

Registratienummer van de school: 9 7 8

Land: N L

Databasenummer van de leerling: 3 2 9 9

Talencombinatie: N L > E N

Initialen van de leerling: M E R

Geboortjaar van de leerling: 2 0 0 0

Hopelessly old-fashioned

Hi Siebe,

It might seem ~~stange~~ ^{ridiculous}, but I sat down to write you a real letter! Maybe it's the act of writing slowly that makes me feel like I'm in your company for a while. I've missed our cycling-tours ever since you moved to Italy. I hope to be able to visit you soon to see what it's like over there.

Last week I already travelled in a southerly direction. It was my aunt's sixtieth birthday and my mother had decided to surprise her sister with a city trip to Brussels, the city where they were both born.

The trip's great atmosphere started in the train to Brussels. All sorts of memories were raked up: Would they still recognise the city? Would they be able to just speak Dutch? Or perhaps they would have to use their best French or English... Brussels used to look more like a town, they said, but it has since grown into its current role as the capital of Europe. We ~~was~~ realised that it was not just our aunt who had turned sixty, but also the EU.

When the train smoothly crossed the Dutch - Belgian border in Roosendaal,

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my aunt and my mother began to tell me about all kinds of border-crossings that they remembered from back in the day, where they always had to get in line because the luggage had to be checked. They remembered the francs and the Dutch currency of that time, the 'guilder', and they remembered exactly how to convert the price of something from one currency into the other ~~for~~ which was necessary for when you were travelling.

They really wanted to visit the House of European History. To be quite honest I ^{was expecting} ~~just~~ a stuffy museum, with pictures of people in a meeting and at the most some relics from the time ~~before~~ Europe ~~was~~ a union. ~~It~~ But it turned out to be great fun! The building alone is stunning, very light and spacious, and there was a temporary exhibition about food and clothing. Did you know for example that fries are said to be a Belgian invention, but that they really only became popular after President Jefferson ^{allegedly} ~~introduced~~ brought them into the US after a trip to France? And that the ~~modern tie~~ scarves which Croatian mercenaries wore when they fought for France, to protect themselves from being stabbed by a sword, evolved into the modern tie?

I'm just babbling away in this letter... ^{Exactly} ~~Just~~ like when we skype in fact. But a letter on paper from time to time is an official envelope with a stamp

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^{pretty}
is ~~kind~~ fun! Some old-fashioned things aren't so bad right?

I hope to see you soon... not on paper, but in real life!

Hub