Jake?

JAKE: Beebee?

BEEBEE: *(to client)* Mr. Arscott, why don't you go into the lounge? The group's waiting for you. *(she watches the man go)*

JAKE: What are you doing here?

BEEBEE: I work here. *(There is a pause as JAKE stares at BEEBEE.)* What do you want, Jake? I'm busy.

**JAKE AND BEEBEE**

JAKE: You work at a crisis centre.

BEEBEE: Don't sound so surprised.

JAKE: I'm not surprised... it's just that...

BEEBEE: I'm too flaky to stop people from committing suicide.

JAKE: I didn't say that.

BEEBEE: You don't have to. Don't worry; I'm only the receptionist. I make coffee. I answer phones. I type. And, on rare occasions, I read tarot cards.

JAKE: Really?

BEEBEE: The clients want to know if everything is going to be all right. *(she turns to talk to a doctor)* Yes Dr. Mott? Not yet, I'll let you know as soon as she comes in.

JAKE: Beebee, why didn't you tell anyone you work here?

BEEBEE: Because.

JAKE: I mean, you sound so normal... I didn't mean that you're usually not normal... Oh for God's sake Beebee! You're the weirdest person I know! You talk to spirits in the walls, your hair changes colour every second day, you're a vegetarian - what am I supposed to think?

BEEBEE: Ken knows.

JAKE: What?

BEEBEE: Ken knows I work here.

JAKE: How come he never said anything... Oh. I guess he wouldn't.

BEEBEE: Don't worry. He was as surprised as you the first time he walked in here.

**JAKE AND BEEBEE**

JAKE: You should have told me he was feeling... that he was...

BEEBEE: He didn't want you to know.

JAKE: Did he talk to you?

BEEBEE: A bit.

JAKE: Why did he come here? What did he say?

BEEBEE: I can't tell you.

JAKE: But I'm his friend.

BEEBEE: It's not my place to...

JAKE: I'm his friend, not you. Why do you get to know and I don't?

BEEBEE: Because I am not here for you. This room holds a lot of secrets and it's part of my job not to spread them around. If there are things you think you have a right to know, well, that's between you and Ken. I won't tell his secrets. Not to you. Not to anyone.

JAKE: I'm not a bad person, Beebee. But nothing is the way it used to be. It's all slipping through my fingers... Two summers ago, we were at his parents' cottage. It was dark, we had just watched the sun go down. Ken was really moody. You know how he gets... And I always left him alone. It was the best. I thought it was the best way to deal with it. We're sitting in the dark and he says out of the blue, "Have you ever thought about killing yourself?" I think I made a joke – "Are you going to hang yourself over that babe at the bait shop, Ken?" He laughed and never mentioned it again. I never knew he was serious. I didn't know. If I had known...

BEEBEE: Why did you come here, Jake?

JAKE: I don't know. I wanted somebody, professional...

**JAKE AND BEEBEE**

BEEBEE: Do you want to talk to someone... I can...

JAKE: No. No, I don't know why I came. Thanks anyway.

BEEBEE: Jake. He doesn't blame you, he blames himself. Don't forget that.

JAKE: But he's the greatest guy! Why would he want...

BEEBEE: You better go. Don't tell anyone you saw me here, ok?

*BEEBEE exits, leaving JAKE alone on stage.*

♦♦♦♦♦



## SHELLEY AND BEN

**PLAY:** Deck the Stage!  
**GENRE:** Seriocomic  
**TIME:** 5:00

### DESCRIPTION

The scene is the kitchen in the home of Shelley Langford. It is just before Christmas. She and Ben have been working on a project together.

### ACTING HINTS

Ben is a non-stop talker while Shelley is practically silent. In the course of the play we learn the reason. Why does Shelley feel she cannot accept the present? Does she feel she doesn't deserve any happiness that can't be shared with her mom?

What does Ben like about Shelley? Does he love her? Has he ever bought a gift for a girl before? What did he imagine would happen when he gave her the present?

*SHELLEY and BEN sit at a table. BEN reaches under the table, pulls out a small present, and puts it on the table.*

SHELLEY: What's that?

BEN: What?

SHELLEY: That.

BEN: Oh that. I believe it's called a Christmas present.

SHELLEY: I know what it is. What's it doing on the table?

BEN: Ok, you caught me. I thought 'tis the season and we've been working on this project and after next week it'll be all over and I just wanted to give you a little something, a little present, a Christmas thing. Merry Christmas!

SHELLEY: I didn't get you anything.

BEN: I didn't expect anything.

*SHELLEY continues to stare at the package.*

**SHELLEY AND BEN**

BEN: Aren't you going to open it?

SHELLEY: No.

BEN: I understand. You're a traditionalist. A woman after my own heart. Christmas presents should be opened on Christmas day.

SHELLEY: No, that's not what I meant. This was a very nice idea but I can't accept it.

BEN: What are you talking about?

SHELLEY: Take it back please.

BEN: Take it back? You're rejecting a present? You haven't even seen it yet! Take it back? I've never heard of this. Sure, I've done the ugly sweater return, but at least I opened the box and saw it was a sweater and went, "gee what a neat sweater" a couple of times. Are you trying to pulverize my heart into tiny bits?

SHELLEY: It's your own fault. If you had asked, I would have told you not to.

BEN: And why is that?

SHELLEY: We don't celebrate Christmas.

BEN: Oh. (*a thought hits him*) Oh! (*he hits himself on the head*) I am such an idiot. Oh wow. I feel so stupid. What an idiot. I didn't know.

SHELLEY: Now you do.

BEN: I didn't clue in. Shelley Langford doesn't sound like a Jewish name. There I go making assumptions. I'm always doing that.

SHELLEY: Who's Jewish?

BEN: You are. That's why you don't celebrate Christmas, right?

**SHELLEY AND BEN**

SHELLEY: I'm not Jewish.

BEN: Oh.

SHELLEY: Shall we get started? I did some more research on the economical -

BEN: (*a thought just hitting him*) Oh! Oh!! Oh!!!

SHELLEY: What?

BEN: I get it now.

SHELLEY: Get what?

BEN: That's what's missing here. There's no tree! There's no wreaths! There's no Christmas decorations of any kind. You'd never know it was December. You know, my uncle has a tree farm and I can probably get you a pretty good deal. Maybe I can get you one for free, who knows. I kinda forgot his birthday this year so I'm not exactly in the good books...

SHELLEY: (*loudly*) Ben! (*a little more quietly*) If we wanted a tree we'd have one. We don't. Ok?

BEN: Riiiiiiight. It's the commercial thing isn't it?

*SHELLEY gives a little groan of frustration.*

BEN: You seem like the kind of girl, um, woman, who would really shun all that money jive. I totally agree, people spending too much money, once a year, going totally crazy on things they don't need instead of spending good decent quality time with their families and...

SHELLEY: Look, will you shut up! Just shut up!

BEN: You don't have to shout.

SHELLEY: Then shut up about Christmas. Ok? Just do your work and

**SHELLEY AND BEN**

get out of here and leave me alone.

BEN: You are trying to pulverize my heart into tiny bits.

SHELLEY: I am not.

BEN: All I did was spend five minutes picking out something nice for you. I wrapped it myself. I thought I was doing a nice thing.

SHELLEY: You did.

BEN: Then open it, say "Gee what a neat sweater!" and I won't say another word.

SHELLEY: I can't.

BEN: Then give me a good reason why not. (*SHELLEY doesn't say anything*) You know, I defend you a lot at school. I. Me. I have come to your defence. You've got a pretty messy reputation. "Cold fish" comes up a lot. So does "snob," "pretentious" and "stuck-up." "No, no," I say, "She's funny. She's ok. She's just new, she doesn't know many people. She's just shy." Obviously I've been the biggest fool 'cause obviously everyone is right about you and I just couldn't see it.

*SHELLEY runs from the room. BEN takes a big breath.*

BEN: Damn. Merry Christmas.

*He sighs and calls out.*

BEN: I'll let myself out.

*He starts to exit when SHELLEY runs back on with a picture in her hands.*

SHELLEY: You don't get off that easy. Sit down!

BEN: I've said all I want to say.

SHELLEY: I haven't even started. Sit down. (*She holds the picture in front*

**SHELLEY AND BEN**

*of his face*) Ask me who's in the picture.

BEN: Shelley...

SHELLEY: Ask!

BEN: Who's in the picture?

SHELLEY: That's my dad. Pretty handsome guy, don't you think? Ask where he is.

BEN: Maybe I should -

SHELLEY: Ask where he is! Come on, you wanted to talk; ask where he is.

BEN: Where's your dad?

SHELLEY: I don't know. Isn't that funny? Isn't that a scream? I don't know. Two years ago he went to work on Christmas Eve and he never came home.

BEN: I'm sorry.

SHELLEY: Don't be. He stole money from his company and ran away with the boss' secretary. Merry Christmas! That's our nearest guess anyway. No one knows for sure because there hasn't been one word. Not one. Not a letter. Not a telegram. Not a postcard. Not an answering machine message. Nothing. He left us with debts up to our ears, and we didn't even get a goodbye. How's your dad? Is he alive? Does he talk to you every day?

BEN: Loudly.

SHELLEY: Well good, 'cause let me tell you; around here there isn't much talking. Around here, we bounce from apartment to apartment and my mom tries to keep working but she's not very strong. My dad knew that. And he left. So you'll have to excuse me if I'm cold, or distant, or pretentious. But my mind's a little full

## SHELLEY AND BEN

'cause I only got three hours of sleep after working the night shift at the 7-11. And I could really give a crap about Christmas because all it means is that my father didn't love my mother and he didn't love me.





# Scenes for Two Men



## 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...



**JOHAN AND HANS**

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.

**JOHAN AND HANS**

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.

**JOHAN AND HANS**

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.

**JOHAN AND HANS**

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.*



## COMPETITION SCENES: DUETS

Edited by Lindsay Price

Collection of 21 Duet Scenes  
[8W/W, 8W/M, 5 M/M]

Are you looking for challenging scenes for two actors? This collection is tailored for student actors, and contains a wide variety of characters, genres and lengths. Ideal for competitions and in-class work.

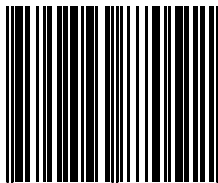
The scenes come from plays published by Theatrefolk and include approximate timing, character/story background, and performance suggestions.

Companion to *Competition Monologues*.

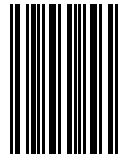


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