

THE SEVEN AGES OF FORENSICING

written and performed
by
Tony & Joan Haigh

(Tony is the bold voice)
(Joan is the regular voice)
(Italics indicates character voice)

Darling: Where are the kids?

Forensics.

Forensics? Like bodies?

No

Cutting up? "Quincy" I saw "Quincy" reruns.

No, from the Latin - speaking in public - what they did in the Forum

Oh.

In Rome.

Not soccer?

The Coliseum

Ah, right...Not music?

No

Not the extra - credit-study-group-watching-of-a-film kinda event...?

No

Not drama rehearsals?

No - forensics!

Oh.

You remember - getting up in the middle of the night?

Oh Yes!

Buying special food.

Yes!

Waiting in the dark for your children to turn up,
Right!

Pacing the corridors, waiting for the results,

Talking to walls

Good, now you have it.

Like having a baby.

Precisely!

(together) **The Seven Ages of Forensicing**

By Tony,

and Joan,

(together) Haigh.

With apologies to Will.

And anyone else that might be offended

All the world's a Forensics tournament,

And all the men and women merely coaches, chaperones, judges....

They have their exits

Do I have to travel on the bus with them again?

and their entrances;

I could drive my own car!

And one man in his time plays many parts -Dec, Duo, Improv, Solo, Broadcasting, Interp, Exterp...

His acts being seven ages.

At first the infant, novice competitor

Mewling and puking on the long bus ride.

Carrying his blanket, pillow and bag of "road food."

And then the whining school-boy, with his folder,

Mom, where's my folder, the little black book? Mr. Meadows will kill me if I can't find my folder.

And shining morning face

Hair too well done, baggy eyes, dressed for bed and for the office.

Creeping like snail

Slug

Unwilling to catch the bus.

I can get up on my own; it's only 4:30.

4:30!

It takes an hour to do my hair, duh!

And then the lover,

What's that happening at the back of the bus?

Adam? I mean Matt!

--and who's that with you? I don't care if she "just fell asleep in your lap" She's a freshman damn it!

Sighing like furnace,

Don't sigh at the end of every line, or gasp at the beginning.

Pronunciation!

You have to think through the thought, and Breathe! If you don't breathe, how can the judges?

Project!

with a woeful ballad

Isn't that piece just a little depressing? How many dramatic interp pieces are there about a retarded, deaf, blind, handicapped, abused individual who kills his mother?

Made to his mistress' eyebrow.

Don't you think that make-up is a little over the top dear?

Than a soldier,

Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,

The stroking the beard gesture looks fine, but don't do it on every line. And the language...? I know they're not supposed to judge for content, but that...it's a little scary, even for me.

Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,

I'll decide who does what speech.

I know you did it last year; but that was last year.

She's your duo partner - get along!

You will have to share with him - no you can't pay extra for a private room!

Seeking the bubble reputation

Take the gum out of your mouth before you begin. Good.

Even in the cannon's mouth

Be subtle, don't blast me away! Project - don't shout!

And then the justice,

In fair round belly with good capon lin'd,

Everyone puts on a little weight when they go to college. The Freshman 15! It's normal! You should be grateful I came back to coach.

With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,

Full of wise saws and modern instances;

When I was in forensics it was really fun. We mooned half the Bluegrass Parkway! Cool! But now I'm a coach and a judge, so there won't be any of that kind of stuff. And everyone in their room by 11.

And so he plays his part.

The sixth age shifts.

Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloons,

Off to college in the fall. A shelf full of trophies. The admiration and unrequited passion of Freshmen following their every step.

What is he wearing? Pantaloons? Slippers? Oh it's a senior English project. That Miz Haigh - always up to something!

With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,

You have to wear your glasses when you give your speech.

His youthful hose well sav'd, a world too wide

Do you know how hard it is to keep that boy in suits? He grows an inch a week! I just thought I'd buy big this time.

For his shrunk shank;

and his big manly voice,

Finally!

Turning again toward childish treble, pipes

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And whistles in his sound.

No, It just broke; it can't go all squeaky again. Please!

Last scene of all,

That ends this strange eventful history,

Is second childishness and mere oblivion,

Sans teeth,

Sans eyes,

Sans taste,

(together) sans everything.

But poise,

and confidence...

and the ability to stand up and speak in public without blushing and stammering.

Skills that will last a lifetime and will never be lost.

That reminds me, what does happen to those huge bags of stuff that we bring home after every tournament and put in lost property?

I don't know.

(Tony is Chair of the Drama Department at Centre College (KY) and Joan is Assistant Speech Coach and Teacher at Danville HS (KY). Haigh wrote and performed this duo at the annual Danville Forensic Banquet. The Haigh children, daughter Rowen is a senior)