

THE PROUD PAINTER

Short

Comedy

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1. EXT. A DUTCH TOWN - AFTERNOON (1650)

Two teenagers: FRANS and ANNIKA, sitting on a stone bench, are watching the sunset.

ANNIKA

We're going through a critical period.

FRANS

Why are you saing so?

ANNIKA

You know, it sounds so "lived".

FRANS

Oh yeah, as for me, I still have to see... er, your home.

Annika stands up, enthusiastic.

ANNIKA

Let's go there now! It becomes more and more beautiful, we're decorating it with Von der Sjic's paintings!

Frans abruptly stands up, making Annika flinch.

FRANS

Henrik von der Sjic?!?

ANNIKA

(after a moment)  
Yep.

FRANS

Oh.

ANNIKA

Follow me.

2. INT. ANNIKA'S HOME - AFTERNOON

The door opens, Annika walk towards the stairs, but stops. Frans gets by her side, looking at her while she lets out a sigh. Frans looks in the same direction the girl is looking. In the semidarkness, hung on a wall, there's the painting of a smiling woman. The style is simple, as if it was painted by a child.

ANNIKA

It gives me the creeps.

FRANS

It's only a painting.

ANNIKA'S FATHER overlooks from a railing. He and the girl greets each other.

Frans and Annika go upstairs, while the girl's father is joined by his wife.

Annika and Frans reach the upper floor.

ANNIKA

Mother and father, I introduce you to Frans...

The boy shakes hands with Annika's mother and father.

ANNIKA

...Frans, I introduce you to father and mother.

Once again, Frans shakes hands with the girl's father and mother.

ANNIKA'S FATHER

Well, lad, what do you do in life?

FRANS

I study.

ANNIKA'S FATHER

So, you study. And what do you "study"?

FRANS  
Literature, mathematics...

Annika's father gesticulates, as to accompany the boy's words.

FRANS  
(O.S.)  
History, geography...

ANNIKA'S FATHER  
A bit of this and a bit of that, huh? No, you need a job. Why don't you start by paying a visit to Von der Sjik and pick up the painting I ordered?

FRANS  
So, am I supposed to do portorage for you?

Upset, Annika's father puts hands on hips.

ANNIKA'S FATHER  
Why you...

Annika quickly approaches Frank, touching him on shoulder.

ANNIKA  
Do it for me.

FRANS  
All right.

### 3. INT. ATELIER - EVENING

A brush draws an horizontal green line over a canvas, dividing it in two halves. The brush moves on the lower half, colouring it in green.

The brush gets dipped in a palette, then returns on the canvas. It paints a brown square in the middle, just above the green line. Once again, the brush is dipped in the palette, then it paints a yellow circle above the brown square, at a certain distance.

4. EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Frans is in front of school with two classmates: JACOB and THOMAS.

FRANS

She have those paintings in her house... she says  
one gives her the creeps. I bet so, they're awful.

His friends giggle.

JACOB

So, what do you guys think?

THOMAS

No way.

JACOB

Same. And you, Frans?

FRANS

I'll attend lectures.

THOMAS

Fine. See ya, then.

FRANS

Bye.

Jacob and Thomas walks away.

A sound of bells comes from the building. Frans and other teens  
walks towards the door.

5. EXT. SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

Frans, Annika and other students exits school.

ANNIKA

Do you remember everything?

FRANS

Of course. I must go to Von der Sjic's atelier:  
left, right, go straight then turn the corner.

ANNIKA

And what are you going to ask him?

FRANS

The painting "House in summer".

ANNIKA

Right. See you in some minutes.

Frans says goodbye with hand to the girl.

#### 6. INT. ATELIER - AFTERNOON

The painter HENRIK VON DER SJIC is a 30 years old man; tall, slim, with long and curly red hair. He wears an apron, dirty with colored stains as well as his hands and face.

He holds a palette and in his right hand there is a brush.

In front of him, on an easel, there's the canvas he started working on.

He paints two small blue squares inside the brown square. Von der sjic then paints the upper part of the canvas, outside of the brown square and the yellow circle.

The painter dips the brush in the palette's red color; he's about to paint, but stops. While looking at the canvas, he stretches out his lips, putting the brush's hair over them. He swings the brush between index and middle finger, coloring his lips.

Von der Sjic dips the brush in the white and paints a trapezium above the brown square. He then dips once again the brush in red and colors all the trapezium.

He dips in the yellow and points the brush, aiming at a spot on the canvas. The painter squeezes the brush's hair on the circle, filling it with yellow color and drawing rays all around. He pulls the brush, removing it from the canvas. He takes the brush's hair between his thumb and index, and straightens them.

A knock on the door is heard. Von der Sjic gets ready to throw the brush into a jar over a shelf.

VON DER SJIC

Come on in.

He throws the brush in the jar. The door opens and Frans enters.

FRANS  
Good morning. I come for "House in summer".

Von der Sjic walks towards a table nearby the door and a wall.

VON DER SJIC  
For the Klerk family, right?

He puts the palette on the table.

FRANS  
Yes, I'm Annika's boyfriend.

VON DER SJIC  
Good taste must be hereditary: her father likes my paintings, and she got herself an handsome boy.

FRANS  
Uh... thanks.

Von der Sjic lifts the easel, shifting it to show Frans the painting.

VON DER SJIC  
It's already finished, and colors will dry in a while.

FRANS  
Congratulations! In particular...

Frans comes close to the canvas, indicating the sun and its rays.

FRANS  
For that effect of light coming from above.

VON DER SJIC

Well well, you're a connoisseur.

FRANS

A bit; and I am too an admirer of your paintings.

Von der Sjic snickers and turns around, folding his arms, laying his back against the table.

VON DER SJIC

I heard a different talk.

FRANS

Hm... Annika's out there calling me?

VON DER SJIC

No. But come with me, I'll show you something.

Frans follows the painter, who opens a little door.

7. INT. LUMBER ROOM - AFTERNOON

Von der Sjic let Frans pass, then takes another palette from a shelf.

The boy looks around while entering the room; the painter approaches behind him.

FRANS

(turning towards the man)  
So, what are you gonna show me?

C.U. on the palette quickly approaching.

VON DER SJIC

(O.S.)  
This.

C.U. on the boy's face, dazed and partially color stained.  
Frans closes his eyes, falling on a chair with armrests.  
Von der Sjic puts the palette on a small table and takes a rope from the floor.  
Frans already begins to recover his senses; the painter ties his wrists to the armrests.  
Von der Sjic then ties Frans ankles to the chair's legs while the boy, eyes wide open and grinding his teeth, frantically glances at his own body.

VON DER SJIC  
I'll decide what to do with you.

FRANS  
Could you tighten less, to begin with?

VON DER SJIC  
You'll eventually understand my art!

FRANS  
I get only that these are huge knots.  
I'm going to get a gangrene!

Von Der Sjic takes a piece of cloth from the table and gags Frans with it.

#### 8. INT. ANNIKA'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Annika and his father are downstairs. The entrance door is behind the girl.

ANNIKA'S FATHER  
Your friend is late.

CONRAD  
(O.S.)  
Quite a lot!

Annika turns around, while her father approaches the door. He opens it letting the father of Frans, CONRAD, enter.

CONRAD

I'm the father of Frans. I know of that errand, but... did he collaborate on the painting? He's at least half an hour late!

ANNIKA'S FATHER

Sorry... We didn't expect this.

CONRAD

I'll go to inspect.

ANNIKA

The very least we can do is that I go instead.

CONRAD

All right.

9. EXT. OUTSIDE THE ATELIER - AFTERNOON

Annika knocks at the door.

VON DER SJIC

(O.S.)

Come on in.

The girl opens the door. Behind it, at a distance, appears the painter.

VON DER SJIC

Hi, Annika! I finished the painting.

ANNIKA

My boyfriend was supposed to get it for us...

VON DER SJIC

Perhaps he'll show up within minutes. Do you want to wait inside?

ANNIKA

No, I'm going to search for him.

VON DER SJIC

In the worst case, introduce him to me. Do you want me to deliver the painting at your home?

ANNIKA

Thank you so much but no, I'll come back to take it. Goodbye.

The girl leaves.

10. EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE OF THOMAS - AFTERNOON

Thomas comes out of the door.

THOMAS

Hi, what happens?

ANNIKA

Did you see Frans?

THOMAS

Not after this morning.

ANNIKA

He was supposed to retrieve a painting from Von der Sjic...

THOMAS

Oh yes, he did mention it at school. I hope there are no problems... Nah, that's silly.

ANNIKA

Please, tell me.

THOMAS

Frans wasn't exactly passionate about those paintings...

ANNIKA

Really?

THOMAS

He even called them "awful".

ANNIKA

I can't believe it!

THOMAS

But there's something worse.

ANNIKA

What could it possibly be?

THOMAS

I retrieved a painting as well, for my cousin...

ANNIKA

So? He didn't like it?

THOMAS

No, he liked it very much. Alas, chatting with Von der Sjik I told him what Frans thinks of his paintings.

ANNIKA

What? Thomas!

THOMAS

I know... Sorry.

ANNIKA

Do you think he took offense?

THOMAS

He seemed to take it jokingly. But, indeed, I saw a flicker in his eyes.

ANNIKA

Ocular spasm?

THOMAS  
More like pissed off.

ANNIKA  
Von der Sjik may as well act with Frans as if  
nothing happened.

A POLICEMAN is walking on the street. Annika and Thomas casually  
glance at him, then resume talking.

THOMAS  
What if Frans already went to the atelier, and it's  
still there?

ANNIKA  
Are you suggesting that Von der Sjik kidnapped  
Frans?

She turns towards the policeman.

THOMAS  
Yeah, a bold idea.

ANNIKA  
(with a skeptical smile)  
So unlikely.

The girl looks again at the cop.

THOMAS  
Indeed.

Annika runs in the man's direction.

ANNIKA  
(shouting and gesticulating)  
Guard! Help!

Thomas runs after her. They come close to the policeman, who stops and addresses them.

POLICEMAN

What do you want?

ANNIKA

(anxiously)

Please, help me! My friend is held hostage by Von der Sjic! You have to free him!

POLICEMAN

Hey girl, just chill. You mean the painter? Your accusation is serious, can you prove it?

THOMAS

I beg your pardon, actually we aren't sure.

POLICEMAN

I'll discuss that with colleagues. We'll do what is possible.

THOMAS

Thank you so much.

The cop leaves.

THOMAS

Don't worry, Annika. We may devise a plan.

#### 11. INT. ATELIER - EVENING

Von der Sjic exits the lumber-room.

He stares for a moment at Frans, bound to the chair, then closes the door.

Somebody knocks.

VON DER SJIC

Come in.

The atelier's door opens and the father of Frans come inside.

CONRAD

Good evening. I come to offer you a deal... and a drink.

VON DER SJIC

Good evening to you. Thanks but don't bother with the drink. What deal are you offering me?

CONRAD

I insist so that we discuss it while enjoying a fine wine, and the bill is on me.

The painter partially unties his apron.

VON DER SJIC

Too kind. Beware, I may accept... In fact, I already did.

He rubs face and hands with the apron, widening the color stains on his skin.

CONRAD

And I'm glad you accepted. We may go to the tavern, then.

Von der Sjic puts his apron on the back of a chair. He opens the atelier's door and exits after Conrad.

12. EXT. OUTSIDE THE ATELIER - EVENING

Conrad and Von der Sjic are just outside the threshold. Thomas is walking on the street.

VON DER SJIC

Hi, Thomas! What you're doing here?

THOMAS

I was taking a stroll... how about if I close the door for you?

VON DER SJIC

Oh, don't bother... Nay, actually you would do me a favor. The door lock got issues, so I give you the keys and go with my new friend to talk about business.

The father of Frans and the painter smiles, while the latter gives Thomas the keys.

THOMAS

I'll return them by tonight.

VON DER SJIC

Don't worry, anyway I'll be right back. Goodbye.

THOMAS

Good evening.

Thomas closes the door and, with some effort, turns the key in the door lock. He looks at the two men who are walking away, until they disappear amongst the buildings. He turns towards an house and gestures with his hand. Annika comes out of the corner and approaches Thomas, while he turns the key once again and opens the door.

### 13. INT. LUMBER ROOM - EVENING

Frans, bound to the chair and gagged, slowly looks around. The sound of a key in the door lock is heard. The door opens, Thomas and Annika abruptly enters.

ANNIKA

Frans!

THOMAS

I'll untie you right away.

He attempts to free one of Frans wrists.

THOMAS

Perhaps it will take longer.

Frans groans.

THOMAS  
Sorry that it hurts.

THOMAS  
Let's loose the other wrist...

Frans groans again.

THOMAS  
Sorry.

Thomas tries to free an ankle. Frans groans a third time.

ANNIKA  
Geez, are you hypersensitive?

Thomas ungags Frans.

FRANS  
I learned this knot in the Scouts. In order to  
untie it...

#### 14. INT. TAVERN - EVENING

Conrad and Von der Sjic are talking, sitting at the counter.

VON DER SJIC  
As I said, I do a little bit of everything: tempera,  
oil and vinegar painting, water...

CONRAD  
What about crayon?

VON DER SJIC  
...color, and crayon.

CONRAD

Good!

VON DER SJIC

So, you have that series of commissions for me.  
It can be done, only, I just remembered another  
urgent work. Sorry but I must return to the atelier.

The painter stands up.

CONRAD

Wait, let me add just a thing.

VON DER SJIC

Sorry but I should've began by now, the deadline is  
very close.

Conrad hastily pays the innkeeper while Von der Sjik heads  
outside.

15. INT. LUMBER ROOM - EVENING

Frans is still bound to the chair, only one hand is free. Annika  
try to loose the other hand.

THOMAS

Straightforward, indeed.

FRANS

You see, the knots are more tangled.

Annika unties the knot, freeing the boy's hand. Surprised, Thomas  
looks at her then set about to untie one of Frans ankles. Annika  
focus on the other ankle and Frans himself helps her.  
Thomas frees the ankle, soon after the other one is free too.  
The three runs outside.

16. EXT. OUTSIDE THE ATELIER - EVENING

Von der Sjic is near his atelier just when Frans, Annika and Thomas come out.  
Enraged, the painter runs towards them, making them return inside.

17. INT. ATELIER - EVENING

Frans, Thomas and Annika gets close to the wall.  
Von der Sjic reaches them inside.  
Annika takes a brush from a nearby shelf. She clenches her fists at the ends, with her thumbs stretched under the brush.

ANNIKA

Stay back, or I'll break it.

VON DER SJIC

You better not harm its hair.

ANNIKA

You better not come close!

VON DER SJIC

Look, little girl. I'm going to count up to three; by then, I expect that you put it down.

Annika's hands starts shaking.

VON DER SJIC

One...

The shake increases.

VON DER SJIC

Two...

The brush snaps between Annika's fingers.

VON DER SJIC

No!

ANNIKA

Whoops... sorry.

Frans takes two brushes from another shelf and throws one to Thomas.

FRANS

Hey!

Von der Sjik faces Frans, who have a brush in his hands.

VON DER SJIC

Just you!

The painter rushes towards Frans, who breaks the brush. Shocked, Von der Sjik stops, then turns hesitant towards Thomas. The boy breaks the brush as well.

VON DER SJIC

(stretching his arms forward)  
No, I beg you, no more!

The painter bends to collect the broken brushes.

VON DER SJIC

My pet brushes!

He cries, while the policeman enters behind him.

POLICEMAN

Aww, you poor thing. Come with me.

The policeman lifts Von der Sjik grabbing his arm, and carries him outside.

Conrad and GRETA enters, followed by Annika and Thomas parents.

GRETA

Frans!

FRANS

Mother!

Greta gives a strong hug to her son, almost suffocating him.

GRETA

Are you ok?

FRANS

(stutters)  
Yes... I think.

Annika's father approaches the girl.

ANNIKA'S FATHER

What about you?

ANNIKA

I'm fine.

GRETA

Let's go home, now.

Frans and his parents leave the atelier. Thomas and his parent do likewise.

ANNIKA'S MOTHER

So, let's go.

Annika's father is about to take the painting, but his wife glares at him. He leave the canvas on the easel, and go outside with wife and daughter.

THE END.