

My dear Theo and dear Jo,

Having made Jo's acquaintance, henceforth it will be difficult for me to write to Theo only, but Jo will allow me – I hope – to write in French¹; because after two years in the South, I really think that I shall say what I have to say more clearly by doing so.

Auvers is very beautiful, among other things a lot of old thatched roofs, which are getting rare. So I should hope that by settling down to do some canvases of this there would be a chance of recovering the expenses of my stay – for really it is profoundly beautiful, it is the real country, characteristic and picturesque.

I have seen Dr. Gachet, who gives me the impression of being rather eccentric, but his experience as a doctor must keep him balanced enough to combat the nervous trouble from which he certainly seems to me to be suffering at least as seriously as I.

He piloted me to an inn where they ask 6 francs a day. All by myself I found one where I shall pay 3.50 fr. a day.

And I think I ought to stay there until a new arrangement is made. When I have done some studies, I shall see if it would be better to move, but it seems unfair to me, when you are willing and able to pay and work like any other labourer, to have to pay almost double because you work at painting. Anyway, I am going to the inn at 3.50 first.

Probably you will see Doctor Gachet this week – he has a very fine Pissarro, winter with a red house in the snow, and two fine flower pieces by Cézanne.

Also another Cézanne, of the village. And I in my turn will gladly, very gladly, do a bit of brushwork here.

I told Dr. Gachet that for 4 francs a day I should think the inn he had shown me preferable, but that it was 2 francs too much, considering the expenses I have. It was useless for him to say that I should be quieter there, enough is enough.

His house is full of black antiques, black, black, black, except for the impressionist pictures mentioned. The impression I got of him was not unfavorable. When he spoke of Belgium and the days of the old painters, his grief-hardened face grew spring again, and I really think that I shall go on being friends with him and that I shall do his portrait.

Then he said that I must work boldly on, and not think at all of what went wrong with me.

In Paris I felt very strongly that all the noise there was not for me.

I am so glad to have seen Jo and the little one and your apartment, which is certainly better than the other one.

Wishing you good luck and good health and hoping to see you again soon, a good handshake,

Vincent

1. In the original translation by Jo Bongers van Gogh, she added the footnote "I had made fun of us, three Dutch people, all speaking French together."