

Letter 075
Isleworth, 3 October 1876

Dear Theo,

Our parents have written to me that you are ill. My boy, I wish I could be with you. Last night, I went on foot to Richmond; I thought of you all the time, it was a beautiful grey evening. You know that every Monday I go to the Methodist church at Richmond; yesterday I spoke a few words on the subject “ Nothing pleases me except Jesus, and everything pleases me in God.”

I would like to be closer to you. Oh! Why are we always at odds with each other? Why? I am enclosing a letter from the aunts at Zundert – you know that Aunt Bet had an accident. I wrote to them that you and I would walk over to Zundert at Christmas if possible.

I have copied a few of the psalms for you; perhaps you would like to read them one of these days. ¹ Drop me a line as soon as you can.

A week from last Sunday, I made a long trip to London, and there I heard about a kind of job which perhaps might do for me sometime. In seaport towns like Liverpool and Hull, certain preachers are often in need of helpers who know how to speak several languages, to work among the sailors, foreigners, and visit the sick; some salary is attached to such a position.

I left here early at four o'clock in the morning. It was beautiful in the park here, with the avenues of dark elm trees, the wet road through it, and a grey rainy sky above it all; in the distance there was a thunderstorm. At daybreak I was in Hyde Park; the leaves were already falling from the trees and the Virginia creeper was beautifully red against the houses, and there was a fog. At seven o'clock I was in Kensington, and rested a little in a church where I used to go so many Sunday mornings.

In London I visited some friends and also Messrs. Goupil & Co.'s gallery, and saw there the drawings that Van Iterson had brought with him. It was delightful to see once more the Dutch towns and meadows in that way. That picture by Artz, the “Mill on the Canal,” I think very fine.

You also have a beautiful life before you, Theo, keep courage.

Has Van Iterson come back yet? I was so glad to see him again. He is bringing you *The Wide, Wide World*; read it one of these days – the first chapters especially are so fine, and so true and simple. And read now and then in *Longfellow*, for instance:

“I see the lights of the village, gleam through the rain and the mist,
and a feeling of sadness comes o'er me, that my soul cannot resist.” ²

And now, boy, a handshake for you and for Uncle Jan. Adieu, keep courage and get better quickly; write soon how you are, and send back the aunt's letter then. Poor Aunt Bet, we are such old friends. O Zundert! Memories of you are sometimes almost overpowering. Adieu, boy, may God unite us more and more and make us true brothers. Compliments to Uncle Jan and to all the Roos family, from
Your loving brother, Vincent

Paris will be beautiful now in autumn. Every Sunday last year Gladwell and I visited many friends and as many churches as possible; we went out in the morning and came home late. Notre Dame is so splendid in the autumn evening amid the chestnut trees. But there is something in Paris more beautiful than the autumn and the churches, and that is the poor. I think often of many a one over there.

1. Psalms 23, 91 and 121; in addition, the hymns *Daar is een stem gehoord* (“A voice is heard”); “The light of stars; ‘t Hijgend het der jacht ontkomen (“As pants the hart,” etc.); all in full.
2. Copied in full in the letter.