



Scripts.com

# Nightwatching

By Peter Greenaway

(suspenseful cello music)  
(slow cello music)  
(mob shouting)  
(man grunting)  
(shouting)  
- Blind him!  
- Fornicator!  
- Gouge out his eyes!  
- Dauber!  
- Scratch out his eyes!  
(indistinct comments)  
(crowd shouting)  
(dog barking)  
- Ah! I can't see!  
I can't see!  
Fuck!  
Where's the light?  
I'm blind. I'm blind!  
I'm blind! Oh!  
My eyes...  
My eyes!  
Open your eyes, you fool!  
- Stop fooling!  
(panting)  
Stop your shouting!  
- Who is shouting?!  
- A blind man shouting!  
A blind man shouting!  
- Who will listen  
to a blind man shouting?!  
- Blinded.  
Darkness.  
Miles...  
...and miles...  
Fuck. And miles...  
of... painted darkness.  
Lit by spasms of light.  
If you're lucky.  
Open your eyes, you fool!  
Miles and miles...  
...and miles...  
...of painted darkness.  
(baby crying)  
Emptiness.

Silence.

- Are you all right?

- Oh!

Oh! Oh, God!

(whimpering)

Was that only a nightmare?

Have I-I-I... Have I woken up?

I've been seeing the night.

I was watching the night.

I was looking...

into Darkness.

Darkness without ending.

I was watching Darkness.

I was...

watching... the night.

I was nightwatching.

- You were only dreaming.

- I am blind.

Do I at least look blind?

- You were having a nightmare.

- Can I, in fact, see...

you, Hendrickje? Hmm?

Red-blooded Hendrickje?

Ah?

You see, I know...

I know your blood is red.

Do I remember -

your eyes are blue?

I suspect your piss is yellow!

- Be quiet.

Let me get you

something to drink.

- How would you describe...

colour?

Hmm?

If you were blind?

Hendrickje...

describe the colour red to...

to a blind man.

- You just did.

It's the colour of blood.

- Red is thick to touch.

If you could not tell

what it was by its colour,

you could tell what it was  
by its touch.  
Red is touchable.  
- And it's warm.  
And when it grows cold,  
it crusts over.  
- What is yellow?  
- The sun?  
Yellow smells.  
It's...  
it's the smelling colour!  
- Yellow is thinner than red.  
It's more transparent.  
Yellow moves.  
Red is static  
and becomes solid.  
Yellow always moves.  
Yellow could be...  
a liquid.  
New beer.  
Urine.  
Piss.  
It doesn't smell so bad  
to begin with.  
(urinating)  
Then it smells ugly.  
- Get dressed.  
We're all waiting for you.  
(woman singing)  
Ineke's pregnant.  
- Again?  
(laughter)  
- You have milk in your beard.  
- Why again?  
I haven't got a proper beard.  
- Because Claus is insatiable.  
- Then you should grow a beard.  
Successful men wear beards.  
- Sanza,  
pick up your doll.  
- I want to be insatiable...  
and wealthy.  
(woman still singing)  
- Then grow a proper beard.

- You are insatiable.  
You could be wealthier.  
(singing)  
- Hendrickje, stop singing.  
- Oh, no. Let her sing.  
It's good for the baby.  
- How would you know?  
- Hendrickje, you're dripping  
all over the floor.  
- And what else  
is good for my baby?  
- Milk.  
Gallons of fresh milk,  
from a Friesian wet-nurse.  
- Well, if Saskia's  
not breastfeeding,  
we shall have to have  
Hendrickje breastfeeding.  
- Rembrandt, don't be vulgar.  
(laughter)  
Poor girl isn't a woman yet.  
Besides, I shall have  
enough milk to make cheese.  
(Rembrandt laughing)  
- Saskia, don't be vulgar.  
There are students present.  
- Students are here to learn  
and earn us money.  
- You mustn't feed him yourself.  
- Of course  
I'm going to feed him myself.  
Geertje, you're old-fashioned.  
We are living  
in the 17th century.  
Women in the 17th century  
are allowed to smoke, write,  
correspond with Descartes,  
wear spectacles,  
insult the pope,  
and breast-feed babies.  
- If you can find a man to pay  
for the first and poke you up  
for the last.  
- Geertje, that's enough.

- Geertje's not old-fashioned.

She wears breeches

between her legs

and garters below her knees.

- And how do you know that,

Hendrickje Stoffels?

- Because

she's a very observant girl.

Saskia,

what have you got there?

- My accounts...

"Contemporary women

are permitted to smoke, write...

**(all):**

wear spectacles, insult the pope,  
and breast-feed babies."

- And conduct business

with men of substance.

- Oh, I'm a man of substance.

- Mm. Visscher has a list.

- Oh...

He has 12 officers interested.

- No, I'm not going to do it.

- Yes, you are.

At 60 guilders each.

- No, I'm not.

Anyway, that's too low a price.

- Yes, you are,

and it's 720 guilders.

- I'm not. I'm busy.

"Ecce Homo" till May.

"Washing of the Hands" till June.

"Saint Veronica" by August.

- You have

such devoted supporters.

- And then print editions

of the same.

- With golden angels.

I need to find a golden angel.

Ah-hah.

You are modelling Magdalene.

- There was no record

of her being pregnant.

Perhaps Hendrickje

can be an angel?

- Are you pregnant, Hendrickje?

- Angels should be innocent.

- What, even in the 17th century?

- But I-I am innocent.

(gunshots)

(cows lowing)

- Painting soldiers

will make me blind.

Blind and fingerless.

Both my father and my brother

had their fingers blown off

by the Dutch artillery -

and not by being shot at,

but by shooting at!

- Rembrandt.

- And painting repetitious rows

of smiling part-time soldiers

is boring

and certainly bad for the eyes.

Not one of them's

ever fired a musket in anger,

though all of them claim

to have pulled

the King of Spain's fucking beard!

- Here's our captain, Piers Hasselburg,

and our lieutenant,

Jean Egremont.

- Van Rijn.

They tell me

your father was a miller.

Well, so was mine.

We are people of the wind.

- That is always blowing

in contrary directions.

- Taking good advantage,

I am sure,

of where we sail.

- How we sail.

- And making sure

we can sail back.

- With profitable returns.

(chuckling)

- Oh!

I thank you, sir.

- Do not mention it, Madame.

I am a soldier,

but my father is - was -

a flower merchant in Paris.

But now, when Amsterdam

is not besieged by Spaniards,

my business interests, Madame,

are flowers.

- Mm... Miller,

flower-merchant, soldier.

You see

how the Republic goes downhill?

(laughter)

- But now,

we have an opportunity.

- An excuse for a grand

celebratory group portrait.

- This time, on the occasion

of the arrival in Amsterdam

of Mary Stuart,

daughter of the King of England.

- When monarchies are in trouble,

they send their females begging.

- The King of England

is in serious trouble

of losing his throne

to his parliament.

His daughter is here

in Amsterdam

trying to arrange loans.

- And to pawn

the Royal English jewels.

- Oh, sounds desperate.

- No, no. She understands,

and we understand,

that there are many

here in Amsterdam

who will, as likely as not,

help her out,

with considerable profit

to themselves, of course.

- Ourselves.



- And you?

How will that help you out?

- I am looking for a place  
in the King of England's household  
as a musician and a composer.

My cousin, Ruben's protege,  
van Dyk, is at Westminster.

- Then the king had better win.

Hmm?

- So you are to be  
the standard-bearer,  
the carrier of the flag of Amsterdam.

Your ambition does not sound  
to be so very patriotic.

- Patriotism is a currency  
of fluctuating value  
in the marketplace.

The Dutch abroad  
are not the Dutch at home.

- You could go to England.

You must know the King of England  
owns a portrait of your mother.

- My son, Carl.

- Ah.

- His mother  
collects your paintings.

My son collects your prints.

- My mother bought  
the "Stoning of St. Stephen"  
that you painted in Leiden.

- Uli! Ahem.

I hear I'm charging 80  
a full-length now?

Would that be to give yourself  
a useful profit?

- Come on, Rembrandt,  
be more gracious.

I recommended you.

I am an honest businessman,  
even in my dishonesty.

If I benefit -

and it's for me to say how  
and for you to find out -  
you could benefit too.

Push up your price.

- Inclusive or exclusive of your fee?

- Well, I obviously don't expect extras from you.

Those days are over, I think.

I feel, I know, I'm sure...

- Cousin, you promised me a man of talent, and as you can see, I now have him.

He lives in my kitchen.

With servants from Leeuwarden all around him.

I have his replica in my belly.

- Saskia!

- And you promised after you trapped him with my smile and my body as bait...

- Saskia, Saskia...

...that I would think of you, and I was certainly to think of myself.

Rembrandt therefore left you, through me, on your recommendation.

You benefited...

from this little provincial for eight profitable years.

Time enough

to make a little fortune.

Now it's my turn...

to make a little fortune, for my son.

And I believe

you still owe us money.

- Saskia.

- Rembrandt,

allow me to introduce

Rombout Kemp,

our sergeant.

You may know him as the Keeper of the Resselwart Orphanage.

- Van Rijn.

We are neighbours

in the Breestraat.

How about making a contribution  
to the orphanage?

We have many new children,  
orphaned by the Spanish wars.

- Then I think

they must all be touching 30.

- Hmm.

The governing body is now six.

Perhaps as a neighbour  
you might like to join us,

a man of means

doing charitable works,

and we may need

a group portrait soon

to remind us

of our responsibilities.

Perhaps we could remind you

of your responsibilities.

(dogs barking)

- I, Rembrandt,

will be your commanding officer.

Are you ready, Mr. Painter?

Then aim...

...fire!

(gunshot)

(crowd exclaiming)

- Rembrandt!

Oh, what's happening?

- Oh, she's fainted!

Fetch some water!

Can you hear me?!

Saskia! Saskia!

Never again! Saskia!

- Look at this.

Bloody burghers.

Gawking and smiling.

Poncing and posing.

I can do better than that.

- There's Benjamin.

He had a most desirable wife.

Dimples and curls everywhere.

- He couldn't sit still.

He had a bladder complaint.

We had to keep the chamber pot  
by his chair.

They all look so stiff.

- They all look like conspirators.

- Or worse -  
thieves, pickpockets.

Child-molesters, murderers...

- His head's too big.

- Well, maybe the painter  
wanted you to say that.

He didn't like him  
or approve of his character,  
so he made him absurd.

Not enough to spoil  
his own reputation,  
of course,

but certainly enough  
to spoil his.

Legitimate painter's armoury.

Flatter, praise,  
insult, abuse, accuse.

- Accuse?

Are you going to do the same?

- I might. It depends.

- On what?

- The price,  
the state of our friendship,  
the angle of the light,  
the smell of his armpits,  
the beauty of his wife,  
whether I've eaten or drunk,  
whether, indeed, I am drunk,  
does he know Titian,  
has he been to Cadiz,  
does he have big feet?

Context, context, context.

- God,

I'd like to watch you  
do those things.

I really think  
you ought to do it.

- You do?

Well, the boy says  
I should do it.

Then I'll do it!

(laughter)

No, I won't.

At least, not for nothing.

I want 100 guilders for a full-length,  
half the money up front.

Now, how much did van der Helst  
get for this one?

- 2, 3, 6, 7, 8...

full-lengths at 100.

2, 3, 6, 7...

half-lengths at 50.

2, 4, 6, 8...

nine heads-and-shoulders at 25.

Which is 1,375.

- Not bad.

- Well, he should've subtracted 100  
for that stale duck,  
50 for the vulgar drinking-horn,  
and 25

for that dried-up vegetation.

- Hello!

Looks like

they're making certain  
that you don't have a choice,  
Rembrandt.

Ah, they've already reserved  
you a space,  
Rembrandt.

You have been named.

- I want to draw everyone  
beforehand.

That's essential.

And I'm not doing long rows  
of pompous faces,

but anyway, I have other  
things to do first,

and I want nine months.

Human gestation period.

If it takes that long  
to make a baby,

it will certainly take that long  
to make a painted army.

- It doesn't take that long

to make a baby.

Ten seconds, at the most.

- For you, maybe,

but for me, with the right  
dimples and curls,

five seconds.

- Ah.

(laughter)

- This is me with Saskia.

Saskia van Uylenburgh.

Hendrick Uylenburgh's cousin.

Now, Hendrick was my dealer  
and patron for eight years.

How was she?

Well, she was

my dealer's cousin,

and the three of us knew  
what we were doing.

A business proposition.

Keep it in the family,  
so to speak.

A dynastic marriage.

Twenty when I met her.

I was... 25.

I admit that I was, at first,  
not so much taken with her.

A little insipid, I thought.

And she was also hoity-toity.

An accent.

At least from where I stood.

She smirked a great deal.

She kept eating almonds,  
which she hid

in a pocket somewhere.

Maybe in her underwear,  
close to her skin.

And...

and perhaps

that excited me a little.

Out of her armpit...

into her mouth.

We met for the first time  
in a church.

The Old Church, Amsterdam.

You don't normally think  
of armpits in a church.  
Her first question  
she ever asked me  
was how the mills  
were turning in Leiden.  
- So how do the mills turn  
in Leiden?  
- Cheeky cow.  
I said, "Well enough.  
As well as they turn  
in Friesland.  
The wind blows in Leiden  
as much as it does  
in Leeuwarden,  
or, for that matter,  
out of any miller's arse,"  
and she smirked again.  
So I could see  
it was going to be possible  
to share a dirty joke with her.  
God, she had big feet.  
And, I must admit,  
the most delightful,  
tight little arse.  
We married,  
and it worked.  
We roused about.  
Did she love me?  
Hmm...  
I don't know.  
Did I love her?  
I don't know.  
She was more like a relative  
I had known all my life.  
Perhaps even like a... sister,  
but legitimate in bed,  
so to speak.  
How do babies grow  
in your family?  
- Like tulips.  
- Let's make a baby.  
- Very well.  
- Very well?

What's that mean?

- No more than it says.
- Get Geertje!
- Let me look!
- No, you don't want to look!

Geertje?!

- Let me draw you.
- No.
- Then let me stay.
- You must go!

This is a private time.

No drawing or painting!

Now, what the hell am I,  
just an excuse

for a bloody drawing?!

- How can it be a private time?!

It's our child! We made it!

- I and my stretched  
and bloodied private parts  
are not just an excuse  
for another bloody painting...

- There are chalk marks  
all over the sheet!

...that ends up  
in a dealer's window  
for the whole world to see!

Oh!

My body reproduced  
in a thousand prints  
seen all over Holland!

- Holland?

How dare you!

You mean Europe?

- Oh, fuck you  
and your painting!

- You are not needed.

Take you stuff and get out!

- Yes, yes!

- Get out!

- I think we married  
to make babies,  
and to make a fortune  
for her cousin -  
and for her, and for me.



- We did? Hmm.

We certainly needed  
to make some money.

- Good at keeping the books.  
She was very good with figures.  
Geertje, please.

Look after her, will you?

- Bastard! Get out!

You smelly little runt!  
(exclaiming in pain)

- Take my hand!

- Out!

- I pay you!!

- We really needed  
to make some money.

- And creating a nice, snug,  
and very Dutch comfortable  
business.

She was a great companion.

Oh, fuck.

Fuck. Fuck!

I cannot lose her,  
and I'm not going to go down  
and fucking pray.

There's no goddamn  
superstitious angels,  
no visitations!

This sort of goddamn thing  
is happening all over Amsterdam  
at this moment.

God.

(women shouting in distance)

What... what are you doing?

You're not going to jump, are you?

- No.

I'm an angel.

Least they say so,  
when I dance for them  
in my angel's costume.

- Angel's costume?

- Like when I was born.

No clothes on.

Only I'm nine now.

Well...

nine going on 10.  
Perhaps 11.  
I could be 12.  
Maybe even older.  
Horatio says  
that's what excites them.  
Am I a woman,  
or am I still a girl?  
What do you think?  
I don't think  
I'm a woman yet anyway.  
Least, I haven't bled yet.  
They say  
that as soon as you bleed,  
you become a woman.  
You are no longer a child  
and you can go with men.  
Sometimes,  
they become impatient,  
and they cut you  
to make you bleed.  
I'm nearly as old as my mother was  
when she died.  
She jumped off the roof  
of the Westerkerk.  
- What was she doing up there?  
- Watching the night, I expect.  
Like you.  
(woman screaming in distance)  
They will tell you  
that babies are made up there,  
the stars in the sky,  
but it's not true.  
Fathers make the babies.  
They are out there,  
doing it,  
between their legs.  
In the streets.  
In the Kerkendam  
and the Kloosterstraat  
and the Doelenplein.  
And then the mothers bring them  
to the house downstairs.  
- I live downstairs.

- It's not so bad really.  
Most of the babies die  
and go to heaven.  
Least, I think they go to heaven.  
So it's less a burden  
than you think.

**(in distance):**

Take my hand

- Think about it.

- Oh, I will.

(screaming in distance)

- Why are your hands red?

It looks like blood.

- Oh, no, it's, um, chalk.

I've been drawing.

- What are you looking at?

- Uh, the night.

I was watching the night.

I see churches and...

- Over there,

in that church,

is where your wife will be buried.

(coughing)

- Really? How do you know that?

- And over there, in that church,

is where you will be buried.

She stays there,

and you get to disappear.

- Really?

- Yes.

- Are you an Angel of Death?

- No. I'm an Angel of Birth.

(woman screaming)

Kemp says.

- Birth? Really?

Rombout Kemp?

- I bring babies.

- Whose babies?

- I can bring you a baby

if you want.

- You can?

How's that?

- How much will you give me?

- That depends.

- Girl or boy?

(screaming)

- Bring me a boy.

- Kemp will be pleased.

He charges more for a boy.

What will you call him,

because as yet these babies

don't have names,

and it's important for baptism.

- Hmm.

Well, I had thought of Titus.

- All right,

but you must look after him

very carefully.

Babies need to be provided for,

for life. Always.

(screaming)

What happens

if you lose your eyes,

become blind.

What then?

- Did you say Rombout Kemp?

- Yes, I did.

He's my father.

(cheering)

(baby crying)

(women singing)

- Thank you. Ladies...

Ladies, please, please.

Thank you so much,

but leave us now.

Thank you.

- Let us change the sheets.

- No, no! Leave them!

It's blood, chalk. It's us.

(baby crying)

Geertje.

And thank you.

We're parents now.

At last, we can be trusted

to be alone together.

Hold that.

Hold that Roman gesture

for a moment!

- Surely we're going

to wake up the baby!

It's meant to be a Nativity

in Bethlehem, isn't it?!

- Matthias, I'll decide, thank you

very much, what the scene is.

It could be

"The Visit of the Three Kings."

The baby's name this time is Titus.

- That's not a Jewish name.

It's Roman.

- Pompey?

Caesar?

Anthony? Augustus?

That's not bad.

Just hold that one more minute.

(music)

(drums playing)

(chatter)

- The queen.

I am the queen.

(applause)

- Is this wise?

- I've given her something to drink.

She's a little bit tipsy.

- Aren't you being

fucking irresponsible?

- Like you, she's celebrating.

Let her be.

- She's just out of childbirth,

the baby's sick,

and you're making them both

fucking drunk!

- Rembrandt, I came to see

what you were doing,

but it's all so noisy in here.

- Oh...

- Careful, he's just been fed.

You'll make him sick.

- Oh. Okay...

Oh...

Mm.

(kissing)

Hasselburg.

Meet...

Titus van Rijn.

Painter's son.

(laughing softly)

(kissing)

Carl, here, hold him.

Come on, he won't bite.

Or shit on your hands.

- But he might throw up  
on your shoulder.

- Ah... There.

There he is.

Look at this lot.

Tramps, beggars,

Amsterdam riff-raff!

Never could be Romans.

- Romans?

Is that what we're meant to be?

- I thought we were in Bethlehem.

- There were Romans in Bethlehem?

- There were Romans everywhere.

Just like now.

- I'm not playing a Roman Catholic!

You never said

we were Roman Catholics!

- No one would mistake you  
for a Roman, or a Catholic.

You're too raggedy-arsed.

- Soldiers are soldiers everywhere.

Make them the Dutch Militia,  
you will have your crowd.

Wave a few banners.

Swing a few pikes.

(baby crying)

Let the Romans become  
the Amsterdam Musketeers.

- All right, you pathetic  
rabble, take a break.

Come on, take them

to the kitchen for a beer.

Carl, give me back my son,  
and, uh, take your father  
into the house,

show him my armour.

I could equip a regiment  
for him.

Yes! Couldn't I?

Couldn't I?

Ah, so beautiful.

(kissing)

I don't want to do this thing.

- Are you so sure?

You prepare a Nativity  
to celebrate your son,  
and you fill it with soldiers.

I think you're halfway  
to accepting the commission.

- And there's no women.

There has to be some women  
in this painting.

Maybe you could be in it.

- Oh, no, thank you.

All happy roistering,  
bad breath, bad jokes,  
buttock pinching.

- Buttock pinching? So who's up  
to buttock-pinching, then?

(giggling)

- Stop it!

(Rembrandt sighing contently)

No, don't put your hand there.

I'm still bleeding.

- Women always bleed  
after childbirth.

That's normal.

- Up to a point.

We have gone beyond that point.

- It's two months.

You should be on the mend by now.

What's happened to our love life?

- Stop it.

- Where's those rosy cheeks?

Hmm?

That kissable backside.

I'm fed up masturbating  
into a paint-rag.

- Well, find yourself a whore, then!

I'm a leaky vessel.  
My womb has never returned  
to where it should've been.  
- Let me be the judge.  
- Stop.  
- Saskia.  
- Stop.  
- Please, please, Saskia.  
Oh, my God, Saskia!  
Saskia!  
Oh, God...  
- Look what you've done!  
Get Geertje!  
Stop thinking about your prick  
and get Geertje!  
- Sorry.  
- Saskia? I'm here!  
What are you doing  
on the floor?  
You fool! Get out!  
- Fuck this painting!  
Fuck it! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!  
Bloody hell!  
(baby crying)  
What are you doing up here?  
- I'm sorry.  
I can only find you a girl baby.  
(baby crying)  
Look.  
- For Christ's sake,  
mind you don't fall.  
- This one's really pretty,  
don't you think?  
- I once had two daughters.  
Both called Cornelia.  
But they died.  
- I expect they're in heaven.  
Maybe these will be soon.  
Only half of girl babies survive,  
and only one quarter  
of boy babies.  
My sister and I do our best,  
but since we are not  
fully women yet,



we can't feed them at the breast.  
That's what they really want.  
So since they don't have  
proper mothers,  
they tend to die.

- Where did you get them from?

- Downstairs.

- Where downstairs?

I live downstairs.

- In the basement.

Next door, really.

Well, three houses next door,  
but the roofs are connected.

My sister normally helps me.

She looks after the boy babies,  
and I look after the girl babies.

There's Horatio, too,  
and Dirk, our friends.

They don't look after babies.

They want to be soldiers.

Horatio's certain to be a soldier.

He's learning to fire a musket.

(babies crying)

My sister, Marita,  
is really in love with him.

She often kisses him,  
and other things.

- You must come downstairs  
to my house,  
and I'll draw you  
and your sister.

- No, I can't do that.

I'm to stay away from men.  
Unless they are approved of  
by my father.

Men are supposed to be  
dangerous.

Especially at night.

- Oh, foul day!

Oh, desperate deed!  
I will bestow on thee  
the reward of thy treachery.

Thou wanton!

Blacker than

the vilest pit of Hell!  
Thinks thou self an innocent?  
Thinks thou self an innocent?  
Thinks thou self chaste?!  
I had rather proved thee  
what I know thou art.  
A whore!  
(audience exclaiming)  
Witness thus  
the reward of dishonour.  
(applause)  
- I need them.  
I need them out here.  
I need them looking towards me.  
I'm the painter of this painting,  
I need them here!  
- Everyone, turn this way.  
- That's good,  
but take it down, please,  
because that's going to be  
way out of the frame.  
- That's Jorisz.  
- Oh, fuck, Jorisz. Never mind.  
Listen. That's good, Pieter.  
I can see Simon.  
Jorisz, will you please  
find the light?!  
- Get them  
to put their hands together,  
as though in prayer.  
- Are you sure, Kemp?  
This is meant to be a tableau  
full of martial spirit.  
Is it an accident the fair-haired ones  
are grouped on the left?  
- Well, they can be  
your little angels, Kemp.  
- My God!  
They don't look  
like little angels.  
- Expert on angels, Kemp?  
Because they can come  
in all shapes, sizes and ages.  
They needn't all be girls, either.

Jan is a blacksmith.

- Joseph shovels shit,  
when he's not  
in the guardhouse,  
or lounging around  
on our doorstep.

- Jacob is a vagrant  
of no fixed address.

- Emmett is...

What is Emmett?

- Uh, Emmett has been Sophocles  
and Nebuchadnezzar,  
if that helps.

And, uh, and...

who else he been?

Potiphar the, uh...

Potiphar the what's it called?

- Cuckold.

- Cuckold. Thank you.

- Potiphar was no cuckold.

- Oh, excuse me,

he certainly was!

I have spoken to a rabbi,  
who told me that Potiphar  
slept with young men  
in order to avoid the temptation  
of his wife  
trying to screw Joseph.

- Jewish sophistry.

- Sophis... Really?

They got a down payment  
on sophistry?

What about Reformists' sophistry?

What about Mary being a virgin  
as a result  
of a translation error  
from the Hebrew?

Come on, Kemp, keep up, love.

Now, hands together, please,  
clasped in prayer.

**(all):**

who art in Heaven..."

- Jan, please,

forgotten how to pray?

Thank you.

- There's bound to be trouble  
with the liturgy.

- What are we praying for?

Rain?

- A visit from the Holy Ghost.

- Thank you.

- Permission to shit?

- Let's try a Frans Hals.

- No, no,

but isn't that plagiarism?

- No. He stole it from Veronese.

- Well, Frans, tables, chairs.

Geertje, Hans!

Come on!

Things for the table!

I'm not paying 100 guilders

to be in a rout.

- Oh, come now.

See it as good poor-box money.

You can take the leftovers  
back to the orphanage.

We'll give you a bag.

Take the bread

back to your little angels,  
your daughters.

- I have no daughters.

- Jorisz, will you please  
stop looking

so fucking miserable.

- My dog died.

- Oh, sorry, but get a new one.

Like this one who's always  
trying to screw Jamie's bitch.

- Oh, yes, that filthy whore  
of a species is always on his,

aren't you Woolfi,

you dirty dog!

- I think we should memorialize  
his efforts, actually,

but be careful, Jorisz,

'cause he's a biter!

He'll have your prick

or your ass, one of the two.

- Mind the glasses!

- All right! All right! Ha! Ha!

Everyone ready?

What this needs is Carl.

Carl, put Hendrickje on your lap,  
but no fumbling.

She's far too young  
and far too respectable.

- I'm almost a woman.

- He's almost a man;

that's what I am worried about.

We're out to salute

the daughter

of the King of England,

who's married

to the King of Holland!

- He's not a king, goddammit!

- As near as - goddammit!

- I'm a Republican!

- So you are.

- When you're drunk.

- Sit down, Jorisz. Finish your beer.

- I am not posing for a picture  
supporting monarchy.

I hate the House of Orange.

- So do we all.

- It's a horrible colour, for a start!

(laughter)

- Oldenbarnevelt forever!

- Can I sing?

- Sing away, canary.

(singing in Dutch)

Kemp, come back!

They're singing your song!

Oh, Geertje,

I'd like to see you singing!

- Get your hands off me,

you dirty bastard!

- Whoa!

- Don't worry, you'll get paid!

You always do!

- Shut up!

(raucous laughter)

(sighing)

- Goddammit. I'll do it.

Stop your sulking.

- I'm not sulking. And do what?

- The goddamned painting  
of the militia  
pretending  
to be mighty soldiers.

- Oh, that.

(coughing)

- What?

What do you mean, "Oh, that?"

I thought

that was what you wanted!

Goddammit!

It was your idea.

You put me up to this!

- Did I?

- And I know I'll live to regret it.

- Then don't do it.

Simply don't do it.

It doesn't matter.

- Well, now you're being petulant.

(coughing)

- You've lost

the commission anyway.

You've apparently upset

Rombout Kemp.

Uli's acting very nervous lately,

and he's drinking a lot

with the Banning Cocqs.

Do you know 100 guilders

is not so much.

You could get

at least 120 a throw,

painting 20 of them.

(coughing)

Then we can fix the foundations

so the house doesn't fall over.

- Oh, God! It won't fall over,

for Christ's sake.

- It would take care of Titus

for some time to come.

You know Uli even said

you shouldn't do the militia.

- Why ever not?

He used to be so keen.

- He keeps on saying  
you ought to talk to the man  
in the red cloak,  
and then decide.

- Who's the man  
in the red cloak?

Uli is getting cold feet.

He's losing his nose  
for a bargain.

- I don't think so.

Something serious  
is worrying him.

- What did you mean,  
"Take care of Titus?"

- Ahem. It's certain  
that I'm on the way out.

- No. No, you're not.

(coughing)

Come on, get up!

Out of this bed at once!

Let me kiss your belly,  
that'll rouse you.

- Oh, for God's sake,  
don't start that again!  
I'll end up on the floor,  
and the floor's cold.

- For Jesus's sake, if the floor's cold,  
I'll buy you a fucking carpet.

(chuckling)

I'm in disgrace.

- Why?

- For attempting to make love  
to my wife?

- Were you hoping  
to make a baby?

- Not necessarily.

- It is strange, isn't it,  
how it all happens?

- Is it?

- I've watched it happen.

The men come to the orphanage,

and some of the older girls -  
Judith, she's about 13 -  
are taken to the bedroom  
overlooking the garden...  
...and they stay there  
for an hour or so.  
I have stood in the gallery  
and watched.  
There is some laughter, it's true,  
but mostly,  
it's all done very quietly,  
and then there are tears.  
But Judith often comes back  
with some flowers,  
or a new ribbon,  
and once,  
she was given a Passover cake,  
which she shared with me.  
And once...  
my father gave her  
a silver coin.  
- Your father? Kemp?  
- Oh, yes.  
Don't worry.  
He took off his white collar  
at the door.  
I don't think Judith knows  
he's my father.  
She just thinks of him  
as an old grandfather  
from Haarlem.  
- You're supposed to be an angel  
and not know about such things.  
What is that bruise  
on your face?  
- I said I wasn't going to do  
what Judith's doing  
for at least another year,  
not until I start  
being a woman, that is.  
Otherwise, you end up  
like my sister.  
She had an accident  
with a pot of scalding water.



She will never  
be beautiful again.

(thunder)

(rain falling)

(coughing)

- This rain never stops.

Geertje's at Titia's with Titus.

- Probably not.

- Hmm?

She'd have left Titus with Titia  
and gone to the guardhouse

round the corner,

more likely with Jorisz.

She'll come back

smelling of tobacco

and other unmentionables.

- Hendrickje's gone home  
to buy linen.

I gave her 10 guilders.

(thunder rumbling)

Carl and Gerard

are at the theatre.

They want to paint actors.

- Isn't that what you do?

(Rembrandt chuckling)

(Saskia coughing)

- Annette and Femke  
are fetching milk.

Christina and Kirde

are sewing at Katia's.

Pieter is reading to his mother  
in Praed Street.

Susanna is praying no doubt  
at St. Swithin's,

and Caspar and Jan are fishing.

- In the rain?

- Mm-hmm.

- Their mother will kill me  
if they catch another cold.

- Balthasar, well,

he has gone to the cemetery  
to whisper

to his father's corpse.

(Saskia laughing)

- And David?  
- David? Well, you know David.  
He's probably asleep somewhere,  
in a barn with a horse.  
(sighing)  
(thunder)  
We...  
...we are alone.  
- In this big house,  
with far too many servants.  
(coughing)  
- Rich.  
- Fat.  
- Tired.  
- Happy?  
- Not so happy.  
You're ill,  
and I am...  
miserable that you're ill.  
- What will you do if I die?  
- You're not going to die.  
- What will you do when I die?  
- I could die before you.  
- Oh!  
(chuckling)  
Then where would we be?  
I'd have to sell this house.  
Say goodbye to paintings  
and pictures.  
Move back to Leeuwarden  
with Titus.  
How about "The Militia"?  
- Oh, let's not talk about it.  
(coughing)  
Hell! I confess  
I'm beginning to warm to it.  
You were right.  
What's keeping me interested  
is all the invented conspiracies.  
- Maybe the conspiracies  
are not so invented.  
- Well, Kemp ought to be castrated,  
that hypocritical, lecherous old wolf.  
Apparently,

he's using the orphanage  
as a child brothel.  
Engelen should be booted  
out of the Kirchmarsal.  
He's buying houses  
in the Jordaan,  
and then burning them down  
to claim the insurance.  
Visscher...  
has gone into tobacco  
after saying he wouldn't,  
and forcing down the price,  
and...  
there's a new thing.  
Borst says...  
that I am giving away...  
military secrets.  
( "coughing" )  
(laughing)  
Apparently, I'm not supposed  
to show the enemy  
how to load and fire  
the new muskets.  
So I'm painting the muskets  
upside down...  
(laughter)  
...to confuse!  
Because it will.  
It will confuse the Spanish  
in Madrid.  
(coughing)  
Oh, yes, and, and...  
and Valladolid  
and Santiago de Compostella.  
You see now  
what a patriot I am.  
(door closing)  
Someone back from somewhere.  
- Tell them to close the windows  
in the balcony,  
or the dye will run  
on the new curtains.  
(thunder)  
- They've shot Hasselburg!

Someone's shot Hasselburg!

In the eye!

Th-they shot him

through the right eye!

Into his brain!

(thunder)

He's dead!

(bells tolling)

- Hasselburg was killed  
with a bullet in the eye.

Blinded.

A painter would sympathize  
with such a death.

- So would Samson.

- He was blinded in two eyes,  
but he brought down the temple.

- He had great strength.

- There might be equivalent  
great strength in seeing.

You could bring down the Temple.

- Temple. What Temple?

- Samson was a witness.

- Before he was blinded.

- You could be a witness, too.

- Witness?

- I think I might introduce you  
to the mourners.

This is Carl,  
Hasselburg's son.

- Well, indeed, we have...

more than a little  
passing acquaintance.

Don't we, Carl?

Carl is very fond  
of my favourite servant,  
Hendrickje.

Sir, in your great grief,  
I offer you condolences  
from myself and my family.

- Thank you, Rembrandt.

And how is Hendrickje?

- She is very well,  
and at present, kissing babies.

Uh, where is Egremont?

Where Hasselburg was  
Egremont was also,  
and I understand Egremont  
will now be captain?  
- Egremont is gone.  
- Gone?  
- This is Hasselburg's successor,  
Captain Frans Banning Cocq,  
Lord of Purmerend and Ilpendam.  
May I, Captain, introduce the painter  
who will shortly be  
memorializing us all?  
- Oh, sir, a pleasure.  
- Sadness to meet  
on such an occasion,  
and I trust you have not  
started your painting,  
and therefore not obliged  
to make any irritating changes?  
- Maybe since  
the subjects have changed,  
we should change the painter?  
- Ooh!  
Do you think so, Willem?  
- How would it have been  
if you'd been obliged  
to paint the portrait  
of a one-eyed captain of the militia,  
lying on his back in a coffin  
dressed like a grandmother  
in bed?  
- And this is Banning Cocq's  
brother-in-law,  
and this is  
Banning Cocq's nephew.  
- I have never met a painter before.  
- I have been told  
that a painter's hands  
are always stained  
with the materials of his trade.  
- Oh, no, no, no.  
As you see, Clement,  
Rembrandt has the hands  
of a gentleman.

Are you a gentleman, sir?

- If I am not,  
then I can paint any man  
to look like a gentleman.  
Indeed, such is the nature  
of painting  
that I can paint  
even a prick like you  
to look like a gentleman,  
and as such,  
any man to look like a painter.  
(clanging)

- If you want to be a military man,  
you have to sweat a little!  
It's not all drinking  
and costume and whoring.  
Now, here look,  
if you want to get in  
to be in a military...

- Sit still.

Hold this.

- You must not look  
at Marita's face.  
If you do,  
she will run away and hide.  
She did that last week  
and we found her up a chimney.

- What happened to her face?

Straighten your arm.

- Kemp did it.

- Rombout Kemp?

- He caught her...

with her dress above her head  
with Horatio,  
who had his thingy  
between her legs.

He said

that she was very, very wicked.  
So he threw the pot  
of scalding water in her face,  
to stop her being a temptation,  
he said.

- My God! That's terrible.

How old is Horatio?

- He's 13.

He's going to be a soldier.

He can fire a musket,  
though he doesn't know  
really how to.

And he loves me.

We are going  
to run away together.

To New Amsterdam.

Manhattan Island.

In America.

- Rembrandt is asking us  
to be stand-ins  
to a collection  
of rich merchants' sons  
playing at soldiers!

When have they ever  
fired a shot in anger?

- When are they ever likely  
to fire a shot in anger?

Bought commissions,  
bought titles,  
and bought uniforms.

They ought to be shot,  
all of them.

- Maybe that's what they  
have started doing already.

- Bang, bang, bang!  
Hasselburg is dead.

- I used to trade bulbs  
from Turkey.

That's how I started,  
but the bottom fell out.

Now it's carnations  
from Alexandria.

Just as versatile as tulips.

Just as colourful.

Just as variegated.

(voice echoing in pail):

Just as decorative.

Ma.

Ma.

And they smell.

Tulips never smelt.

Except when they went bad,  
but it's not the same.  
The market's all right,  
but not brilliant.  
You could buy them off me,  
if you like.  
I'll give you...  
a goodish price.  
Hmm? Hmm?  
Where the hell have you been?  
Hey! Look at that!  
What do you think? Huh?  
Do you think I look and feel  
like a flower-seller?  
(with French accent):  
From Paree?  
A Huguenot  
escaping from the pogroms?  
Like Descartes hiding  
from being a French soldier,  
living incognito in Amsterdam,  
learning to be Dutch -  
double Dutch, even!  
Trying very hard indeed  
to assimilate,  
like all foreigners.  
What do you think?  
- I think you're a fake,  
Bloemfelt.  
(exclamations)  
I saw you at the theatre  
the other evening,  
and not in the audience,  
on the stage.  
You're an actor.  
- Oh!  
- And I know your moustache  
to be fake, too.  
And this, of course,  
is not your house, is it?  
I mean, this is Egremont's house.  
- Mm...  
Till he gets back.  
I'm looking after it for him.



(all chuckling)

- Well, well, well,

all is not as it seems,

is it, Bloemfelt?

I mean, shall I paint you

as the flower merchant

Bloemfelt?

As the actor Bloemfelt?

As the pretend soldier

Bloemfelt?

Or as Lieutenant Egremont?

- I should do

as you normally do, Rembrandt.

Your paintings

are always full of actors

posing and stalking about.

And like all actors,

you're always peering in a mirror

to see how you look.

All the world's a stage,

eh, Rembrandt?

You're going to put us all

on a stage in your painting?

(music)

(laughter)

- Oh, it's wonderful.

You did it at last.

Oh, you do listen.

- Thank you!

Let me kiss you.

(baby fussing)

- Where did you get it?

- I walked to Jaffa,

I got a camel to Jerusalem,

I climbed Mount Ararat.

(Saskia laughing and coughing)

Yes, I sailed

the whole Sea of Galilee.

- Where did you get it, really?

- No, that would be telling.

- Oh, look it's beautiful!

Oh, I want to be buried in it!

- What?

Tatty and moth-eaten by then.

Pieter sold it to me.

He says it's from Cadiz.

- Where's Cadiz?

- I dunno.

- Fetch the globe!

Where is Cadiz?

(laughing)

- Hello.

Come on! You must all sit  
on my magic carpet.

- Well, with all of us on it,  
it won't fly away.

(laughing)

- Come on, bring your wine.

Sit here and here.

Balance it and stop it tipping.

- Feet, feet, feet, feet, feet.

- Rembrandt, hurry up.

- All right, all right.

- If you don't sit down,

we'll fly away,

and you'll be left behind!

- I'm checking the filth.

- Up you get.

- Oh, me coccyx.

(grunting)

- So where is Cadiz?

- Well, I have to say,  
it's in the Keizersgracht.

- What?

- Mm-hmm.

- In Amsterdam?

- Well, I said to Pieter  
to get me a Turkish carpet for you,  
and he knew

that Banning Cocq's father  
lived for several years  
in Alexandria and Jaffa,  
and he had a collection.

So we did a deal.

"Pontius Pilate

Washing His Hands"

for the Dutch Turkish carpet,  
courtesy of the Cocqs.

- There was surely  
a hidden meaning there.

- I would say so!  
(laughter)

- That family is full of secrets  
and conspiracies.

- Titia, how do you know that?

- The biggest public secret  
is that Captain  
Frans Banning Cocq,  
Lord of Whatever,  
is hopelessly in love  
with Willem van Ruytenburch,  
Lord of Whatever.

- Oh! What?  
That little runt? Fuck!  
(laughter)

- Titia!  
How on earth do you know that?

- Has our little Willem  
got his promotion, then?

- Apparently his father  
was somewhat peculiar  
in that direction as well.  
Too many years  
going native in Arabia,  
where he shared certain favours  
with a bailiff.

- Or a "caliph."

- A caliph, like you!  
(laughter)

- Well, I don't care.  
I like this carpet very much.

- Good, good.

- So does Titus.  
He just sicked up on it.

- Oh, Titus!

- Well, that's it, christened then.  
We can't turn it back now.  
If Titus thinks it warrants  
his vomited breakfast,  
then that's it. Settled.  
(indistinct chatter)  
(laughter)

- Yes, the English say  
the Dutch...  
are getting taller all the time.  
- That seems not to be the case,  
though,  
with little Willem.  
Do you think?  
- Little?  
Little?  
You think Willem is little?  
Do we look  
so different together?  
Well, maybe if...  
Well, if you...  
dress him in yellow and white -  
hmm -  
with a tallish hat  
and perhaps a feather,  
and I'm dressed darkish,  
maybe in black, like this,  
that would compensate a little,  
don't you think?  
But I mean we don't want  
to look like a bride and groom,  
now, do we?  
(chuckling)  
You're hearing me, Rembrandt?  
- Oh, you're making all your negatives  
sound to me like positives.  
I think I'm hearing you very well.  
- Oh, good, that's very good.  
So perhaps you might be  
the excellent man for the job.  
But, um...  
...there is my brother-in-law,  
Andries de Graeff, to remember.  
That business  
of the returned painting  
wasn't very good,  
was it, Rembrandt?  
We understood he, uh...  
We understood he threw  
the glove at you, so to speak.  
A challenge,

so to speak?

You know, he tends to be touchy and tetchy, I suppose.

- Well, it's not too late for you to change your mind, and I would hate to have to sue you for non-payment, like your brother-in-law, who you must know lost his case.

- Ah! So who's making a challenge now?

Huh-huh.

Well, you know, Andries warned me all about you, you know, putting special meanings in your paintings.

I mean, what he was asking for was honesty.

You interpreted the honesty for drunkenness.

Is that right? Hmm?

Rembrandt?

And since he's my brother-in-law, and very, very wealthy...

...I understand several of us paid you already?

Isn't that right?

- The red sash, I think, and the black suit.

Let's see? Good.

Um... and I think we'll have a gesture, a gesture like a Roman officer.

Not Greek.

Mm-hmm. There. There.

And the...

That's it.

Flat-soled shoes, this, I think.

Oh, and "The Man in Black."

Ha-ha.

And you've...

you've picked up the glove,  
so to speak,

for your brother-in-law?

- Yeah. Yeah, I think so.

I think so...

- Hmm.

- Yes.

Well, as long as you make  
Willem look very grand, eh?

He'll be pleased.

As of course shall I.

We shall, I'm sure, Willem and I,  
look very splendid together.

Very splendid.

- Look what we found for you.

She's a present.

A beauty. An exotic.

Her name is Ispidie,

from the Gold Coast,

and she hasn't caught pneumonia

or influenza yet,

but I'm certain

she surely will, eventually,

and then she'll die.

They just don't survive

very long.

- You can take her

and then draw her,

or whatever you do.

- What do you do?

- You're so wealthy now.

You could probably buy

her entire tribe.

Though if she's only got

six months to live,

it might not be a good idea.

- I'm sure painting alone  
never made you so filthy rich.

- Tell us what you really do  
to make all this cash.

- Are you a sort of pimp,  
Rembrandt?

- I have known some pimps  
here and there,

some of them  
were quite well off,  
but, uh, I would never say  
they were rich.  
Really rich.  
See, the problem with pimps  
is that they don't live  
so long either.  
They die of the pox  
or the knife of a jealous lover,  
or with their eyes scratched out.  
- Are you a ship speculator?  
For I am told  
you are lousy with money.  
- When people owe me money,  
I'm ruthless.  
I just can't stand debtors.  
If you can't play the game  
like the rest of us, then out.  
- I understand  
the money side of things  
is more in your wife's line.  
- We gave her 50 each.  
I suppose that's half of it now.  
Or has it gone up again?  
I need a good position  
in that painting.  
No Holland corners,  
and if I don't look like  
I would like to look like...  
then 50 is all you're getting.  
(chuckling)  
- I hear that Wormsmark...  
- It's Wormsdyke.  
...has included you...  
in his deal with the Sunflower.  
- And I understand...  
that that is Egremont's ship.  
Do you know where he is?  
- Egremont?  
- Mm.  
- Good Lord, no!  
He's finished.  
He's disgraced himself.

He'll probably stay abroad.  
Probably somewhere  
where they speak French.  
Madeira. Tunisia.  
She speaks French.  
Don't you, darling?  
She may be black,  
but she's very, very talented.  
Remember, Rembrandt,  
six months at the latest.  
Then you have to pay  
for the coffin.  
And the Calvin crowd,  
they don't really like blacks  
in their cemeteries.  
Do they, Ispidie?  
- Look...  
I paid 20 guilders for these.  
I need to wear them!  
My wife will complain if I don't  
and my life  
won't be worth living.  
- Now...  
- I wore this at the Queen's visit!  
- If I put you in this stuff,  
you're going to have to lose  
the beard,  
because they want clean-shaven.  
I could give you a dog to carry.  
- What the hell for?!  
I don't like dogs,  
and they don't like me!  
They bite me.  
I insist we wear these.  
I'm paying, for God's sake!  
- This - wrong colour.  
Too dull and no shine.  
- If they're good enough  
for the Queen of France,  
they're good enough for me,  
and should be good enough  
for you!  
- Look, if you wear this stuff,  
then I'm going to put you



in the shadows,  
otherwise you'll look  
like a catamite in a kardomah.

Next one?

- Well, what the hell is that?

- Well, the first's a bum-boy,  
and the second I'm not sure.

I got it from Wormscheldt.

- It's Wormskerck!

- Ah. Mm-hmm.

There... Now, this...

Ahem-hem-hem.

How's Egremont doing?

- Pfft!

Disgraced.

- Oh?

- Why do you want to know?

He disappeared.

- Disappeared? What?

He was so loud a man,  
I doubt he could disappear  
so... easily.

- Disgraced,  
drunk in charge of firing.

He drank too much.

- Oh?

- He's got relatives in Virginia.

- Oh.

- Maybe he's gone there.

He was the one  
that ordered the shot  
that killed Hasselburg.

- Now that, to me,  
does not at all sound likely.

- Fire!

(gunshot)

Clear!

Ferdinand. Ready?

Fire!

(gunshot)

Clear.

Gerard. Ready?

Fire!

(gunshot)

Clear.

- You've forgotten the order to aim.

Who's doing the aiming?

- Well, surely the shooter  
aims his own musket?

- You would've thought so.

- Not without a musket stand.

(Rembrandt sighing)

- All right.

Well, let's try it again.

Uh, now, Hendrickje!

And Liefje!

Mind the way, please,

we're going to try again.

Hameron, let's try another one.

Now, bear with me.

Aim...

...and fire.

(gunshot)

So you see, you see,

that without a musket-stand,  
the aimer is in full control  
of the trajectory of the bullet.

So, in order for this to work,  
the aimer -

let's say Geyle or Jongkind -  
has to be in close association  
with the lieutenant  
who shouts the orders to fire.

- Which is Egremont.

- Mm-hmm.

- Egremont is in this conspiracy?

- Well, Jongkind said  
that Egremont was drunk  
and waved his arm  
indiscriminately.

- But Jongkind said  
that Egremont  
wasn't looking at any target.

- Has he been made a dupe?

Where the Hell is Egremont now?

I've asked around,  
but get hazy answers.

- I've heard a rumour

that he may be in Genoa.

- Jongkind says Virginia.

- That is a long way to travel  
in six weeks.

What's he doing there?

- Well, everyone says the same:  
Shame, guilt, disgrace.

He's in hiding.

- He's on a ship  
belonging to Engelen.

- Virginia? Tobacco!

Engelen is after a slice  
of the Virginia tobacco market!

- But it was an accident.

"Dereliction of duty."

- Well, I'm absolutely certain  
that Egremont  
had nothing to do with it.

We must paint him  
into the picture.

Now, now, is there a likeness  
of him in Amsterdam?

- Yeah, well, he was supposed  
to be painted by Pinkenoy,  
so perhaps the Hague?

- Mm-hmm.

- The shot was fired  
behind Engeland's head.  
Matthias said the sound  
made everyone jump,  
so it could not have been expected.

- Fired by a 12-year-old boy.

Too young to be a soldier.

- It could be Horatio Eiken.

- Hmm?

- He's from the orphanage.  
He was out that afternoon shooting,  
the afternoon  
it was pouring with rain?  
Marita says he came back  
wringing wet and shivering,  
and wouldn't talk.

Then Dirk came in later  
and told everyone

that Hasselburg was dead,  
and Horatio told him to shut up,  
and then locked himself  
in the privy.

Dirk told me the details.

He said they'd caught him  
and told him to keep his mouth shut  
and not report what he had seen.  
Only he bit Jongkind's wrist  
and escaped.

- Well, Jongkind said his wrist  
was bitten by a dog.

Where is Horatio now?

- He's on a boat  
belonging to Engelen,  
somewhere off the Azores.

He left a note for Marita.

Which she keeps wrapped  
in a tear-stained handkerchief  
tucked in her bodice.

- Is it not curious  
that both Horatio and Egremont  
are not in Amsterdam?

- I don't understand.

Why would Horatio agree to do this?

- Oh.

- Marita says he was forced to.

- Blackmail.

- Freedom from Kemp.

- Kemp set him up?

- Kemp caught Horatio  
and Marita together...  
doing things.

- They were 12 and 13,  
for God's sake!

- Marita said she loved him.

- And Kemp says rape.

- No, they were going to take  
a passage to New Amsterdam,  
the Dutch settlement in America!

- Kemp accuses Horatio  
of throwing scalding coffee  
into Marita's face.

- Perhaps he wanted it to appear

like an act of jealousy.

- Well, if Horatio did not do what the conspirators wanted, he is accused of rape.

- Marita, like Marieke, is Kemp's daughter.

- What?

- Yes, she threw herself off the roof of the Westerkerk.

- We cannot blame Horatio.

He was planted.

- The plotters know who he is, and now I can show so do we.

We can include him in the picture.

Not by using his face, but by using his name:

Horatio Aiken.

Oak.

Oak leaves.

- That's not Banning Cocq's hand, is it?

It looks like it doesn't belong to the arm.

- Is that an observation, or a criticism?

But you're right.

It's not his hand.

That belongs to Piers Hasselburg.

- Geyle looks smart in his red suit.

Though the red of his nose matches the red of his jacket.

(baby coughing and crying)

(baby gurgling)

Has he been drinking?

- What's Woolfi the dog doing there?

- He's barking at Jorisz.

Can't you see him?

- Well, he's usually doing something dirty -

makes a change

he's only barking.

- Matthias doesn't look like he knows what he's doing

with that musket.

(baby crying)

- Oh, so what's new?

He's so near-sighted,  
he can't see two feet  
beyond his face.

- And Bloemfelt's grown  
a moustache!

- Ah, Bloemfelt says  
that when he's clean-shaven,  
he's himself,  
and when he wears a moustache,  
that's a signal he's acting.

Isn't it, Titus?

(Titus wailing)

So we can see...

(coughing)

We can see in this,  
he's acting, isn't he?

- Then it seems to me  
they should all  
be wearing moustaches.

Because it looks like  
they're all acting.

- Come on, let's have a little.

- No!

- Shh-shh-shh.

(woman crying)

Oh, what have you got  
under here?

Oh, now, no, no, no. Listen.

Shh-shh-shh.

(woman wailing)

- Will, no!

Goosing the servants?

(woman crying)

Did he get his dirty fingers  
on you, Hendrickje? Huh?

The master fumbler.

All big, empty breeches.

- Shut up, van Rijn.

- Bad-boy son of a rich man  
who got his money from spices,  
then bought a title,

gave it to his son  
to squander in fucking squalor?!!  
Mr. Lord Vlaardingen,  
the bought-title man -  
how much is that?!  
30,000 guilders  
from the good burghers  
of Rotterdam,  
because they needed a new  
fucking roof for the town hall?!  
- Shut your bloody mouth, Rijn,  
Leiden fucking miller.  
- Let's have some manners,  
and let's have some fucking  
courtesy in my house,  
you queer cunt.  
You inherited a bought title  
to improve  
your station in life.  
Pepper, nutmeg,  
cinnamon, cloves,  
in exchange  
for a poppycock badge of merit  
and a charter signed and sealed  
with wax crimson  
somewhere in the misty marshes  
of the Maas,  
which nobody has even heard of...  
Vlaardingen?!!  
Fucking hell. Vlaardingen?!  
Vlaardingen?!  
Where is Vlaardingen,  
Hendrickje, do you know?  
Vlaardingen? Who are you?  
Where are you?  
"Wherefore art thou,  
fucking Vlaardingen?!"  
- Shut your fucking mouth, Rijn.  
You're out!  
(Rembrandt feigning fear)  
You're dismissed.  
You'll not get  
a fucking penny from me.  
- Too late, Ruytenburch!!

You're in the picture!  
Led there by your bold captain,  
who always wanted  
to fumble your balls,  
suck your cock,  
and finger your arse!!  
- You are a disgusting  
little miller's pig  
from God-knows-where!  
- "God-knows-where!"  
"I'm a disgusting  
little fucking miller's pig  
from God-knows-where!"  
Well, we're off.  
Here we come. Here we come.  
We're facing off,  
and I'll ram you through  
your fucking queer balls, cad!  
What was it  
your Banning-Cocq said?!  
"Fire!"  
Because I know. I know.  
Now, you're out of here!  
And out of my fucking kitchen  
before I call Kemp  
and the city fathers  
and have you arrested  
for molestation of a child underage!!  
- You wouldn't dare!  
And besides, Kemp's in it, too.  
- Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah -  
conspirators together.  
Try me.  
- Leave us!  
- Yes! Oh, yes, you better go,  
Hendrickje,  
because Little Willem  
in his high-heel fucking boots  
is going to try  
and bribe me now,  
aren't you, Willem, eh?!  
Eh? Eh? Eh?  
Well, come on, then,  
Vlaardingen!



Come on! How much?

How much?

I think...

I have you

by the short and curlies.

- Hendrickje, there's something

Rembrandt ought to know.

You must tell him to come  
and buy meat here himself.

- Oh, whatever for? There's lots  
of comings and goings going on.

You're like a conspirator.

- We should get back now.

- Oh, Femke. I'm talking.

- Although you could come,  
if you like.

He seems

to let you know everything.

- Everything?

What do you mean?

- Do you, uh...

do you ever...

do you ever get away  
from the house?

- If I want.

What are you saying?

- Nothing.

It's... it's just...

if you ever had any free time,  
and, you know,

I was wondering...

(chicken clucking)

(Hendrickje laughing)

- Wondering what?

- If I could... see you.

- Well, you're seeing me now.

I'm a very busy

and valued servant.

I can't be seen

loitering around with you.

- If you're going

to stand here forever,

I'm putting the shopping  
on the ground.

- But I am often in the backyard  
and in the garden,  
and it has a gate without a lock.  
- In the mud.  
- Oh, shut up.  
There is no mud.  
- And the blood.  
- You do that, and I'll box  
your ears, madam!  
You can come and watch me  
shelling peas, or picking radishes,  
or looking for lice in Titus's hair.  
You could come and watch me  
pluck the chicken.  
- The emblem  
of my father's regiment.  
- Well, you see,  
that could be the excuse.  
- Hendrickje, will you please  
get rid of these people?  
This is a private bedroom,  
not a public drinking house,  
or a goddamn  
Reformed church chapel!  
- Shh!  
Look, it's for Titus,  
and it's for you.  
If you remarry,  
I want him to be safe.  
- I am not going to remarry!  
- If you remarry,  
half of everything we have together  
should go to him when he's 16.  
Look after him for me carefully.  
Very carefully.  
I shall never forgive you  
if anything happens to him.  
My ghost will come back  
and haunt you forever.  
He's our investment.  
We made him together.  
Let's invest in him together.  
I never want him to end up  
in that orphanage.

- You should listen to her.

They sometimes do it  
to little boys.

They did it to Horatio.

- For Christ's sake!

- Thank you.

So...

...how's the painting?

- It's almost finished.

- Satisfied?

- Yes.

- Then I can go.

- What?

- Well...

I only stayed around long enough

to see you finish the job

I encouraged you to start.

You can put the money away

somewhere safe,

all 4,000 of it.

Half of what I accounted for

is in the red-lacquered

tea-urn in the kitchen.

That's 300 with my stockings

in the chest under the bed,

and Uli's got the rest.

- Uli?

- He won't cheat you.

I made him promise.

With that little nest egg,

Titus can go to Italy to study.

And I...

get a good funeral.

- Oh, Saskia.

- I want to be buried

on the west side,

a long way from Sweelinck.

He was a noisy man.

I want some peace.

(Rembrandt sighing)

And get Geertje

to put me in woolens.

It's cold in that church.

The sun only reaches so far,

they say,  
with that plot you bought  
for us all,  
and it'll probably be damp.  
- Oh, God, no.  
(sobbing)  
No...  
you can't.  
You're not going anywhere.  
- Come on.  
(sobbing)  
Come on.  
I want you now  
to make me some China tea.  
Yes?  
(whimpering and crying)  
Get Hendrickje to bring  
some hot water,  
and Geertje to iron  
the long hose.  
I want to go to heaven  
with warm feet  
and no garter marks  
on my calves!  
And I want to take  
my Turkish carpet with me.  
(sobbing)  
(sighing deeply)  
- Egremont!  
You're supposed to be  
on your way to America,  
or Cadiz, or Algiers,  
or Manhattan, Calcutta, Macao.  
- I find it exotic enough here.  
All the world  
comes to Amsterdam.  
- I am going to put you  
in the picture.  
In the painting.  
Where you should be.  
- Where do you sleep?  
- Pardon?  
What is it to do with you?  
You're very forward.

What's my bed, Carl, to you?

- Now you're being silly.

In the house?

- I sleep with Femke  
and Luce and Gemte  
in the big bed in the attic,  
next to the chimney,  
where's it's very warm.

- Do you ever walk about the house  
in your underclothes?

- Oh, stop it, Carl,  
you're being ridiculous.

- Does he see you like that?

- Carl, you're now being offensive.

- It's Hasselburg's helmet.

It's Greek...

and antique.

- I doubt very much, though,  
whether it's gold,  
but it is very fine.

- Do you ever pose for him?

You know,  
without any clothes on?

- All right...  
you've gone too far!

- I was drunk, it is true,  
but I was not there.

It was raining cats and dogs.  
You remember that afternoon?

I was sure the gunpowder  
would never go off.

Target practice  
was a waste of time.

I sat in the tent...  
with some

of those washerwomen.

They were rained off too.

And, Rembrandt,  
we got so drunk,

I could not stand up.

Mind you, neither could they.

We all sort of ended up  
on the floor,

among the washing.

I gave no orders to fire.  
It was Clement Cocq,  
Cocq's brother-in-law.  
Cocq is not exactly a coward,  
but he's a pawn,  
a handsome pawn,  
and he is besotted with Willem.  
And Willem, with those little shits,  
Floris and Clement,  
they set up the order to fire!  
Willem will gain more...  
than the lieutenant's position  
from this.  
Though he's tainted all round,  
and knows it.  
That's why he's so determined  
to show he's a lady's man,  
overeager to suggest  
he could have nothing to do  
with what Cocq wants!  
(metal rattling)  
Now he can be blackmailed.  
In fact, they can all now  
be blackmailed.  
You could blackmail them.  
- Be reasonable, Saskia.  
I have to finish this drawing,  
for God's sake.  
Saskia,  
if you are around no more,  
then I shall have to look at myself  
more often in the mirror.  
All right, a mirror was never  
so far away, I know.  
Saskia.  
Saskia, for fuck's sake!  
We have not come  
all this fucking way together  
for you to goddamn  
drop out on me now.  
Come bloody back, at once!  
Saskia, you go,  
and I'll lose bloody everything.  
Saskia?

All right, let's say I give in  
and agree that you are dead.  
This drawing...  
says you're still breathing.  
Doesn't it?  
Does it?  
It's curious. This drawing...  
forever and ever, will go on saying  
that you are sleeping.  
Forever and ever.  
Can you tell from a drawing  
if a body is dead,  
or simply asleep?  
Which is more correct,  
Saskia?  
Your body?  
This drawing?  
(crying)  
Saskia...  
(crying)  
(sobbing)  
Oh, Saskia!  
(wailing)  
(sobbing uncontrollably)  
(crying)  
Carl, what are you doing here?  
- I don't want you to paint me  
in the picture.  
- You're already in it.  
- I don't want to be in it.  
You must take me out.  
- Whatever for?  
Carl, if I can't put your father in,  
I can put you in.  
- No!  
I think you're disreputable.  
You're old enough  
to be her grandfather!  
I've seen the way  
you look at her.  
- Carl, don't be stupid.  
What's happened?  
What's the matter?  
- I meant what I said.

- Mm.

Ah, Tobias.

**(whispering):**

Thank you for coming.

Come. Come.

I can't paint you out, Carl.

It's sad

that you feel the way you do -

or maybe we can put you

more in the shadows -

but, Carl, you and Hendrickje

must be friends again. Hmm?

There's enough unhappiness

in this house tonight,

without you making it more so.

You're very young.

Next month, in a few weeks,

you'll have other enthusiasms,

and your world

is not Hendrickje's world.

Marita, come, hold this.

We can show Kemp

that we know about

his pot of scalding hot water.

- No.

I couldn't.

- Very well.

Uh, Marieke,

carry this for your sister.

Be her champion. Hmm?

Now, Carl, kiss Hendrickje.

Hmm?

And then for your sake,

as well as for ours, you must leave.

This painting is dedicated

to your father. Mm?

This painting is the way it is

because of your father.

Come. Come.

(baby crying)

(crying)

(Rembrandt crying)

(all gasping)



Well, my little fat,  
hysterical friend.

- Who you calling fat?

- The circle circled.

She's dead.

- Yes, she is.

- You made your bed with her.

- I did.

- No, you didn't.

I made your bed with her,  
and then you pissed in it!

- What, I did? How so?

- You got mighty.

- You mean I left you.

- Now this is how it goes from here.

I take over.

- Fuck off!

- I've seen the painting,  
and you're in trouble, you fool.

- How come

you've seen the painting?

- I can see

what you've been doing.

- How come

you've see the painting?

- I've had that door locked  
for four weeks!

You must've snuck in!

- Jorisz took me in via the roof.

- Sneaky bastard!

- You have got to destroy it  
and start again,

or else I can't take care  
of the circumstances.

You are painting  
your death warrant!

- You can't take care  
of the circumstances?

What the fuck

has it got to do with you?

- Everything, you fool!!

I'll go down

with the rest of them!

I tried to warn you with de Roy,

"The Man in the Red Cloak" -  
though he might have  
his own little agenda -  
and you wouldn't listen!  
- I think I've listened  
very much, fucking well enough!  
Why don't you... fuck off?!!  
You fucking turncoat cunt!!!  
Fuck you!  
I didn't want to do  
this fucking painting  
in the first place!!  
If you've got your mucky  
fucking hands dirty,  
it's your fucking problem!!!  
Now, fuck off!!  
This is my wife's funeral!!  
Fuck off!  
Fuck off!  
Fucking queer fat Polish cunt!  
Fuck off!  
It is curious, gentlemen, is it not,  
that paintings are normally silent?  
Now, however,  
we can give this painting,  
this picture,  
this image...  
sound.  
(disembodied voices  
and military drums)  
(military drums)  
(voices)  
"The Calling out of the Militia  
for the Fifth Company  
of the Musketeers,  
Amsterdam."  
There is, of course...  
another sound.  
Steady...  
Aim...  
Fire!  
(gunshot)  
(all exclaiming)  
I and this painting

accuse you gentlemen  
of being responsible...  
for the painting's major sound,  
a musket shot.  
(gunshot)  
Where...  
did... the bullet go?  
I accuse you gentlemen...  
of murder!  
(murmuring)  
- What bloody fucking arrogance.  
You arrogant little dauber!  
- Fuck! Bloody hell!  
- Rembrandt,  
you're being absurd!  
You agreed, we agreed...  
- You have a bloody cheek!  
- Yes, you go too fucking far!  
- You simply have not fulfilled  
the terms of the contract.  
- 18 members of this guild  
paid you good money  
to see ourselves represented suitably  
in a group portrait.  
- You couldn't even  
accomplish that.  
- Yes, where is Willemsen,  
Leijdeckers and Cruysbergen?  
- And who the hell is that?  
If I'm not mistaken,  
that looks like bloody Egremont.  
He wasn't there!  
- Oh, shut up, you fool,  
of course he was there!  
- No, he wasn't.  
He was drunk and incapable,  
and screwing some washerwoman  
on the mess-tent floor!  
- And him with his hat  
on goddamn backwards?  
- And what is that little ugly girl  
doing there?!

Dressed for a party  
I wasn't invited to?!

- You do not load a flintlock  
like that,  
making me look like a real prat!  
- It's so goddamned dark,  
you can't see anything anyway!  
- Bring on some candles!  
(laughter)  
- That does not resemble shadow  
so much as simply dirt!  
- You not trying  
to be Italian on us,  
are you, Rembrandt?  
- Where's Uylenburgh?  
He ought to be here.  
He's to blame.  
He's the fucking producer!  
- That's right!  
- Why don't you bloody well  
go to Italy  
and look at some paintings  
like everybody else?  
And if you haven't been to Italy,  
what the fuck do you know  
about Italian paintings anyway?  
- Look at Wormsditch!  
Look at the way you've done him up!  
He looks like a clown  
in a commedia dell arte farce!  
- That is Bloemfelt!  
That's Wormskerck,  
not Wormsditch!  
And I'm dressed in red,  
with tassels,  
that look as though  
they decorate my wife's bed!  
- And look at Ockersen!  
Look, where did he get  
that helmet from?  
- It belongs to Rembrandt.  
Ockersen is so broke,  
he could never even afford  
a helmet.  
- It's out of Rembrandt's  
little cabinet of curios,

bought in some flea market  
on the Jordaan.  
All his clothes are out of date.  
No one wears a helmet like that  
except outside of a theatre.  
We are meant to be the militia  
coming to defend the city,  
and it looks like we look like  
a bunch of fucking  
out-of-work actors  
trying on the wardrobe!  
I say...  
let's burn the fucking thing!  
(murmuring)  
- You are for it, dauber.  
Your credit has been blasted.  
- So...  
what then, Mr. Painter,  
is this little painting telling us?  
That Banning-Cocq is a faggot  
itching to get his hand  
on Willem's prick?  
That Willem is a womaniser  
with a big cock?  
That Kemp has  
a bastard daughter,  
maybe two,  
and there is a murder  
in our midst?  
Not bad. Not bad.  
Not bad. Not bad.  
Can you hold that for me?  
Four "not bads,"  
but what, I wonder,  
have you done in the end?  
You've pushed a bunch  
of ordinary and fallible  
and undistinguished citizens  
out of the guardroom  
and onto the streets.  
(laughing)  
But in the end, the effect  
is just...  
well... silly.

Unless, of course,  
that's what you wanted to do  
all along.  
Are you being satirical,  
van Rijn?  
Is this a satire?  
You refused to go to Italy,  
because you could not stand  
the heroics of Italian painting.  
Are you mocking us, Rembrandt,  
by bringing  
empty Italian heroics to us?  
You must know  
that our little Dutch Republic  
just can't handle this sort of stuff.  
We want to hear Dutch  
spoken in our streets.  
We want foreigners to behave,  
and a Republic  
tempered by assassination  
is not the Dutch way.  
We do not assassinate like this.  
Like, like...  
like Italians, like Romans.  
Or do we?  
Will we?  
In your attempt  
to make an accusation,  
you've made  
a silly, messy caricature,  
which everyone is going to forget,  
or no longer understand.  
The context, as always,  
is rapidly going to disappear,  
even if they ever understood it  
in the first place.  
You can depend that,  
despite all this,  
there will be no justice here.  
Captain Hasselburg remains dead,  
his wife remains grief-stricken,  
his son, Carl, bitter,  
and the public verdict is?  
"Accidental death

during artillery practice."  
Three of those accidental deaths  
have happened every week in Holland  
for the last three generations.  
You can settle scores privately  
by painting evil  
and chicanery and murder,  
but, watch out,  
they will certainly try  
to settle scores privately  
with you, too.  
Watch out, Rembrandt.  
- Just look what that little  
Leiden bastard has done!  
- Who's the child?  
- Oh, Marieke,  
Kemp's illegitimate,  
carrying the pot  
of scalding coffee  
that ruined her sister's face.  
She carries  
the musketeer's cockerel,  
hanging upside down  
ready for plucking and fucking.  
- Oh, cock-a-doodle-doo!  
- St. Peter Kemp in the farmyard  
denying Christ three times,  
but there's never any denying  
of Kemp's little peter.  
- Three squawking birds:  
Engelen, Jongkind and Kemp.  
- Cock-a-doodle-do!  
- My dame has lost her shoe!  
- My master's lost his piddling stick!  
- And doesn't know what to do!  
- I'm sure I cannot piss  
forward or backward,  
and yet I am wet before and behind.  
- We're going to pretend  
to like it,  
because the deeper accusations  
are far more dangerous.  
He has made the militia company  
look incompetent,

holding their muskets like...

well, like fairies.

- You're going to like this painting,  
and everybody

is going to remember

how much you like this painting,

and all of those who make a case

that nobody complained

about this painting

are going to be right!

No buts!

- No disagreements.

- Ah...

- Listen!

We stick together in this,

or we are found out and ruined!

- This is not the way to do it.

One for all and all for one.

- Shut up, Wormskerck.

- It's going to hang

in the militia hall as planned,

and everybody is going to say

how much we like it.

- Hang a painting on a wall,

and in three weeks,

it will be forgotten.

- Everything

it's supposed to say

will be forgotten as well.

- So I have paid 60 guilders

for the privilege

of being forgotten?

- I'll give you your money back.

Make a fuss, you're likely

to lose everything.

Rembrandt may be

cock of the roost just now,

but he's unstable.

- Expensive unfashionable house

falling down around him.

He's going to have difficulty

selling it.

- Call in his debts.

Nobody can stand a debtor



in Holland.

- Destroy his livelihood.

- Blind him.

He can have an accident.

- Burn the bloody thing!

- No, no, no, we sew him up!

- Ruin him.

- He's very susceptible to women.

- Humiliate him.

- Disgrace him.

- The reformers will not  
commission a fornicator.

- The Amsterdam Calvinists  
think sex with a woman  
is like kissing a shit bucket.

(laughter)

- In five years,  
he'll be forgotten,  
crawling back to Leiden  
to hide away  
among his father's flour sacks.

- And when he's gone,  
we can get rid of the thing.

Take it down for cleaning,  
never put it back.

Roll it up.

Lose it somewhere.

- We, uh...

we have a suggestion.

- This is me with Geertje.  
She's a professional widow,  
all cunt and arse  
and thrusting tits.

The slut.

The delightful slut.

Doesn't wash.

Smells like a sailor,  
talks like a sailor.

- I'm a trumpeter's daughter.

Bomp-baa-dee-da!

Hold my trumpet.

Blow my trumpet.

Let me blow your trumpet.

See?

Mm.

He's crying.

- Leave him.

It'll do him good to cry a bit.

- No, it won't.

Go and fetch him.

- He's stopped.

- She was a dry wet-nurse,  
so to speak.

No children of her own.

Never had.

Her husband had died  
years before.

We always thought  
she had a lover  
in the military depot at Amstelveen.

(baby crying)

She'd been around in my house  
for years,

a sort of slightly grumpy  
midwife-servant,  
and Saskia liked her.

They both came from Leeuwarden,  
they spoke Friesian together,  
Titus took to her.

And then one night,  
several months  
after Saskia died...

I saw her undressing  
in the scullery to wash,  
and...

was...

gripped...

by the sight of garter marks  
on her calves.

So...

pirouette around a bit.

Show me how you dance.

Can you dance a little?

- You show me.

(Rembrandt laughing)

- I don't dance.

I'm a short, stocky...  
plump sort of a man.

I don't dance.  
- We all noticed.  
A miller's son.  
No better at bottom than me.  
- It's true mills  
and trumpets both need wind.  
Wave your arms around.  
Like a mill.  
- Like this?  
- That's not bad.  
That's good.  
Hmm.  
Stand... on the other foot.  
- Everyone's an excuse  
for a painting.  
- What better excuse  
can you think of?  
For everyone.  
For anyone?  
Here.  
Try this.  
(sniffing)  
- It smells.  
- It's beaver.  
- What's a beaver?  
- North American water-rat.  
- What's this all for?  
What are we going to do...  
you and me?  
After we've posed?  
And danced?  
We are the soldiers  
Of Amsterdam  
We are the soldiers  
of Amsterdam  
- She had been married before,  
to a soldier.  
She knew all the tricks  
he had taught her.  
She practised them on me.  
My brother is a soldier  
Who plays the trumpet  
And my husband is a bugler  
Every night I hid my prick,

my head, myself, in her.  
If my prick was not in her cunt,  
it was in her arse, her mouth.  
If it was in none of these places,  
it was in her hand.  
I was distracted...  
for hours...  
every night,  
to escape...  
thinking...  
of missing you, Saskia.  
Ahhh!  
(Geertje moaning)  
(Rembrandt climaxing noisily)  
I was obsessed  
with Geertje's body.  
(groaning)  
I wanted to paint myself  
as a transgressor.  
(panting)  
I was in another drunken,  
ribald, sticky country.  
(grunting)  
(panting)  
Stay still.  
Don't move.  
Let me draw you.  
- No!  
- Stay still!  
I'll give you the drawing.  
- Then why do it?  
(Rembrandt panting)  
- For the pleasure of drawing.  
For the pleasure...  
of seeing you  
nicely humiliated.  
For the pleasure  
of me humiliating you  
and you letting me.  
For the pleasure...  
of me acknowledging...  
my transgression,  
that is surely part...  
of what we do together.

Master... servant.

- I look after Titus.

- Well, so you do!

(Geertje giggling)

Geertje! Geertje!

- Let me look at it!

(laughter)

- Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah!

- I could not,

of course,

let anyone else

envy... my enjoyment.

- Empty bed?

- The child, Marieke, is in labour.

- Who is that?

- She's in disgrace.

- Her face is damaged.

- Someone went out of the way  
to destroy her good looks.

She used to have

such a pretty face.

- Pretty face...

and still...

has a handsome body.

- Then she will likely be  
a good candidate for me.

Someone so disadvantaged  
is going to work very hard  
to please.

I would enjoy that.

Perhaps

you would like to join me?

Half the price,

double the pleasure.

- She's Kemp's daughter.

- A private room...

for three, then,

Mistress... Rombout Kemp.

- Shh. We are not supposed  
to call me that.

- One for you...

(coughing)

- For those poor orphans  
more unfortunate than you,

Marita.

- One for my friend...  
and one for me.

- No lice, no dogs,  
no crabs, no peepers.

- Mirrors, hot water,  
clean sheets, ribbons.

- Straps,  
a towel,  
a comb,

a razor,  
a knife,

candles...

...a pair of scissors.

- Beer, spirits,  
and...

a Bible.

- Oh!

(wailing)

(panting)

- I was a soldier's daughter,  
and a soldier's wife.

(Rembrandt exclaiming)

I was reared for soldiery.

- You make me think the worst  
of your husband  
and your father.

- The very worst you can think of...  
is perhaps the least important  
of what I would be called upon  
to perform.

(panting)

(moaning)

And in your imaginings...

...you have left out a brother,  
and a brother-in-law!

(gasping)

When they all found out  
that I could not bear children,  
their lust increased...

...for they never could  
be frightened  
that their excesses  
would be discovered.

I saw three ships  
go sailing by  
I can smell the sea.  
(baby crying)  
Can you smell my ship? Hmm?  
The Leaden Weight?  
That was a stupid investment,  
wasn't it?  
Your mother  
would've told me better.  
Marieke!  
And where are all your babies?  
- I live with Rombout now.  
- What?!  
(baby crying)  
- I'm his scullery maid.  
I come back  
to see where I was happy.  
I come up here most nights  
when he has finished with me.  
We had a baby.  
It didn't have any legs...  
...my father's baby...  
and it died!  
(baby wailing)  
- Come here, little chicken.  
Life is tough.  
(crying, sniffing)  
Unfair.  
Imperfect.  
Brutish.  
Disappointing.  
And unbearable.  
And there is no justice.  
And there never will be.  
Shh...  
(Rembrandt singing softly):  
I saw three ships  
Go sailing by  
Sailing by sailing by  
I saw three ships go sailing by

**At half past 3:**  
in the morning

- I liked me in that painting.  
I still wear Saskia's earrings  
when I come up here.  
I'd like to see me  
in that painting again.  
Though Rombout says  
I shouldn't look.  
He says it's an evil painting.  
I don't think so.  
I was very happy with you.  
- Jesus, Marieke!  
Marieke! No! No!  
I saw three ships go sailing by  
(baby crying)  
Sailing by sailing by  
I saw three ships go sailing by

**At half past 3:**

- Enough.  
- You've changed.  
- Such intense distraction,  
it wears itself out.  
I'm bored of being your victim.  
You began to glory in bringing  
me so close to the ground,  
till my nose is shovelling  
in your shit.  
- You were once not so unhappy  
to be there!  
- You're right. It fitted  
my bad reputation of myself.  
I paid you huge sums in jewels,  
furs, crockery, to pretend  
that you were a whore  
experienced enough  
to deserve such things!  
I paid you more  
to make you dare more,  
but soon...  
you have  
no more novelties to give.  
I had exhausted  
your entire store of novelties.  
And you!



You wanted more and more!  
You became too triumphant!!  
Titus walks this house  
with shit between his legs  
and sores around his mouth!  
(crying)  
He has fleas,  
his shit wriggles with worms!  
(laughter)  
That's it. You're a slut.  
You're a bitch.  
You call yourself a nursemaid -  
I saw you...  
in front of the mirror  
fixing Saskia's necklaces  
around your neck.  
- You gave them to me!  
She can't wear them!  
She's dead.  
Very dead.  
(crying softly)  
(whimpering)  
(sobbing)  
(wailing)  
- The original contract  
for the painting  
came from Hasselburg  
and Egremont.  
They went to Visscher and Kemp  
to arrange it.  
Visscher and de Roy came to me.  
Once started...  
(sighing heavily)  
...the other militiamen joined in.  
Here is the rest of the money.  
I came tonight to hand it over.  
Then...  
the Banning-Cocqs moved in.  
They wanted the prestige  
of meeting the Stuarts  
and arranging the pawning  
of the English crown jewels.  
To be in a good position  
to do this,

they needed to lead the musketeers  
when the English...  
came to Amsterdam.  
Hasselburg had to go.  
- And with him...  
the inseparable Egremont.  
- They were in negotiations  
to move both of them to Utrecht  
when the Banning-Cocqs,  
Floris and Clement,  
suggested a more violent plan.  
They suggested staging...  
what they called...  
a military accident.  
Kemp provided  
the innocent assassin  
from his orphanage,  
hopelessly blackmailing  
the highly impressionable Horatio  
with accusations  
of illicit sex with you,  
and threatening you,  
and destroying  
your innocent dream  
of going to America,  
and because you did not shut up  
and behave like a good girl,  
destroying your good looks.  
- A terrible act of spite  
for which  
may he never be forgiven.  
- De Roy...  
had discovered  
that they planned to remove  
Hasselburg violently,  
and he told me.  
He thought the action  
lacked elegance and finesse.  
He was displeased.  
It was not necessary.  
He discussed it with me.  
It affected his sense of fair play,  
but, more importantly,  
his sense of aesthetics.

I threatened to move out  
and tell you,  
through Saskia,  
to have nothing to do  
with the painting.  
To be sure you got the message,  
I got Jacob de Roy  
to try to warn you,  
because I knew  
you wouldn't listen to me,  
and would likely listen to him.  
I foolishly  
told my friend, Broest,  
about my worries and...  
Floris and Clement  
overheard us at the bathhouse  
and told the others.  
I was tainted,  
and implicated.  
(baby gurgling)  
- Titia, put your coat on  
and go and pay those people,  
the genuine creditors,  
waiting outside.  
Here are their names.  
See if you can get a signature  
for each piece of paper.  
If they won't or cannot sign  
for the money,  
I'll see them in the morning.  
- They wanted continuity,  
solidarity,  
a smooth transition of power,  
as though everything's normal,  
nothing had changed.  
So they continued  
the commission with you,  
and then you began to work  
the rest out for yourself,  
and stupidly decided,  
in your arrogance,  
to self-righteously paint  
the indictment  
within the very commission

they had paid you for,  
and for what end?  
They are set now  
to destroy you,  
and they will stop at nothing  
to shut me up too.  
(baby gurgling)  
- It's a very sorry mess.  
- Marita, you're shivering.  
- They cut me.  
I'm not a woman yet,  
and they cut me  
to make me bleed.  
And now that I am a woman,  
they set up clients  
and I go with them.  
And what should I do  
if I don't agree?!  
With my face like this  
and my family history,  
I will never get a husband!  
- That's not true.  
- Kemp has thrown me  
out of the orphanage.  
- Y-you can stay here with us.  
- I can't do that!  
- Egremont could take you  
to America.  
- Draw my portrait!  
Paint my portrait  
and make me beautiful  
once again!  
Could you do that?  
- Rembrandt hasn't painted anything  
since Saskia died.  
- Then let me be the excuse  
to start again!  
The painting could stand in  
for my face.  
I still have a beautiful body,  
haven't I? You've seen it.  
And it will grow more beautiful  
as I get older!  
And once the world

is finished with my body,  
I will climb even higher  
than my mother and sister,  
and I will jump!  
- What is wrong?  
You have stopped working.  
- I will let you into a secret  
that you will tell no one.  
I have a lazy eye.  
This is my good eye...  
...and this is my lazy eye.  
If you tell anyone,  
I am destroyed,  
for who would employ a painter  
with a lazy eye?  
I entrust you  
with my most destructive secret.  
But now I finally realize  
what this is all about.  
My eye was never lazy.  
This eye...  
was just waiting.  
Waiting nearly 30 years...  
to see you,  
and now, having patiently waited  
for so long,  
I find it is the better  
of my two eyes.  
This is the eye waiting to view...  
a miracle.  
And the miracle...  
is you.  
And now...  
this eye...  
...must see all of you.  
This is me and Hendrickje.  
Isn't she lovely?  
Twenty years younger than me.  
No fool like an old fool.  
What more can I say?  
How did it happen?  
Well, it happened...  
when a musket  
blew up in my face

and she licked the powder  
from my eye.

- No. I don't think so.

I was 13 years old.

- Well, it happened  
when I stopped Willem  
fumbling her body  
in a dark kitchen.

- No, I don't think it did.

I was 15.

(sighing)

- Well...

it happened  
when I was on the roof  
watching the night and waiting  
for the Angel Gabriel  
to come from Leiden Way,  
and Hendrickje  
came looking for me  
with a candle in her hand.  
Candle lights up your face  
better than any angel  
dare hope to be illuminated  
in all its innocence and glory.  
And then...

I fell in love.

- And I was old enough  
to know what you were doing,  
and it wasn't quite like that,  
but it will do.

- You have disappointed me,  
Rembrandt.

I expected  
something better of you,  
something more intelligent,  
something more knowing.

Something less local,  
more universal.

More lasting, so to speak.

- Ever the critical turncoat,  
eh, de Roy?

Why did you ever alert me  
to all this chicanery  
in the first place?

So to speak.  
- I'm an enthusiastic man  
of the theatre,  
as I know you to be.  
I enjoy the plots and the plotting,  
the mysteries,  
the enigmatic figures,  
the twists and turns.  
The metaphors.  
The multiple possibilities  
and interpretations  
from the one event,  
and I need a man of talent  
to make them work for me.  
To give me the whole show  
with some wit and irony,  
and, of course,  
topped off with some sense  
of visual spectacle.  
Rembrandt,  
you have curiously  
attempted to be real.  
Now, we know that  
that isn't possible.  
You have made a frozen moment  
of theatre.  
You have stopped a costume play  
in action.  
They wanted the costume,  
we know that,  
but you encouraged them,  
and that was to be certain  
that we all knew  
that we were at the theatre,  
and at the theatre,  
all things are possible.  
Even dying of love.  
If you think about it  
for one minute,  
the tradition of militia paintings  
that you so carefully broke  
was a true and honest tradition,  
where the participants can say,  
"Look, we are being painted."

Look, we understand  
that we are being watched,  
and we're looking  
straight at you,  
into your eyes, at you,  
to prove it.  
We are not real,  
we are in a painting."  
That's what they understood,  
and that is what they wanted.  
You have spoilt all that  
for them, Rembrandt.  
You have tried to pretend  
that these are real people.  
They didn't want that,  
didn't want it at all.  
In your painting,  
they hustle and bustle about  
doing real things -  
loading muskets,  
giving commands,  
drum, run and bark -  
when all they wanted  
was to stand still  
and be looked at.  
"Here is me, here I am  
in my splendid uniform  
as an important member  
of this important club.  
I look at you, you look at me.  
I'm watching you  
and you're watching me."  
But you have pretended  
that the people in your painting  
are not being watched.  
Which is the definition  
of an actor?  
An actor is a person  
who has been trained to pretend  
he is not being watched.  
So all the people in your paintings  
are all actors,  
not real people at all.  
Yet you have got them



to do things which are real.  
Except, of course -  
because you knew  
what you were doing -  
of your little portrait of yourself.  
You knew  
you were being watched,  
and you look at us,  
within the old tradition  
of these sort of paintings,  
with admirable  
self-consciousness.  
You're giving yourself  
an old-fashioned position  
and responsibility  
in a new-fashioned painting  
which tries to deny that  
position and responsibility.  
(indistinct chatter)  
Your painting, Rembrandt,  
is a pretence,  
a fakery, a cheat,  
a dishonesty,  
full of impossible contradictions,  
unworthy of a truly intelligent man.  
They, of course, knew  
that they were being painted,  
and you knew  
that they were being painted,  
but what do you acknowledge?  
Neither.  
Why pretend?  
Apart from all the other infelicities  
that demonstrate  
you did not fulfill the task  
asked of you,  
your painting, Rembrandt,  
is dishonest.  
So much so,  
that this is not a painting at all.  
By its very nature,  
it denies being a painting.  
It is a work...  
of the theatre!

- He's still around.

He's still among us.

He will never just go away.

He survives everything

we can throw at him.

- We should make it our business

that he never survives

anything, anywhere, anymore.

- You could separate him

from his friends.

You could use Marita

as an encouragement.

Persuade him to drink.

Get him to walk home

on his own.

- We have heard that yesterday,

the King of England

officially declared war

on his parliament.

The English are in a civil war,

and we are certainly rich men.

(shouting)

...witnesses!

- Blind him!

- Scratch out his eyes!

(music)

(bells tolling)

- Some in the future might argue

that Rembrandt had had his day,

and that new fashions

in painting had arrived.

Gayer, more expensive,

easier, relevant,

more into luxury and splendour

of a well-satisfied little republic.

- To the king!

- And that Rembrandt

had been spiteful and critical,

and cynical and over-inventive

in a melodramatic,

conspiratorial tradition.

He had learned at the theatre

that really was foreign

to the Dutch.

It could have been more  
English, so to speak,  
a tradition of spite  
and conspiracy,  
and secrecy and cruelty  
and revenge.

- I can't see!

Where's the light?!

I'm blind!

I am blinded!

Open your eyes, you fool!

(moaning)

Ah!

Ah... Ah...

Painted...

darkness.

Miles and miles and miles...

(laughing insanely)

...of painted darkness.

Lit by spasms...

of light.

If you're lucky.

(staccato laugh)

Silence. Amen.

- Amen?

- Ah!

- Are you all right?

- Hendrickje?

Have I woken up?

Was that a nightmare?

Oh, God.

I've been seeing the night.

I was watching the night.

I was looking into darkness.

I was... I was nightwatching!

- What happened?

- Ah!

I met two men on a horse  
that galloped towards me.

Ow!!!

Galloped towards me...

- Turn your head.

Into the light.

Let me look again.

- What light?!

They knocked me down,  
they knocked me over. Ah! Ah...  
They kicked me,  
they poked me in the eyes!  
They stripped me,  
they beat me,  
they beat the fucking colour  
out of me!

- You're all right.

And you're drunk.

- No, I'm not!

No, I'm not.

It's still dark.

It's still dark.

Night...

Is this a nightmare?

I've been watching the night!

I was seeing... the night!

Now, Hendrickje, Hendrickje,

Hendrickje, now, now, now,

now that I'm perpetually

nightwatching,

don't you dare die on me!

- Look at me.

(crying)

Look at me.

I am alive enough,

and there's life in my belly.

(moaning loudly)

(gulping)

Stop shouting.

Where is the darkness in it

for me? Hmm?

Where's the darkness

in it for us?

- The Banning-Cocq

conspirators knew

that they were

correctly indicted,

and to hide their guilt,

they revengefully embarked

on a campaign

to gradually destroy

Rembrandt's wealth,  
reputation and good fortune,  
to persuade the world  
that Rembrandt's  
celebrated group portrait  
of the Amsterdam Militia  
was just an innocent painting  
of exuberant soldiers  
rallying for musket practice.  
Rembrandt...  
intelligent and perceptive man  
that he is...  
...though a miller's son,  
converted to uneasy bourgeois,  
still stocking up his money  
like a peasant,  
and trying to make friends  
in high places like a parvenu,  
still sleeping with his servants  
because he could not sleep  
with the women  
he aspired to be equal to.  
He knew otherwise.