

Dear Theo,

I just received your letter. As your letter crossed one of mine, written in the same tone as the one you answered today, you will see that I am speaking in a different mood than the rash one which you suppose. Just because I say what I have to say quietly, be it not in tone which is used every day (it is a serious question here), I cannot avail myself of your kindness in considering it said "in haste."

That very idea of yours (that I should have spoken in haste, and rashly) is sufficient proof to me that we have come to a point where mere words won't do any good, and I think it better to let this question rest

You say, you must speak about the financial side. So must I.

Brother, know it well, I repeat what I said before about your noble help without any alteration – and that "money can be repaid, but not kindness such as yours."

But this is what I want, and what you yourself will call reasonable. I must take such measures as are necessary to have freedom in disposing of what I receive.

I mean that I can only accept such money as I can spend as I like, without having to ask anybody's opinion.

I would rather have 100 francs a month and the free use of it, than 200 francs without that freedom.

If we were more of one mind in our way of looking at things, I should think an agreement like the one between you and me up to now by far the best.

And because of too great a difference in our ways of looking at things, because of our understanding each other too little, an agreement like the one between you and me is neither tenable nor sensible.

Supposing that your character as well as mine wants to avoid disorderliness or outbreaks of violence after all; we must part company quietly and collectedly-but decisively, in such a way that neither you nor I can be reproached with foolishness or recklessness.

I should like to receive the usual amount until March. That will enable me to pay everything I have to pay, and to lay up a supply of necessary things. This is the first measure to be taken.

Last year, the year '83, was a hard, sad year for me, and the end especially was bitterly, bitterly sad.

Well, we will not speak of that any more.

After March we shall both be free. But if you could pay Father some allowance for a time, as I do not want to be too great a burden to him, that will be wise and well, I think.

However, this must be between Father and you. If necessary, I shall then try and get a job. I do not even care what kind. But bear in mind that, realizing the fact that obviously we could not agree sufficiently if we continued together, I am absolutely serious about trying not to accept favours from you in the form of money any longer if they should not leave me quite free in my concept of life.

You will say that you leave me free, yes – but there is a certain restraint after all. And I prefer to have less from somebody else, when after all I am not free in things that are nobody's business but my own.

You must not infer from this that I want to have done with you, on the contrary – you are an art dealer, very well, when I make something which you think saleable, I should prefer to sell it to you rather than to somebody else, but it must be an arrangement which does not put me in a false position; but in point of fact what I want is to sell in the literal sense.

I thank you for your letter, I appreciate many things in it. Goodbye, and believe me,

Yours sincerely, Vincent