

Letter 174
The Hague, 13 February 1882

Dear Theo,

Though I have been expecting a letter from you every day, I am writing you once more.

I heard some news of you from Mr. Tersteeg when he came back from Paris. He told me that you were all right, and he seemed quite satisfied with his trip. When I went to see him, I took a few drawings with me; he said they were better than the others, and told me to make some more small ones. I am busy with them now.

I also made a new pen drawing of an old woman knitting. And I think this one is better than last summer's, at least it has more tone. When I have finished a few pen drawings which are well done, I think I know a purchaser for them.

A few days ago I also wrote C. M. to tell him that I have taken a studio here, and that I hoped he would let me know whenever he came to The Hague and that he would come to see me. Last summer Uncle Cent also told me that whenever I had finished a drawing somewhat smaller than those I was doing and more watercolours, I must send them to him and he would buy them. Perhaps the time is really not far off when I shall earn some money with my work; I need to very much, for no other reason than to go on working seriously.

You must tell me if you can find out what kind of drawings the magazines would take. I think they could use pen drawings of types from the people, and I should like so much to make something that is fit for reproduction; I do not think that all the drawings are made directly on the blocks – there must be some means of getting a facsimile on the block. But I do not know exactly what process is used. Sometimes I long so much to see you and have a talk with you. Will it be long before you can come to Holland? I think that Father rather expected you on his birthday.

I was very glad that Mr. Tersteeg thought the drawings somewhat better. Well, I am getting more used to my model, and for that very reason I must continue with her. In the last two studies I grasped the character much better – everyone who saw them told me so.

At present I sometimes go out drawing with Breitner, a young painter who is acquainted with Rochussen the same way I am with Mauve. He draws very well, and in quite a different style from mine, and we often make sketches together in the soup kitchen or in the waiting room, etc. now and then he comes to my studio to see wood engravings, and I go to see him too. He has the studio that Apol used to have at Siebenhaar's. Last week I went to a small art show at Pulchri, where I saw sketches by Bosboom and Henkes. Very fine; Henkes had much larger figures than one usually sees from him. He ought to do more of them, I think. Weissenbruch has also been to see me.

Every day I look for a letter from you, for I hope that you will send me some money soon. We must keep on and persevere, brother, you as well as I, and someday we shall reap the fruit of it.

I am so glad I have worked on the figure up to now. If I had done only landscapes, yes, then I should probably do something that would sell at a small price now, but then later I would be stranded. The figure takes more time and is more complicated, but I think that in the long run it is more worthwhile.

De Bock came to see me this afternoon, just as I was working with my model. When he saw her, he said he would also like to draw from the figure; but for all that, he doesn't do it. But he made a very beautiful drawing recently.

In your last letter you told me something about the question of your not being able to draw an advance before the inventory was made. But if you cannot get the money, then be so kind as to write at once to Mr. Tersteeg about it, for I have only about 3 guilders left, and it is nearly the middle of February already.

At all events, I expect a letter from you one of these days.

I think that in my last drawings the proportions are much better than before, which has been the worst fault in my drawings up to now; thank God it is changing, and then I shall not fear anything.

Adieu, Theo, write soon, a handshake in thought,

Yours sincerely, Vincent