

Letter 365
Nuenen, April 1884

Dear Theo,

The drawings for this month are still at Rappard's, else I should have sent them to you already. And as Rappard intends to come soon and stay with us for some time, I have asked him to bring them with him then.

It gives me much pleasure that you wrote about Cor in the way I learned from your letter to Father and Mother. How fortunate that Braat is recovering – I trust you will have seen in the meantime that in what you thought you had to write about him you were radically wrong – am I right? I hope you will have seen it.

Further, I want to revert to what I wrote you about Rappard. I do not think it necessary to talk much to him about you, as long as you and I are not on better terms than we are at the moment.

Now, just think whether it wouldn't be very unkind of you toward him if you took no notice of his visit when he comes here before long. Think over whether it is right that you, who know Rappard, have seen nothing of his work, do not even know what he makes except for what I tell you, that you do not take the slightest notice of him. Yet he is one of the people that will count – who will assert themselves – of whose work one will have to take notice. At one time Rappard came to you, and felt small in your presence because you knew so much about art. Since that year he spent in Paris – what enormous progress he has made!

I don't think you would regret it if you took my hint to heart. I simply want you to renew the acquaintance with him.

There is all the more reason for it because he is more advanced than I am. I say this simply to prevent your being guilty of negligence.

I do not know what impression it would make on Rappard if I told him what has been wrong between us recently.

But I know for certain that the work I showed him during these last months pleased him. I should greatly prefer being able to tell him that all was well between us.

But I shall not bore you with this. If you want to divide art – by drawing sharp, straight, rigid lines – into things that one may show in the full light of day and things that one should calmly neglect with great singleness of purpose – well, that's your affair.

And at the moment the whole question is so deeply repulsive to me that I for my part will not expiate on it. As to Rappard, it is curious what absurd things he sometimes hears about his work, which he takes quite coolly. One must be prepared for that, and have a certain self-confidence, so as not to let oneself be confounded or upset. Friends whose cordiality makes up for the bother the work causes are of great value to a painter. If you should feel personal sympathy for Rappard's work, he would certainly not feel indifferent toward you either.

But he as well as I, we are getting more and more disillusioned about finding sympathy, and are more and more determined to persevere without minding what anybody says.

As for Mother, the fact is that there is nothing the matter with her any more, except that she must learn to walk all over again – and that the leg must be loosened up by means of regular exercises. It might have been worse. Goodbye.

Yours sincerely, Vincent