

Dear Theo,

Few things have given me so much pleasure recently as hearing things from home which to a certain extent set my mind at ease about their feelings toward me. Sien came to tell me that a parcel had been delivered to the studio, and I told her to go and open it and see what was in it, and in case there was a letter, to bring it with her; so I learned that they had sent a whole package of things, underwear and outer clothing and cigars, and there was also 10 guilders enclosed in the letter. I cannot tell you how it touched me, it is much more than I expected; but they do not know everything yet.

I am just weak and feeble, Theo, and I need absolute, absolute rest to recover, so everything that makes for peace is welcome. But I felt much worse than now before I was lying here, and please bear in mind that it is not at all serious, and only a short period of treatment will make me well again. I wanted to tell you the news about Father and Mother immediately, because I thought it would please you, too.

Sien will probably go next Monday, for I think she is better off in the hospital now; she will be admitted about the middle of June. She wanted to stay here for me, but I wouldn't allow it.

I have my books on perspective here, and a few volumes of Dickens, including Edwin Drood; there is perspective in Dickens, too. Good God, what an artist! There's no one like him.

I hope my having to take a rest will have a good effect on my drawings; sometimes one gets a better view of things when one does not work on them for a while – then when one sees them again, they seem fresh and new.

The view from the window of the ward is splendid: yards on the canal, with the barges loaded with potatoes, rear view of houses that are being pulled down by workmen, part of a garden; and on the next, more distant, plane the Quay with its rows of trees and street lamps, a very complicated little almshouse with little gardens connected to it; and finally, all the roofs. The whole is a bird's-eye view which, especially in the evenings and in the mornings, is mysterious because of the light's effect, for instance, like a Ruysdael or Van der Meer. But I may not and cannot draw it as long as I am so weak. But though I'm forbidden to get out of bed, I cannot refrain from getting up to look at it every evening.

Write me soon; wasn't that parcel from home a surprise? – and especially coming at a time like this, it made me more than happy.

The rest cure does me good and makes me so much calmer, and takes away that nervousness which has troubled me so much recently. And the ward here is no less interesting to me than the third-class waiting room. But I may not and cannot draw yet. Adieu, I hope you will find time to write to me, believe me,

Yours sincerely, Vincent

I thought it so nice that this came from home, I wanted to let you know at once. Of course I do not need any more clothes now. I wrote home to thank them, and to tell them I was here. You know the address is—City Hospital—4 Class—Ward 6—No. 9. Brouwersgracht.