

Plays for Young Audiences

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY-MINNEAPOLIS

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Rembrandt Takes a Walk

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Rembrandt Takes a Walk was first presented by The Children's Theatre Company for the 1988-1989 season.

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Cast List:

- Tom, a ten-year-old boy
- Tom's Mom, a middle-aged woman, suburban
- Tom's Dad, a middle-aged man, suburban
- Uncle Morton, a man in his late sixties, older in appearance than he really is, unkempt
- Rembrandt, a man the same age as Uncle Morton, but younger in appearance
- Motorcyclist, a young woman in a blue spandex racing suit and full helmet
- Boy on Roller Skates
- Girl on Roller Skates
- Someone on a Ten-speed
- Crying Little Boy
- Fireman #2
- Fireman #1
- Man Sunbather
- Woman Sunbather
- Sunday Painter, an older woman
- Hot Dog Vendor
- Hard Hat #1
- Hard Hat #2
- Woman in Curlers
- Lionel, her husband
- Bride
- Groom
- Wedding Guests

SCENE 1

The scene opens to a sound blaring from a television set – an interesting collage of cuts from Saturday TV: cartoons, commercials, and cuts from MTV with very brief snippets from the unavoidable passes through educational channels, necessary to get back to the cartoons. The collage effect is caused unconsciously by TOM, stretched out in a chair in front of the TV, staring contentedly at the screen and switching the TV channels randomly with a remote control he holds in his hand. It is the living room of a middle-class home in suburban America and the floor is strewn with toys, comic books and debris. The time is the present.

On TOM's ears are headphones that are connected to a walkman (iPod) and he periodically sings along with the tape, never interrupting his concentration on the TV. In his other hand, he holds a Transformer toy and is feeding himself french fries with it. A soft drink is balanced precariously on the arm of the chair. A comic book is open in TOM's lap and he looks at a bit of it, turns the page, singing along with the walkman and then returns to watching the TV. There should be nothing hurried in any of the movements. He is completely relaxed – this is his favorite time of the week.

After several beats, TOM's MOM enters. She is wearing a dress and heels and is carrying a small suitcase. She puts the suitcase down and opens it up.

TOM'S MOM Tom? (TOM can't hear her, of course.) TOMMM! (TOM doesn't respond, so she stands between him and the TV. TOM points the remote at her, trying to make her go away. She lifts the headphones from his ears.)
Tom? It's me, your mother. (Taking the remote out of his hand.) I'm not on television. I'm here.

TOM Hi mom.

TOM'S MOM Where are your good pajamas?

TOM Under my bed.

TOM'S MOM Under your BED?!

TOM That's where I keep all my good stuff.

TOM'S MOM (Sighs.) Alright. (She starts to exit, TOM puts the headphones back on. TOM'S MOM takes them off.) Are your slippers under the bed too?

TOM *(Can't understand why she doesn't deduce this herself.)* No mom, they're in the closet. With the shoes. *(She exits, TOM shakes his head at the general stupidity of parents, then notices the open suitcase.)* Mom? *(Notices something in the suitcase, picks it up. It's a toothbrush. He looks at it, then tries it in his mouth, realizes that it's his – this worries him.)* It's mine, alright. MOMMMM!?! Where am I going?

At this moment, TOM'S DAD enters, also dressed up, but in loud pants and a contrasting jacket.

TOM'S DAD Are these pants alright? Oh, I thought you were your mother.

TOM'S DAD exits. TOM'S MOM enters with pajamas, slippers.

TOM'S MOM *(Packing them in the suitcase.)* Oh, you'll need a robe – it's always cold there. *(She exits.)*

TOM Mom?

TOM'S DAD *(Entering)* Are these pants-? Well, where IS she? *(Exiting)* Hon?

TOM Dad?

TOM'S MOM *(Entering with the bathrobe. Suddenly remembering.)* Underwear!

She exits. TOM waits for his father to appear, sits down, thinking it won't happen – just then, TOM'S DAD enters.

TOM'S DAD Hon, these pants seem- *(Sees that his wife isn't there, sighs in frustration and exits. TOM'S MOM enters, carrying more stuff.)*

TOM'S MOM I packed extra everything just in case.

TOM MOM!

TOM's MOM Yes?

TOM Where am I going?

TOM's MOM Oh. You're going to Uncle Morton's.

TOM Uncle Morton's?

TOM's MOM You love your Uncle Morton.

TOM Maybe...

TOMS MOM He's getting old, he's getting lonely, he never leaves that house, and you seem to be the only one who can cheer him up.

TOM I hate going there. His house is so big and gloomy, and nothing works. And Uncle Morton never has any food around.

TOMS MOM We have to get going. Your father and I have tons of errands to do before we can drop you at Uncle Morton's.

TOM I always get so hungry and bored there.

TOMS MOM I packed a comb and a brush. USE them!!

TOM Why? Uncle Morton never does!

TOMS MOM Uncle Morton is bald.

TOM Mom -my shows.

TOMS MOM Your shows are over. The only thing left on now is bowling.

TOM I like bowling.

TOM's MOM Your father and I are going to a wedding rehearsal and-we won't be home until very late tonight. Now, get in the car--we have lots of errands to do. Don't worry, we'll get you to Uncle Morton's in time for dinner.

TOM An afternoon of errands in the car? And then Uncle Morton's? I'm going to die.

TOM'S MOM Uncle Morton's got all those wonderful paintings. And I hear he's just added a new one!

TOM I don't want to see paintings. I want to sit in my own house and eat and watch TV!

TOM'S MOM Would you rather have a babysitter? We could call a babysitter.

TOM'S DAD *(Entering)* Here you are!!

TOM'S MOM *(To Tom)* Ready?

TOM picks up the remote control and tries to pack it. TOMS MOM takes it out of his hand, gives it to TOMS DAD, shuts the suitcase, and hands the suitcase to TOM who takes it.

TOM Ready.

TOMS DAD turns off the TV and puts down the remote.

TOM'S MOM Hon, are you sure you want to wear those pants?

They exit. TOM runs back in, still holding the suitcase, grabs the rest of the french fries, stuffs them into his mouth and drinks the rest of his soda.

TOM's MOM TOMMMMM!!!!!!

TOM burps, picks up the suitcase and exits.

TOM, suitcase in hand, waves and watches his parents drive away – they are offstage.

TOM's MOM *(The sound of her voice disappearing as she is driven away.)* Don't forget to brush your teeth after you eat... *(His father honks the car horn.)*

TOM Eat? I hope I get to.

SCENE 2

TOM turns and crosses toward an enormous door with an equally enormous brass knocker of a lion with a ring in its mouth. TOM reaches for the knocker, but can't get to it, so he stands on his suitcase and moves the brass ring. It comes off in his hand, causing him to fall off the suitcase. Just then, the door begins to open – it makes a loud and long, creepy squeak. TOM gets up and stares into the darkness.

TOM Uncle M--Morton? (No one answers. TOM gets up, picks up his suitcase and enters.) It's Tom.

TOM enters a long, dark hallway. The walls are covered with paintings, hard to see because of the ancient chandelier is encased with cobwebs – it hasn't been used in years. At the end of the hallway is a figure of a man standing before a painting, transfixed. TOM stops.

TOM Uncle Morton?!

UNCLE MORTON (The man turns and sees TOM.) What? Oh, TOM!!! I quite forgot for a minute! I opened the door and then I just had to come back here and look at my new painting. (UNCLE MORTON comes to TOM. He's wearing ancient trousers and a torn bathrobe over and underwear top. His glasses are old yellow plastic and are so loose they hang on his nose. He's unshaven and unkempt – he looks like a bum.) Come in, come in my boy!! (UNCLE MORTON shakes TOM's hand in pleased silence, beaming at him.) Did you look at my paintings? Most of them are old friends to you. Monet, Picasso, Zurbaran--look at those oranges-- such form!

TOM They look good.

MORTON They look good! Yes, they do! They're works of genius! And Monsieur Cezanne--these apples speak to all that is fine in all of us. Do they not?

TOM They look good, too.

MORTON (Taking TOM to the Rembrandt.) But here. Come here, my boy. Come here.

TOM (Looking at the Rembrandt.) Who's this guy?

MORTON *(Loving TOM's comment.)* "Who's this guy?" How bright you are! "This" is Rembrandt--a great painter who painted his own likeness with such feeling that anyone might look at this self-portrait, might look at this painting, like you would at someone's face in a window, and ask--"Who is this guy?"

TOM So, who is he?

MORTON Rembrandt--my newest acquisition. Rembrandt painted by himself. A masterpiece! Ahhhhhh... *(No answer from TOM, UNCLE MORTON tries again to express his pleasure at his Rembrandt painting.)* Ahhhhh...

TOM *(Tries to please.)* Ah.

MORTON I have a surprise for you.

TOM What Uncle Morton?

MORTON Dinner.

TOM That's a good surprise.

MORTON "It's too late for lunch," I said to myself. "So I bet young Tom would like dinner."

TOM Young Tom would like that, Uncle Morton.

MORTON *(Leading TOM.)* Well, come on, come on.

TOM I was afraid you'd forget about dinner--like the last time—

UNCLE MORTON leads TOM to a giant table on which there on two small plates. On each plate is half a hamburger and few peas.

MORTON *(Gesturing to the food.)* Well, what do you think?

TOM Is this dinner?

MORTON I cooked for company!

TOM *(Getting excited.)* Company? Who? Where are they?

MORTON Right here, Tom. It's you. You're my company. Sit down. *(He seats TOM, takes the suitcase and puts it aside.)* Go ahead. Don't wait for me. "Dig in," as they say. *(TOM eats. UNCLE MORTON sits down and watches him.)* Enjoy your dinner.

TOM I did.

MORTON *(About his food.)* Well, I hardly know how I'm going to get this all down. So, tell me all that you've been doing. Everything!

TOM Well – Ummm... Well...

MORTON I think there are some more peas. Help yourself.

TOM can't reach the can of peas sitting in the middle of the table, so he gets up and walks to it, takes it back to his place and turns the can upside down over his plate. Four peas roll out – TOM eats each one.

TOM Thanks.

MORTON Now--go on, tell me more. I was a boy once myself, you know.

TOM Err... Ummmmmm.

MORTON *(In pleasure.)* Yes. Yes. Yes. Go on.

TOM Well....school.

MORTON *(As if he'd been told an entire wonderful story.)* Yes. Yes. *(He waits for another 'story'.)*

TOM Ummm – my birthday.

MORTON *(Chuckling with delight.)* Yes. Oh, yes. Yes. *(He waits for another 'story'.)*

TOM T – Taller.

MORTON Yes. Oh my, yes. YES. (Beat) Oh my. Aren't we having a good time, my boy?

TOM Yes.

MORTON *(Smiles largely at TOM and shakes his head in agreement to things TOM hasn't said yet.)* Just think – an entire evening to talk, just like we've been doing. Go on – I'll never get this eaten unless I stop talking.

Time passes. Light change. TOM's head has ended up in his plate – his eyes are shut. UNCLE MORTON is still stabbing peas one at a time with his fork.

MORTON Chew every bite twenty-five times and you never get indigestion. *(To the peas)* Come here you. *(To TOM)* Go on, my boy. We were talking about – now, what was it – oh yes – the weather. The weather. *(Forming his thought with care.)* It--always--changes. Don't you think that's true, my boy? *(Noticing that TOM seems to be napping in his plate.)* Oh! How rude of me! I so cherished our long, leisurely dinner, I quite forgot! Tom? *(He crosses to TOM, lifts his head out of the plate.)* I have another surprise for you!

TOM What? Hello? *(UNCLE MORTON escorts TOM to another chair – a big overstuffed one – in front of an ancient TV in a brown cabinet.)* What is it?

SCENE 3

MORTON turns a knob – nothing happens, so he kicks it, seems satisfied, waits, looking at the empty screen.

MORTON That'll do it. *(A loud static starts and then the picture appears – it's black and white diagonal lines.)* I bet you thought I didn't have one. It's a television! For my Tom. See? Picture needs adjusting. *(He adjusts the knob – the diagonal lines shift direction.)* There. See? I know what you like. I'm going to say good-night to my paintings--be right back. *(He crosses away and we hear and see him waltzing down his hallway, saying goodnight to his paintings.)* Good-night,

Cezanne. Good-night, Canaletto. Good-night, Degas. Good-night, my Tintoretto. Good-night, Raphael... (Meanwhile TOM nods off in his chair. UNCLE MORTON crosses to him, takes off TOM's shoes and covers TOM with an old blanket full of holes. He turns off the TV and climbs upstairs yawning.) Good-night, Zurbaran. Sleep tight, Botticelli. Sweet dreams, my Monet. Sweet dreams, my Rembrandt.....

TOM is asleep in his chair. UNCLE MORTON is snoring away upstairs. We hear the distant sound of morning birds. TOM wakes up, looks around – he's disoriented. He sees the TV – a recognizable object – he reaches around, picks up his shoes and treats it like a TV remote control, pointing it at the TV and trying to get it to click.

TOM MOM! The remote control's broken!! MOM? (Beat) Hey, this isn't a remote control--this is a shoe! This is - my shoe. But that isn't my TV. Where am I? (TOM gets up and crosses to the window, opens a drape that hasn't been opened in years – sunlight pours in.) Oh, I remember - Uncle Morton's. Well, at least I got to sleep in my clothes. (TOM looks up the stairs where UNCLE MORTON snores away.) UNCLE MORTON? (No answer, just snoring.) ANYTHING FOR BREAKFAST? (More snoring) I knew it.

TOM crosses to a lonely refrigerator, puts his hand on the handle, opens the door. Inside is a jar of pickles with one pickle. Two eggs and a bottle of ketchup are in the door shelves.

TOM A dill pickle, two old eggs and a bottle of ketchup – I don't think that makes anything.

TOM closes the refrigerator door and goes to the breadbox, picks it up, shakes it, but only crumbs come out. He puts that down and opens cupboards, finds a few cans and packages of useless and incomprehensible items. Suddenly, he sees something that fills him with joy.

TOM A cookie jar! (He opens it and pulls out a tea bag) A tea bag!? (He puts the cookie Jar down, defeated) There isn't a thing to eat in this house! And I'm starving! (TOM wanders out of the kitchen area, past the TV-- puts on his shoes, sits for a beat, then suddenly notices something edible-- an big orange is shining in the sunlight TOM let-in when he opened the drapes) Oh ! An ORANGE!! (TOM runs toward the orange, but stops right before he gets to it) Oh no! It's not a real orange! It's just in this old painting! (TOM can't help but look at it longingly) But it looks so

good. (*About the fruit in another painting*) Oh man, look at those APPLES! They look so real!

He's discouraged. After a beat, though, he looks at the apples again--they look so real. This idea overcomes him and, transfixed, TOM reaches out, very slowly, and touches the apple--it MOVES--he pulls his hand back, as if it just received an electric shock. He stares at the apple, then decides that it didn't move, that he's imagining things. The orange he saw first catches his eye again--he has to try: he reaches out very slowly touches the orange, and it moves, too.

TOM Let's see if there's a pear. (*Finds one in a painting, walks up and touches it--it moves. Beat*) Let's EAT!!

TOM starts going from painting to painting, gathering fruit and putting it on the table. He sits in a chair, puts his feet on the table and begins to eat, enjoying himself fully.

TOM (*Much happier now, able to enjoy his environment*) These old paintings look pretty good--I can see why Uncle Morton likes them. (*Suddenly, a realization*) These old paintings look pretty empty. I'm in BIG TROUBLE! (*This realization throws TOM into high gear--he frantically tries to put the fruit back the way it was, but has trouble*) No, wait a minute! There weren't any pears in Monsieur Cezanne's painting. And which plate did he have? And where did these LEMONS come from? (*UNCLE MORTON'S snoring shifts slightly--TOM freezes, then looks upstairs --UNCLE MORTON is still asleep*) And this pitcher? Which painting was it in? Oh, I'm dead! Dead, dead, DEAD!

REMBRANDT (*In the painting*) Psssssssst.

TOM (*Not hearing*) Dead, dead, dead, dead.

REMBRANDT PSSSST !

TOM hears it this time, looks around for the source of the sound.

REMBRANDT Over here.

TOM turns around slowly and looks at the REMBRANDT--TOM crosses to it and looks very closely at the painting until he's right up against REMBRANDT--almost touching.

REMBRANDT I'll tell you what, little boy. (*TOM recoils and falls on his behind, now staring at REMBRANDT*) If you help me out of this painting, I'll help you put these paintings back the way they belong. (*TOM doesn't answer — he stares*) You need help, don't you? (*TOM nods yes*) Well, so do I. Give me your hand-- (*TOM gives REMBRANDT his hand and REMBRANDT proceeds to crawl out of the painting, talking while he does*) I have to tell you, for the last hundred years, I've been hanging in another collection, across from a terrific painting of women bathers, until last month when your Uncle Morton bought me and brought me here and where did he hang me? Right across from a bowl of fruit--lemons, no less. Do you know what it's like to have to stare at a bowl of lemons, day after day? However beautifully they are painted? Although I would certainly have painted them differently.

REMBRANDT (*Whispers to TOM*) Better, to tell the truth. (*Standing up*) OOOOHHHHH MYYYYY! (*Stretching his legs*) Legs! I'd quite forgotten I had legs down there! (*Looking at them*) Still got their shape! (*Does some stretching*) Ahhhh! (*To TOM*) My name's Rembrandt. How do you do?

TOM My name's Tom.

REMBRANDT (*Trying out the name*) "Tom. " "Tom." (*Looking at the fruit from the paintings*) Well, Tom, this fruit's a mess, but I can help-- (*The window catches his eye*) Oh, I have to look out the window! It's been a long time since I've seen what it's like outside--alright with you?

TOM Okay.

REMBRANDT (*At the window*) HOLY HOLLANDAISE! Things have CHANGED! I can see things have changed! Tom! We have to take a walk around town!

TOM Wait! We can't do that.

REMBRANDT We can't?

TOM What if my uncle wakes up and sees all these empty paintings?

REMBRANDT Tom - listen--we've got nothing to worry about!

TOM We don't?

REMBRANDT I've watched that old goat for a month and he NEVER wakes up before noon! NEVER! *(At the window again, looking out in amazement)* Holy Hollandaise! You're gone for three hundred years and look what happens!

TOM You're not dressed right.

REMBRANDT I think I look wonderful. I dressed for my own portrait, after all.

TOM No, no. You've got to take off that weird-looking hat and that funny coat. And you've got to wear some pants!

REMBRANDT These are my best hose.

TOM My uncle has a suit in the closet upstairs – I think it might fit you.

REMBRANDT If I must.

TOM Come on. Be very quiet. *(TOM pauses and looks at the fruit)*

REMBRANDT Don't worry. I'll fix these paintings good as new. When we come back.

REMBRANDT and TOM tiptoe up the stairs. TOM finds the suit--a blue serge with extra wide lapels, shows it to REMBRANDT.

TOM Here.

REMBRANDT Alright. But it's not as attractive as what I've got on.

REMBRANDT tiptoes behind the mirror and begins taking off his "funny" clothes—he flings them over the mirror as he takes them off. After a few beats of this, TOM looks behind the mirror, to check on REMBRANDT.

TOM Hey, wait a minute. *(Going to a drawer, opening it)* You have to have

underwear.

REMBRANDT *(Sticking his head out from behind the mirror)* What are underwear?

TOM *(Brandishing a large pair of boxer shorts)* These. You gotta have 'em.
(Gives them to REMBRANDT)

REMBRANDT What do I do with them?

TOM You wear them--with your pants.

REMBRANDT's head disappears behind the mirror again. TOM finds a loud and large tie—he loves it.

REMBRANDT I'm ready!

REMBRANDT comes out from behind the mirror. He has put on the undershorts over the pants. REMBRANDT looks at himself in the mirror—he likes what he sees.

TOM *(About the undershorts)* No.

REMBRANDT No?

TOM The undershorts.

REMBRANDT Too much? *(REMBRANDT takes them off--looks down at his fly)* I don't understand this silver—

TOM *(Zipping him up)* It's a zipper.

REMBRANDT Zipper. Miraculous!

TOM Bend down. *(REMBRANDT kneels down and TOM puts the loud tie on him, REMBRANDT stands for inspection. He's still wearing his period slippers)* Different shoes! *(TOM finds a pair of shoes and helps REMBRANDT put them on)*

REMBRANDT Nobody wore these things back in my day. Do all the men cover up their legs? *(Lifts his pant leg to admire his calf)* Seems a shame. *(About the tie)* I do like this cravat, though.

UNCLE MORTON snores a loud snore, startling TOM and REMBRANDT.

REMBRANDT Let's go. *(They start downstairs)*

TOM Are you sure he won't wake up?

REMBRANDT Never before noon.

TOM Here's the door.

REMBRANDT Let's go!

Scene 4

They open the door and REMBRANDT and TOM steps outside, the bright light blasts, the sounds of a Sunday morning in the suburbs flood around them--birds, dogs, the whoosh of cars in the next block, children's voices, car radios--it shouldn't be too busy or cacophonous. REMBRANDT stands transfixed.

REMBRANDT I'm blind! No, wait a minute--here it comes into focus--I've been hanging in dark halls so long. *(Takes a deep breath)* Ohhhhh. Fresh air! *(His eyes get used to the light)* There!

TOM What?

REMBRANDT The sky! Oh, it's still blue! And what a blue that is! And everything is green! Look at that tree shimmer! And listen! There's a bird! There's another bird! And what's that sound--like a waterfall?

TOM I don't hear anything.

REMBRANDT *(duplicating the sound)* Whoooooosssssssh.

TOM *(Listening)* Oh, that's traffic.

REMBRANDT Oh, let's go see that! *(REMBRANDT starts off, with TOM in tow. Sees*

a car) What's that?

TOM A Porsche 944.

REMBRANDT (*Watching it pass*) Where's the horse?

TOM Under the hood. Sort of.

REMBRANDT Great Gouda! (*Suddenly, the sound of a motorcycle coming toward them--REMBRANDT grabs TOM and tries to hide.*) BEAST!!!! BEAST!!

TOM Just a motorcycle.

The MOTORCYCLIST drives on stage, slowing down--the motorcycle is having engine trouble. The MOTORCYCLIST is dressed in a blue spandex jumpsuit and matching helmet--the kind that completely encase the head. The MOTORCYCLIST gets off the cycle and looks at the engine, one hand still trying the accelerator handle. REMBRANDT can't stand it--he approaches and knocks on the MOTORCYCLIST'S helmet visor.

REMBRANDT Back from the war? Are we winning?

MOTORCYCLIST (*Putting up the visor*) What's your problem?!

TOM (*To REMBRANDT*) Come on, let's get out of here.

MOTORCYCLIST gets back on the cycle, takes off the helmet—she's a young woman.

MOTORCYCLIST (*As she rolls away, to REMBRANDT*) WEIRDO!

She exits. In a beat, we hear the engine revving up again and coughing its way into the distance--REMBRANDT stands amazed.

REMBRANDT Was that a woman?

TOM Uh-huh .

A BOY and GIRL go by on roller skates, holding hands--they wave. REMBRANDT waves back.

REMBRANDT Marvelous! You know what I'd like to do?

TOM *(A little worried)* What?

REMBRANDT I'd like to draw! *(He begins searching all his pockets for paper)* I never go anywhere without paper. Oh, I don't have my smock on. *(Checks inside his shirt, finds some paper)* Here's some! My own shirt--I'm so glad I didn't change it. Now, all I need is something to draw with.

TOM Sometimes, I have a ballpoint pen in my back pocket. *(Checks)* No. *(Goes through the pockets in REMBRANDT's jacket)* Check all the pockets. *(REMBRANDT checks the pockets, too. TOM pulls a pencil from one of the jacket pockets)* Sometimes they get behind the lining--here!!

REMBRANDT *(REMBRANDT takes it in his hand, looks at it.)* Why didn't somebody think of this when I was drawing. The charcoal always got all over my hands.

TOM *(Pointing to one of the ends of the pencil)* That's the eraser.

REMBRANDT Amazing! Now for a subject--I hardly know where to start--
(SOMEONE ON A TEN-SPEED goes by. REMBRANDT draws him or her quickly, using something as a surface, then sketches some scenery.)
Great Gouda! Three hundred years make a tremendous difference. I'm rusty. I've lost my touch!

TOM *(Looking at the sketches)* Looks pretty good to me.

REMBRANDT Well, let's go "downtown" and see some "traffic"- maybe a change of subject will help.

TOM We shouldn't go too far. Uncle Morton—

REMBRANDT Not to worry, Tom. Come on! *(They walk through the neighborhood. A dog trots through)* Dogs haven't changed! *(A LITTLE BOY, crying loudly, stands beneath a tree)* Hello, little boy. *(A siren and bell—a chartreuse fire engine rolls in)* Look at THAT!!! THAT IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CARRIAGE I HAVE EVER SEEN!!

REMBRANDT takes TOM by the hand and chases the fire engine--it stops by the tree with the crying little boy under it. Two FIREMEN appear, raise a ladder and one climbs it.

REMBRANDT begins to draw the fire engine.

REMBRANDT Such WHEELS!!

A FIREMAN comes over and watches REMBRANDT.

FIREMAN #1 Clear the area, sir.

TOM (To REMBRANDT) We have to go.

REMBRANDT Almost done--just a few touches.

FIREMAN #1 No one allowed near emergency vehicle, sir.

TOM (To FIREMAN) We're going.

TOM pulls REMBRANDT away. Just then, the other FIREMAN comes down the ladder with a kitten in his arms. He hands it to the LITTLE BOY who stops crying when he gets his kitten. The fire engine pulls away.

REMBRANDT and TOM come upon a couple, a MAN and WOMAN, sunbathing--they are holding reflective panels up against both sides of their faces. REMBRANDT comes right up to them and stares at them -- they don't see him at first because they have their eyes shut.

REMBRANDT (Sketching again) This is better than the carriage.

At the sound of REMBRANDT'S voice, the sunbathing WOMAN and MAN open their eyes and see REMBRANDT.

SUNBATHING

MAN Hey! HEY!!!

REMBRANDT 'Cuse me. Are you modeling for someone else?

SUNBATHING

WOMAN Come on, Chad. Let's get out of here!! (They exit, holding their reflective panels)

TOM You've got to stop bothering people! (A frisbee whizzes by, then a group of kids enter on their skateboards) Oh NO!

REMBRANDT What is it?

TOM Kids from my school!

REMBRANDT I'd love to meet them.

TOM Not just now. Maybe some other day.

TOM gets REMBRANDT going in another direction. But then, they see something else even more interesting to REMBRANDT, that is--a SUNDAY PAINTER. A old lady is sitting at her easel, working on her painting of the boats on the lake. REMBRANDT crosses right to her.

REMBRANDT Were you painting those nudes with the silver hats?

SUNDAY
PAINTER No, I'm painting those boats.

REMBRANDT *(Looking at the view—her subject)* Ah, the landscape--always presents interesting problems. May I?

PAINTER Yes.

REMBRANDT *(Looking closely at her painting—he's a little shocked at how bad it is, but covers his reaction)* What did you say you were painting?

PAINTER I call it "Boats of the Morning."

REMBRANDT Pardon me-- *(Takes the brush from her hand, begins to work on the painting)*

PAINTER What are you DOING!?? LEAVE MY PAINTING ALONE, you MANIAC!

TOM *(Trying to pull him away)* Rembrandt!! Rembrandt!! MR. REMBRANDT!!

REMBRANDT Oh, alright. There. *(Gives her the brush)*

PAINTER I ought to have you arrested! *(To TOM)* Little boy, your grandfather may THINK he's Rembrandt, but he's not--he's some kind of MUGGER!! *(She looks at the painting--mourning it)* My beautiful,

beautiful painting-- *(Sudden realization — she looks closer at it, then farther away) --it IS beautiful. It's BEAUTIFUL!!! (She looks around for REMBRANDT and TOM, but they've escaped). Where did they go? (She wraps up the painting, etc. and exits, very pleased)*

REMBRANDT and TOM are resting--TOM is exhausted from herding REMBRANDT around and keeping him out of trouble.

REMBRANDT Rembrandt's my first name, Tom.

TOM What?

REMBRANDT Never "MR. Rembrandt -- just "Rembrandt."

TOM I'm hungry. Fruit from paintings isn't as satisfying as I thought it would be.

REMBRANDT Well, we must get you something to eat, then. *(REMBRANDT gets up and takes TOM with him.)*

TOM No, I not really THAT hungry. I'm ready to go back. I'll eat that pickle in the refrigerator--I'm sure it will be very good.

Sound of traffic getting closer and then the sound of horns honking. REMBRANDT pulls TOM through the traffic.

REMBRANDT So this is "traffic." *(The MOTORCYCLIST goes by again. A young man on roller skates with a walkman on whizzes by) There! (A HOT DOG VENDOR enters with his cart. REMBRANDT rushes up and sniffs the hot dogs) I haven't smelled anything this wonderful in three hundred years!*

HOT DOG
VENDOR Hey!! Whatsamatter with you! Get away!

REMBRANDT My friend Tom needs one of those sausages-- I haven't any money on me--wait--I've got an idea!! *(REMBRANDT begins to draw the HOT DOG VENDOR) What a face!! Such character!!*

VENDOR Hey, are you an artist or something?

REMBRANDT Hold still. You've got a great chin. (*REMBRANDT finishes the drawing, gives it to HOT DOG VENDOR. Then, pointing to the hot dogs*) Is that worth a couple of those?

VENDOR (*Looking at the drawing*) Hey, not bad-- Here ! (*He gives TOM and REMBRANDT hot dogs*)

TOM Thanks!!

REMBRANDT Thank you, Sir!

VENDOR You're welcome. (*Looking at the drawing of himself*) Hey, you're a regular Rembrandt!!

TOM is waving good-bye, thinking that REMBRANDT is next to him, but turns around and finds himself alone. REMBRANDT has seen something else that caught his eye and has wandered off. Two HARD-HATS enter, carrying a stretch of cable and a large sign that says "DANGER: LIVE CIRCUIITS." The two HARD-HATS approach a large circuit box and begin to work.

TOM (*To the HARD-HATS*) Have you seen a--a-- (*Doesn't know how to describe REMBRANDT*)

HARD-HAT #1 Bicycle?

HARD-HAT #2 A bunch of kids on skateboards?

TOM No, no. An old guy--in a suit!

HARD-HAT #1 Oh, him.

TOM Where?

HARD-HAT #2 Over there.

Just then a WOMAN IN CURLERS enters, running, holding a garden hose.

WOMAN Stay AWAY from me!! (*To HARD-HAT #1*) Keep him away from me!!

REMBRANDT *(Entering)* I just want to draw you, Madam. *(To HARD-HATS)* Such flesh! Did you ever see anything like it?

TOM Rembrandt!! We'd better get out of here!

REMBRANDT *(To WOMAN IN CURLERS)* Just hold still for a moment!

HARD-HAT #2 *(To REMBRANDT)* Hey, the lady doesn't want you to draw her. Right!

REMBRANDT *(REMBRANDT continues his sketching)* Such contours!

LIONEL *(Her husband, from offstage)* MADELINE! ! MADELINE!! HEY!! WHERE ARE YOU!!!

HARD-HAT #1 *(Looking at the drawing over REMBRANDT'S shoulder)* Hey, this is pretty good!

WOMAN That's my husband!

TOM *(To REMBRANDT)* Come on, Rembrandt. PLEASE.

WOMAN *(To LIONEL who is still offstage)* LIONEL!! I'M HERE!!

TOM *(To REMBRANDT)* PLEASE!

LIONEL WELL, I'M TURNING ON THE WATER!!!

Just then, water starts to stream out of the garden hose WOMAN IN CURLERS is holding--she loses control of it and it sprays everyone. The HARD-HATS try to grab it and get sprayed and the audience receives a stream of water. The water hits the electrical box and it explodes. LIONEL strolls on. He is dressed as tastelessly as WOMAN IN CURLERS.

LIONEL Madeline? What are you doing out here? This isn't our lawn.

HARD-HAT #1 TURN OFF THE WATER!! TURN OFF THE WATER!!

LIONEL What?

HARD HAT #2 exits to look for the spigot. He finds it and the spray turns off.

LIONEL (to WOMAN IN CURLERS) What are you doing out here?

WOMAN (About REMBRANDT) It's HIS fault!!! It's all HIS FAULT!!

REMBRANDT (About the drawing) Almost finished.

The HARD-HATS, LIONEL and WOMAN IN CURLERS approach REMBRANDT slowly, furiously, ready to jump him. TOM sees this, grabs REMBRANDT, pulls him, then takes the drawing and gives it to LIONEL, runs, pushing REMBRANDT.

LIONEL (Looking at the drawing) Madeline- (Holds it up)Look!

The HARD-HATS and WOMAN IN CURLERS look at the drawing--they are drawn to it and forget about REMBRANDT and TOM who, seeing this, tiptoe away. The group that are looking at the drawing say things like, "Hey, it's pretty good." "What a beautiful woman--he was right."

REMBRANDT I'm getting the old technique back.

TOM Come on.

REMBRANDT That was a good sketch--hate to give it up. (TOM pulls REMBRANDT offstage)

WOMAN (Looking up for REMBRANDT) Hey, where did he go? I finally find somebody who appreciates my beauty and you guys chase him away!!

HARD HATS give LIONEL the sketch and exit with their cable, shaking their heads at the exploded circuit box.

LIONEL Come on, honey. We'll frame this.

LIONEL and WOMAN IN CURLERS exit with the sketch and garden hose. REMBRANDT and TOM enter.

TOM I KNOW it's noon. At least!!

A group of adults appear--they are at an outdoor wedding reception. A BRIDE and GROOM are cutting a cake. Suddenly, TOM sees his MOM and DAD at the reception--they don't see him.

REMBRANDT Look! A party! What natural composition! (*To TOM*) I see that you're amazed, too. (*REMBRANDT begins to sketch again.*)

TOM (*Afraid his parents will see.*) OH NO! I'm begging you, Mr. Rembrandt--

REMBRANDT Not MR. Rembrandt--just Rembrandt.

TOM Rembrandt. Please, I'm begging you, We HAVE to go NOW. It's LATE.

REMBRANDT (*Looking at the sun*) See where the sun is? It's not noon, yet. (*Going back to the drawing*) I love weddings, don't you?

TOM You HAVE to STOP DRAWING!

REMBRANDT What?

TOM You HAVE TO STOP DRAWING!

REMBRANDT I'm sorry--I was drawing--what did you say?

TOM YOU HAVE TO STOP DRAWING!!!

Hearing TOM'S line, TOM'S MOM looks in their direction.

REMBRANDT But I can't stop drawing, Tom.

TOM'S MOM (*To her husband*) Dear?

TOM (*The loudest whisper he can muster*) BUT YOU HAVE TO!

TOM'S DAD Hmmmm?

REMBRANDT But I can't.

TOM'S MOM Look over there.

TOM But you PROMISED!!

TOM'S DAD Where?

REMBRANDT I promised what?

TOM' S MOM There.

TOM The FRUIT! That I took out of the paintings? We have to get back!

TOM'S MOM Doesn't that look like. . .

REMBRANDT Oh, you're HUNGRY--go get some of the food at that reception. I'll draw you into the picture! What a great idea!!

TOM'S MOM Doesn't that look like Tom?

TOM I thought you were my friend.

REMBRANDT I am, Tom. You're my first friend in three hundred years.

TOM'S DAD With Uncle Morton? Naaaah.

TOM *(Loud whisper)* Then you HAVE TO COME BACK WITH ME!
NOW!

REMBRANDT I may never get another chance to draw. And I've missed it so!!

TOM'S MOM It looks like Tom.

TOM If you come to Uncle Morton's house and go back into the painting, I'll come over as soon as I can and take you out for another walk.

TOM'S DAD Tom would never get Morton outside.

REMBRANDT Promise?

TOM'S MOM Let's get a better look.

TOM Cross my heart and hope to die.

REMBRANDT *(Stops drawing, stands)* Alright.

TOM'S parents start their cross - TOM is exiting with REMBRANDT. REMBRANDT stops suddenly.

REMBRANDT Oh, I'll need some more paper.

TOM I'll get it! I'll get it!!

REMBRANDT Large pieces.

TOM *(Pulling him offstage)* Let's gooooo! *(TOM and REMBRANDT exit)*

TOM'S MOM I think Tom actually got Uncle Morton to come out of that house and take a walk! I KNEW our Tom could cheer him up!

TOM'S DAD It's someone else--I'm telling you.

TOM'S MOM They're running away! How strange! Get the car, dear!

TOM'S DAD I was going to have some more wedding cake.

TOM'S MOM We've wished the bride and groom good luck at least three times. I just know that's our Tom! Come on!

TOM'S DAD Alright. Alright. *(Mumbling to himself)* But it's silly, I'm telling you.

TOM'S MOM and TOM'S DAD exit to get into their car to pursue TOM and REMBRANDT.