

-----ISSUMATSASIUK-----

Jens Haven Memorial - Nain

Isaac, the main characer has to make a choice between
going to a Science Fair and going on the traditional deer hunt.

Players:

Isaac - Elias Obed

Father - Sabina Hunter

Teacher, Mother - Beatrice Hunter

Jacko - David Harris

Diane - Lucy Jaramuse

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Jens Haven Memoiral School

SCENE I

The scene opens with slides of hunt. Follow - theme ("Break Free"). Lights. Isaac sitting in the take-out alone, staring into space. Waitress enters, waits for order, walks away. Isaac continues staring.

(Two friends enter. They see him and pause.)

Diane: Hey, look there's Isaac.

Jacko: Why don't we go over?

Diane: Hey, look at him ... he seems real depressed.

Jack: He didn't talk all day.

Diane: Gee, there must be something bugging him. Let's go see what it is.

(They cross to Isaac's table and sit down. Isaac ignores them.)

Diane: Hi, Isaac ... what are you doing here by yourself?

(Isaac continues to ignore them)

Jack: Hey, Isaac ...

Diane: Yeah. Tell us what's wrong.

Isaac: (muttering) What did you say?

Diane: Tell us what's wrong!

Isaac: Naaa

(pause)

Diane: Come on ... Tell us! We're your friends; you can tell us.

Isaac: I'm just sleepy.

Diane: If you were sleepy, you'd be home in bed. Don't try to hide it from us. We can tell you're depressed about something.

Jack: Yeah, Isaac, you didn't talk all day in school, you didn't get any work done, and now you're here by yourself.

Isaac: Well, I failed my English exam!

Jack: We didn't even have an English exam!

Diane: Isaac, there must be something really wrong if you're lying to your friends.

Jack: Don't you trust us?

Isaac: There's nothing you can do.

Jack: Just talk it out.

Isaac: It's nothing.

Both Friends: Come on ...

Isaac: (reluctantly) Well, I got picked for the science fair

(Friends respond with enthusiasm)

Diane: When??

Isaac: Next week.

Diane: Well, if you made it, why are you so depressed? Everyone wanted to go!!

Isaac: (hesitantly) Well, the science fair is the same weekend as the hunt ... and ... my father .. wants me to go on the hunt ...

Diane: Why not tell your father?

Jack: Does your science teacher know?

(Isaac is silent for a moment)

Isaac: No.

Diane: Well ... what do you want to do?

Isaac: Well, I want to go the science fair - but the hunt is a tradition, and my father really expects me to go.

Diane: So, tell him!

(Isaac rises to leave)

Jack: Want us to walk with you?

(Isaac shakes his head, turns, and leaves. The two friends remain sitting .. exchange looks, shrugs, light fades.)

SCENE II

The scene opens in the kitchen of Isaac's home. Father is present. Mother comes in from hanging laundry. They begin to discuss last year's hunt.)

Mother: Warm out, boy! Is the ice going to be bad?

Father: No, it's too early for it to be bad. Won't be bad for awhile yet.

(Father is working on gun.)

Mother: That's good. What are you cleaning that gun again for?

Father: I'm getting ready for the hunt next week. Making sure it's in proper working order. I can't wait, boy. This year's hunt is going to be better than ever. Especially since Isaac is coming and I can teach him what my father taught me.

(Enter Isaac. Takes off coat, etc. and sits at table by father.)

Father: Speak of the devil! We were just talking about you and the hunt. Can't wait, boy ... get those little tuktuk.

Mother: Do you have your gun ready, Isaac? Not much time left now before you go off.

Isaac: I'll get around to it, sooner or later.

Father: What do you mean, 'later'?

Mother: Yeah! You don't sound very excited about it.

Isaac: I want to go to the hunt. But does it have to be next week?

Father: It's always this time of year - you know that.

Isaac: Yeah! But couldn't it be a little later?

Father: What's all this talk about later? You know we're going next week.

Isaac: Yeah, but ...

Father: But what??

Isaac: Well, ah ... I got picked for the science fair.

Mother: Did you! When are you going?

Isaac: I'm supposed to go next week.

Father: Next week? We're going hunting next week. This is your first time. I want you to learn now ... while I'm still here to teach you.

Isaac: I know, but I want to go to the science fair, too.

Father: Do both! You can't do both things at once. You're going hunting; that's the tradition.

SCENE III

Two settings are present on stage: a room, with table and bed; kitchen, where father is sitting. (Fade in: Isaac is sitting at desk, attempting to do his homework. Finally he gives up, goes over to his bed, puts on headphones, and lies down. Music can be heard faintly. Then, music fades and we hear Isaac.)

Isaac: Gee, I can't make up my mind. What should I do .. listen to my father or my science teacher? Boy, this is a problem. What should I do? When I told my father, he seemed so angry ... I know he expects me to forget all about the science fair ...

Oh, I hate my father for going hunting ... why did he have to talk like that anyway? If he was more understanding and thought about how I feel, it would be a lot better ... he would be a better father, It's up to me what I want to do with my life, not him

(Light fades out on Isaac, fades in on father, who is sitting in his chair.)

Father: I can't understand that boy. He was so excited about going on the hunt. And now this ... science fair ... how is that going to help him become a man? ... This hunt is what he needs .. not a science fair. Always something interfering these days. Not like before. We just did what had to be done... except ...

We were living in Hebron. It was such a beautiful place. Then everybody started to move, they told us it would be better in Nain. A hospital, a school

(Light fades out on father, fades in on Isaac, still lying on bed.)

Isaac: I'm so confused. I love him; he's my father. I do like hunting but I dunno ... the science fair means a lot to me ... I wonder if my science teacher knows what the hunt means ... I just ... don't ... know....

(Light returns to father)

Father: Oh, how I hated to leave that place. But I thought if I raised my family my way, everything would turn out ok. I thought I could keep the old ways, even if I left Hebron. I thought my son, Isaac ... would value the important things. But now this ... this science fair. It won't do him any good at all. He has to go on the hunt. It's the only way.

(Light fades.)

SCENE IV

Scene IV takes place in the hallway, near the science classroom. The two friends from Scene I come out of a science class together, talking and juggling books.)

Diane: Gee, that was a good old class, eh? No work! We spent the whole time talking about Isaac's project!

Jack: Yeah!

Diane: Have you got your project done?

Jack: No! Of course not!

Diane: Too bad we didn't ... We would have been able to go.

Jack: Naa ... it wouldn't have been as good as Isaac's

Diane: The teacher really liked Isaac's. She thinks it's going to win.

Jack: I think it's going to win too ... if he goes.

Diane: Yeah, that's right. (pause) Have you seen Isaac today? I wonder if he's in school.

Jack: Why wouldn't he be in school?

Diane: Well, he was pretty depressed yesterday. I wonder if he told his father yet?

Jack: Yeah. (pause) If you were him, what would you do?

Diane: I'd pick the science fair; it's the chance of a life time.

Jack: I'd go on the hunt.

Diane: Why? He could always go on the hunt next year.

Jack: But his father wants to teach him this year. Besides, it's the tradition.

Diane: That doesn't make any difference! This is his only chance. He'll be too old next year. Besides, he's got to think of his future ... he could make science his career. He could get out of Nain ...

Jack: Tradition is more important. Most of it's gone already .. it needs to be preserved. Language is gone already, most of it anyway.

Diane: What's language got to do with deer hunting?

Jack: That's not the point! Language is tradition, and deer hunting's tradition.

Diane: He's only going to be gone a week. How's that going to affect tradition?

Jack: He's going to miss the hunt, and the hunt teaches a lot of the tradition. He's going to have to wait another year. Besides, he might just keep making excuses.

Diane: Oh, come on ...

(Enter Isaac.)

Isaac: What are you two arguing about?

Diane: Well, the teacher spent the whole period talking about your project. We were talking about what we think you should do. He thinks you should go on the hunt. I think you should go to the science fair...

Isaac: (suddenly angry): It's none of your business! It's my decision!

SCENE V

It is after school, the same day. Isaac is walking along the hall. He seems preoccupied. A friend (voice?) calls out to him; he replies that he has to go somewhere. He continues, hesitates, and finally enters the science classroom. The teacher is present at the desk.

Teacher: Hi, Isaac. Getting your project ready to go?

Isaac: (after a pause) What chance does my project really have of making it?

Teacher: Well, Isaac, you certainly have the best project in this school .. maybe even in this entire district! You've really got something going here. I'd say .. oh, let's say your chance should be at least seventy-five per cent in favour of winning overall.

Isaac: Yeah? Well... you know...I might not be able to go ...

Teacher: But Isaac, you have to go! I mean, your project is the best ...

Isaac: Well, I'm not sure yet.

Teacher: Why?

Isaac: Next week .. The deer hunt is next week, and my father is really expecting me to go with him.

Teacher: But you can go with him next year.

Isaac: You see .. he wants to teach me this year...

Teacher: Well, couldn't he still teach you next year?

Isaac: It's just that it's ... well, it's tradition.

Teacher: Now Isaac, what difference is it really going to make to the tradition if he teaches you this year or next year? With the work you're doing, you have other things besides deer hunting ahead of you.

Isaac: I just don't know ...

Teacher: Isaac, is your father pressuring you?

Isaac: No, not really, I just have to make up my mind -- you know, he really wants me to go -- he expects me to go.

Teacher: Isaac, do you want me to talk to your father for you?

Isaac: No, no, I'll work this out alone.

Teacher: What do you really want to do?

Isaac: I -- really want to go to the science fair.

Teacher: Okay. But are you going to go? (pause) You know, if you don't go, Bob will be able to take his project. He's in second place right now. I know his project doesn't measure up to yours.. yours is really in a

Teacher: different category. But if you don't go -- well, give me your decision by tomorrow. I have to make all the arrangements, you know.

Isaac: Yeah, I'll let you know tomorrow for sure.

SCENE VI

Father and Teacher. Father enters classroom, stands at door and clears throat.

Teacher: (turns around) May I help you?

Father: Are you Isaac's teacher?

Teacher: Yes, you must be Isaac's father. Did he send you?

Father: Oh no. Isaac doesn't know I'm here. I've just come to see what this 'so called' project is about.

Teacher: Isaac has worked very hard on his project, you should be proud of him.

Father: My son is a very hard worker, but why does he have to go away?

Teacher: Isaac doesn't have to go away - the choice is his but ...

Father: But what?

Teacher: Your son is a very bright student. If he goes to the science fair he will have the opportunity to meet other students and learn from their work ... here let me show you his project.

Father & Teacher - Teacher demonstrates project to Father.

Father steps back - Striking thinking pose: Gotta leave now, nakomek.

Father leaves. Teacher shrugs and goes back to her desk.

SCENE VII

The mother is working in the kitchen. Enter: Father. Mother continues to work while he speaks.

Father: I don't know about Isaac and this science stuff. I want him to go on the hunt. (pause, mother keeps working.) I want him to come with me and not with that teacher ... he's my son, not hers.

Mother stops working, turns to father.)

Mother: Try to understand. He has a difficult choice to make. You've made difficult decisions before.

Father: It's not the same.

Mother: Isn't it?

(Father looks at mother.)

Mother: Think of it this way. You was being pressured to come to Nain, you wanted to stay in Hebron, do what your ancestors did. But, you also wanted to move on in life, and now Isaac has the same problem you had to face. He can either move on in life or stay back and struggle with a tradition that is running out.

(Father broods)

Mother: Things do change, you know.

(Isaac enters. Stands for a moment before speaking.)

Isaac: I've decided to go on the hunt. Bob can go to the science fair if I don't make it.

Father: Ahhh ... go to the science fair.

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