

Letter 245
The Hague, c. 16 November 1882

Dear Theo,

Today I received your letter, for which many thanks. Bitterly though I regret that your letter of November 9 and the enclosed banknote got lost, I was glad there was no other reason for your letter's failure to arrive. For I can assure you, I was awfully anxious. I at once notified the post office of the loss of the letter, but they could give little hope, and the inquiries must be made in Paris. Meanwhile, they will also investigate. Let us hope it will be found, but I dare not count on it, and I fear the 50 francs are damn well lost, just at the moment when they are almost indispensable to me. In the first place, to make progress in the experiments with lithography. I am very glad that you liked those which I sent first; by the same mail you will receive the very first print of "Sorrow." I added another one with a larger margin for Heyerdahl, and another one for Buhot, but as they are larger, I do not know if the post office will accept them.

You can of course take the one you like best and get as many copies as you like, but I marked the very first one: first impression.

Tomorrow I shall go to Smulders to get the stones from him. I can tell you I should like it enormously if I could succeed in making a fine series.

I am now busy drawing diggers, which I hope will lead to something.

It's very cold here, snow and frost, but very beautiful.

In the roll of lithographs you will find a little drawing made with neutral tint on Whatman. What I want to ask you about is, Would a drawing made in this way be fit for reproduction? And then, would such drawings made with autographic ink be acceptable to the *Vie Moderne*?

I should like to ask you to send me some numbers of the *Vie Moderne*, for I have only a very few loose sheets (I believe just three from a very old issue) and I should like to form a better and more complete idea of what the magazine really is. I looked for them here in town, but could not find a single copy. The sooner I receive them, the better it would be, as just now I am trying to find the different processes, and the reproductions in the *Vie Moderne* will perhaps help me to understand better what one can do with it. But I think I have to ask your pardon for all the trouble I'm causing you over it.

This week Father was here just for a moment when he was in town for a meeting.

Rappard had written me about the new series of drawings (of miners) by Paul Renouard in *L'Illustration*. I haven't seen them yet, but if you find them at some newsstand where they sell "those things you find in the South Holland Café," please get them for me, as I think they must be extremely beautiful.

I do not know whether you will think me conceited when I tell you that the following pleased me very much. Smulder's workmen at the other store on the Laan saw the stone of the old man from the almshouse, and asked the printer if they could have a copy to hang on the wall. No result of my work could please me more than when ordinary working people hang such prints in their room or workshop.

I think what Herkomer said, It is really done for you – the public, is true. Of course a drawing must have artistic value, but in my opinion this doesn't prevent the man in the street from finding something in it.

Well, this very first print doesn't count yet, but certainly I hope it will lead to something more serious.

The loss of those 50 francs (for I fear they are gone) thwarts you as well as me in making those experiments, but let's not be discouraged.

How I wish you could see the drawings I am doing just now. I assure you, I was very melancholy when your letter didn't come and I didn't know what the cause was. I shall be pleased to hear, at your earliest convenience, something about what I'm sending you today. Further, I must remind you that you promised to tell me more about Daumier, also at your earliest convenience, for I perfectly understand that you do not always have time to write.

Adieu, boy, once more thanks for your letter, and believe me with a handshake,

Yours, Vincent

Tonight I shall start reading Zola's *Pot-Bouille*.