

Dear Theo,

I am longing very much to hear from you, for the time has come for me to make a decision.

There are only ten days left in the month, and I have to know what I must do. However, for myself, I have come to a decision. I only wish you would see things as I do.

If you approve of the plan of my coming to Paris as soon as possible, then after having been in Brabant for a short time, I shall send you from here the studies and drawings I have here.

But I must hasten to send them, otherwise I shall have to stay here longer again.

I should also like so very much to finish having my teeth fixed. What must I do?

I have a total of one franc fifty centimes left, and as to my food, I paid 5 francs in advance until the end of the month.

In so many ways it would be such a good thing to change soon.

You understand that no money is left to take painting materials from here to Brabant, so I shall be doubly in a fix there, both as to models and colours.

So there is no choice; besides, what need is there to choose? For what is most pressing must come first, and that is the period of drawing from the nude and the works of antiquity.

Perhaps I write you somewhat abruptly, but things must not be put off. For the rest, it is only natural that there cannot be any objection to finding a garret in Paris at once, on the very first day of my arrival, and then I can go and draw at the Louvre or the Ecole des Beaux-Arts so that I shall be quite prepared for Cormon. So don't let's hesitate or take too long to decide.

We must put our shoulders to the wheel. Well, let's do it.

If ever we want to do some good, you may be sure that more and more things will depend on quickness and resoluteness of action, and as, notwithstanding all the trouble one may take, nobody can be sure of the result of his undertaking, there can be no harm in some daring and energy.

So if it were at all possible, I should like to have that job on my teeth finished this month. I should like to pack up my studies and send them to you, and then leave here on the last of this month, or even a few days sooner.

But not stay on into March, on account of the rent.

Would this be possible? Then I can help them to pack up at home, if it should be of any use to them. And if I can paint or draw a little there, so much the better. But the sooner and the more energetically we go through that period of drawing in Paris, the better it will be for the whole future; I feel even the little I did of it these last few weeks here has been of use to me. And if I did not do so, and tried another way, direct from nature, I should always have trouble with people who had been at some academy, who would say that according to them I cannot draw.

I do not know definitely yet how things will go with me here at the academy. I think I wrote you recently, didn't I, that they absolutely picked a fight with me?

Yesterday I heard that Sibert, the teacher, had said to somebody that I had a good idea of drawing, and that he had been rather too hasty.

As he does not come into the class often, I have not seen him for a few days.

At the moment I am working on a woman's torso.

Goodbye, do write as soon as you can. My health remains pretty much the same, yet I believe it is beginning to improve.

With a handshake,

Ever yours, Vincent

If I did not insist on it, i.e. going to Paris, I should not recover, for I must try to earn more. I am living too wretchedly now. If one didn't have to pay for so many other things, one could live very well on 150 fr., but now there are too many things to pay for.

But after all, my health is improving, and it will come out all right.