

Letter 629a  
St. Rémy, 29 April 1890

Dear Mother and sister,

After having been unwell for two months, it is only now that I am able to write you a letter.

Until today I have not been able either to bring myself to read your letter or to write one, and the doctor not being at home today, I cannot get the letters and the package you sent me, but in the meantime I don't want to postpone thanking you both most heartily. With all my heart I hope that all is well with you both, and also with Anna and Lies and their families

Today I wrote Theo and sent him a number of pictures, some of which I expect him to send on to you. So you see I have not been able to work during the most favorable part of spring, consequently things aren't going too well. But what can a man do about it? Every change is not a change for the better, but I am longing to get away from here; what one has to endure here is hardly bearable.

These last few days I have been working on the picture of a lawn in the blazing sun with yellow dandelions. I continued painting even when my illness was at its height, among other things a memory of Brabant, hovels with moss-covered roofs and beech hedges on an autumn evening with a stormy sky, the sun setting amid ruddy clouds [F 673, JH 1919]. Also a turnip field with women gathering green stuff in the snow [F 695, JH 1923].

I have asked Theo to let me have as many of my old drawings as he has kept.

Do you happen to have any of my old studies and drawings at home? Though they may not be good in themselves, they may serve to refresh my memory, and so be the subjects for new work, but I do not want those you have hanging on the walls, for instance. I should prefer quick sketches of peasant figures. But it is not important enough for you to rummage a long time to find them.

With all my heart I hope you are both well; and before long I shall write more. Believe me, I often think of you. I embrace you in thought.

Your loving Vincent

As soon as I heard that my work was having some success, and read the article in question, I feared at once that I should be punished for it; this is how things nearly always go in a painter's life: success is about the worst thing that can happen.