

Closer to God

BY

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FADE IN:

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE -- DAY (1886)

A TRAIN is seen off in the distance. This scene looks like a landscape painting with a train passing through it, as depicted in "Landscape with Carriage and Train in the Background" by Van Gogh.

SUPER IN/OUT: "France 1886"

CUT TO:

INT. SECOND CLASS TRAIN CAR - DAY

A very crowded train car. VINCENT is seated next to MARTHA, an old woman. Vincent is a scruffy looking young man in his early 30s. He sports a ragged full red beard and is dressed in a paint stained blue smock and a fur cap. Vincent is smoking a pipe.

MARTHA

You say your name is Vincent.

VINCENT

Yes Martha, I am a painter.

MARTHA

Why are you traveling to Paris?

VINCENT

Because Paris is where a serious painter needs to be. And Martha, may I ask why you are traveling to Paris?

MARTHA

I am coming to see my son who is a protestant minister and to see my granddaughter for the first time. We also will going see the Ballet.

VINCENT

I worked as an evangelist minister for Flemish coal miners in the Borinage before becoming a painter.

MARTHA

That sounds just awful, I mean
having to exist in a place like
that. I cringe when the train
passes through that place.

VINCENT

The only hope for those people is
their belief in god.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY

The train enters Paris and approaches the train station.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS TRAIN STATION - DAY

The train comes to a stop at the platform.

People rush out of the car and Vincent emerges. He is
carrying a large bag and a folded easel box. He also has a
rolled up canvas under his arm.

Vincent lugs his bags to a delivery service desk. A YOUNG
MAN is a clerk at the desk.

VINCENT

(as he places his
luggage on the counter)
Please take these to Theo Van Gogh
at Rue de Laval.

Vincent takes a paper and pencil out of his pocket and
begins to jot a quick note.

VINCENT POV

VIncent writes

VINCENT O.S.

(slowly)
Do not be cross for having come all
at once like this. I have thought
about it so much, and I believe that
in this way we shall save time.
Shall be at the Louvre from midday
on or sooner if you like.

BACK TO SCENE

Vincent hands the note to the Young Man.

YOUNG MAN
That will be one Franc.

Vincent reaches into his pocket and places two coins (one large and one small) on the counter, then walks away.

YOUNG MAN
(enthusiastic)
Thank You.

CUT TO:

INT. LOUVRE - DAY

Vincent is mesmerized looking at the paintings as THEO enters the room. Theo is a well groomed professional, in his late twenties.

Theo sees Vincent, walks toward him.

THEO
(from across the room)
Vincent

Vincent turns toward Theo and offers a handshake

THEO
(as they shake hands)
I am surprised that you suddenly appeared. I thought that we had agreed that you would not come to Paris until I could move into a bigger place.

VINCENT
But, I could not wait until June.
Just look at these Paintings.

Vincent gestures toward the paintings in the room.

VINCENT (CONTINUING)
I have been diligently training to be a painter. The time is now to become serious.

Vincent leads Theo to the end of the room where Millet's "THE GLEANERS" hangs

VINCENT (CONTINUING)

(with emotion)

Maybe someday I can have a painting hanging here with the greats like Millet.

THEO

Well, you are here so we will have to make the best of it.

The pair walk down the grand hall together. Vincent struggles to see each painting as they walk.

THEO

You will have plenty of time to look at these paintings. You can even come here with your easel and make sketches.

Vincent stops Theo when they get to Courbet's "Stonebreakers".

VINCENT

(with sudden enthusiasm)

Just look at how he uses the colors to convey the feeling of the scene. It is real. It is like I am there.

Theo, then Vincent begin to walk down the hall toward the exit.

VINCENT (CONTINUING)

Those are real people in the real world, not some damn idealized scene from history.

CUT TO:

INT. THEO'S APARTMENT - DAY

They enter the apartment.

Theo's apartment is very small one bedroom flat that is very neat and clean. The furniture is expensive and the place shows like a model. The walls are decorated with Vincent's paintings and other impressionist paintings and Barbizon School paintings.

THEO

(pointing to the sofa)

This is where you will have to sleep
until we move to a larger space.

VINCENT

(agreeably)

This will do just fine.

Vincent looks around the room, then they both sit down.
Vincent's luggage is visible near the sofa.

VINCENT(CONT'D)

But, I will need a some studio space
to paint.

THEO

Let's go see CORMON and enroll you
into his art school. That will not
only give you studio space to use,
but will also give you the chance to paint from
live models.

VINCENT

(smiling)

That is why I came to Paris.

THEO

You will also be able to meet other
painters and see how they approach
their craft . There is a new camp
emerging that looks to painting as
science.

VINCENT

I have read about impressionism and
an anxious to see artists like Monet
and Degas.

THEO

There is an impressionist show
coming up soon. I think that it is
important to see this show. This is
the way that art is headed. I would
someday like to open a gallery
devoted to young artists and
impressionism.

VINCENT

Do you currently have any of these artists for sale in your gallery?

THEO

I do have a few paintings tucked away upstairs at the gallery.

VINCENT

(trying to change the subject)

Well, I have

Vincent reached over to the rolled up canvases with his luggage, stands up and proceeds to unroll the canvases on the floor in front of Theo.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Some paintings here of my own.

Vincent unrolls the canvases, revealing "Potato Eaters". There are at least 30 other paintings in the roll.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Potato Eaters. When I finished this painting I knew that I was finally a painter.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARIS STREET - CORMON'S ART SCHOOL

Vincent and Theo walk down a the sidewalk of a wide boulevard in a nice section of Paris. Vincent is carrying his easel box. They approach a storefront with a sign "Cormon's Atelier". They enter the building.

CUT TO:

INT. CORMON'S STUDIO - DAY

There are 30 or so all male STUDENTS all seated around a still life with a plaster figure cast and a dirty BURLAP drape as the background.

Felix CORMON is 40, rather thin and is wearing a black suit and top hat. Vincent open up his easel and sets up at the rear of the classroom. Theo and CORMON shake hands, then leave the room, going into an office.

HENRI is one of the students in the classroom. Henri is a short man in his early 20s.. He walks with a slight limp

The students remain silent, pretending to ignore the new pupil, but snickering can be heard from students in the classroom as Vincent fumbles around when setting up his easel. Vincent begins to paint the scene

VINCENT POV -

Vincent begins to paint the scene. He notices a drape on the floor at the back of the room that has been painted with thin alternating stripes of orange and light green. Theo and Cormon emerge from the office and Theo waves good bye to Vincent as he departs through the front door.

RETURN TO SCENE -

Cormon comes over to Vincent and offers a handshake.

CORMON

(as they shake hands)

I am Felix Cormon, welcome to my atelier.

VINCENT

Nice to meet you, I am Vincent.

CORMON

(walking away)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

VINCENT POV - LATER -

Vincent continues to paint is replacing the brown burlap drape with one that has orange and green stripes.

RETURN TO SCENE -

ELIME BERNARD enters Cormon's. Elime Bernard is 20 years old with a normal physique. Vincent continues to paint while Emile Bernard walks around and shakes hands with many of the students. Cormon ignores Emiles presence as Cormon helps another student with his painting.

Emile Bernard walks behind Vincent and takes a long look at Vincent's mostly completed painting. Emile Bernard then

picks up a stack of painted canvases from the back of the classroom and departs Cormons.

Henri leaves his easel and casually walks over to Vincent and takes a long look at his painting.

HENRI

(offering a handshake)

I am Henri de Toluse Lautrec.

VINCENT

(as they shake hands)

Nice to meet you, I am Vincent, a Dutchman.

HENRI

I do not think that Cormon will like your colorful background. It looks like ...

Henri pointing to the crumpled-up painted burlap in the corner.

HENRI (CONT'D)

... You used that drape for your background.

VINCENT

(with excitement)

I in fact, Did.

Cormon takes notice of their conversation and heads over toward Vincent. Henri quickly returns to his easel.

Cormon stops behind Vincent's painting and takes a long look.

CORMON

(pointing to a line)

You need to pay more attention to the perspective. This looks a bit too distorted.

Vincent immediately shortens the line by painting over it with a background color.

VINCENT

(as Cormon continues to watch)

Like This.

CORMON

Precisely.

CUT TO:

EXT. IMPRESSIONISTS GALLERY - DAY

Vincent and Theo walk down a small Paris street in an old, lower class neighborhood. They have to maneuver over a dung pile on the narrow sidewalk. They enter a building.

CUT TO:

INT. IMPRESSIONIST SHOW - DAY

FOYER & STAIRCASE

The pair go up a rickety staircase.

The open door at the top of the stairs leads into the gallery.

THEO

(as they enter the gallery)

Vincent, this is the future of painting.

MAIN GALLERY

The two enter a large room that has only a few other people.

Paintings and drawings populate the walls.

Vincent stops at the first painting.

VINCENT POV -

VINCENT O.S.

(analytically)

Look at how the brushstrokes only imply what he sees.

BACK TO SCENE

THEO

Impressionism is more about capturing the feeling or essence of the moment rather than depicting reality itself.

The two slowly walk down the row of paintings. Vincent stops at the next painting".

VINCENT

Look at how the colors create a mood. I have never seen anything like this before.

THEO

You do see how he captured the feeling.

VINCENT

All of the colors are so festive. The experience of viewing this painting really lifts my spirits.

The two approach a doorway to another room. They enter the smaller room.

GALLERY ROOM

This room contains neo-impressionist paintings, including Seurat's "SUNDAY AFTERNOON - ISLAND GRADE JATTE". This painting takes up the entire back wall in this smaller room.

Vincent and Theo are both stunned when they first view this enormous canvas of "Sunday Afternoon, Island Grand Jatte".

VINCENT

(as he walks up to the painting)
My God...

Vincent gets very close to the painting.

VINCENT POV -

VINCENT O.S.

(Vincent points to an area on the canvas)
Just look at this! It is composed of small dots of pure color.

THEO POV -

Theo is still standing 10 feet from the painting.

THEO

But they appear to be green from a distance. This must be the new scientific approach that I have been hearing about.

BACK TO SCENE -

VINCENT

He is using pure colors and the colors are mixed in our minds.

Vincent and Theo leave this small gallery, going back into the main gallery. On their way out, they pass SEURAT who is entering the smaller room with a female companion MADELEINE KNOBLOCH. Seurat is in his mid 20's and dressed in the finest clothing as is his girlfriend.

MAIN GALLERY -

Vincent and Theo walk along a wall that has Camille Pissarro's "The Delafoile Brickyard, Eragny Sunset" They stop to gaze at the painting.

A pair of men approach Theo and Vincent.

CAMILLE Pissarro is in his late 50s, sports a full gray beard with long hair and bald on top. He is dressed a bit like a peasant. LUCIEN Pissarro is in his 20s, dressed like a typical Parisian.

Camille notices Theo and walks around to get into his sight.

CAMILLE

Theo, What do you think about Seurat's "Sunday Afternoon"?

THEO

Quite impressive in size, magical in its effect, but a bit stiff in emotional character, but all-in-all this is a significant painting. This is my brother, Vincent.

CAMILLE

(as they shake hands)
Nice to met you Vincent, this is my son, Lucien.

LUCIEN

(as they shake hands)

Nice to meet you Vincent, what brings you to Paris?

VINCENT

I am studying at Cormon's Atelier.

LUCIEN

Drawing and Painting?

VINCENT

Yes, both. I really want the opportunity to paint from live models.

CUT TO:

INT. THEO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The place is a mess. There are dirty dishes sitting around, dirty clothing on the floor, several unframed paintings stacked on the coffee table.

Vincent is smoking his pipe and reading a book when Theo arrives home. Theo enters the flat and takes a long look at the mess.

THEO

(sarcastically)

I see you are right at home in this comfortable environment.

VINCENT

I am reading Zola's "L'oeuvre". It is about a painter who is obsessed with ...

THEO

(interrupting)

Obsessed with anarchy and disorder.

Theo begins to pick up the dirty dishes. Vincent reacts by quickly trying to tidy up.

VINCENT

I am sorry for neglecting to tend to keeping things orderly.

THEO

Apology accepted, but please try to keep the apartment clean. I know that it is small and I am already looking at larger living quarters.

Vincent takes the pile of canvases on the coffee table and places them leaning against the wall. The visible painting is the still life that he was painting at Cormon's.

VINCENT

(calmly)

I have been thinking a lot about the Impressionist show.

THEO

I am really glad that you have had a chance to see the new work. The color palette and techniques that these new young artists are using will usher in a new way of thinking.

VINCENT

(growing a bit more troubled)

That is precisely the problem. Look at all of my previous works.

THEO

Now you are here in Paris and you can look at this as a new beginning.

VINCENT

(becoming angry)

What good does all of this work do?

Gesturing to his paintings that are hanging on Theo's walls.

VINCENT

I wasted the last 6 years. None of my paintings has any feeling or emotion compared with Impressionism.

Vincent gets up and walks over to the canvases leaning against the wall.

THEO

Calm Down. Would you like a cup of Coffee?

VINCENT

(gesturing toward the
still life from
Cormon's)

Just look at this. The only
redeeming value is the background
that I copied from a drape on the
ground.

THEO

Be patient. Give yourself time to
absorb the new direction of
painting. You have the basic
foundation. Now build the house
from that.

Vincent reaches down and picks up the painting.

VINCENT

(becoming enraged)
No Feeling. No Emotion

Vincent now holds the painting up.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

(still enraged)
What's its purpose? Why does it
exist? ...

THEO

(interrupting)
Sit down. Calm ...

VINCENT

(interrupts, still
enraged)
No Heart. My paintings do not get
me ...

Vincent takes the canvas high over his head.

VINCENT

Closer To God!

Vincent SMASHES the painting on the floor.

Vincent takes two more paintings and smashes them to the
floor, right on top of the first painting.

VINCENT POV -

The smashed and torn paintings on the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. CORMON'S - DAY

The classroom is quiet as the students paint a still life scene that includes a plaster female torso. Vincent's easel is set-up in the front of the room, with most of the other students behind him. Cormon is not in the room.

Vincent is painting at a frenzied pace while the other students method is slow and methodical. One student snickers, pointing to Vincent. Vincent can not see this activity because it all takes place behind his back.

This student then begins to mock Vincent's action of painting quickly, which receives general laughter.

Vincent turns around to see what caused the laughter, but the students all go back to their normal mode until Vincent turns back to his canvas.

When Vincent holds his thumb out, the rest of the entire class mimics this action, followed by a roar of laughter.

This time Vincent turns around in enough time to see some of the students quickly drop their thumbs.

Vincent then ignores the students and he goes back to painting his canvas.

VINCENT POV -

There are no longer any bouts of laughter, but an occasional snicker is heard. A half completed "Plaster Statuette of a Female Torso" (F 216h, JH 1058) is on Vincent's easel. Vincent quickly paints with occasional looks at the still life.

BACK TO SCENE-

Cormon enters the room from the back office. He walks down the rows of easels. When he gets to Vincent, he pauses and takes a long look at the painting.

CORMON

Vincent, You have really captured the lighting and essence of the scene. Your perspective is better than before.

VINCENT

Why, Thank You monsieur Cormon.

Cormon finishes his check and returns to his office. STUDENT1 is right beside Vincent.

STUDENT1

(to Vincent)

The only reason why Cormon let you into this atelier is because your brother sells paintings.

VINCENT

Perhaps, But I am here to study and learn. Just like you.

Vincent returns to painting his canvas.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARIS BOULEVARD - DAY

OUTSIDE CAFE -

Theo and BONGER sit at a table in an outside cafe. A third seat is unoccupied with an empty coffee cup at that place. Both Theo and Bonger have full coffee cups. There is a pot of coffee in the center of the table.

Bonger is in his early thirties. He is dressed in the typical Parisian attire of black coat and top hat. Theo is also a bit more formal looking than usual.

BONGER

(looking at his pocket watch)

You said Vincent was supposed to meet us here at 12 Noon.

THEO

(taking a sip of coffee)

He will be here. Do not expect him to be on time.

SIDEWALK -

Vincent is hurrying along the sidewalk, lugging his folding easel.

CAFE -

He gets to the cafe and quickly takes a seat.

VINCENT

(winded)

I am sorry that I am late.

THEO

Vincent, this is my friend Bonger.
He has a large apartment for lease.

BONGER

(as Vincent and Bonger
shake hands)

Nice to meet you Vincent.

VINCENT

Does this apartment have studio
space?

Theo pours Vincent's cup with coffee.

THEO

Yes, we will show you the apartment
in a few minutes.

Vincent slowly takes a sip of coffee.

SIDEWALK -

The three men walk down the sidewalk of a wide Paris
boulevard.

The three men gaze at an attractive woman walking alone as
she passes then on the sidewalk.

BONGER

Courtisone?

VINCENT

Definitely. She would make an
interesting subject.

The three men laugh.

They get to RUE LEPIC and turn onto that street. Bonger leads them into the front door of the apartment building.

CUT TO:

INT. 54 RUE LEPIC - DAY

FOYER -

The three come in and with Theo leading the way, go up the stairs.

FOURTH FLOOR -

They get to the top of the stairs and go down the hall. When they arrive at the door to the apartment, Bonger unlocks the door and they enter the apartment.

LIVING ROOM -

There is no furniture in the place yet. The space is huge and Bonger gives Theo and Vincent a quick tour of the Living Room area that, then Bonger opens the door to a large Bedroom. They enter the room.

BEDROOM -

The room is very large with a big window that has an excellent view of Paris. After they enter the room, Vincent goes to the window and gazes out.

THEO

I hope that this will do.

VINCENT

(with excitement)

This will do just fine.

CUT TO:

INT. 54 RUE LEPIC - DAY - (ONE WEEK LATER)

The brothers moved into their new flat. All of the furnishings from the old apartment are now in this new apartment. Vincent now has a bed and a studio that includes a table for still life sets. The room with the view from the previous scene is Vincent's room.

VINCENT'S ROOM -

Vincent is set up with painting at his easel. There is a large bouquet of flowers on the still life table and a couple of completed flower paintings without frames leaning against the wall.

Theo comes into the room.

THEO

Vincent, I have some good news.
Portier's gallery is looking for
impressionist paintings.

Theo looks at the paintings leaning against the wall.

VINCENT

But Theo, I do not have any
Impressionist paintings yet.

THEO

Your new flower still lives will do
just fine. Your colors are brighter
than before. These are
Impressionist paintings.

VINCENT

Can you tell me about Porter's?

THEO

This is a small gallery, but this
can be a good way for you to get
your paintings seen.

VINCENT

That sounds good. I will take these
to him when the paint is dry.

Vincent continues to paint, but at an accelerated pace.

CUT TO:

INT. PORTIERS - DAY

PORTIER is a portly fellow in his late 40s. His store/gallery has a large variety of curios and framed paintings of all types and styles. The shop has a cross between thrift store and gallery feel.

Vincent comes in with several canvases and places them in front of the counter. Portier is behind the counter comes over to Vincent.

PORTIER

I am Portier, can I have a look at your paintings.

VINCENT

(with enthusiasm)

Yes, I am Vincent and these are all recent pictures of flowers.

Vincent picks up the paintings one at a time, holding each one up for a few seconds. There are four total paintings.

PORTIER

(as Vincent completes displaying the paintings)

Excellent. you can put these paintings on consignment and you will receive 50% of any sale.

VINCENT

Yes, that will be good.

PORTIER

But, I do need you to put them in frames. Even a modest frame will do.

VINCENT

Do you know a place that sells frames at a low cost?

PORTIER

I would suggest Tanguy's. He sells all sorts of artist's supplies.

VINCENT

Where is Tanguy's

PORTIER

He has a little shop on Rue Clauzel. Just look for a black store front.

VINCENT

Thank you, I will be back.

Vincent leaves the store with his paintings.

CUT TO:

INT. TANGUY'S SHOP - DAY

PERE TANGUY is a short & plump man in his late 50's. He is dressed more like a peasant than the typical Parisian. Tanguy is depicted in "Portrait of Pere Tanguy" painting by Van Gogh. TANGUY'S WIFE is obese and dresses more like a typical Parisian. She is also in her mid to late 50s.

Their store is filled with artist's supplies and has many completed unframed paintings on the walls and in the front window. He has Japanese woodblock prints in places where there are no paintings. One of the paintings on the walls is "Still Life with Compote" by PAUL CEZANNE.

There is also a store counter and a large work table near the back of the store. The store has a small bell hanging from the doorknob as to alert when a customer enters.

Vincent enters the store with his 4 flower paintings. Tanguy's wife is sweeping the floor. She leans the broom against the wall and comes over to the counter to help Vincent.

TANGUY'S WIFE

May I help you?

VINCENT

I am looking for picture frames.

TANGUY'S WIFE

Yes monsieur. Let me get my husband who can help you.

She leaves the counter and leaves the room while Vincent takes a closer look around the store.

Pere Tanguy comes up to Vincent at the counter as Pere's wife returns to sweeping.

PERE

What can I help you with?

VINCENT

I need four ready-made modestly priced picture frames.

Julian comes out from behind the counter and leads Vincent to a bin that has many frames. Pere begins to search through the bin and pulls out several frames that do not match each other.

PERE

All of the frames in this bin are used but they only cost 1 Franc each.

VINCENT

Do you have four frames that match?

PERE

No, Look here, these are very ...

Julian picks out four frames.

PERE (CONT'D)

... similar to each other.

VINCENT

These will do.

Pere takes the frames to the work table places all of the frames face down.

Vincent takes the frames to the counter and places the canvases one at a time into them, Pere quickly hammers small nails to secure each picture.

PERE

(as he is hammering)

I sell all sorts of painting and drawing supplies.

Vincent then takes the framed paintings and lines them up along the floor in front of the counter. Vincent takes four coins out of his pocket and gives them to Pere. At this time, Pere steps back and takes a closer look at Vincent's paintings.

Pere takes Vincent over to a chest of drawers that has tubes of paint and paint brushes.

PERE

(offering a handshake)

I am Julian and am honored to make your acquaintance.

VINCENT
(as they shake hands)
I am Vincent, a Dutchman.

Pere opens a drawer and grabs a few tubes of paint, then hands them to Vincent.

PERE
Here, try my paints for free. I mix them myself using only the finest ingredients.

VINCENT
Thank you very much. I use a lot of paint.

They return to the counter.

VINCENT POV -

A copy of "le Cri du Peuple" lies toward the end of the counter.

RETURN TO SCENE -

VINCENT
Pere, do you find that our society allows the privileged to take advantage of the rest of society?

PERE
(proudly)
Yes, I was a soldier of the commune.

VINCENT
It seems to me that the utopian society of the common man is always thwarted by greed.

PERE
Perhaps, someday the people of a society will stand up to those evils.

VINCENT
France has had many revolutions over the past 50 years and its society always seems to revert back to autocratic rule.

PERE

It seems that you and I think alike.
You are welcome to come in at any
time and use my work table and tools.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. VINCENT PAINTING - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS -

- A. Vincent painting "Pont du Carrousel and the Louvre"
- B. Vincent painting "A Pair of Shoes"
- C. Vincent painting "Le Moulin de la Galette"
- D. Vincent painting "View of Paris from Montmartre"
- E. Vincent painting "Self Portrait"

CUT TO:

EXT. TANGUYS SHOP - DAY

A large PAUL CEZANNE landscape painting is hanging in the shop's front window. Vincent pauses to look at the painting in the front window. Vincent enters the shop.

CUT TO:

INT. TANGUYS SHOP - DAY

Pere is behind the counter. EMILE Bernard is at the counter talking with Pere. Vincent comes into the shop and walks up to the counter beside Emile Bernard.

VINCENT

Pere, can you tell me about the
landscape painting in your front
window?

PERE

That my friend Vincent is a painting
by Paul Cezanne.

EMILE

(points to "Still Life
with Compote on wall)
There is another Cezanne painting.

Vincent walks over to get a better view of the painting. Emile and Pere follow him and join him to look at the painting. There is a price tag "80fr" near the painting.

PERE

(proudly)

Cezanne lives in Provence and I am the only shop in Paris to have his work.

EMILE

People come in here just to see his paintings.

The small bells on the front door ring as a new customer enters the store. Pere returns to the counter. Emile Bernard turns to Vincent.

EMILE

(Holds hand out)

I am Emile Bernard.

VINCENT

(as they shake hands)

Nice to met you. I am Vincent.

EMILE

I saw painting you at Cormon's.

VINCENT

I used Cormons until I got a studio.

EMILE

Cormon expelled from his art school.

VINCENT

Really. He seems like a very agreeable individual.

Pere finishes helping the customer. The customer exits the store and Pere returns to Emile and Vincent.

PERE

You know, Cezanne will be here in next week.

VINCENT

Do you think that he would mind looking at my paintings?

PERE

I do not know. He is a recluse.
Why don't you bring a couple of
paintings and I can hang them up
right beside this still life.

VINCENT

Do you know what day?

PERE

Be here around lunch time next
Tuesday.

EMILE

That will be a very interesting day.

CUT TO:

INT. 54 RUE LEPIC - VINCENT'S ROOM - DAY

Vincent is working at his easel. The still life table has a flower pot with a Geranium. He is quickly working on the painting as Theo enters the room. Theo walks over to Vincent.

THEO

I have just heard from Paul Gauguin.
He will be in town next week.

VINCENT

I really admire his work

Vincent continues to paint.

THEO

We will have dinner with him

VINCENT

Good. I look forward to meeting him.

Vincent stops painting, sets his palette down and turns his concentration toward Theo.

VINCENT

I will also get the chance to meet
Paul Cezanne soon. Can you tell me
anything about him?

THEO

He was a student of Pissarro. He
lives in Aix en Provence and rarely
comes to Paris.

INT. TANGUY'S SHOP - DAY

Vincent's GERANIUM painting from the previous scene, "THE FOURTEENTH OF JULY CELEBRATION", and "SKULL WITH BURNING CIGARETTE" are hanging beside Cezanne's still life on the wall. Each of Vincent's painting have "35 fr" price tags posted below each painting. Vincent, Emile Bernard, and Pere are present. Paul CEZANNE is a portly man with long gray beard and a bald head and has hair muffs on the side. He speaks with a thick southern French accent.

Paul Cezanne enters the shop. He is carrying a large burlap bag. He carefully places the bag on the counter and approaches Pere.

CEZANNE

(as he shake hands with Pere)
Good to see you Pere.

PERE

It has been a far too long time
monsieur Cezanne.

Cezanne begins to remove paintings from the burlap bag. Both Vincent and Emile Bernard look on with interest, but they keep their distance from Cezanne and Pere. Cezanne leans the first painting up against the front of the counter.

"VIEW OF THE OISE VALLEY" is revealed. The second painting that he places in front of the first is "THE SEA AT L'ESTAQUE". Then he places a third and final painting in front of the second "VIEW OF GARDANNE".

PERE

(with a bit of excitement)
These look great. I will hang them
beside your still life.

Pere leads Cezanne over to the wall that has the Cezanne still life and Vincent's paintings. Pere stops in front of Vincent's paintings.

PERE

Paul, what do you think about these paintings? They were done by a new painter.

Cezanne takes a long look at each of the three paintings.

CEZANNE

(emotionally)

These are the work of a madman.

CUT TO:

INT. THEO'S ART GALLERY - DAY

This is a formal art gallery that has framed paintings on the walls by Courbet, Corot, Daumier, Mauve, and other French salon and Barbizon artists. There are large skylights and a narrow stairway to a loft space. The paintings are hung in the typical 19th century style of stacked displays.

Vincent enters the gallery and Theo meets him.

THEO

Vincent, I have something to show you.

Theo leads Vincent up the stairs to the loft.

THEO (CONT'D)

Paul Gauguin just arrived in town and dropped off his latest paintings.

They arrive at the top of the stairs.

The loft is a small space with only about two dozen framed paintings hanging. The paintings are crowded almost against each other. The hanging paintings are impressionist works by Monet, Pissarro, and Caillebotte. There are four unframed paintings sitting on the floor, leaning up against the wall.

Theo and Vincent stop in front of the four unframed paintings. They are "Still Life Pont Aven, Pension Gloanec", "Cattle Drinking", "Breton Shepherdess", and "The Four Breton Women".

VINCENT

These are quite extraordinary.

THEO

Yes, they indeed are. We will meet Paul Gauguin for dinner tonight at Moulin de la Galette.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOULIN DE LA GALETTE - NIGHT

Moulin de la Galette is a restaurant that has a windmill at the rear. The business has a large elegant outdoor dining area that is lit with gas lamps. There is a canopy over the main seating area. The WAITER is a young man in his early 20s.

Paul GAUGUIN is an attractive man in his mid 30s. He is nicely attired in the typical dark suit with top hat, and is well groomed with a mustache.

It is a busy night with all tables occupied. Paul, Vincent, and Theo are all seated at a table. There is a lot of chatter around them from the other tables. The three are eating their meal.

THEO

Paul, would you like some dessert?

PAUL

Yes. I would like a cup of espresso.

THEO

(turning to Vincent)
Vincent, how about you?

VINCENT

I would like a Mille Feuille and a cup of roast coffee.

Theo flags down the waiter who comes over to the table.

THEO

We would like to order dessert.

The waiter takes out a pencil and is ready to write down the order.

THEO (CONT'D)

I would like cup of your special
galette tea.

Waiter looks at Vincent.

VINCENT

I would like a Mille Feuille and a
cup of roast coffee.

Waiter looks at Gauguin.

GAUGUIN

I would like a double cup of
espresso with cream on the side.

WAITER

Very well

Waiter leaves the table.

VINCENT

Paul, Bernard tells me you prefer
working in Pont Aven, what is the
appeal of Brittany?

GAUGUIN

In Pont Aven, I stay at Pension
Gloanec that attracts many young
artists. Some have never heard of
impressionism and I discuss artists
like Pissarro, Cezanne and Degas. I
also am attracted by the simple
culture that does not need to
conform to standards that Paris
demands.

VINCENT

I saw your new work today and these
paintings seem to be working in a
new direction.

GAUGUIN

Not really, study Paul Cezanne's
work closely and I think you will
come to another conclusion.

VINCENT

What do you think about the new
scientific approaches to painting?

GAUGUIN

(a bit emotional)

BUNK. Those guys are infecting great painters like Pissarro with their garbage. This infection can mean the end to impressionism if we can not counter-act it.

VINCENT

How do you propose to do that?

GAUGUIN

Perhaps the best solution is to begin an artist's colony somewhere out of Paris based on the primitive simplicity of Japanese culture.

VINCENT

Where do you propose to establish this colony?

GAUGUIN

The village of Pont Aven seems to have a lot of appeal.

VINCENT

Can this artist's colony be commercially successful outside of Paris.

GAUGUIN

We can send the pictures to Theo when he opens the impressionists gallery.

THEO

The problem with that logic is I still need to convince my uncles to invest in this venture.

The waiter comes to the table with their desserts and serves them.

WAITER

Is there anything more that you need?

THEO

No. Everything is fine. Thank you.

WAITER

You are very welcome.

The waiter departs.

THEO

My gallery's small loft space is inadequate to the task. My task at hand is to generate more sales from impressionists, then the uncles will be enthusiastic about pressing forward. These things take time.

CUT TO:

INT. 54 RUE LEPIC - DAY

VINCENT'S ROOM -

Vincent is painting an almost completed small 11" x 14" canvas "Mussels and Shrimps" at a frantic pace. The still life table has the items seen in the painting.

Vincent finishes the painting, sets his palette down, places his brushes into a glass of turpentine. He puts his coat on and walks out of his room, into the living room.

LIVING ROOM -

Theo is on the couch reading a book. Vincent enters the room. Theo turns his attention to Vincent.

VINCENT

Theo, I will be meeting Gauguin and Guillaumin at Cafe de la Nouvelle Athenes.

THEO

Have you met Armand Guillaumin before?

VINCENT

No, that is why I want to go. Gauguin said that you never know who is going to show up at that cafe.

THEO

Enjoy your meal. Do not be concerned about their squabbles. Each one of them thinks that he is right and is closed minded about other possibilities. Just keep an open mind yourself.

Vincent departs the apartment.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE DE LA NOUVELLE ATHENES - DAY

The cafe is a typical Paris restaurant. There are not very many people at the tables.

ARMAND Guillaumin is a casually dressed man in his late 30s. He is well groomed and clean shaven.

Gauguin and Armand Guillaumin are seated at a table. Each has a half full cup of coffee. There is a small pitcher of cream and a bowl of sugar at their table. Vincent enters the scene, sees Gauguin and comes over to his table. Gauguin gestures to offer Vincent a seat at the table.

VINCENT

(as he shakes hands
with Armand)

I am Vincent.

ARMAND

Nice to meet you, I am Armand
Guillaumin.

GAUGUIN

We were talking about how detrimental that this new found scientific approach has been to painting.

VINCENT

Maybe there is actually something that can be gleaned from these new ideas.

GAUGUIN

I doubt it.

VINCENT

How about the effects of complementary colors. I find this part of their ideas most fascinating.

ARMAND

I think what we are talking about is the part where you abandon mixing colors on the palette and only use pure colors.

A WAITRESS comes over to the table carrying a pot of coffee. She tops off the cups for Gauguin and Armand.

WAITRESS

(asking Vincent)

Would you like order anything?

VINCENT

I would also like a cup of coffee.

The waitress takes a clean cup and saucer from the adjoining table, sets it on Vincent's placemat and fills the cup with coffee.

VINCENT

Thank you.

The waitress leaves their table.

A group of three men enter the cafe. They are Georges Seurat, Paul SIGNAC, and Camille Pissarro. The three wait at the front counter. Paul Signac is a clean shaven man in his late 20s.(CHECK THIS FACT)

GAUGUIN

Speak of the devil.

ARMAND

Please be kind Paul. We are here to enjoy the afternoon.

VINCENT

I have met Pissarro and Signac, but who is the other gentleman?

GAUGUIN

(growing agitated)

That is the one and only Georges
Seurat. He had some huge
monstrosity at the Independents show
this year.

The waitress escorts the Pissarro party into the dining
room. When they get to Vincent's table, Vincent raises to
standing and Camille approaches Vincent with his hand
extended.

CAMILLE

(as they shake hands)

Nice to see you Vincent.

VINCENT

It is great to see you.

Vincent turns to Signac who extends his hand. Armand
raises to his feet and Gauguin remains seated.

SIGNAC

(as they shake hands)

I hope all is well.

VINCENT

Indeed all is very well.

Vincent turns to Seurat with his hand extended. Armand
also shakes hands with Camille, Signac, and Seurat
following Vincent.

VINCENT

(as they shake hands)

I am Vincent, Brother of Theo.

SEURAT

Nice to meet you, I am Georges
Seurat.

VINCENT

I would be interested in hearing
more about your scientific approach
to painting.

Gauguin quickly gets up, throws his napkin on the table,
takes a couple of coins out of his pocket and slams them on
the table, then quickly departs the cafe.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARIS STREET - DAY

It is a cold winter day. Snow is on the ground. Vincent is wearing a goatskin overcoat and a fur cap. Other people on the sidewalk are also bundled-up. Gauguin and Vincent are walking down the sidewalk Rue Lepic. Vincent is carrying a small painting "Mussels and Shrimps".

VINCENT

You really surprised everybody when you got up and left the other day.

GAUGUIN

I just couldn't stand the thought of having to listen to their rhetoric for the rest of lunch.

VINCENT

You mean their scientific beliefs.

GAUGUIN

Yes, precisely that.

VINCENT

Actually, we talked about promoting art in general. You know, ways to get our paintings exhibited.

GAUGUIN

I was just not in the right frame of mind. Or I guess that I am really upset that Camille Pissarro was swayed over into Seurat's camp.

Vincent and Gauguin get to a store that has paintings, primitive arrows & spears, and old iron scrap on display in the front window.

CUT TO:

INT. JUNK STORE - DAY

The large store is a combination junk store and art gallery. The paintings are mostly older Romantic and Barbizon school works.

The store also has old swords, suits of armor, and African masks. The old discarded items from everyday Parisian life. There are several other CUSTOMERS shopping in the store.

The CLERK is an older gentleman with gray hair. He wears an apron over a nice set of clothing. He is standing behind the counter.

Vincent and Gauguin enter the store. They approach the counter.

CLERK

May I help you.

VINCENT

I understand that you buy oil paintings.

Vincent hands the painting over to the clerk.

CLERK

(as he examines the painting)
Yes I do.

VINCENT

Can you give me enough money to buy a meal?

CLERK

(still carefully
examining the canvas)
You really have put your heart and soul into this small canvas. My customers are difficult. They want Courbets for next to nothing. And, this painting is not very cheerful. You know, still lives are not in demand. I hear that you are talented. You deserve something. Here are five Francs.

The dealer slaps the coin onto the counter. Vincent picks up the coin.

VINCENT

(painfully)
Thank You.

Vincent and Gauguin exit the store.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARIS STREET - DAY

Vincent and Gauguin walk along the same sidewalk that they came from.

VINCENT

That is the first painting that I have ever sold.

GAUGUIN

Undoubtedly the first of many.

VINCENT

(as he holds the 5 franc piece)
But this does not even pay for the cost of the paint and canvas.

GAUGUIN

Everybody has to start somewhere.

The two men encounter a POOR WOMAN. She is in her early 20s and is bundled up with only a blanket. She smiles at the two and holds her hand out.

Vincent quickly places the coin in her hand.

Vincent keeps walking with Gauguin, not even looking back at the poor woman. They continue to walk along the sidewalk.

GAUGUIN

(surprised)
Why did you do that?

VINCENT

I thought of the unfortunate girl in the novel "La Fille Elisa".

GAUGUIN

But she is just a fictional character.

VINCENT

That woman who I gave the coin to has needs that are real.

Snow begins to fall as Vincent and Gauguin enter 54 Rue Lepic.

CUT TO:

INT. TANGUY'S SHOP - DAY

Pere is wearing a double breasted blue coat, brown pants, and a wide brimmed hat as depicted in "Portrait of Pere Tanguy". Vincent is at the work table assembling stretcher bars. Pere is at the counter when the postman enters. He delivers a small package to Pere. The postman exits the store.

PERE

(Excitedly)

Vincent, come over here. I think that it has finally arrived.

Vincent stops his work and comes over to the counter as Pere carefully open the package. The contents are slowly revealed as being at least 100 Japanese woodblock prints. He begins to lay some out on the counter.

VINCENT

These are quite stunning.

PERE

Their primitive society gives the artists freedom from having to always comply with set rules and standards.

VINCENT POV -

Vincent is looking at "Kameido Ume" by Ando Hiroshige.

VINCENT (O.S.)

Just look at the pure colors. I can see why Gauguin is so attracted to this society.

BACK TO SCENE -

PERE

As well as Claude Monet.

Pere begins to hang the prints up on an empty wall, in a tiled format, as seen in "Portrait of Pere Tanguy". Vincent returns to the work table and finishes stretching the canvas.

VINCENT

Pere, May I paint your portrait with
the Japanese prints?

PERE

Why, certainly. It is a slow day.

Vincent places a chair in front of the newly hung prints
and he unfolds his portable easel. Pere takes a seat and
Vincent begins to paint at his typical frantic pace.

VINCENT

(as he paints)

Too bad Gauguin will not be able to
see your new prints.

PERE

Why is that?

VINCENT

(as he paints)

He just left for Colombia.

PERE

To help dig the Panama canal?

VINCENT

(as he continues to
paint)

No. He is looking for something
more exotic and primitive than he
can get in France. The same
qualities that are in your Japanese
prints.

VINCENT POV -

The almost finished painting with Vincent making the
finishing touches. A customer comes into the store and
Pere leaves the chair to help the customer. Vincent
continues to paint.

CUT TO:

INT. 54 RUE LEPIC - VINCENT'S ROOM - DAY

Vincent is hanging Japanese prints on his wall, next to his
own paintings. Theo enters the room and approaches
Vincent.

THEO
Vincent, where did you get those?

VINCENT
(pointing to the
Hiroshige prints)
At the Galerie Bing. These two are
by Hiroshige.

THEO
They are quite excellent.

VINCENT
Yes, I was delighted to find them.

THEO
I do have some good news.

VINCENT
(as he sets up his
easel)
It seems to me that any news is good
news these days.

THEO
Madamaselle La Segatori at Le
Tambourin on the Boulevard de Clichy
is looking for people to hang art in
her cafe.

VINCENT
I know of the place. Many writers
and artists go there.

Vincent places a medium sized canvas on the easel and
begins to paint "Japonaiserie, after Hiroshige".

THEO
I think that her venue is a great
way for your paintings to be seen.

VINCENT
(as he continues to
paint)
Maybe I should just show up with a
couple of pictures and see what
happens.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAFE LE TAMBOURIN - DAY

Vincent is carrying a couple of finished paintings and looks at the "Le Tambourin" cafe across the street.

Vincent crosses the street and enters the cafe.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE LE TAMBOURIN - DAY

Cafe Le Tambourin is a large size cafe with only a couple of pictures on its walls. The rest of the cafe is typical for Paris.

Vincent enters the cafe with his two paintings. He comes up to Madamaselle LA SEGATORI at the receptionist's desk and sets the paintings down as he fumbles through his pockets looking for a note. Vincent finds the note.

La Segatori is a beautiful Italian woman with strong facial features. She is in her mid 30s. She is depicted in "Woman at a table in the Cafe du Tambourin" painting by Van Gogh.

VINCENT

(as he reads from the
note)

May I speak with Madamaselle La
Segatori.

LA SEGATORI

I am La Segatori.

VINCENT

I understand that you are looking
for some pictures for consignment.

Vincent holds up "Japonaiserie after Hiroshige" painting.

LA SEGATORI

Those unframed paintings will do
just fine, but what I really want to
fill these walls with pictures.

VINCENT POV -

Vincent looks around at the mostly bare walls.

VINCENT (O.S.)
(as he continues to
scan the walls)
I can do that.

RETURN TO SCENE -

LA SEGATORI
The sooner the better. I do want a
commission of 50% of each sale.

VINCENT
That sounds fair. Please give me a
couple of days. I know of a couple
of other painters who will help me
fill these walls.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAFE LE TAMBOURIN - 3 DAYS LATER - DAY

Vincent, Henri Lautrec, and Emile Bernard are hanging pictures on the walls at Cafe Le Tambourin. They are almost done this project with only two pictures waiting to be hung.

Vincent is observing the levelness of the painting they are working on hanging while Emile and Henri stand on either side. The last picture is leaning against the wall under the place where it will be hung.

HENRI
How is this?

VINCENT
(gesturing with his
right hand)
The right side needs to come up a
little.

Henri and Emile slowly adjust the angle of the painting.

VINCENT
(quickly)
There.

Henri and Emile move on to the last painting. Henri grabs a hammer and places a nail into the wall.

La Segatori approaches Vincent looking into his eyes with a smile.

LA SEGATORI
(almost flirtatious)
You certainly impress me Vincent.

VINCENT
Why is that?

LA SEGATORI
Because you were able to get this exhibit together so fast.

VINCENT
That is because we do not get very many opportunities to show our work.

LA SEGATORI
I hope that you come by often to check up on this show

VINCENT
(with a smile)
Thank you, I certainly will.

Customers come into the cafe and La Segatori leaves Vincent to wait on them.

Henri and Emile have hung the last painting. Vincent returns his attention to them.

HENRI
I think this is good.

VINCENT
Yes, it does look level.

Henri and Emile walk over to Vincent and look at the pictures on the wall.

EMILE
Maybe someday our pictures will hang in Art Museums instead of cafes.

VINCENT

Every artist had to start somewhere.
Look at Courbet who had to set up a
tent to display his pictures because
the Salon rejected his submissions.
Now he shows in the Louvre.

HENRI

We all will be dead before before
that happens, so what is the point?

VINCENT

Then we should not worry about it.
We can all be proud of this
exhibition, and go on from here.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIELD WITH FACTORIES - DAY

Vincent has his easel set-up with a large canvas. The scene is "Factories at Asnieres, seen from Quai de Clichy", which he is painting in his typical frantic pace. Vincent is using a "Pointillist" style, where small staccato dots of color are used rather than broad brushstrokes. Paul Signac has his easel set-up beside Vincent, but is facing a different direction, so that they are not both painting the same scene. Signac is also using small dots of color to paint, but in a very slow methodical manner.

You can hear the mechanical rumble of machines off in the distance. Smoke is spewing from tall smokestacks at the factories.

SIGNAC

I am glad that you are now using a
modern painting method.

VINCENT

You mean using the dots of color?

SIGNAC

Yes, this forces the viewer to mix
the colors in their minds.

VINCENT

I am just experimenting with
different methods of applying paint.

SIGNAC

I find this method to be very satisfying.

A person dressed in blue enters Vincent's field of view and slowly walks across the field. Vincent begins to add this figure to his canvas. Vincent and Signac continue to paint.

VINCENT

I find that this method does seem to lack certain emotional qualities that I want. However, I do find that there are positive elements from this style that can be infused into impressionism.

SIGNAC

You do seem to be much more open minded than most painters.

VINCENT

I just don't want to be locked into a specific camp that has set rules and regulations.

SIGNAC

The longer you stay in Paris, the more you will be servant to the politics of art.

VINCENT

I just want to paint and not be concerned about appeasing predetermined standards.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARIS STREET - DAY

Signac and Vincent are walking down a crowded pedestrian only street. Signac's folded easel with a painting still attached is being carried slung over his shoulder (like someone would carry a bag of golf clubs). Vincent also has his easel slung over his shoulder, but his "Factories at Asnieres, seen from Quai de Clichy" painting is in his hands.

Vincent uses the painting in careless gestures of exuberance to random PASSER-BYERS as they walk along.

VINCENT
What a great day.

VINCENT
God Bless You.

A passer-byre must dodge to avoid being struck by the painting.

VINCENT
Success.

VINCENT
Bless You.

VINCENT
Bonjour Madameselle.

Vincent accidentally gets wet paint from the painting on his pants, but he ignores this and continues.

VINCENT
Prosperity for all.

VINCENT
God Bless.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE LE TAMBOURIN - DAY

Vincent has his easel set-up with a medium sized canvas. La Segatori is sitting as his model. She is wearing a flowing black skirt, a jacket with large buttons, and she has a lit cigarette. Vincent is painting "Woman at a table in the Cafe du Tambourin". The background shows "Japonaiserie: Oiran, after Kesai Eisen" and other pictures by Vincent, Lautrec, and Bernard. La segatori is sitting at a small table that looks like a musician's Tambourine.

Vincent paints in his frantic style during the following dialogue.

LA SEGATORI
Vincent, Why do you paint?

VINCENT

We live in this world where organized structures are set in place so that certain people can take advantage the masses.

LA SEGATORI

How does that relate to painting?

VINCENT

Most people must struggle just to exist and become a success. I see the act of painting as being a similar struggle.

LA SEGATORI

What do you consider a success in painting?

VINCENT

(painting even more intensively)

When I can express those emotions and feelings that we experience during our individual struggles.

VINCENT POV -

Vincent places the last few brushstrokes onto the canvas with speed and emotion.

CUT TO:

INT. 54 RUE LEPIC - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The entire apartment is a mess with dirty dishes, old newspapers, painting supplies, and general clutter. Several paintings placed in small stacks around in an unorganized manner.

Vincent is reading a novel and smoking his pipe when Theo enters through the front door. Theo slowly looks across the messy room.

THEO

(irritated)

Just look at this mess. I would be embarrassed to have company.

VINCENT

(defensive)

I am sorry. I thought that the housekeeper was coming today.

THEO

She only cleans every other Wednesday, Not today.

Vincent begins to try to tidy up the place.

THEO (CONT'D)

Sometimes I wish that you could find a place of your own.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAFE LE TAMBOURIN - DAY

There is an "Out of Business" sign across the marquee of the cafe and the windows are boarded up. Vincent comes out the front door with a push-cart that has a pile of paintings on it.

He struggles with the overloaded cart down the cobblestone street. A painting falls off the cart, Vincent stops and picks up that painting. Then he tries to rearrange the cart to be more manageable. He continues down the street.

CUT TO:

INT. 54 RUE LEPIC - DAY

STAIRS AND HALL -

Vincent is awkwardly carrying ten or so paintings up the stairs. He arrives at the top and continues down the hall until he reaches a door. He carefully sets the stack of paintings down and opens the door. He picks up the stack of paintings and enters through the open door.

APARTMENT LIVING ROOM -

Theo is sitting on the couch, reading a book. Theo sets the book down when Vincent enters, gets up and helps Vincent carry his paintings.

THEO

I am glad to see that you were able to retrieve your pictures.

VINCENT

There was nobody there, but the front door was unlocked.

They set the stack of paintings down, leaning up against the wall in an orderly manner. Theo sits down at his place on the couch and Vincent sits down in a chair.

THEO

I wonder what happened?

VINCENT

I was just there on Sunday and everything seemed to be normal.

THEO

I am sorry about wishing that you would move out. I was upset. Please stay.

VINCENT

I should have kept the mess in my room and studio

THEO

There is another place that is looking for impressionist paintings.

VINCENT

Really, where is that.

THEO

The Theatre Libre wants pictures for their lobby.

VINCENT

I will go there first thing in the morning.

CUT TO:

INT. TANGUY'S - DAY

Vincent is going through the drawers of supplies, taking out several tubes of oil paint and putting them into a small open-top basket. There are many tubes of paint in the basket.

Signac enters the store and sees Vincent. Signac comes up to Vincent

SIGNAC

Wow Vincent, that's a lot of paint.

VINCENT

I use a lot of impasto and that requires a lot of paint.

SIGNAC

I heard that the cafe Le Tambourin closed.

VINCENT

Yes, but there is another place that wants an exhibition.

SIGNAC

Where is that?

VINCENT

I just talked with Andre Antoine at Theatre Libre. He wants his lobby filled with pictures. There is a huge skylight and our pictures will be seen by a lot of important people. Would you like to contribute?

SIGNAC

Yes, I have been there to see a play. I would be love to exhibit at that theatre.

VINCENT

We really need another painter. Do you know anybody else?

SIGNAC

Maybe Georges Seurat. I will ask him.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATRE LIBRE - LOBBY - DAY

The lobby of the Theatre Libre has high walls with a ceiling that is mostly a huge skylight. The show is already hung and the people in this scene are celebrating the show's opening.

Vincent, Seurat, Seurat's girlfriend- Madeleine Knobloch, Camille Pissarro, Lucien Pissarro, Theo, Tanguy, DR. GACHET, and many other PEOPLE are present.

Most people are hob-knobbing about or are looking at the pictures on the walls. There are 30 or so unframed pictures on the walls. A couple of Seurat's larger paintings have simple frames.

Artist's pictures on the walls include: Vincent, Signac, Seurat, and Lucien Pissarro. There is an even mix of the four artists, with the pictures being intermixed.

The people present AD-LIB conversations with each other.

Vincent is standing with Tanguy, Signac, Lucien and Camille Pissarro. Each is holding a wine glass with wine.

VINCENT

I offer a toast to our success.

They all hold their glasses up and take turns touching them together.

LUCIEN

(as he and Vincent
touch glasses)

To our success together.

Theo walks up to the group and leads Vincent away.

THEO

It looks like we really have a great exhibition here.

VINCENT

This space is truly grand. For once, the artist's of the Petit Boulevard can celebrate.

THEO

Where do you want to go from here?

VINCENT

I would like to spend some time painting in the Midi.

THEO

That sounds like a great plan. I can send you a monthly stipend in return for pictures.

VINCENT

Yes, a studio in Arles.

THEO

Well, before making plans to travel, we have a date with Seurat. He was quite impressed about how you put this show together.

VINCENT

That is because it was not me alone. Everybody here made a significant contribution.

CUT TO:

INT. SEURAT'S STUDIO - DAY

Seurat's studio is a small older loft type space that has large windows. There are many paintings hanging on the walls by both Seurat and other neo-impressionist artists.

Seurat has "The Side Show" on his easel and has a completed smaller version (study) hanging on the wall.

Seurat is actively painting using small dots of color. Seurat works very slowly and carefully places each individual dot of color. He has separate paint rushes for each color.

Vincent and Theo are watching Seurat work on the painting. Seurat does pause his painting to engage in dialogue.

VINCENT

How long does it take you to complete a single canvas?

SEURAT

Many months. Each dot of color needs to be placed correctly.

THEO

When and where will you exhibit this canvas?

SEURAT

(to Theo)

I think that it will be completed in time for the independent's show.

SEURAT

(to Vincent)

Vincent, do you plan on also showing there?

VINCENT

I am departing for Arles tomorrow to spend some time painting in the south of France.

THEO

(to Vincent)

I can deliver your pictures to the show if you desire.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Vincent and Theo are standing on the platform beside the train. Vincent is wearing a coat and a fur cap. They shake hands, then embrace. Vincent boards the train.

INT. SECOND CLASS TRAIN CAR - DAY

There are not very many PASSENGERS in the car. Vincent takes a window seat near the back of the car. The train's WHISTLE is heard, then the train departs the station.

The CONDUCTOR comes into the front of the car, taking tickets and punching them. He slowly works his way to Vincent. The Conductor takes Vincent's ticket, punches it with a hand punch.

CONDUCTOR

Provence.

VINCENT

Yes, Arles in Provence.

The conductor hands the ticket back to Vincent and goes to the next passenger.

VINCENT POV -

Vincent looks out the window and watches the French countryside pass by. The ground is covered with fresh snow.

Vincent sees a Mining Operation off in the distance. As the train gets closer, the mining tower and the pyramid shaped debris pile can distinctly be seen.

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - BORINAGE MINE - 1880

EXT. BORINAGE MINE - DAY

SUPER IN/OUT: "BELGIUM, 8 YEARS EARLIER"

The ground is covered with a fresh coating of snow. There is a wooden mining tower that stands above a mine entrance. A pyramid shaped debris pile dwarfs a village of shantys next to it.

Vincent is wearing a white collared ministers shirt under his unbuttoned coat. He is carrying a bible. He walks down the street toward the village. He is the only person on the street.

Suddenly, a loud BELL can be heard being manually rung. Many VILLAGERS emerge from their huts and head toward the mining entrance. Vincent joins them.

Thick black smoke begins to rush out of the mine entrance.

A feeling of panic is in the air with the villagers who have gathered at the mine entrance. The bell stops ringing. MINERS come rushing out of the mine entrance. They are reunited with family members in the crowd.

Everything turns to silence as injured miners emerge from the mine entrance, being carried on stretchers. There are half dozen injured workers and another half dozen stretchers with blankets covering dead bodies.

The stretchers with the injured workers are placed on the ground. A DOCTOR attends the first VICTIM while everybody watches.

DOCTOR

He is hopeless.

The doctor moves on to the next victim. Vincent comes up to the first victim with his bible.

VINCENT

Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom
come, thy will be done . . .

VICTIM

(joins in with Vincent)
. . . in Earth as it is in heaven,
give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses, as we
forgive them that trespass against
us, and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil, for thine
is the kingdom, and the power, and
the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

DISSOLVE TO:

RETURN TO SCENE - SECOND CLASS TRAIN CAR - DAY

Vincent is looking out the window. The train pulls into a station and stops. An "Arles" sign is on the station wall.

Vincent gets up and gets off the train.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLES TRAIN STATION - DAY

A light snow is falling. There is at least one inch of snow on the ground. Vincent steps exits the train car and walks over to the baggage car. There are bags on the platform. He finds his TRUNK and lugs it away.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLES STREET - DAY

A light snow is still falling. Vincent continues to lug a trunk down the street. He frequently changes carrying the trunk between his left and right hand.

He gets to the HOTEL CARREL and enters its front door.

INT. HOTEL CARREL - DAY

HOTEL LOBBY -

Vincent lugs his trunk to the counter. The INNSKEEPER comes up to help Vincent.

VINCENT

How much are your rooms?

INNSKEEPER

Small rooms with single beds are 2 francs per day or 10 francs per week. Larger rooms with double beds are 3 francs per day or 15 francs per week.

VINCENT

Can I get a small room for the weekly rate.

INNSKEEPER

Yes, that will be 10 francs.

Vincent hands the Innskeeper 10 francs. The Innskeeper reaches to a pegboard and gets a key. He writes out a paper receipt, then he gives the key and receipt to Vincent. Vincent takes the items, then them into his pocket.

INNSKEEPER

Do you need help with your luggage monsieur?

VINCENT

No thank you, I can manage.

Vincent lugs the trunk away from the counter and walks toward the stairs.

VINCENT'S ROOM -

Vincent's room is small with a bench for his trunk, a single twin sized bed, and a chair with table. There is a large window behind the table that has an excellent view of the town and mountains beyond. There is a coat hook near the door.

Vincent's trunk is on the bench. Vincent opens the trunk revealing a mix of clothing and painting supplies,

including a folding painter's easel. Vincent removes a pad of paper and pencil from the trunk and places them on the table.

NOTE: All subsequent LETTER QUOTES are made from "The Complete Letters of Vincent Van Gogh" ISBN: 0-8212-2630-4

Vincent sits at the table and begin begins to write a letter.

Vincent's voice is heard speaking unbroken over the scene changes.

VINCENT (V.O.)

(As Vincent writes)

My Dear Theo, I thought of you at least as much as I did of the new country I was seeing. And now I'll begin by telling you that there's about two feet of snow everywhere, and more is still falling. Arles doesn't seem to me any bigger than Breda or Mons.

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - TRAIN TRIP TO ARLES - DAY

VINCENT POV -

Vincent is looking out the window of the train car at the passing by countryside.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Before getting to Tarascon I noticed a magnificent landscape of huge yellow rocks, piled up in the strangest and most imposing forms. In the little village between these rocks were rows of small round trees with olive-green or gray-green leaves, which I think were lemon trees.

DISSOLVE TO:

RETURN TO SCENE -

Vincent is sitting at the table, writing a letter. Snow is no longer falling outside the window.

VINCENT (V.O.)

But here in Arles the country seems flat. I have seen some splendid red stretches of soil planted with vines, with a background of mountains of the most delicate lilac. And the landscapes in the snow, with the summits white against a sky as luminous as the snow, were just like the winter landscapes that the Japanese have painted. Ever
Yours, Vincent.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLES - DAY

It is a bright sunny day with fresh snow on the ground.

Vincent is walking down a street, wearing his coat and fur cap. He is carrying a folding easel. He stops and sets up the easel with a medium sized blank canvas at the edge of town, looking out on the snow covered countryside. Vincent begins to paint the scene. The painting on his easel is "Landscape with Snow".

POSTMAN ROULINS sees Vincent painting and approaches Vincent. The postman wears a blue double breasted coat with brass buttons, blue pants, and a blue cap with "Postes" embroidered on it in gold. A pocket watch is concealed. He is in his early 40s and has a full, long beard. He is depicted in "Postman Joseph Roulin" painting by Van Gogh.

The postman looks at the half completed painting.

POSTMAN ROULIN

Good Morning Monsieur. It is a cold day to be outside painting.

VINCENT

(continuing painting)

Yes, but the fresh snow will not be around for very long. I love how the reds, yellows, and green colors show through the white ground cover.

Vincent stops painting and extends his hand.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I am Vincent, a Dutchman.

POSTMAN ROULIN
(as they shake hands)
Pleased to meet you, I am Joseph
Roulin. Will you be visiting Arles
for very long.

VINCENT
(Vincent begins
painting again)
Yes, I am looking for an apartment to rent. Do you know of
any that are available?

POSTMAN ROULIN
There is a vacant house on my postal
route. I think it is only 15 francs
per month.

A man wearing a brown coat and black full brimmed hat walks
with a medium sized brown dog through the scene. Vincent
begins to add these characters to his painting.

VINCENT
(continuing painting)
Where is this house?

POSTMAN ROULIN
At the Place Lamartine. Look for a
yellow house.

The postman looks at his pocket watch.

VINCENT
(Pauses painting and
turns to the postman)
Thank You very much.

POSTMAN ROULIN
You are quite welcome.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLACE LAMARTINE - DAY

The YELLOW HOUSE sits on a corner. It is a 2 story duplex
with matching tandem gables. The left side has a pink

awning over the bottom story and two windows with pink shutters on the top floor. There is a regular shaped door situated between the two sides with a single window above. The right side has no awning, an arch top green door with and arch top single window on the lower floor, and two normal windows with green shutters on the top.

It is a bright sunny day with no snow on the ground. Vincent is walking down the street toward the yellow house. He does not have any painting gear with him.

He finds the yellow house and reads a note in the window of the side that has a green door.

VINCENT POV - NOTE IN WINDOW -

"For Rent 15 Francs per Month. See Monsieur Ginoux at Night Cafe across the street."

BACK TO SCENE -

Vincent walks the short distance to the Night Cafe and enters through the door.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT CAFE - DAY

The cafe is small, with a pocket-less billiards table in the center and small tables around the sides. The walls are painted red, with a green ceiling and natural wide planked wooden floors.

MONSIEUR GINOUX is a middle aged man with short black hair that is very neat. His face has strong features.

Vincent enters the cafe. MONSIEUR GINOUX comes up to Vincent

MONSIEUR GINOUX

My I help you.

VINCENT

Are you Monsieur Ginoux?

MONSIEUR GINOUX

Yes.

VINCENT

I am interested in the apartment
across the street.

MONSIEUR GINOUX

It is fairly small with only four
rooms and the bathroom is next door,
but it is only 15 francs per month.

VINCENT

That sounds good. That is better
than I am getting now.

MONSIEUR GINOUX

Where are you staying now?

VINCENT

At the Hotel Carrel.

MONSIEUR GINOUX

Be very careful there. That
innskeeper is well known for
unjustified small charges.

VINCENT

He has already tried to trick me on
several occasions. Yesterday, he
ruined my day when he charged me One
Franc for receiving a parcel.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE- VINCENT WRITING LETTER - DAY

Vincent's voice over is read in a continuous manner over
each corresponding shot.

-- VINCENT WRITING LETTER - HOTEL ROOM

Vincent is sitting at the table writing a letter.

VINCENT (V.O.)

My Dear Theo, Many thanks for your
letter and the 50-fr. Note enclosed.
I don't see the whole future black,
but I do see it bristling with
difficulties and sometimes I ask
myself if they won't be too much for
me.

-- VINCENT MAKING DRAWING IN ARLES

Vincent is making a small ink drawing on yellow paper of the yellow house.

VINCENT (V.O.)

However, I have just sent you a roll of small pen and ink drawings, a dozen I think. You will find among them a hasty sketch on yellow paper, a lawn in the square as you come into town, with a building at the back.

--- MONSIEUR GINOUX SHOWING VINCENT THE APARTMENT

Monsieur Ginoux is giving Vincent a tour of the apartment. The place has whitewashed walls and large windows.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Well, toady I've taken the right wing of this complex, which consists of 4 rooms, or rather two with two cabinets. It is painted yellow outside, whitewashed inside, on the sunny side. I have taken it for 15 francs A month.

Monsieur Ginoux takes Vincent up the stairs to the second floor. They tour the second floor.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Now my idea would be to furnish one room, the one on the first floor, so as to be able to sleep there. This house will remain the studio and the storehouse for the entire campaign, as long as it lasts in the south, and now I am free of the innkeeper's tricks: They're ruinous and they make me wretched.

--- VINCENT WRITING LETTER

Vincent sitting at the table in his Hotel Carrel room, writing a letter.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Meanwhile, if you approve, I shall furnish the bedroom, either by renting or buying; I shall see about that today or tomorrow morning. I am still convinced that nature down here is just what one wants to give one color. So it's more than likely I shall hardly ever budge from here.

A good handshake for you. I wish you a year as sunny as today is here. Ever Yours, Vincent.

MONTAGE ENDS - CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL CARREL LOBBY - DAY

Vincent is quickly comes up to front counter. The innkeeper is behind the counter.

VINCENT

(very upset)

My trunk is missing from my room.

INNSKEEPER

It is safe. I have it.

VINCENT

(still upset)

Why do you have it?

INNSKEEPER

Because you owe me back rent.

VINCENT

Can you give me a couple of days?

INNSKEEPER

I will give you the trunk when you pay the bill.

Vincent pulls his wallet out and opens it. He takes out 40 francs and places the bills on the counter.

VINCENT

Here are the forty francs that I still owe you.

INNSKEEPER

No, you owe me 67 francs. You will get your trunk when you pay me.

VINCENT

I am paying under protest and I want you to sign this fact.

INNSKEEPER

Very well.

Vincent writes up a quick note. He has the Innskeeper sign the note, then pays the 67 francs to him. The innskeeper then opens a nearby door to a closet that has Vincent's trunk inside. Vincent takes the trunk and heads for the front door of the hotel.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLES - DAY

Vincent lugs the heavy trunk down the street. He gets to the ARLESEINNE INN. He enters.

CUT TO:

EXT. WHEAT FIELD - DAY

It is a brilliant sunny & windy day and Vincent is set up with his easel at the side of a road, near town.

Vincent is dressed with blue pants, his blue paint stained smock, and a straw wide brimmed hat, as depicted in "Painter on his way to work" painting by Van Gogh.

Vincent is painting "Wheat Stacks with Reaper". The painting is more than half completed. Vincent has to occasionally grab his hat or easel due to the wind.

A ZOUAVE soldier stops and watches Vincent paint. Vincent appears oblivious to his presence as he continues to paint in his frantic manner.

The Zouave officer is a young man in his late 20s, with a mustache. He is dressed in a blue and red French Zouave Second Lieutenant uniform.

The Zouave moves to be a bit closer to Vincent and Vincent takes notice of his presence. Vincent pauses and looks at the Zouave.

ZOUAVE

Why do you paint so fast monsieur?

VINCENT

(goes back to painting)

I need to quickly capture the impression of the moment. Things such as shadows, people, and the weather can quickly change.

ZOUAVE

Wouldn't you make a quick drawing first, then finish the painting in your studio?

VINCENT

(Continuing to paint)

Some artists work that way. I prefer to just paint so that I can capture the emotions and feelings that I am feeling at this precise moment in time.

ZOUAVE

How can I learn to paint in this way?

VINCENT

(pauses painting and looks at the Zouave)

You should start working with small drawings or studies and begin to add paint after you are proficient at drawing. Keep in mind that you will not be as concerned about needing an accurate drawing as you advance in your studies.

ZOUAVE

What would I need to be able to get started?

VINCENT

A tablet of paper and an assortment of pencils ranging from soft to hard. Also, a perspective frame will help at first.

ZOUAVE

Can you help me?

VINCENT

I can help you with a couple of lessons. All that I ask in return is to sit for me as a model.

ZOUAVE

That sounds like a good idea. I will be in town for a few weeks before I return to Algeria.

VINCENT

You welcome to come by at any time. My studio is in the yellow house with green shutters at Place Lamartine.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE- VINCENT WRITING LETTER - DAY

Vincent's voice over is read in a continuous manner over each corresponding shot.

-- VINCENT WRITING LETTER - HOTEL ROOM

Vincent is sitting at a desk in his Arleseinne Inn room, writing a letter.

VINCENT (V.O.)

My dear comrade Gauguin, I have thought of you very often, and the reason why I did not write sooner is that I did not want to write empty phrases.

-- VINCENT PAINTING PORTAIT OF ZOUAVE - YELLOW HOUSE

The Zouave is sitting on a box in Vincent's yellow house studio. Vincent is painting "The Seated Zouave" in his typical frantic style.

VINCENT (V.O.)

I wanted to let you know that I have just rented a four room house here in Arles. And that it would seem to
(MORE)

VINCENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

me that if I could find another painter inclined to work in the south, and who, like myself, would be sufficiently absorbed in his work to be able to resign himself to living like a monk who goes to the brothel once a fortnight--who for the rest is tied up in his work, and not very willing to waste his time, it might be a good job. Being all alone, I am suffering under this isolation.

-- VINCENT PAINTING - EXT. ARLES - DAY

Vincent is painting "The Bridge at Triuquetaille". Many people are walking along the riverfront. Vincent has his easel set-up in the middle of the sidewalk, so the passerbyes must maneuver around this obstacle. A couple of these people stop briefly and watch Vincent paint.

VINCENT (V.O.)

So I have often thought of telling you so frankly. You know that my brother and I greatly appreciate your painting, and that we are most anxious to see you quietly settle down. Send us your answer t the earliest convenience.

-- VINCENT WRITING LETTER - HOTEL ROOM

VINCENT (V.O.)

Sincerely Yours, Vincent

Vincent finishes the letter. Then he places it in an envelope, seals it with wax, licks a stamp and puts the stamp onto the envelope.

MONTAGE ENDS - CUT TO:

EXT. ARLES STREET - DAY

Vincent is walking down a street, wearing his blue pants, blue smock, and straw wide brimmed hat. He is carrying a completed painting "The Harvest" in his hand and has his folding easel strapped to his back.

RACHEL is a beautiful young lady, about 18 years old and dressed like a Courtasane. She sees Vincent coming down

the sidewalk from the opposite direction and strains to see his painting as they pass. Vincent sees this act and stops to hold the painting up for her to see. She stops to get a better look at the picture.

RACHEL

What is the picture of?

VINCENT

This is the harvest right outside of town.

RACHEL

I see you coming this way almost every day.

VINCENT

(puzzled)

Really. I usually go out to the countryside to paint landscape pictures.

RACHEL

How do you deal with the Mistral winds?

VINCENT

I have to struggle against these terrible winds almost every day, but the bright sun more than makes up for the Mistral.

RACHEL

You should come by the Maison de Tolerance someday to paint.

VINCENT

(Enthusiastic)

I would love to come by and paint if that wouldn't be too much trouble.

RACHEL

Come by any time. I look forward to seeing you.

CUT TO:

INT. YELLOW HOUSE - DAY

Vincent has the large room on the ground floor set up as an improvised painting studio. There is a small table made by

placing a plank on a box, then covered with a cloth. There is a drape serving as the backdrop. There is a vase with Sunflowers in it on the set.

It is rainy day.

Vincent is painting a still life of Sunflowers. "Still Life of 14 Sunflowers". There is a knock at the door and Vincent places his brush down and answers the door.

Postman Joseph Roulin is there with a letter.

POSTMAN ROULIN
 (as he hands the letter
 to Vincent)
 Another letter from Theo.

VINCENT
 (as he quickly opens
 the letter)
 Yes, A bright respite during a rainy
 day.

The letter has three 100 franc notes in it. Vincent hides the franc notes from Roulin.

POSTMAN ROULIN
 (looking at the still
 life set)
 I see you keep busy, even on rainy
 days.

VINCENT
 Yes, I prefer live models, but
 Flowers also make an excellent
 subject.

POSTMAN ROULIN
 I can sit for you sometime.

VINCENT
 That would be great.

POSTMAN ROULIN
 Are you ever going to move in to
 this place.

VINCENT

Soon. I am looking for furniture, including two beds at a reasonable cost.

POSTMAN ROULIN

I know of someone who has two beds for sale. I will ask him what the cost is.

VINCENT

That would also be great.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE. VINCENT PAINTING/WRITING LETTER

Vincent's voice over is read in a continuous manner over each corresponding shot.

-- VINCENT IN HIS BEDROOM WRITING LETTER

Vincent is sitting at the small table in his Arleseinne Inn room writing the letter.

VINCENT (V.O.)

My dear Theo, Thank you a thousand times for your kind letter and the 300 francs it contained; after some worrying weeks I have just had one of the very best. And just as the worries do not come singly, neither do the joys.

-- PAINTING POSTMAN JOSEPH ROULIN

Roulin is sitting/posing in Vincent's Studio, while Vincent is painting in his typical manner.

VINCENT (V.O.)

For just because I am always bowed under this difficulty of paying my landlord, I made up my mind to take it gaily. I swore at the said landlord, who after all isn't a bad fellow, and told him that to revenge myself for paying him so much money for nothing, I would paint the whole

(MORE)

VINCENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 rotten joint so as to repay myself.
 Then to the great joy of the
 landlord, of the postman who I have
 already painted,

-- PAINTING NIGHT CAFE INTERIOR - NIGHT

Vincent is painting the interior scene of the Night Cafe as depicted in "Night Cafe" painting by Van Gogh.

VINCENT (V.O.)
 Of the visiting night prowlers and
 of myself, for three nights running
 I sat up to paint and went to bed
 during the day. I often think that
 the night is more alive and more
 richly colored than the day. Now as
 for getting back the money I have
 paid to the landlord by means of my
 painting, I do not dwell on that,
 for the picture

-- MOSTLY COMPLETED NIGHT CAFE PAINTING

Same Night Cafe Interior scene, Vincent is making the final touches on the canvas.

VINCENT (V.O.)
 (with passion)
 Is one of the ugliest I have done.
 It is equivalent, though different,
 of the "Potato Eaters". I tried to
 express the terrible passions of
 humanity by means of red and green.
 The room is blood red and dark
 yellow with a green billiard table
 in the middle; there are four
 citron-yellow lamps with a glow of
 orange and green.

-- VINCENT WRITING LETTER

Vincent is at the small table in his Arleseeinne Inn room, writing a letter. The completed Night Cafe painting is leaning against the wall near him.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Everywhere there is a clash and contrast of the most disparate reds and greens in the figures of the sleeping hooligans, in the empty, dreary room, in violet and blue. The blood red and the yellow-green of the billiard table, for instance, contrast with the soft tender Louis XV green of the counter, on which there is a pink nosegay. The white coat of the landlord, awake in a corner of that furnace turns citron-yellow, or pale luminous green.

MONTAGE ENDS - CUT TO:

EXT. YELLOW HOUSE - DAY

There is a wagon parked in front of the Yellow House with furniture on it including two beds. MOVERS are unloading the wagon and taking the furniture inside Vincent's apartment. Vincent is standing outside watching the men and trying to help them as they unload the wagon.

The Postman comes up to Vincent. Vincent stops helping the movers and approaches the postman.

POSTMAN ROULIN

Well, this is a big change for you.

VINCENT

Indeed it is. I can finally move out of the Inn.

POSTMAN ROULIN

I see two beds. How much did you end up paying for them?

VINCENT

A little less than 150 Francs each.

POSTMAN ROULIN

Good, I thought that 150 francs was a bit too substantial.

VINCENT

I still thank you for looking out for furniture for me. I did buy some chairs from your friend.

POSTMAN ROULIN

I am glad that everything worked out. I see that you are furnishing for two people, do you expect company soon?

VINCENT

Yes, my painter friend Paul Gauguin will be joining me soon. That is why Theo is helping us set up this studio.

POSTMAN ROULIN

Will you two be sending pictures to him in Paris.

VINCENT

Yes. He will sell the pictures and part of those sales will pay for all of this.

POSTMAN ROULIN

Does he sell a lot of your pictures?

VINCENT

No, but he does frequently sell Gauguin's canvases, and I will soon have enough pictures for an exhibition.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - ARLES - DAY

Vincent is with a small group of PEOPLE standing on the platform, waiting for a train.

The train appears from around a corner. The powerful steam locomotive chugs by, hissing steam and blowing its loud whistle.

The train comes to a stop. TRAVELERS begin to exit the cars as people watching from the platform AD-LIB reuniting with the travelers exiting the train.

Vincent spots Gauguin and walks toward him. Gauguin spots Vincent and the two meet and warmly shake hands. The two walk to the baggage car as ATTENDANT throws suitcases from the car to the platform, one at a time.

VINCENT

(very enthusiastic)

I am so glad you could make it.

GAUGUIN

(cool and level headed)

I only hope that this does not turn into a disaster.

VINCENT

(still excited)

Don't worry, I have the yellow house set up as a studio and you have your own room. Theo will be able to provide for us in exchange for pictures.

GAUGUIN

That's what I am afraid of.

VINCENT

What is that?

GAUGUIN

That we must make compromises become so dependent on Theo.

CUT TO:

INT. YELLOW HOUSE - DAY

The place is clean and is furnished in quite a minimalist manner. A staircase leading to an upper floor is near the front door. Downstairs has a large living room space that doubles as Vincent's studio and a single bedroom through a narrow door. This is Vincent's Bedroom. There is also a small room that serves as a kitchen.

Vincent's bedroom is furnished with a twin bed, small table, and two side chairs. There are paintings hanging on the walls. (This room is depicted in "Vincent's Room" painting by Van Gogh.)

The downstairs Living room is set up with an old couch, Upholstered Chair, and a couple of small end tables. A trunk with a cloth over it serves as a coffee table, there are several books on the coffee table. Half of this room is set up as a painting studio, complete with a table for still lives, an easel, painting supplies, and shelves with

still life items, such as old shoes, vases, and other small items.

-- DOWNSTAIRS LIVING ROOM

Vincent is sitting on the couch and Gauguin is sitting in the upholstered chair. Vincent strikes a match, then lights his pipe.

GAUGUIN

How did you go about furnishing this house?

VINCENT

Theo and I feel that it is advantageous to set up a studio here in the south of France. Your upstairs bedroom can be used by visiting artists after you decide to depart.

GAUGUIN

Are you striving to create a facsimile of Japan?

VINCENT

(taking a puff from his pipe)

It is hard to try to create a utopian environment that strives to lose the constraints that modernity places on painters. We are far enough from Paris and that establishment, yet close enough to not be left out entirely.

GAUGUIN

I do not think that we need to be concerned about such matters. Our minds can free us from those constraints. I do see that appeal of primitive societies for other reasons. Perhaps we have not gone far enough.

Vincent reaches over to the books on the coffee table and pulls out "The Marriage of Loti" and hands the book to Gauguin.

VINCENT

Here, read this book. The answer to our questions may lie here. This is about a sailor who visits Tahiti.

Gauguin takes the book.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLES - ALYSCAMPS - DAY

Vincent and Gauguin are together. Vincent has his easel set up and is working on a painting while Gauguin only has a sketch pad and pencil. Vincent is standing while Gauguin is seated at a park bench right beside Vincent, with the pad of paper on his lap. Gauguin works occasionally on a rough sketch while Vincent paints in his typical manner. Vincent continues to paint during their conversation.

GAUGUIN

I think that you really are too set in your plein-air style. You need to try to paint from memory.

VINCENT

I can only interpret the feeling that I see at this moment in time by quickly getting the paint onto the canvas. Please explain why I should paint from memory.

GAUGUIN

That way you let loose and use your own imagination to create rather than simply interpret the scene.

VINCENT

How did you come about this idea?

GAUGUIN

Both Bernard and I have been using this technique at Pont Aven prior to my coming here. We painted like children, by inventing and recreating things as we saw them from what we could remember.

VINCENT

This sounds more like an experiment to me. I would be glad to try it, but there are no guarantees that I will want to continue to do that technique.

GAUGUIN

Fair enough. I think that you will see your work evolve significantly when you can freely paint from memory.

VINCENT

There are many times where I may change something in the picture to give it more meaning.

GAUGUIN

That is precisely what I am talking about.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT CAFE - NIGHT

Vincent and Gauguin are sitting at a table near the billiards table. There is a large pitcher of water on the table and both Vincent and Gauguin have small glasses with a greenish liquid. Vincent also is smoking his pipe. The two take sips of their drink (or takes a puff from the pipe) occasionally during this scene.

VINCENT

(optimistically)

What do you think of Arles so far?

GAUGUIN

To be quite honest, I find this dirty place, a bit lacking.

VINCENT

(surprised)

Why is that?

GAUGUIN

Because in Brittany, everything is bigger, better, more beautiful, purer in tonality, and more solemn in character than Provence. I find this scorched region to have more trivial scenery than other places I have visited.

VINCENT

Are you referring to Martinique?

GAUGUIN

Yes. The tropics have so much going for painters that returning to Martinique is high on my agenda. I need to save up 2000 francs.

VINCENT

When do you plan on leaving Arles?

GAUGUIN

Maybe in a year or so. How ever long it takes me to save the money. The only reason why I am here is the arrangement with Theo allows me to save more money.

VINCENT

Maybe someday, we can establish a painting studio in the tropics. Tahiti may be a better place than Martinique.

GAUGUIN

I may tend to agree with you. The Marriage of Loti novel does seem to paint a special picture of the south pacific.

ROULIN the postman enters the Night Cafe and comes over to Vincent's table. Vincent immediately offers him a seat. He sits down with the pair.

POSTMAN ROULIN

(to Gauguin)

Well, what do you think of our small town here in Provence?

GAUGUIN

The women here are stunning. Your Arleseinne girls really do stand up to their reputation.

POSTMAN ROULIN

Yes, they most certainly do. How long are you going to stay for?

GAUGUIN

I will be here for awhile, and will move on when circumstances allow for my goal of traveling to the tropics.

A WAITRESS comes to the table.

WAITRESS

(to Postman Roulins)

Would you like something to drink?

POSTMAN ROULIN

Just a cup of coffee please.

WAITRESS

Yes, Monsieur

The waitress walks away from the table.

POSTMAN ROULIN

(to Vincent)

Vincent, what will you do when Gauguin departs?

VINCENT

The studio has room for two painters to work. I hope that other painters will be drawn to this region and maybe someday we can form an artist's colony here.

GAUGUIN

I would rather see that done outside of France.

VINCENT

I do not think that it needs to be only one option. Why not have more than one artist's colony?

The waitress brings the cup of coffee to the table and serves it to Postman Roulin. She leaves the table. Postman Roulin takes a sip from the cup.

GAUGUIN

Perhaps there can be more than one artist's colony, but the tropics is marvelous to me and this is where the next great renaissance in painting will take place.

POSTMAN ROULIN

You both seem to share the same dreams. Could an artist's colony really form in a place like this?

VINCENT

It did happen in Barbizon many years ago. It can also happen here.

CUT TO:

INT. YELLOW HOUSE - DAY

Both Vincent and Gauguin are set up with easels painting. Vincent is painting a still life: "French Novels" and Gauguin is painting his "Night Cafe" from memory. Both painters continue to work on their canvases during the dialogue. Vincent's "Night Cafe" painting is hanging on the wall.

GAUGUIN

When we were at the Night Cafe last night, I was taking mental notes and now I am working on that picture.

VINCENT

Is that how you approach working from memory, by carefully looking at a scene, then trying to faithfully depict it later?

GAUGUIN

Yes, but you do not really need to be completely faithful. You can let your imagination enter a bit into the scene too.

VINCENT

(pessimistically)

I think that I will try to do that today. I will go down to the promenade try to keep the mental image.

GAUGUIN

(optimistically)

You should give yourself the benefit of the doubt. You may be pleasantly surprised with the result.

Gauguin takes the final few small brushstrokes on his painting, then takes the painting off of the easel and holds the completed picture up next to Vincent's Night Cafe painting.

CUT TO:

INT. MAISON DE TOLERANCE - NIGHT

Maison de Tolerance is a brothel that looks more like a restaurant, having many tables and chairs. This scene is depicted in "The Brothel" painting by Van Gogh.

Vincent is set up with his easel painting "The Brothel", he is more than half way done, painting in his usual frantic quick-style. There are several CUSTOMERS at the tables talking with the WHORES.

Rachel sees Vincent and comes over to talk with him. Vincent continues to paint during their dialogue.

RACHEL

Are you enjoying yourself?

VINCENT

Yes, I find this setting to have a lot of energy and mood.

RACHEL

You know, Christmas is coming. Are you going to bring me a present?

VINCENT

What do you want?

RACHEL

I don't know. Something small,
surprise me.

VINCENT

We'll see.

The PIMP brings an OVERWEIGHT CUSTOMER to Rachel. Rachel and the overweight customer leave the room.

CUT TO:

INT. YELLOW HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY

A rainy day. Vincent is setup at his easel, painting "Memory of the Garden at Etten". The canvas is mostly complete, but without all of the bright paint dabs. Instead of his typical frantic method, he works in a slow and methodical manner.

Gauguin is also at his easel painting "Women from Arles in the Public Garden, the Mistral". The two easels are set-up close together, so that each artist can see the other's canvas. Gauguin paints in more of a normal manner.

VINCENT

The best part about painting from memory is that I am not forced into having to do only still lifes on rainy days.

GAUGUIN

How do you feel about your picture?

VINCENT

I am depicting what I remember, but I do not feel any passion and am very detached from the subjects.

GAUGUIN

It does seem to have a more pure or primitive manner, does it not?

VINCENT

No, it does not. It is merely fleeting thoughts.

GAUGUIN

Vincent, you are just too closed minded.

VINCENT

(getting a bit agitated)

I beg to differ. You are the one who is closed minded by insisting that your way is the only way. There may be some merit to painting from memory, but give me time to integrate that merit into my painting style.

GAUGUIN

(egging)

Impressionism has run its course. At first, impressionism was radical and cutting edge, but these days, it has become too entrenched with standards such as quickly trying to get the initial impression down on canvas.

Vincent returns to his typical frantic painting style and starts to quickly insert the bright paint dabs onto the canvas.

VINCENT

(defensive)

You should not condemn a person's method just because you don't use it.

GAUGUIN

I'm just trying to get you to try different painting methods.

VINCENT

Why? If I see a picture that has some redeeming value, I will investigate. Take for example Seurat's work. I love the luminosity he achieves, but I really think that his pictures are a bit too stark. I tried his retinal mixing for a while, but just a short while.

GAUGUIN

Why are you telling this story to me?

VINCENT

To make the point that I am always seeking different possibilities to improve my pictures.

GAUGUIN

Just remember this, paintings from memory are more artistic and less awkward than studies from nature.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE. VINCENT PAINTING/WRITING LETTER

Vincent's voice over is read in a continuous manner over each corresponding shot.

INT. VINCENT WRITING LETTER - DAY

Vincent is sitting at the small table in his bedroom, sitting in the "Vincent's Chair" chair. He is smoking his pipe, taking an occasional puff from his pipe while writing the letter. Vincent's "The Red Vineyard" is leaning against the wall.

VINCENT (V.O.)

My dear Theo, I have received a letter from M. C. Dujardin on the subject of the exhibition of my pictures in his black hole. I am so disgusted at the idea of handing a canvas over in payment for the proposed exhibition that there is only one possible answer to the gentleman's letter.

EXT. VINEYARD - DAY

Vincent has his easel set up and is painting "The Red Vineyard" in his typical frantic style.

VINCENT (V.O.)

The one you will find enclosed. So no exhibition at the Revue Independante; I boldly venture to think that Gauguin is also of this opinion. What will please you is that Gauguin has finished his canvas
(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

of the "Women Grape Gatherers". It is as beautiful as the Negresses, and if you pay the same price as for the Negresses it will be well worth it.

Vincent is putting the final touches on the Vineyard painting.

VINCENT (V.O.)

I too have finished a canvas of a vineyard all purple and yellow, with small blue and violet figures and the yellow sunlight.

INT. VINCENT WRITING LETTER - DAY

VINCENT (V.O.)

I think that you will be able to put this canvas beside some of Monticelli's landscapes.

VINCENT POV - "The Red Vineyard"

VINCENT (V.O.)

I am going to set myself to work from memory often, and the canvases from memory are always less awkward, and have a more artistic look than studies from nature, especially when one works in mistral weather.

INT. MONTPELLIER GALLERY - DAY

Vincent and Gauguin are looking at art inside a gallery. The art on the walls shall correspond with pictures described in the following dialogue.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Yesterday, Gauguin and I went to Montpellier to see the gallery there and especially the Brias room. There are a lot of portraits, by Delacroix, Ricard, Courbet, Cabanel, Couture, Verdier, Tassaert, and others. Then there are pictures by Delacroix, Courbet, Giotto, Paul

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Potter, Botticelli, Th. Rousseau,
very fine.

Vincent and Gauguin get to the portrait of Brias by Delacroix and they stop to gaze at that picture.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Brias was a benefactor of artists, I need say no more to you than that. In the portrait by Delacroix he is a gentleman with red beard and hair, uncommonly like you or me, and made me think of a poem by Musset-
"Whenever I touched the earth - a miserable fellow in black sat down close to us, and looked at us like a brother."

Gauguin and Vincent begin to walk down the gallery, looking at paintings. When they get to a painting by Rembrandt, they stop to gaze at the picture. Vincent and Gauguin ad-lib having an argumentative exchange during corresponding dialogue.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Gauguin and I talked a lot about Delacroix, Rembrandt, etc. Our arguments are terribly electric, sometimes we come out of them with our heads so exhausted as a used electric battery. We were in the midst of magic, for as Fromentin says so well: Rembrandt is above all a magician.

INT. VINCENT WRITING LETTER - DAY

Vincent is sitting at the table in his bedroom, writing a letter.

VINCENT (V.O.)

As for founding a companionship for our painter comrades, you see such queer things, and I will wind up with what you are always saying - time will tell. You can say that to our friends and even boldly read this letter to them. I'd have

(MORE)

VINCENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
written them already if I had felt
the necessary electric force. A
good hearty handshake all round from
Gauguin as well as from me. Ever
Yours, Vincent.

MONTAGE ENDS - CUT TO:

INT. YELLOW HOUSE - STUDIO - DAY

The table that Vincent uses for Still Lives has some items on it, including books and other ordinary objects from around the house, including a closed razor. Vincent's easel has a completely blank canvas on it.

Vincent is cleaning up the studio and organizing pictures. He is smoking his pipe. He leans "Gauguin's Chair" painting against the wall. Vincent takes brushes out of a glass filled with turpentine and uses a rag to dry the brushes.

One corner of the studio has a chair with a baby's cradle beside it. The cradle has a long string attached to it, so that if someone were sitting in the chair, that they could rock the cradle with the string. There is a half completed painting on an easel "Madame Roulin".

Gauguin enters the room through the front door. He has some groceries as well as an open bottle of beer that he is drinking from. Gauguin is slightly intoxicated.

Gauguin sets the bag of groceries down and comes over to Vincent. Gauguin is still holding the mostly full beer bottle in his hand.

GAUGUIN

I see you finally decided to tidy up
the place a bit.

VINCENT

(looking at the half
completed canvas)
Yes, Madame Roulin had to go home
for the day, so I am going to paint
another picture.

GAUGUIN

Are you going to try to paint
another picture from memory?

VINCENT

No, not today. I am going to paint a still life of items from around the house.

GAUGUIN

Why don't you try painting a still life from memory?

VINCENT

Maybe some other day, but today, I really feel the need to paint exactly what I see.

Gauguin guzzles the remaining beer in the bottle, then he goes over to the still life table and removes all of the objects that Vincent had placed there and places his now empty beer bottle in the center of the table. Vincent just watches.

GAUGUIN

Here, Paint this.

VINCENT

What significance does that bottle have?

GAUGUIN

About the same as any painting that you have done in this despicable yellow house.

VINCENT

I think that you have had a bit too much to drink.

GAUGUIN

(sarcastically)

A bit too much?

Gauguin goes over to the still life set and begins to take the objects and place them back onto the table, but upside-down.

GAUGUIN

This is what I think about this yellow house,

Each time Gauguin makes a point, he places another object back onto the table inverted.

GAUGUIN

This is what I think about
Impressionism. This is what I think
about Delacroix. This is what I
think about establishing an artist's
colony in Arles.

Gauguin then takes a step away from the table. Vincent takes the razor from the set and opens it in a non-threatening manner. Gauguin quickly heads for the front door and exits.

CUT TO:

INT. MAISON DE TOLERANCE - NIGHT

Vincent has an improvised cloth bandage wrapped around his head. He has perspiration on his face. He looks terrible. There are some blood stains on the cloth bandage. He has a small box in his hand, it is a matchbox.

There are several PEOPLE sitting at the tables, a mix of girls and customers, including Rachel. They are ad-libbing chatting among themselves.

Vincent enters the brothel and sees Rachel and approaches her. She stands to greet him. She is shocked at Vincent's appearance.

RACHEL

Vincent, What happened to you?

VINCENT

I have brought you a gift.

The room has become quiet and everybody is watching Vincent and Rachel.

Vincent's hand is trembling as he slowly hands the matchbox to Rachel.

VINCENT

Guard this object carefully.

The contents of the matchbox are never revealed. Rachel slowly opens the box. She looks at the contents with puzzlement, then she closes the matchbox, looks at Vincent's cloth bandage, then sets the matchbox down and

clinches her hands to her face and faints. Vincent grabs her as she falls and lowers her limp body to the floor.

Vincent quickly leaves the brothel through the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLES STREET - NIGHT

Vincent walks a short distance from the Maison de Tolerance and sits down at a curb. Several people exit the brothel and see Vincent. They begin to walk over toward him. Vincent struggles to get up and walks away from the people. The people do not follow.

Vincent sees Postman Roulin, dressed in street clothes coming from the opposite direction. Postman Roulin sees Vincent and is shocked with Vincent's appearance.

POSTMAN ROULIN

Monsieur Vincent, what has happened to you?

VINCENT

I felt very sad.

POSTMAN ROULIN

What happened to your head?

VINCENT

I felt sad and cut off my ear.

POSTMAN ROULIN

Can I help you in any way?

VINCENT

Can you walk with me until I get home?

POSTMAN ROULIN

Most certainly, but you really need to get immediate medical attention.

VINCENT

I just need to get home.

The two walk a block or two to the Yellow House, then Vincent enters and closes the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. YELLOW HOUSE - DAY

Postman Roulin dressed in his postal uniform knocks at the front door of the yellow house.

He waits for an answer, then knocks again.

After waiting again, he suddenly rushes off.

LATER:

Postman Roulin and a POLICE OFFICER return. The officer uses his baton to loudly knock. There is no answer.

The police officer kicks in the front door and the two enter the yellow house.

CUT TO:

INT. YELLOW HOUSE - DAY

The police officer and postman Roulin go from the studio/front room into Vincent's bedroom.

Vincent is laying asleep on the bed.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

The hospital ward has beds that are separated by drapes. There is a wood burning stove with chairs around it. This room is depicted in "Ward in Hospital in Arles" painting by Van Gogh.

Vincent's improvised cloth bandage over his left ear has been replaced by a proper white gauze dressing. He is wearing a fur cap and a jacket, as depicted in "Self Portrait with Bandaged Ear and Pipe" by Van Gogh.

DR. REY is in his 30s with dark brown to black hair with goatee and mustache, similar in appearance as depicted in "Portrait of Dr. Rey" by Van Gogh.

SUPER IN/OUT: "CHRISTMAS 1888"

Theo and Dr. Rey are sitting in chairs near the stove.

DR REY

Vincent seems to have stabilized since he was admitted. It was touch and go with high fever, but his temperature has returned to normal.

THEO

Do you think that he did this to himself?

DR. REY

He was in a great state of confusion during the attack. Yes, I do believe that he brought this upon himself.

THEO

What sort of attack?

DR. REY

Perhaps Epilepsy or perhaps poisoning of some sort. I really do not know for certain.

THEO

How long do you think he will need to remain here?

DR. REY

I think that he can go home in a week or two.

THEO

(emotionally)

Poor fighter, poor poor sufferer. Can I see him?

DR. REY

Yes, but please be brief.

Dr. Rey leads Theo down the ward to a bed and opens the drape. Vincent is reading and smoking his pipe. Theo enters the bed cubicle and the doctor leaves.

VINCENT

You did not need to come. It is Christmas. You shouldn't have come all of the way to Arles.

THEO

Vincent, What have you done?
Gauguin wired me telling me about
what happened.

VINCENT

I am sorry that you had to become
involved. All that I remember is
feeling sad because everything that
I ever do ends up in failure and
that people in general can only
tolerate me. After that, I can only
remember small parts of the episode,
kind of like trying to remember a
bad dream. When I woke up, I was
here in the hospital.

THEO

I must leave. I am proposing
marriage to Joanna Bonger when I get
back. God Bless You Vincent.

Theo reaches over to Vincent with his extended hand and
shakes hands.

LATER:

SUPER IN/OUT: "MARCH 1889"

Dr. Rey and Paul Signac are walking down the ward toward
Vincent's bed. The doctor opens the drape that surrounds
Vincent's bed. Vincent still has the bandage wrapping
around his head. He is reading a book and smoking his
pipe.

VINCENT

Paul, it is great to see you. Theo
said that you may be visiting. What
brings you to Arles?

SIGNAC

I am traveling to Cassis and your
brother asked me to stop by and say
hello.

VINCENT

I am so glad that you stopped by. I
would love to show you my pictures.

VINCENT

(to Dr. Rey)

Can I leave the hospital to show Paul my pictures?

DR REY

Yes, but please be back by supper.

VINCENT

Thank You. We should not be gone for very long.

CUT TO:

EXT. YELLOW HOUSE - DAY

The Yellow house is boarded up. There are boards across the windows and front door.

Vincent and Signac pause to look at the boarded up front door. Vincent pulls one board back just far enough to squeeze through the opening and opens the door. Signac squeezes through the opening and the two enter the Yellow House.

CUT TO:

INT. YELLOW HOUSE - DAY

The place is much different than it was on the day of the breakdown. The half completed "Madame Roulin" is now completed, hanging on the wall with Sunflower paintings hanging on both sides of this picture; a triptych.

"Gauguin's Chair" painting is hanging on another wall with "Vincent's Chair" hanging beside. The following paintings are also visible, either hanging or leaning against the wall: "La Berceuse", "Les Alyscamps", "The Night Cafe", "The Drawbridge", "Saintes-Maries", and "Starry Night over the Rhone".

Vincent takes Signac to a portrait of postman Roulin.

VINCENT

This is Postman Roulin. The government just relocated him to Marsailles and only pay him 135 francs per month. He will have a difficult time making ends meet

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

because he has to provide for his family.

SIGNAC

Is he the one who helped you during the crisis?

VINCENT

Yes. I have been in and out of the hospital a couple of times over the winter and helped me a great deal during these times. He also sat for several pictures.

Vincent takes Signac into the bedroom. "Vincent's Bedroom" painting is hanging on the whitewashed wall. Also visible hanging on the wall are: "Sower with Setting Sun" and "Cafe Terrace at Night".

SIGNAC

Why is the house boarded up?

VINCENT

Because the people in this neighborhood signed a petition to have me removed. The police ordered me back into the hospital and boarded up the house.

SIGNAC

What are you going to do now?

VINCENT

I can not move back here. It will also be difficult to find any other place here in Arles. I will either move to Aix or enter the Saint Paul Hospital at Saint Remy.

Vincent leads Signac back into the Front Room/Studio.

Vincent walks over to a work table and picks up a bottle of TURPENTINE.

Vincent takes a swig from the bottle and Signac takes the bottle away from Vincent.

SIGNAC

I think that we should return to the hospital.

CUT TO:

EXT. ASYLUM IN SAINT RENY - DAY

The asylum in Saint Reny looks like a Monestary. It has heavy walls as depicted in "Trees in the Garden of Saint-Paul Hospital" painting by Van Gogh (in the Hammer Museum).

Vincent is in an open air horse-drawn carriage with a MINISTER. The carriage stops at the front entrance of St. Reny. Vincent shakes hands with the minister and exits the carriage, carrying a small suitcase. The carriage pulls away and Vincent approaches the front door.

Vincent uses a heavy door mounted knocker to knock.

An ATTENDANT answers the door and invites Vincent in.

The attendant is in his 50s and balding. He has a mustache, as depicted in "Portrait of Trabuc" painting by Van Gogh.

CUT TO:

INT. ASYLUM - DAY

ENTRY FOYER-

The interior looks like a medieval castle. There are a couple of chairs against the wall.

ATTENDANT

You must be Vincent.

VINCENT

Yes.

ATTENDANT

We have been expecting you. Please follow me to your room.

The attendant leads Vincent through a heavy wooden door, into a long corridor.

LONG CORRIDOR and hall-

The long corridor has many passages that lead off in different directions, like a labyrinth. This corridor is depicted in "Corridor at St. Reny" painting by Van Gogh.

They take a turn down the corridor into a smaller hall that has doors. Each door has a small window of jail bars and large hooks where a board can be used to lock the door from the outside. The place is cold, dark, and damp.

They get to Vincent's room and enter the room.

VINCENT'S ROOM-

Many of Vincent's non furniture items from the yellow house are there, including his trunk, books, vases, easel, painting supplies, etc. None of the furniture from the yellow house is present. There is a simple metal frame bed and a small wooden table with chair. This room looks more like a jail cell than hospital room.

ATTENDANT

There is a stove in the dining room, at the end of this hall. The toilet is next to the dining room. Dinner will be served at 6PM. Then you can meet the other patients.

The attendant leaves and Vincent takes his pipe from his pocket. He walks over to the window and looks out of it.

There is a field outside his window that has a short rock wall as depicted in "Field of Spring Wheat at Sunrise" painting by Van Gogh. There are a patch of Cypress trees close by as depicted in "Cypresses" painting by Van Gogh.

Vincent lights his pipe while continuing to look out the window.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - ASYLUM - DAY

The dining room looks like a prison dining room, with long tables and benches. There are 30 or 40 male and female INMATES standing in separate queue lines holding trays and water cups.

Vincent enters the dining room, picks up a tray and water cup, then joins the queue line with the men.

There are several Nuns working: filling trays, filling water cups, and directing the inmates on where to sit. The

lines move in an orderly procession as the inmates are seated and begin to eat.

Vincent gets to the Nun who places a plate of food on the tray. The plate of food includes a bowl of soup, one bread roll, and small piece of pie. The next Nun fills his water cup from a pitcher.

Vincent is seated by a Nun, beside an older gentleman named DAVID. The two continue to eat during their dialogue.

VINCENT

(Looking at David)

I am Vincent

DAVID

My name is David. What brings you to this godforsaken place?

VINCENT

The good citizens of Arles asked that I be removed from their community. My doctor said that I needed a place of tranquility to recover, so I decided to come here.

DAVID

This place is quiet and peaceful. It is also a prison. Like yourself, most people here are victims of circumstance.

VINCENT

Are there a lot of truly insane people here?

DAVID

There are a few, but they are kept locked away from the rest of us. Some are even kept in restraints.

VINCENT

What brought you to this place?

DAVID

I am here to keep from drinking. My doctor said that if I did not stop drinking that I would die. After being here for 3 months, I would be better off dead.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE. VINCENT PAINTING/WRITING LETTER

Vincent's Voice Over dialogue begins and continues over the following shots.

-- VINCENT WRITING LETTER - DAY

Vincent sitting at the small table in his room, writing a letter.

VINCENT (V.O.)

My dear Theo, Many thanks for the package of brushes, tobacco and chocolate which reached me in good condition. What news can I tell you? Not much.

-- VINCENT PAINTING LANDSCAPE

Vincent is outdoors, painting "Field of Spring Wheat at Sunrise".

VINCENT (V.O.)

I am working on two landscapes, views taken in the hills, one is the country that I see from the window of my bedroom. In the foreground, a field of wheat ruined and hurled to the ground by a storm. A boundary wall and beyond the gray foliage of a few olive trees, some huts and the hills. Then at the top of the canvas a great white and gray cloud floating in the azure.

-- VINCENT PAINTING LANDSCAPE

Vincent is looking out the window of his room, painting "Starry Nights" during the day.

VINCENT (V.O.)

My health is all right, considering; I feel happier here with my work than I could outside. By staying here a good long time, I shall have learned regular habits and in the

(MORE)

VINCENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

long run the result will be more order in my life and less susceptibility. That will be so much to the good.

--- VINCENT EATING IN DINING ROOM

Vincent is sitting with other inmates in the dining room, eating a breakfast meal.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Besides, I should not have the courage to begin again outside. I went once, still accompanied, to the village; the mere thought of people and things had such an effect on me that I thought I was going to faint and I felt very ill.

--- VINCENT PAINTING LANDSCAPE

Vincent is outdoors, painting "Cypresses".

VINCENT (V.O.)

Face to face with nature it is the feeling for the work that supports me. But anyway, this is to show you that there must have been within me some too powerful emotion to upset me like that, and I have no idea what can have caused it.

--- VINCENT WRITING LETTER

Vincent is sitting at the table in his room, writing a letter.

VINCENT (V.O.)

During this month, I shall really again be in need of 8 tubes flake white, 6 tubes malachite green, 2 tubes yellow ocher, 1 tube red ocher, 2 tubes ultramarine, 2 tubes cobalt, 1 tube raw sienna and 1 tube ivory black. With a great handshake for you and your wife. Ever yours, Vincent.

MONTAGE ENDS - CUT TO:

INT./EXT. VINCENT PAINTING - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS -

- A. Vincent painting interior portrait "Portrait of Trabuc", SUPER IN/OUT "Summer 1889"
- B. Vincent painting exterior landscape "Les Peiroulets Ravine", SUPER IN/OUT "Fall 1889"
- C. Vincent painting exterior landscape "Enclosed Field with Rising Sun", SUPER IN/OUT "Winter 1889"
- D. Vincent painting interior still life "Landscape with Couple Walking and Crescent Moon", SUPER IN/OUT "Spring 1890"

CUT TO:

EXT. ASYLUM COURTYARD - DAY

Vincent is at his easel, painting "Landscape with Couple Walking and Crescent Moon". (The same painting as the last in the series of shots above) DR. PEYRON approaches Vincent. Vincent sets his palette down and stops painting and turns toward the doctor.

DR. PEYRON

Good morning Vincent, I hear that you have asked to be released. I do think that we can safely discharge you.

VINCENT

So you do think that I am really ready to go.

DR. PEYRON

Yes, but I would suggest that you go to Paris to be near your Brother. I think that being near family is important for your health and recovery.

VINCENT

How soon can this happen?

DR. PEYRON

We can easily discharge you fairly soon.

VINCENT

May fifteenth?

DR. PEYRON

Yes, that will give everybody time to make the preparations. I can write your brother if you wish.

VINCENT

Please do. I will be most grateful.

Dr. Gatlin and Vincent shake hands, then the doctor walks away as Vincent returns his attention to the painting.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. PARIS TRAIN STATION - DAY

SUPER IN/OUT: "PARIS, MAY 1890"

The train is going very slow, then stops at the platform. Theo and JO (Joanna), who is holding a NEWBORN baby are waiting at the platform.

Jo is an attractive young lady, in her early 30s. She is dressed like a typical Parisian woman.

People begin to detrain and Vincent emerges from the train car, carrying a small suitcase. Theo gets Vincent's attention and the two meet, shakes hands, then a quick embrace.

THEO

Vincent, you are looking great.

VINCENT

I am glad just to be able to make it here.

THEO

Come and meet Jo and Vincent.

Theo leads Vincent over to the Jo & Newborn.

VINCENT

It is really great to see you.

JO

I am glad that you finally have the chance to see your new nephew, Vincent.

Vincent looks at the newborn, who is a very happy baby.

The four begin to leave the train platform.

THEO

(to Vincent)

We have a place for you to live, here in the country. A nice peaceful village.

VINCENT

Where is that?

THEO

The village is Auvers sur Oise, just north of Paris.

VINCENT

That is near where Pissarro lives.

THEO

Yes. I have arranged you to meet Dr. Gachet who is Pissarro's doctor.

VINCENT

Does Dr. Gachet know of my needs?

THEO

I have discussed your need for peace & quiet with him. He suggested that you stay in Auvers.

CUT TO:

EXT. DR GACHETS HOUSE - DAY

This is a large house several shade trees. There is a front gate that forces visitors coming to the house to pass through the large front garden that contains many flowers.

There is a sign at the front gate: "Dr. Gachet". The front gate is open.

Vincent arrives in a cab (carriage). The CABBIE is a crusty old man. The cab stops in front of Dr. Gachet's house and Vincent exits carrying a small suitcase.

CABBIE

That will be two francs.

Vincent hands the man several coins.

CABBIE

Thank You Monsieur.

The cabbie pulls away and Vincent enters through the open gate. Vincent gets to the front door and knocks.

DR GACHET answers the door. Dr. Gachet is a thin man in his 40s. He is depicted in "Portrait of Dr. Gachet" painting by Van Gogh. Dr. Gachet is the nervous type who always seems to have a lot of energy.

DR GACHET

(excited)

You must be Vincent. Come on in.

Vincent enters the house.

CUT TO:

INT. DR GACHETS HOUSE - DAY

The front door foyer leads into a large black room that is decorated with Impressionist paintings. Many large works by Cezanne and other well known early impressionists, including "Red house in Snow" by Pissarro.

There is a PIANO and other eccentric items and furnishings. Most of the furnishings are painted black. The entire room is mostly full of black items except for the impressionist paintings.

DR. GACHET

I have arranged a room at the local boarding house and I have already gathered painting supplies for you. I hope that the blank canvases are large enough for you.

VINCENT

That is most kind of you.

Vincent walks over to a Cezanne painting hanging on the wall.

VINCENT

You have a most impressive collection of impressionist paintings.

DR GACHET

Thank You. Come and let me show you the painting supplies.

Dr. Gachet leads Vincent out of this room into a work room adjacent to the Black room. There are several huge blank canvases about 40" x 20" in size.

VINCENT

(excited)

These are huge.

DR. GACHET

I also have some tubes of paint that I got from Tasset.

Dr. Gachet opens a box sitting on a table to reveal many large tubes of paint and dozens of paintbrushes and several palette knives.

DR. GACHET

Maybe you can paint my portrait if you get a chance.

Vincent smiles as he picks up one of the large blank canvases.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ST-AUBIN - DAY

Dr. Gachet and Vincent enter through the front door. Vincent is carrying his small suitcase. The two shake hands and Dr. Gachet exits while Vincent approaches the front counter. There is a CLERK working behind the counter.

This is a snobby looking place where wealthy travelers would stay.

CLERK

May I help you monsieur?

VINCENT

I would like a room please.

The clerk reaches to a pegboard and gets a key.

CLERK

That will be 6 francs please.

VINCENT

That seems to be a bit expensive.

CLERK

There is a boarding house down the street but it is small and dingy.

VINCENT

What is the name of it?

CLERK

"Ravoux's Inn", but after you see it, you will come running back here.

VINCENT

Thank You. I would like to take a look at Ravoux's inn first.

The clerk reaches to the pegboard and hangs the key back up as Vincent exits with his suitcase.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVOUX INN - DAY

LOBBY-

The place is old and deteriorated like a skid row rooming house. The lobby is small with a dining room area that has a large table with chairs adjacent, through a portal to the lobby.

There is a WOMAN in her 40s working behind the counter. Vincent comes up to the counter, carrying his small suitcase. He sets the suitcase down.

VINCENT

How much are your rooms?

WOMAN

Room and Board is 3 francs and 50.
That includes dinner each night.

VINCENT

I would like a room please.

The woman opens a drawer and takes a key out. She holds the key for Vincent.

WOMAN

Room 201. Go up the stairs into the attic, it is the first room on the left. Dinner is at 6PM.

VINCENT

(takes the key)

Thank you.

Vincent picks up his suitcase and goes to the stairs.

VINCENT'S ROOM-

Vincent unlocks the door and enters the room.

The room is small with old worn furniture.

Vincent puts the suitcase on the bed and opens it to reveal its contents, including his pipe and tobacco. He takes the pipe out, fills it with tobacco and lights it.

CUT TO:

INT. DR GACHETS HOUSE - WORKROOM - DAY

Dr. Gachet is posing for his portrait. He is wearing a blue jacket and a white cap.. As depicted in "Portrait of Doctor Gachet" painting by Van Gogh.

Vincent is painting in his typical frantic style. Dr. Gachet fidgets and moves a lot.

VINCENT

(stops painting)

Could you please return your hand to your head.

The doctor moves his hand as instructed. Vincent resumes painting.

DR. GACHET

You know Vincent, I would really appreciate it if you could paint "Pieta" for me.

VINCENT

You mean after Delacroix?

DR GACHET

Yes. I love that picture.

VINCENT

Delacroix is a true master of color.

Vincent stops his painting and fumbles around his painting supplies, looking for something.

DR GACHET

What are you looking for?

VINCENT

I need a very small brush and I must have left it in my room.

DR GACHET

Look in the bottom drawer of the black dresser around the corner.

This dresser is positioned inside the room next door (In the Black Room) so that Dr. Gachet can't see Vincent opening the drawers.

Vincent walks over to the dresser and opens the TOP drawer, revealing a REVOLVER. Vincent quickly closes that drawer and opens the bottom drawer and takes out a small paint brush, then he returns to working on the portrait.

DR GACHET

Have you had a chance to see your brother recently?

VINCENT

I plan on going into Paris soon, so I can visit with him, Jo and the baby.

CUT TO:

INT. TANGUY'S - DAY

Vincent is talking with Pere.

PERE

So, how is your brother and his new child?

VINCENT

The child is sick. Theo and Jo could not even see me today because Theo has trouble at work and Jo is busy with the baby.

PERE

I hope it is not serious.

VINCENT

I need to convince Theo and Jo to come out to Auvers so that the child can breathe fresh air and drink goats milk instead of the poison they call milk.

PERE

How are you feeling these days? Is Doctor Gachet helping you?

VINCENT

Dr. Gachet is sicker than I am, I think, or shall we say just as much, so that's that. Now when one blind man leads another blind man, don't they both fall into the ditch?

PERE

Don't you worry Vincent, everything always seems to work out in the end.

VINCENT

Pere, you are the eternal optimist, being a soldier of the commune. In the end, the people who end up prevailing are those who exploit other people or those who take advantage of other people to increase their wealth.

CUT TO:

INT. DR GACHETS HOUSE - DAY

Vincent is painting Dr. Gachets DAUGHTER, sitting at the piano in the black room. She is in her late teens and is dressed in a long skirt, as depicted in "Marguerite Gachet at the Piano" painting by Van Gogh.

Vincent has his easel set up next to the black dresser.

Vincent is painting in his typical style. He is putting the final touches on the painting.

VINCENT

(to daughter)

Thank You, I am finished.

DAUGHTER

That was fast.

VINCENT

I try to capture the moment by completing the canvas as quickly as possible.

DAUGHTER

Why do you need to capture the moment?

VINCENT

(after a short pause)

Because it brings me closer to god.

The daughter comes around the canvas to take a peek at the picture. She gasps and does not say a word then exits the room into another part of the house.

Vincent waits until she is out of view and opens the top drawer to the dresser. He removes something that we can not see and places it into his painting kit.

CUT TO:

EXT. WHEAT FIELD - DAY

Vincent has a very large canvas set up on his normal sized easel. It is a bright sunny day. He is painting "Wheatfields with Crows" in a much slower manner than usual.

We slowly get further away from Vincent.

SUPER: The End

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END