

Dear Mother,

Many thanks for your last letter, which I have not yet answered. At the time Wil told me that you have been to Nuenen, which I can quite well understand, and I am already longing to hear from you how you found things there and of your visits to old friends.

Time passes quickly, though some days last long. In fact, I did not intend to return to Paris so soon; I should have stayed in St. Rémy another year if I had not attributed my last attack partly to the influence which the illness of others had on me, for which reason I decided it was time to change my surroundings if I wanted to keep my energy, such as it is, and what I have left of common sense. I wrote this to Dr. Peyron today; we had words over it, but we separated on good terms, and he has asked Theo for news of me. I liked him very much, and in turn he differentiated between me and his other patients in my favour.

And things are such that if I should ever want to go back there, I should be there as with friends. But the pleasure of seeing Theo again and making the acquaintance of Jo, who seems to me sensible and cordial and simple, and my new little namesake, and further, to be back among painters and interested in all the struggle and discussions and especially in the work of the little self-contained world of painters – all this distraction has, it seems to me, a favourable effect in so far as the symptoms of the disease, which are a sort of thermometer, have quite disappeared these days – though, as I have learned, one must not count too much on this.

The physician here has shown me much sympathy, I may come to his house as often as I want, and he has a good knowledge of what is being done these days among the painters. He himself is very nervous, which I suppose has not improved since his wife's death. He has two children, a girl of nineteen and a boy of sixteen. He tells me that in my case work is the best thing to keep my balance.

Well, during the last fortnight or three weeks which I spent in St. Rémy I worked from morning till night without stopping. And I stayed in Paris for only a few days, and started working here right away.

Theo was waiting for me at the station, and my first impression was that he was looking paler than when I left. But while talking, and when I saw him busy at home, it was not so bad – though he was coughing, but in fact he has not grown worse during this time. Even if it only stayed the same, I should almost believe that this may be considered as something gained. And that next year he will grow stronger rather than weaker. It is a matter of patience, his constitution and the kind of life he has to lead.

I heard some details about Cor from him. When you write, please send my best regards, and tell him I am back again. I would write him, but it is such a different profession, his and mine.

Theo's vacation is approaching, and so you will see him again pretty soon. They also intend to spend a few days here, for we saw each other for only a short time and hurriedly.

Unfortunately it is expensive here in the village, but Gachet, the physician, tells me that it is the same in all the villages in the vicinity, and that he himself suffers much from it compared with before. And for some time to come I shall have to stay near a physician I know. And I can pay him in pictures, and I could not do that with anyone else if anything happened and I needed help.

Now I say goodbye to you, for I have to go out. Hoping you and Wil will receive this in good health, and embracing you in thought,

Your loving Vincent