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`Be clearly aware of the stars and infinity on high. Then life seems almost enchanted after all'

Few artists' letters are as self-revelatory as Vincent Van Gogh's, and the selection included here, spanning the whole of his artistic career, sheds light on every facet of the life and work of this complex and tortured man. Engaging candidly and movingly with his religious struggles, his ill-fated search for love, his intense relationship with his brother Theo and his attacks of mental illness, the letters contradict the popular image of Van Gogh as an anti-social madman and a martyr to art, showing instead that he was capable of great emotional and spiritual depths. Above all, they stand as an intense personal narrative of artistic development and a unique account of the process of creation.

The letters are linked by explanatory biographical passages, revealing Van Gogh's inner journey as well as the outer facts of his life. This edition includes the drawings that originally illustrated the letters.

`If ever there was any doubt that Van Gogh's letters belong beside those great classics of artistic self-revelation, Cellini's autobiography and Delacroix's journal, this excellent edition dispels it'
The Times