

Dear Mother,

I can understand quite well what you say in your letter, namely that it did you good “to be again with many,” when A.s’ children were with you. Wil has described the house elaborately to me, and I am very glad that your experience proves to you that the motive for the change was justified. And thus I hope that you will still spend many quite good days in Leyden – and be sure that I think of you often, here where I spend my days more withdrawn into myself than now and then seems to me desirable.

Yet I have decidedly no reason at all to complain, feeling stronger and healthier and quieter than before, and compared with this time last year, when I really had no thought of recovering. Yet I shall always keep on feeling the shock, and it will be best to stick to my work, leaving the rest alone as hardly being compatible with it, and as worrying cannot do much good.

As for the exhibition in Brussels, it does not leave me indifferent because I shall have a few pictures from here in it which, though made in quite a different region, remain just as if they were painted say in Zundert, or Calmpthout, and I think they could also be understood by people who haven’t any knowledge of painting, as it is called. And so one may say, It would have been simpler if I had stayed quietly in North Brabant – but it is as it is, and what can one do?

I suppose that your thoughts are often with Theo and Jo; I think it an excellent plan that Wil is going to lend a helping hand in January, and I hope it will come about. If you go and stay with Aunt Mina in the meantime, she will be pleased too, now that Aunt is ill. When you see her, don’t forget to remember me to her, will you? According to what you write she is courageous in suffering without complaint.

I intend to spend a great part of next year here too, as it would be best for my work, even if it were not absolutely necessary for my health – as I have somewhat got my hearings here. Though it is not cheap considering what one gets for it – but change is always injurious to painting, and therefore I am thinking strongly of staying – as I can work here very regularly, and for the rest the country here has not been painted yet, at least not much. For this is a part of the South no warmer than with us, and the other painters usually go somewhat farther on, to Nice or so.

It is important news that Aunt is no longer at Prinsenhage, but at any rate she did the right thing in getting rid of Jakob and the others, for in fact they seemed to be the real proprietors of the whole establishment, which was considerably more than human nature could bear.

Such things belong among the queer occurrences in life, which one can’t make head nor tail of as far as understanding the reason goes. Well, at any rate I think she is quite right – and yet I think she was attached to Prinsenhage, and will remain so for a long time to come. And attachment to things is part of our nature, and others can hardly take it away from us.

And now I say goodbye for today. Thanks for the news about Cor – embraced in thought,
Your loving Vincent