

## Last Weeks In Amsterdam

### **Introduction: Almost there**

We're almost there everybody. The clock is almost up. The game is almost over.

Indeed the time is fast approaching where many of *you* will be heading back home to your respective countries and your semester in Amsterdam will officially be at an end. You might be curious why I said "*you*" instead of "*us*". Well, the truth is that the semester is only ending for a select few people. However, some people, myself included, will be sticking around in Amsterdam for a little while longer. Admit it! You're jealous!

This got me thinking about what I should write about for a blog entitled "*Last weeks in Amsterdam*". It certainly wasn't my last weeks here; so if not my last weeks, whose should I talk about?

And then it hit me like a snowball in the face! While rapidly pacing back and forth in the hallway of my flat, a thought occurred to me. What if I asked some Semester in Amsterdam students (who were leaving) questions about their last weeks???

What was their favorite thing about Amsterdam? How has the Semester in Amsterdam experience changed them for the better? What would they miss most about this experience?

Pure Genius right!!! But the question still remained; whom should I choose???

At long last I decided to choose the people whom I have grown closest to during my stay thus far in Amsterdam... My amazing roommates! All four of them are departing the European continent on December 22-23 and all of them have many takeaways from their time in Amsterdam. So in this blog I plan on sharing the thoughts and emotions of my dear friends/roommates as they reach the end of their time in Amsterdam. But first!

### **I Want to Play a Game**

Before we get started I thought it would be fun to loosen up and play a little game of *Guess Who's Who!* There are five of us in total residing here in De Boelelaan and I, having nothing better to do with my time, have come up with the brilliant idea of creating character descriptions of all of them! So I extend to you a little challenge.

The rules are simple:

Your mission, if you choose to accept it, is to try and identify *who is who* in our merry band of misfits! Think of this game as a version of the board game Clue. Except this time, the Butler didn't do it!!!

The choices are Zoe, Will, Taashi, Allie, and myself.

The stakes are high here ladies and gentlemen! For at the end of this blog, one of us will **die**!!!

Come to think of it, that's a little too intense. Lets try that again.

The stakes are high here ladies and gentlemen! For at the end of this blog, one of us will be ***mildly upset!!!***

Nailed it!

Without further ado, let me introduce the characters.

### The Characters

- The Queen Bee/Mom: This person is a strong independent woman! (With a very dirty sense of humor). As a ruler of De Boelelaan, she is kind and benevolent to her loyal subjects. Maybe that's just part of her Chicago charm. On the other hand, she also acts the role of mother to her people. It is not uncommon for the queen mother to be constantly cleaning up and nagging her subjects to do their chores. (She'll probably ground me or throw me in the stockades for saying that, but I don't care!).
- The Lovable Goofball: This guy should have been born as a cartoon character. Hailing from California, he even has classic laidback catchphrases. For example, the energetic "*Nooooo Wayyyyyy*", the casual greeting "*how's it goin my dude*", and my personal favorite "*just F@#\$'n send it!*"  
Constantly positive and upbeat, this guy is always doing interesting things. Such as: leaving the stove on when he's finished cooking, leaving his door wide open when he leaves the flat for days on end, and eating his food like Meg Ryan in the 1998 film *When Harry Met Sally*. "*Ummmm I'll have what he's having*". (If you don't get this reference stop what you're doing and Google "*Meg Ryan Faking it*" on YouTube! Then you'll be a believer.)
- The Mysterious Stranger: This person is so mysterious that we're not even 100% sure if this she actually lives here or not. One minute she will be here and the next, like a puff of smoke, she's gone for days on end. As far as we know she has been travelling far and wide throughout Europe during her time here. I haven't actually seen any hard evidence that she in fact took these trips, so I have a hunch that this person might be moonlighting as a superhero or secret agent... I am eagerly awaiting her return so that I can ask her in person. Maybe she can protect me from Queen Bee...
- The Cheerleader: This person is ALWAYS happy and full of pep! Too much pep in my opinion. What ever you do, don't let her small stature fool you. Because whenever she is happy her jovial cheers resonate through our flat like an echo within the Mines of Moria! I've warned her numerous times that if she keeps it up we're gonna have an army of Orcs on our hands. And nobody likes that's... Just ask Frodo and the Fellowship.
- The Handsome Rouge: Now where should I begin when describing this king of men? This mountain of a man is so devilishly handsome that his jaw line can cut through a stick of butter. I dare not even to look into the gorgeous and hypnotic brown eyes of this Adonis for fear of loosing my sanity! Every guy wants to be his pal and every girl wants to be his gal. But I hate to break it to you folks... this majestic stallion just can't be tamed...

## The Reveal

Do you think you have it figured out? If not, I will now end your suffering.

I will begin with...

Zoe aka Queen Bee/Mom

(Photo: The Queen and the King)

The Queen is revealed! Zoe hails all the way from the Kingdom of Chicago and is studying Political Science. Living with her has been an interesting ride that consisted of many laughs and even a stretch when she gave me the silent treatment for not doing the dishes :(

But we have long since buried the hatchet and made peace. I am also happy to report that Zoe has snagged herself a charming young Dutch lad! They are an amazing couple and it makes me happy that the Queen has found her King. Here's what Zoe had to say in response to my questions.

1. What is your favorite thing about Amsterdam?

My favorite thing about Amsterdam is the food! I love the sweets in particular including stroopwafels and oliebollen! They are the perfect treat when exploring the city!

2. How has the Semester in Amsterdam experience changed you?

This experience has changed me for the better. I feel that I am now more open-minded. I also think that it makes me see the world in a bigger picture and I am more aware that there is a bigger world out there for me to discover.

3. What will you miss the most?

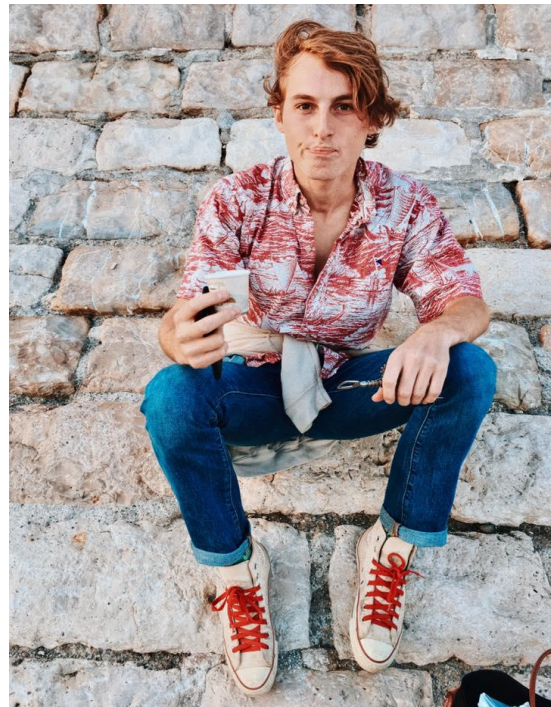
What I will miss most about Amsterdam are the amazing people I have met while I am here. I have made so many wonderful friends and I will miss the big adventures and the late night puzzling study breaks!... And I will maybe sort of miss my amazing roommates as well!



## Will aka The Lovable Goofball

(Photo: The Man, the myth, the legend)

The Lovable Goofball is the one, the only, Will “Rocket” Reynolds! I can honestly say that it has been extremely entertaining living with this beauty! Will hails from California and is studying Science Technology and Society. If any of you have had the pleasure of knowing Will you’ll know that he’s truly salt of the earth. He is always smiling and always positive. I think he does it on purpose because whenever I want to be mad at him, those puppy dog eyes disarm me. Damn you William! You lovable bastard! Here are Wills answers to my questions.



1. What is your favorite thing about Amsterdam?

My favorite things about Amsterdam are the biking and canals. It definitely blew my mind as I rode my bike down narrow alleyways and the along the canals. The canals are like the veins of the city, which is really cool!

2. How has the Semester in Amsterdam experience changed you??

This experience has made me feel almost like an adult, because I have never had this much independence. It’s a really great feeling living on my own, cooking my own food, and just being more independent in the choices that I make.

3. What will you miss the most?

I will definitely miss all the amazing people. I’ve made new friends from all over the world and its cool that I have these new connections that I otherwise couldn’t have made back home. I will also miss the lifestyle here! Amsterdam is a very active city with an awesome nightlife that I’ll definitely miss.

## Taashi aka The Mysterious Stanger

(Photo: Taashi biting a little more than she could chew at Oktoberfest)

At long last! The elusive stranger is unmasked! Taashi hails all the way from India and is studying Psychology... During her time here she has been extremely busy, both in and out of school. She was gone almost every weekend since she first arrived in Amsterdam and has travelled to multiple cities in Germany, France, Belgium, Portugal, Switzerland, Denmark, Hungary, and Luxemburg! It has been a running joke in our flat that Taashi didn't actually live here because she was ALWAYS gone! But her travels are over, for now, and from what I've heard she is already planning to return to her European playground in the new year. Here's what Taashi had to say in response to my questions.



### 1. What is your favorite thing about Amsterdam?

Coming from India, Amsterdam definitely seems very liberal and accepting, and I really love that! There's room for every kind of person in the city, with their different tastes in music, culture, a night out, literally everything, and you don't find this everywhere, which is why I love Amsterdam so much.

### 2. How has the Semester in Amsterdam experience changed you?

I think earlier I would always want things to work out exactly the way I wanted them to. After coming here I've definitely loosened up more, and become more accommodating to changes and differences. I think this has also helped me to stress less, so that's definitely a bright side!

### 3. What will you miss the most?

Bikes! I think the biking culture of Amsterdam is really wonderful. I feel really economical, healthy and I feel like I've done well for the environment. I really wish that I could bring it back home with me, but I don't think it would work out quite the same, because of our chaotic lifestyle at home. Apart from that, I would really miss the independence here. I've studied in a boarding school in India for 7 years, and have done 2 years of college in the US, which is halfway across the globe, so I've been living away from home for a long time now, but I feel like Amsterdam has been the place where I've felt the most independent, and I'm going to miss that level of independence, because it has given me a sense of confidence and responsibility that I didn't know I had.

## Allie aka The Cheerleader

(Photo: Allie resembling a Hobbit of the Shire at Oktoberfest)

Allie hails all the way from New York City and her favorite catch phrase is “HEY I’m Walkin Here!” Allie and I bonded over many things during our time together and we dominated our kitchen most nights as we studied. Our shared interests included discussing the latest episodes of Rick and Morty, chatting about life’s big questions like “*why does Will always clog up the toilets?*”, and much much more. Allie is quiet when you first meet her, but get to know her better and you’ll discover that she is an extremely interesting and lively soul. Here’s what Allie had to say.



1. What is your favorite thing about Amsterdam?

Coconuts and coffee! Definitely one of my favorite spots! Plus there are so many awesome spots through the city that were absolutely amazing! I also definitely ordered out from Uber eats a little more than I should’ve...

2. How has the Semester in Amsterdam experience changed you?

Living in Amsterdam made me realize how much I love to travel. So far I’ve been to Munich, Prague, Croatia, Vienna, Copenhagen, and Bologna. It truly was an amazing experience and I hope to travel more in the states when I get back home.

3. What will you miss most?

I think I’ll miss hanging out in the kitchen with my flat mates the most. Lots of laughs and great memories!

## Ruben aka The Handsome Rouge

(Photo: ITS ME! Dang I'm handsome!)

I mean was there any doubt here ladies and gentlemen. I'm usually not this vain but I couldn't resist the opportunity to pump my own tires a little bit. Like I said in the beginning of the blog post I still have another month to go here in Amsterdam before I can give definitive answers to the questions I posed to my flat mates. However, I did have some final words to share with them in regards to how they affected me during their months in Amsterdam.

### **Conclusion: Thanks for the memories guys!**

Since moving to Amsterdam I have met countless individuals from different races, creeds, and nationalities from all over the world. Everyone I have met is uniquely different but the people that I have grown closest too are still my amazing roommates. Over the course of the last few months we have gotten to know each other fairly well and have become a great friends as a result of our cohabitation. And dare I say it? A Family.

Friendship has been a crucial component to our survival as a species since the days of the Hunter-Gatherer society. There can be no denying that is always nice to have a friend. If a Saber Tooth Tiger was chasing you, it is always nice to have a slower, and more juicy, friend that you can count on. Flash forward to modern times and the principles are more or less the same. Granted there are no saber tooth tigers running around but, no matter what the situation, it's always nice to have someone you can call a friend.

Their friendship has meant the world to me and it saddens me that our time together is coming to a close. However, I am extremely grateful that I happened to be paired up with the Queen Bee, the Lovable Goofball, the Mysterious Stranger, and the Cheerleader because they helped create lasting memories for this ol' Handsome Rouge here.

So I will finish this blog and say that you guys are the best and thank you for the wonderful memories. I wish you all the success and happiness that the world can offer you and I sincerely hope that our paths may cross again!

Thanks for reading and happy holidays everyone!

Tot de volgende keer (until next time)!

Ruben

Semester in Amsterdam Blogger

