

HO HO HO

A TEN MINUTE COMEDY

By Joseph Sorrentino

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A Ten Minute Comedy Duet

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SYNOPSIS: It's Christmas Day and two actors - - out of work and money - - dressed in well-worn Santa and elf costumes hit the streets hoping to beg enough money for a hot meal. As they continually scare away potential benefactors, their conversation ranges from the weather, to business practices, to how best to serve cat (baked or fried). In the end, only a minor miracle saves them from a hungry Christmas.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 male)

FRANK (m) A well-dressed, well-spoken man, in his mid-late 30s. He's an actor.

(66 lines)

HARRY (m) A much less well-dressed man, in his late-50s. He's a blue collar worker. Or was one, anyway. *(66 lines)*

All in the Name of Frankenharry . . .

Joseph Sorrentino's *Frankenharry* plays get their name from the two unforgettable Philadelphia actors, Frank X and Harry Philibosian, who starred in the original Philadelphia Fringe Festival productions. Although the relational plays are not really linked, there is an underlying "opposites truly do attract" thread. Frank is usually the urbane, well-dressed and well-spoken actor while Harry is more of a blue collar Everyman stumbling his way through life. Whenever he stumbles into Frank's life, it almost always ends with surprising and refreshingly comic results. The sharply drawn characters with contrasting qualities give audiences a reason to get involved with them over and over again. These Philadelphia Fringe favorites have been called "clever . . . idiosyncratic," ". . . genuinely funny" and "hilarious" and may be produced individually or as "An Evening with Frankenharry."

AT RISE: As lights come up, we see FRANK dressed in what is supposed to be an elf's costume and HARRY as Santa Claus. They are definitely out of their element; they and their clothing are looking rather worn. FRANK can have cigarettes which he occasionally puffs on, HARRY a cigar and a bottle in a brown paper bag he keeps hidden under his coat and drinks from occasionally. There is a bucket on the ground, a hand-drawn sign above it that says "Salvation Army."

HARRY: Frank?

FRANK: What.

HARRY: I'm cold.

FRANK: It's December, Harry, you're supposed to be cold.

Pause.

HARRY: Frank?

FRANK: What.

HARRY: I'm really cold.

FRANK: Try ringing the bell. See if that helps.

HARRY rings it once. Pause.

FRANK: Well?

HARRY: Didn't help.

FRANK: Don't you have any of that . . . whaddaya call it . . . ? Uh . . . uh . . . antifreeze you always carry around? Take a swig of that.

HARRY: Why you gotta say that? I don't do that no more.

FRANK: Right.

HARRY: I don't.

FRANK: Whatever.

HARRY: You hurt me. You really hurt me, Frank.

FRANK: Well . . . I . . . I didn't mean to hurt you. It's just . . . you've been complaining ever since we got out here.

Pause. HARRY sneaks a drink from his bottle.

FRANK: I told you this wouldn't work.

HARRY: We hadda try somethin'. We haven't worked in months. Not even one lousy audition. You rather starve?

FRANK: As opposed to freezing to death? (*Picks up and turns bucket over.*) Not a cent. It's these stupid costumes. It'll be a miracle if we get any money. Where'd you get them anyway?

HARRY: My cousin.

FRANK: Oh . . .

HARRY: What?

FRANK: I should've known. This is the same cousin who got us those gorilla suits for that catering gig, isn't it?

HARRY: That was a simple misunderstanding . . . classic case of miscommunication. I'm the one who told him we needed two monkey suits.

FRANK: How he didn't know "monkey suit" was slang for tuxedo . . .

HARRY: I take full responsibility for that. He got us exactly what I asked for.

FRANK: What he got us was tossed outta that restaurant, that's what he got us.

HARRY: Not to mention fired.

FRANK reacts.

FRANK: And what is this outfit, anyway? I thought I was supposed to be an elf.

HARRY: You are an elf.

FRANK: I look like a psychotic jester.

HARRY: You look fine.

FRANK: Well, I don't feel fine, and it's affecting my ability to get into character.

HARRY: He got us these outfits for free and that's about all we can afford right now, OK? Just don't go blamin' everythin' on me.

FRANK: Who do you want me to blame? It was your idea.

HARRY: If you have a better one . . . (*Pause.*) We shoulda tried out for "The Nutcracker."

FRANK: It's a ballet, Harry.

HARRY: I know that.

FRANK: We can't dance.

HARRY: So?

FRANK: Wait . . . there's someone. Give 'em a ring.

HARRY: (*Ring bell.*) Ho. Ho. Ho.

FRANK: Nothing. *(Pause, lights cigarette.)* I don't understand why no one's stopping. *(Longer pause. Stare at audience. Maybe FRANK adjusts HARRY's collar. HARRY sneaks drink.)*

HARRY: Location.

FRANK: Location?

HARRY: Must be. Everything I ever read says location is the most important thing in business. Maybe this isn't the best location.

FRANK: It's the only one where we don't have to worry about cops.

HARRY: True, but . . . there's no people either. Maybe we should try somewhere else tomorrow.

FRANK: Too late.

HARRY: Why?

FRANK: Today's Christmas.

HARRY: Right. I forgot. *(Takes out bottle, offers to FRANK.)* Merry Christmas. *(FRANK pauses.)* Hey . . . it's Christmas.

FRANK: Here's at ya. *(Drinks, gives bottle to HARRY.)*

HARRY: And you. *(Drinks.)*

Pause.

HARRY: Frank?

FRANK: Now what?

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