

My dear Vincent,

It is very distressing to me to learn that you are not feeling well.¹ It is to be supposed that you have worked too hard, and consequently have forgotten to take proper care of your body. I am glad that your letter arrived today, for within a very short time I should have gone off to Brussels, in which case you would have had to wait at least two more days. What a financier you are! What causes me so much grief is that, notwithstanding all that, you are always so miserably hard up, because you cannot refrain from doing all kinds of things for others. I should greatly like to see you more egotistic, at least until your budget balances better.

You will understand that Father Thomas has given me the cold shoulder; you should have approached him yourself and all that. Now let's try to wriggle out of the difficulty; the others will come to us of their own accord. You will be pleased to learn that I sold the big picture of Gauguin's "Les Bretonnes," which has been on exhibition at Diot's. I am sending him 500 francs, so for the moment he will be quite well off, but is he going to join you? De Haan is coming this week, and he will stay with me for some time, which is very pleasant for me, for he will probably become the central figure of a group of young people here after a while.

From your previous letter I get the impression that you believe that these fellows know all the answers to all the questions, in the manner of the Dutch, but if you have formed such an opinion it's my fault. When I told you that they know how to analyze a picture, taking as their starting point a feeling for the technique and so on, I did not mean to say that they separate the qualities; what I really meant to allude to was their singular clarity of mind, which prevents them from mixing things up. Isaäcson, particularly, gives me the impression of a true scholar. They have now received pictures and studies done in Holland – very good, only a bit dark. It is their intention to stay in Paris during the winter, and then to start for the country as soon as the weather permits them to travel out of town. I intend to return from Brussels on Friday or Saturday, and I hope to be able to write you a letter less hurriedly soon.

I hope your indisposition is not serious, and that you will not lose courage, even if Gauguin should not come.

Yours, Theo

1. See Vincent's letter 556.