

Dear Vincent,

Among all the letters from brothers and sisters which you will receive tomorrow, mine may not be wanting to wish you the best of luck, which I do at the same time on behalf of your little namesake, who cannot do so very well for himself as yet. What he does do is look at Uncle Vincent's pictures with a good deal of interest – the tree in blossom especially [F 671, JH 1891], which is hanging over his bed, seems to enthrall him – and further the Rembrandt, although I cannot assert confidently that it is not the gilt frame which attracts him in the latter case. I am happy to say he is growing well, and we long to show him to you. But being a father and a mother is quite an art – perhaps because I had to learn to get used to so many things in the course of that one year – for I never heard other people speak of it in the same way – they had a baby and then everything was all right and things straightened themselves out of their own accord – but it's not like that at all with me. What amazes me most is that such a little child has so much of a personality, against which you are utterly powerless. Now and then he looks at me as if he wanted to say, "What are you doing to me? – I know much more about things than you do." His are the eyes of an adult and then with a lot of expression. Is it possible that he has the makings of a philosopher?

He does not allow his mother much leisure, but I managed to escape for a little while at the opening of the Independents to see your pictures there – there was a seat directly in front of them, and while Theo was talking to all sorts of people I sat there for a whole fifteen minutes enjoying the delicious coolness and freshness of the "Undergrowth" [F 609, JH 1693] – it's as though I knew this spot, and had been there several times – I'm so fond of it.

Here is the height of summer – indescribably hot – and I dread the hot days yet to come. I know it sounds a bit like sacrilege now that there is that fine delicate haze of green all over the trees, but I prefer winter after all. I shall have to close this letter in a hurry, for Theo is waiting for it.

With best wishes,
Affectionately yours, Jo

1. Written in Dutch.