

Het bezoek van de dames van de Charité

Het waos op ne Maondagmurge, dat het veurjaorszonneke zien ierste wermde begos te laote veule en hei en dao e lekker sträolke doog neerkomme in het smal, vochtig sträotsje dat op de Merret oetkwaom.

Meister Baltus, nen awwe gepensjeneerden oosgenger, kwaom stokkenteere op zien krukke door den duustere gank nao de straotdeur gesukkeld um zien armzielig, laam korpus get te komme werme en ins e lugske te schuppe. Heer stiepede zieg met zien krukke tege den deurpos, loerde rustig ins op en aof, of pitsde z'n ougen en tuurke touw um ins op ze gemaak de zon op ze gezieg te laote schijne.

Um de kare neet door te laote stond aan den ingank van het sträotsje ne paol, en dao leunde noe Jeannet "de kat" tege en ploeyerde zieg oug e bitsje in de zon. Ze had nen erm gebroke en droog dee in e breid verband. Ze heel en oug in het zeil, want de dames van de Charité waoren op koms, en dan moos ze zurge tot ze thoes waor veur de ontvangs.

Heur kinder leepen al berreveuts um het hoes, want ze had ze bijtijds laote kousen en sjeun oetdoen met het oug op het bezoek, en noe drentelde die rond de stop en verveelde zieg. Neleke, het ajdste, stond op heuren doum te zoeke, klawde zieg al ins oet geweente de dun vlesse haore die in piezelkes um heure kop honge en loerde rond nao en aofleijing.

Dao veel heur meister Baltus op, wie dee dao met z'n ouge touw stond, en ze gonk vlak veur h'm stoon um h'm ins good op te numme.

The visit of the ladies of Charity

It was a Monday morning. The sun of spring began to let [people] feel its first warmth and, here and there, it made a nice little ray fall down in the narrow, damp alley joining Market Square.

Master Baltus, an old pensioner who had been working in Dutch East India, came, shaking on his crutches, trudging through the dark passage to the street door, to have his poor lame body warmed and to get a breath of air.

He leant with his crutches against the doorpost, looked quietly to and fro, or pinched his eyes a bit to let the sun leisurely shine on his face.

In order to not allow carts, there was standing at the entrance of the alley a pole, and now there was leaning against it Jeannet "the cat", who was also basking a bit in the sun. She had a broken arm and wore a broad bandage. She kept a watchful eye, because the ladies of Charity were to come, and then she had to make sure she was at home for the reception.

Her children were already walking barefooted about the house, for she had betimes made them take off their stockings and shoes in view of the visit, and now they were sauntering about on the footway and feeling bored.

Neleke, the eldest, stood sucking her thumb. She scratched from habit her thin flaxen hair that was hanging in little strings about her head, and looked around for diversion.

There she noticed master Baltus, [seeing] how he was standing with his eyes closed, and she went and stood right before him to measure him up [with her eyes].

Sjus doog dee zien ouge ope wie Neleke

h'm lang genug beloerd had.

Opins staok ze heur tong oet en zag: –
“Onnut”.

Meister Baltus doog of heer het neet hoort
en loerde euver heur eweeg, mà dat beveil
Neleke neet.

– “Onnut”, zag ze weer ins.

– “Houw je smoel snotneus!” bromde noe
meister Baltus geërgerd, mè dat beveil
Neleke, tot ze aon de gank kos komme.

– “Awwen onnut!” repeteerde ze nog e
paar kiere.

Opins verloor meister Baltus ze geduld.

Heer lufde en kruk op om Neleke en
peuter te geve, mà ongelukkigerwijs
schoot ze h'm oet z'n han en ratelde op de
straatstein.

Met had Nelekeze te pakke, en, of ze opins
bezete waos, begos ze met de kruk in de
huugde wie en posjenel rond te danse en
zong mer altied door:

– “Awwen onnut, awwen onnut!”

Noe kwaom Baltus zien sjoendogter door
de gank oetgevlooge, reet Neleke de kruk
oet heur han, en gaof heur en gooi mep um
heure kop.

Ongelukkigerwijs zaog dat sjus Jeannet
oet de veerte.

– “Hullabah!” reep ze, “Blief met din
fikke van me keend, slaag den eige
jonge!”

– “Wat lik ze dan deen awwen maan te
transeneere”, geef de sjoendogter veur
antwoord.

– “Wat is het, Jeannet?” vroeg toen
Janneske de krof, heure maan, dee sjus
nao hoes kwaom en dee veur z'n ambag de
bieste van de statie van de Merret nao het
slaghoes dreef.

– “Bel”, zag Jeannet, “wat heet zieg die
aon me keend te kruije, zoe e kaal
mirakel”.

En ze veegde met heur ein hand Neleke de
traone van ze sprotele snuutske.

He just opened his eyes when Neleke had
looked at him long enough.

All of a sudden, she put out her tongue
and said: – “Dirty fellow”.

Master Baltus did as if he didn't hear it
and looked away beyond her, but this
didn't please Neleke.

– “Dirty fellow”, she said again.

– “Hold your tongue, you snot!” grumbled
master Baltus, annoyed, but this did please
Neleke: now she could set it going.

– “Dirty old fellow!” she repeated yet, a
couple of times.

Suddenly, master Baltus lost his patience.

He lifted up a crutch to strike Neleke a
blow, but, unfortunately, he let it drop out
of his hands and it rattled on the paving
stones.

Immediately, Neleke had picked it up. As
if she was suddenly possessed [by the
devil], she began, holding the crutch high
above her, to dance around like a puppet,
and she sang again and again:

– “Dirty old fellow, dirty old fellow!”

Now Baltus' daughter-in-law came flying
outside through the passage. She grabbed
the crutch out of Neleke's hands, and gave
her a sound box on the ears.

Unfortunately, Jeannet saw this from a
distance.

– “Ho, there!” she cried, “Stay away with
your paws from my child, smack your
own children!”

– “Why, then, is she bullying that old
man?” answered the daughter-in-law.

– “What's up, Jeannet?” asked then
Janneske ‘the hump’, her husband, who
just came home, and who, for his work,
drove cattle and other livestock [coming]
from the railway station from the Market
Square to the slaughter house.

– “Well”, said Jeannet, “why is she
touching my child, this scanty miracle?”

And she swept with one hand the tears off
Neleke's little freckled face.

Janneske trok ze groet gezieg in giftige ploetje en preutelde zoe get van:
“Verdommese wiever, met hun geënzal altied, en ... neet mie gebeure, of ieg bemeuj mieg ins demet”, en trok toen zien deurken in, wat sjus tegeneuver dat van den oosgenger gelege waos.

De sjoendogter gaof de kruk trug en Jeannet hernaom heur aw plaots, met Neleke aon heure rok, want ze wouw zieg noe neet kekele wijl de dames op koms waore.

En jaowel, dao kwaome ze sjus aon. Sjiem aongekleid, eeder met e notitiebeukske in hun moffel, en gans doordronge van hun deftige weerdigheid, boe met ze hun charitabel werken doge.

De ein, en lang mager juffrouw, had een flinke neus, die wel get opveel, en de ander, en korte, dikke, leet altied heur veurtan zien, umdat heur bovelip get opgetrokke waos.

Ze gonge bekans van hoes tot hoes en informeerde zieg dao nao het ginnige, wat me al zoe nudig had.

Meister Baltus zaog ze aankomme en sprong agteroot op zien krukke de gank in, um zen sjoendogter agter te waarschouwe, en Jeannet sleipde hun agternao, um ze aon heur deur in ontvangs te numme.

Nuischierig bleef ze veur eeder hoes stoon kieke boe de dames alzoe ingonge.

Noe waos de beurt aon de familie Baltus en dan zouwe ze wel bij heur komme.

De twie juffrouwe bleve dao en tuurke binne, mà wie ze weer oetkwaome gonge ze met en opgestoke gezieg Jeannet veurbij en en deur weijer in.

Wat zou heur noe euverkomme?

Ze wagde tot oug dao de dames oetkwaome, en snooi hun toen de pas aof.

– “En ougenblikke ezzebleef”, begos ze, “wie zuut het oet, komt der neet ins bij mieg?”

– “Neint, vrouwke”, antwoorde de langste juffrouw, “vandaag neet”.

– “En dan boeveur neet?”

Janneske twisted his large face into angry wrinkles and grumbled something like:
“Those damned women are always fussing, and ... don’t let this happen again, or else I’ll interfere”.

Then he went through his own little front door, which was situated just opposite the door of the East-Indiaman.

The daughter-in-law gave the crutch back and Jeannet returned to her former place, with Neleke at her skirt, for she didn’t wish to quarrel while the ladies were coming.

And, yes indeed, there they came. Smartly dressed, each one with a little notebook in her muffle, and fully alive to their distinguished dignity, with which they did their charitable works.

One of them, a tall and skinny spinster, had a robust nose, which was striking indeed, and the other, a short and plump one, always showed her front teeth, because her upper lip curled a bit.

They went to nearly every house, and inquired after the things that were needed.

Master Baltus saw them coming, and jumped backward on his crutches into the passage, to warn his daughter-in-law at the back, and Jeannet shuffled after them, to receive them at her door.

She anxiously kept looking at every house the ladies went into.

Now it was the turn of the Baltus family, and thereafter they would probably come to her [own house].

The two ladies stayed inside a while, but when they came outside again, they went with haughty faces past Jeannet’s [house] and into the next.

What was happening to her now?

She waited until the ladies came outside again, and then she blocked their way.

– “Just a moment, please”, she began, “What do you think, will you not come to me?”

– “No, my good woman”, answered the tall lady, “not today”.

– “And why not?”

– “Dat zien eur affeeres neet”, verklaarde de dikke juffrouw en meinde zonder weijer eksplikaties devan aof te komme. Mè, jewel, popnel!

“Ieg krijg zeker niks? Jewel, dat begriep ieg! Die schintong van heijeuver heet uug zeker verteld dat ieg zaat bin gewees en dat ieg toen mienen erm hub gebroke. Zoe ne valen hond van e vrommes.

Dat heet mieg zeker dat lekker dier van e sjoendogter van dieg gelap, lielikke lammen verdrugden oosgenger”! reep ze opins met ein hël kekel stum tege meester Baltus, dee de dames had oetgeleije gedoon en zien aaid pläotske in de zon weer had ingenomme.

Baltus gaof gein antwoord en knikden en uigske tege de dames of heer wouw zegge: “Wij weten wel wie we voor hebben”, en de dames profiteerde van de gelegenheid um langs Jeannet door te schievele en zoe gaw meugelik en deur weijer in te trekke, in de meining dat ze noe wel van heur verlos zouwe zien.

Jeannet posteerde zieg evels veur de deur en keek wie de dames zieg binne benaome.

– “Haw den deksel op diene ketel, Triene, anders stik dee lange pottekiaker heur neus d’r in um te zien wat ste gekook hubs”, reep ze nao binne, boe op de lang juffrouw hiel verontweerdig eve nao veure kwaom en Jeannet metdeilde tot ze ‘t ins aon de dames zou zegge wie astrant tot ze waor en tot ze zeker noets mie get zou kriege.

Noe leep het Jeannet euver.

– “Triene!” reep ze op heur naoberse, “beloer mieg die neus ins die dat wief heet, wat pappegej! Es ieg zoe’n neus had bleef ieg nog gein oor oet de kanaar!”

De dames vondten het raodzaam um zieg mer zoe gaw meuglik oet de riezter te maken, en verlete met hoeg roei kup de woening van Triene.

Mè, noe waore ze gans aon de heidene euvorgelieverd, veural wie de korte dikke in het langsgoon nog kordaot op heur maneer zag:

– “That’s none of your business”, declared the thick lady, and she thought she could get away without further explications. But, yes indeed, [here’s a] puppet-trump-card! “Don’t I get anything? Well, I understand! I think that this scandalmonger across the street told you that I was drunk when I broke my arm. Such a treacherous dog is that woman.

I’m sure that sweet child, your daughter-in-law, has been slurring me, you ugly lame dried-up East-Indies man!” she suddenly cried in a loud, high-pitched voice to master Baltus, who had shown the ladies out and returned to his former spot in the sun.

Baltus didn’t answer and he tipped a wink toward the ladies, as if he wished to say: “We know who is here before us”, and the ladies took advantage of the occasion to shuffle past Jeannet and go into a next door as soon as possible, thinking they were now set free from her.

Jeannet, however, posted herself before the door and watched the ladies to see what they did inside.

– “Keep the lid on the kettle, Triene, or else that tall kettle watcher will put her nose in it to see what you have been cooking”, she cried to them inside, and now the tall lady came very indignant to the front for a moment and informed Jeannet she was going to tell the [other] ladies how impudent she was and she certainly wouldn’t get anything ever after. Now Jeannet’s [gall] overflowed.

– “Triene!” she cried to her neighbour, “look at that nose of this woman, what a parrot! If I had such a nose, I wouldn’t stay one hour out of the canal!”

The ladies thought fit to cut their sticks as soon as possible, and they left the dwelling of Triene with a bright red face.

But now they were entirely delivered up to the heathen, especially because the short plump one said in passing in her resolute way:

“Foi, vrouke, 't is ongepermiteerd. Veer zulle dreuver spreke.”

– “Dao, dee schaarstand heet oug nog get te kommandeere. De kaans mieg met dien humme en dien klompe gestole weurde, wets ste dat, ieg hub van dieg niks nudig, lielik wouvegebit, en van dieg oug neet, neuzekeuningin met diene vloere mantel aon. Wat e model tot dao lup, sjus en verstopde kanjel die leek.”

Noe bemeugde zieg de sjoendogter demet, die meister Baltus op zij had geduid in dat Jeannet oug versterking kraog in de persoon van Janneske, dee in zien deurke verscheen, en Neleke, dat aon heure scholk gong hange.

– “Laot ze mer sjelle, m'n leef juffrouw”, zag de sjoendogter. “Dat zien veer van dat bagasje geweend. Ze zet altied het gans sträotsje op stelte.”

– “'t Is weer Maandag en dan heeft dat wyf altijd de duivel in de prij”, veugde meister Baltus dr aon touw, dee pas opgeschreve waos veur ne struzak. Koelik had er evels ziene mond ope gedoon of Janneske stond veur h'm met ze groet gezieg.

– “Gaot in, meister Baltus, bemeugd uug dao neet met”, schriewden heer driftig, boe op meister Baltus verschrik twie sprung agteroet maakde de gank in.

– “Die maag nog op ander lui hun neus sjokkeere”, gong de sjoendogter door. “Dee roejen tuitel dee ze zelfs veur heure kop heet is oug neet van niks. Dee is roed van de blauwe?”

– “En zij lus niks”, schimpde Jeannet, “es ze niks krijg. Ze heet oug liever e bakske es nen teleur Mommussop!”

Op het woord “sop” kwaom Meister Baltus weer nao veure gesprongen:

– “Kom, kom, Sjannet”, zag heer, “laat nouw de dames met vree. We motten er 's winters tog van vrete”.

– “Meister Baltus, noe veur de leste kier, gaot in en bemeugd uug dao neet met”,

“For shame, my good woman, this is inadmissible. We'll report it.”

– “Hear! This woman with her strange teeth wants to take a high line. I don't care if you disappear with your undershirts and clogs, do you know that? I don't want anything from you, [with your] ugly set of wolf's teeth, neither from you, queen of noses, with your velvet coat. What a [nose] model is walking there, just like a roof gutter that's stopped up and leaking. Now the daughter-in-law interfered. She pushed aside master Baltus when Jeannet got reinforcements, too, in the persons of Janneske, who appeared in his little doorway, and Neleke who began to hang against her apron.

– “Just let them call names, my dear miss”, said the daughter-in-law. “We're used to that, with this wretch. She always raises hell in the whole alley.”

– “It is Monday again, and then this vixen has always the devil in her body”, added master Baltus, who had just been allotted a straw mattress.

He had hardly opened his mouth, however, when Janneske stood before him with his large face.

– “Go inside, master Baltus, don't interfere with this”, he cried passionately, and master Baltus, in a fright, made two jumps backward into the passage.

– “She wants to criticize the noses of other people”, the daughter-in-law continued. “[But] that red spout she has before her own head isn't anything, either. Is that [nose] red because of the [many] blue [small drinks of gin]?”

– “And she [only] doesn't like any [gin]”, scoffed Jeannet, “when she doesn't get any. [But] she, too, prefers a small drink [of gin] to a plate of Momus soup!”

Hearing the word “soup”, master Baltus jumped forward again:

– “Calm down, Jeannet”, he said, “now leave the ladies in peace. We have to eat in winter [what we get] from them”.

– “Master Baltus, now for the last time, go inside and don't interfere”, warned

waarschouwde Janneske, dee weer in eine wup met ze groet gezieg veur den awwe maan stond, dee oug weer van de schrik twie sprung agteroet de gank in maakde.
– “Tot ze hunne rats mer zelfs vreete”, reep Jeannet, die het in veel dat veurtaan de kans op broed- en soppekaarte veur good verkeke waor.
“Tot zij dao zieg mer stief d’r aon vrit, aon dat schotelwater. Die heet het anders nudig. ‘s Maondags lup ze met de kurf langs de deure en Zondags hubbe ze frikkedel in de sop!”

– “Aog juffrouw, geluif zoe get tog neet”, betuigde de sjoendogter, en ze lag en hand op heur hart, en keek nao bove, of ze den hiemel tot getuige naom.
– “Jao, frikkedel, ... in de sop ... frikkedel”, gong Jeannet door, blij tot ze de ander geraak had.
– “Zoe ne lielikke ... lielikke ...”, ze kos gei woord lielik ... genug vinden.
– “Meer, zek gaw poddel, anders zeet zij het”, steukden heur Neleke op.
– ... “Zoe ne lielikke poddel”! besloot Jeannet.

Mè meister Baltus vond noe aon dat z’n naoberse ne bedinkelikken aonvaol doog op de bedeilung van z’n familie. Met ne groete sprunk waos heer weer aon de deur.
– “Ze liegt het, dames, ze liegt het”, protesteerden heer, “we hebben in geen jaar meer ‘ne grummel frikkedel gezien.
– Sjannet, je bent en kreng ...”

Koelik had heer dat woord oet ziene mond of heer kraog van Janneske ne boks met ein voes onder zien kin, tot heer met krukken en al onderstebove veel met e spektakel of ze in de gank e speul keigele doorein smete.

Noe leep ouch te sjoendochter de gal euver en met ne lange greep klawde zij ziech vas in Sjannet heur muts, en trok die van heure kop met ‘n ganse bussel haore debij.

Sjannet met heure kepotten erm kos ziech neet weere, mer begos te sjriewe:

– “Frikkedel!”

Janneske, who stood in a flash with his big face before the old man again, and the old man made again in a fright two jumps backward into the passage.

– “Let them feed on their own broth”, cried Jeannet, who realised that from now on her chance for bread and soup tickets was gone forever.

“Let she feed on it until she’s stiff of that dishwater. Anyway, she doesn’t need it. Every Monday, she’s walking with a basket from door to door, and every Sunday they have minced-meat balls in the soup!”

– “Ah, miss, don’t believe such things”, objected the daughter-in-law, and she laid a hand upon her heart, and looked upward, as if she was taking heaven to witness.

– “Yes, minced-meat, ... in the soup ... minced-meat”, continued Jeannet, happy to have hit the other.

– “Such an ugly ... ugly ...”, she couldn’t find a word [which was] ugly enough.

– “Mum, say slut, else she will say it herself”, urged Neleke.

– ... “Such an ugly slut!” decided Jeannet. But master Baltus now found that her neighbour made a precarious attack against his family’s welfare allowance. With a long jump, he was at the door again.

– “She’s lying, ladies, she’s lying”, he protested, “We haven’t seen a scrap of minced-meat for a year.

– Jeannet, you are a bitch ...”

This word was scarcely out of his mouth, when Janneske gave him with one fist a box on his chin, so that he fell with his crutches upside down, as if somebody had thrown a set of skittles down the passage. Now the [cup of] bitterness flew over with the daughter-in-law too, and with a long grasp she grabbed Jeannet’s bonnet and pulled it off her head, with a whole tuft of hair.

Jeannet with her broken arm couldn’t defend herself, but she began crying:

– “Minced-meat!”

en wie ze 't neet mie gaw genog oet bringe
kos klopde zij zieg al kekenteere met heur
vrij hand op heure mond: "... joa ...
Zondags ... in de sop ... frikkedel!"

De erm dames stondte toen in ne groete
krink van nuischierige, die van alle kante
kwaomen aongezat.

– "Noe of noets", dag toen zeker de klein
dikke en met en vaart boeveur eederein
moos schuive drong ze door de kring
gevolg door de lang.

Met kup wie de piepers maakde ze tot ze
het sträotsje oet kwaome, en vooldte en
ganse gerusstelling euver zieg komme wie
ze op de Merret nen deender zaogen aon
komme gewandeld, dee eins kwaom loere
woerum de lui zoe leepe.

In de veerte hoorde ze nog altied Jeannet
boven alles oetkeke:

– "Frikkedel; Frikkede-è-è-èl!"

And when she couldn't bring [the words]
out quickly enough, she tapped with her
free hand on her mouth while shouting:
"... yes ... every Sunday ... in the soup ...
minced meat!"

The poor ladies were standing in a large
circle of inquisitive people, who had
turned up from all sides.

– "Now or never", the little plump one
seemed to think, and at a speed for which
everybody had to go aside, she pushed her
way through the circle, and the tall one
followed her.

With [red] heads like the flutists [in a
wind band], they got out of the alley, and
they felt greatly relieved when they saw
on the Market Square a policeman who
came walking on. He came to see why
people were assembling.

Far away they still heard Jeannet shouting
above everything:

– "Minced meat; minced m-e-e-eat!"