

Letter T31
Paris, 29 March 1890

My dear Vincent,

How happy I should be if I could go to you and shake your hand on the festive occasion of your birthday. Will it be a festive occasion for you, or is your condition still such that you are unhappy? What do you do in the daytime, and do you have something to do to divert your mind? Can you read, and do you get everything you want? After your last letter I hoped that you had entered upon a period of convalescence, and that you could have told me soon after that you were feeling better. My dear brother, how sad it is for us to be at such a distance from one another, and to know so little what the other one is doing. For this reason I am very happy to be able to tell you that I met Dr. Gachet, that physician Pissarro mentioned to me. He gives the impression of being a man of understanding. Physically he is a little like you. As soon as you come here we are going to see him; he comes to Paris several times a week for consultations. When I told him how your crisis came about, he said to me that he didn't believe it had anything to do with madness, and that if it was what he thought he could guarantee your recovery, but that it was necessary for him to see you and to speak with you in order to be able to make a more definite statement. He is a man who may be of use to us when you come here. Have you spoken about it to Dr. Peyron, and what did he say? I have not yet gone back to the Independents, but Pissarro, who went there every day, tells me that you have achieved real success with the artists. There were also art lovers who discussed your pictures with me without my drawing their attention to them. The papers which publish reports on the exhibition are silent about the hall of the impressionists. And it is the best thing they can do, for the majority of those criticisms – well, you know what they are worth.

It is beginning to be real spring here. This afternoon Jo and the baby were in the little square in front of Trinity Church. The shrubs are beginning to get green, and the trees show little green tips peeping forth from the buds, all bathed in beneficent sunshine, and the grey colour of the church against the intense blue of the sky was very beautiful. Jo and the child are very well. It is true that there is a little hitch from time to time, but nothing serious. The doctor who came this week said that he was a magnificent child, and he complimented Jo on him. You will see how funny he is in his movements.

My dear brother, I am anxious to know whether you are feeling better, and to receive particulars about your health. Be of good heart and cling to the hope that things will soon take a turn for the better. I am sending you some reproductions of etchings by Rembrandt; they are so lovely. A cordial handshake, and believe me to be your loving brother.
Theo