

My dear Theo,

Until now I have not been able to write you, but being a bit better just now, I did not wish to delay wishing you a happy year, since it's your birthday, you and your wife and child. At the same time I beg you to accept the various pictures I am sending you with my thanks for all the kindness you have shown me, for without you I should be very unhappy.

You will see that first of all there are canvases after Millet.

Not being intended for the public, perhaps you will eventually make presents of these to our sisters. But first you must keep what you like and as much as you want, it's yours absolutely. One of these days you will send me something else to do by past or present artists, if you can find anything.

The rest of the canvases aren't much; not having been able to work for two months, I am very much behind.

You will find that the olives with the pink sky are the best, and the mountains, I imagine; the first would go well as a pendant to those with the yellow sky. As for the portrait of the Arlésienne, you know that I have promised a copy of it to our friend Gauguin, and you must send it to him. Then the cypresses are for M. Aurier. I should have liked to do them again with a little less impasto, but I haven't time.

They must get several washes with cold water, then a strong varnish when the impastos are thoroughly dry, then the blacks will not become dirty-looking when the oil has evaporated. In the meantime I shall of course want paints, which you might get again in part from Tanguy, if he is hard up, or if he should like it. But of course he mustn't be more expensive than the other one. Here is the list of the colours I want:

	12	zinc white	3	cobalt	5	malachite green
Large	1	crimson lake			2	chrome 2
tubes	2	emerald green			4	chrome I
	1	orange lead			2	ultramarine

Then (but at Tasset's) 2 geranium lake, medium-sized tubes. You would do me a kindness if you sent me at least half of them at once, at once, because I have wasted too much time.

Then I shall need 6 brushes – 6 marten brushes – and 7 meters of canvas or even 10.

What am I to say about these last two months? Things didn't go well at all. I am sadder and more wretched than I can say, and I do not know at all where I have got to.

The order for paints is rather big, so let me wait for half of it if it is more convenient to you.

While I was ill I nevertheless did some little canvases from memory which you will see later, memories of the North [F 674, JH 1020; F 675, JH 1921], and now I have just finished a corner of a sunny meadow, which I think is fairly vigorous. You will see it soon.

M. Peyron being away, I have not yet read my letters, but I know that some have come. He has been good enough to keep you posted on the situation, I do not know myself what to do or what to think, but I greatly wish to leave this house. That will not surprise you, I need say no more to you.

Letters from home have come too, which I have not yet had the courage to read, I feel so melancholy. Please ask M. Aurier not to write any more articles on my painting, insist upon this, that to begin with he is mistaken about me, since I am too overwhelmed with grief to be able to face publicity. Making pictures distracts me, but if I hear them spoken of, it pains me more than he knows. How is Bernard? As there are some canvases in duplicate, if you like you can exchange with him, for a good canvas by him would be a fine thing to have in your collection.

I felt ill at the time I was doing the almond blossoms. If I had been able to go on working, you can judge from it that I would have done others of trees in blossom. Now the trees in blossom are almost over, really I have no luck. Yes, I must try to get out of here, but where to go? I do not think I could be more shut up and more of a prisoner in the homes where they do not pretend to leave you free, such as at Charenton or Montevergues.

If you write home, give them my kindest regards and tell them I often think of them. There, a good handshake for you and Jo, and believe me,

Ever yours, Vincent

Please send me what you can find of figure among my old drawings. I am thinking of doing the picture of the "Peasants at Dinner" [The Potato Eaters F 082, JH 764], with the lamplight effect again. That canvas must be quite black now, perhaps I could do it again altogether from memory.

You must send me the "Women Gleaning" and the "Diggers" if they are still there.

Then, if you like, I will do the old tower of Nuenen again and the cottage. I think that if you still have them, I can make something better of them now from memory.