

Van Gogh: Before the Legacy
A play in one act
Written by
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Characters:

Van Gogh Stage Left- lucid, the one who has conversations with Theo, Dr. Gachet

Van Gogh Stage Right- haunted by demons

Theo

Doctor Gachet

Rachel

Demons:

- 1- Voice of rejection/condemnation to Vincent
- 2- Voice of the alcoholic/despondency/guilt
- 3- Voice of the artistic genius.

Notes:

1) Demons (characters that haunt Van Gogh's dark side) may have freedom with their text. Speech can repeat freely, and fade in and out according to what is most effective.

2) Although this play was built on facts from Van Gogh's life, the incidents depicted here are embellishments of the research. For example, Van Gogh was actually in two different asylums--one in Arles, which was more of a hospital and this play takes place in the asylum where he was admitted after he cut off his ear. Then as his health/behavior deteriorated, he voluntarily admitted himself to the Saint-Paul-de-Mausole asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence where he painted his famous "Starry Night". It is also during this period, not earlier, that Theo married and set up his home. Then, as Van Gogh approached the last weeks of his life (mid May, 1890), he moved to Auvers-sur-Oise, not far from Theo's Paris home and set himself up in a small inn and began treatment with Dr. Gachet. Van Gogh, from a gunshot wound on July 27, died July 29, 1890 in Auvers.

Stage Setup: Asylum

- Stage is divided in two identical sides both representing his room at the asylum.
- Lighting could be used to highlight dark side/light side
- Yellows and violets can be emphasized on dark side
- Enough room down center for the Van Goghs to pace
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- Theo, Gachet, and lucid Van Gogh stage left
- Three demons and insane Van Gogh stage right

Props List: One per each side. The director may choose to portray one side more colourful than the other, particularly with Violets and Yellows as they were Van Gogh's favourite colours due to his absinthe drinking.

Matched Pairs Of:

Bed and bedding

Side table (*see Van Gogh painting entitled "La chambre de Van Gogh à Arles"*)

Chairs (*see Van Gogh painting entitled "Chair"*)

Bottles:

Dark Wine Bottles

Absinthe bottle (*see Van Gogh painting entitled "Still Life With Absinthe"*)

Old-fashioned medicine bottle

Easel

Paint tubes

Paintings:

Reproduction of Dr. Gachet painting

Reproduction of Starry Night

Reproduction of other Van Gogh paintings

Side table

Fountain Pen (Placed on side table)

Paper (a few sheets. Placed on side table)

Palette (placed on the side table underneath the paper and pen)

One only of:

Reproduction of the Meadow

Curtains closed

NARRATOR/INTRODUCTION

Vincent Van Gogh produced over 2180 works, and many of his paintings are in the most prestigious art galleries in the world. A total value of his works has never been determined, however his four most valued paintings today are worth over a total of 250 million dollars. In his lifetime, he sold only one work and his paintings mostly sat in his brother's warehouse, forgotten.

(exit)

Unit I: Ear

(on apron, curtain closed)

RACHEL

(enters, holding something wrapped up in a handkerchief)

A gift, nobody ever gives me a gift.

(opens package and screams)

(throws what it holds in shock and disbelief) That Monster!

I've had enough!

A gift- a gift he calls it! Guard this object carefully he says! I thought it was the money he owed me.

No wonder they want him out of town, he's mad, completely mad!

This is the last straw.

Picks up bloody ear with handkerchief in disgust

exits .

curtain opens

Unit II: Asylum

In the asylum, reveal one side is darker, heavier on blues, one side is light.

VAN GOGH	
<p><i>Pacing, sits on the floor, then lies down on floor fetal position Stares at the audience for ...</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>-Eyes start to wander around the whole room -Starts to feel his face, gets closer to right ear, and touches left side, but instantly withdraws by twitching.</i></p>	
<p>This is stage right Van Gogh</p>	<p>This is stage left Van Gogh</p> <p><i>(Demons 1,2,3, enter; all moving around Van Gogh- repeating and whispering, over top of each other, confusing)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON1</p> <p>You know why you're here. Everyone thinks you're crazy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p>You need a drink. You'll feel better <i>(Repeating)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 1</p> <p>Paul left! He left you!</p> <p><i>(Van Gogh looking around the room)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 3</p> <p><i>(Excited)</i> Use Naples yellow, thicken the brush strokes...now, cobalt blue..there is nothing like it..swirl your brush strokes...more energy...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 1</p> <p>Nobody wants you around.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p>You need a drink. You'll feel better <i>(Repeating)</i></p> <p><i>(Van Gogh starts to feel his face and reacts when he touches where his ear was)</i></p>

	<p>DEMON 3 Viridean and emerald green combine them... <i>(Continue listing variety of colours)</i></p> <p>DEMON 1 Everyone laughs at you, at your art</p>
<p>VAN GOGH <i>(sitting at front of stage rocking back and forth)</i> What have I done?</p>	
<p>VAN GOGH I can't remember!</p>	<p>DEMON 2 <i>(still repeating)</i></p> <p>DEMON 2 <i>(It's no use)</i></p> <p>DEMON 3 Scarlet with coal black <i>(color babble)</i></p> <p>DEMON 2 Everyone wanted you to leave. They MADE you leave</p> <p>DEMON 3 It's no use.....</p> <p><i>(Quiet whispers)</i> <i>(demons fall silent, Van Gogh settles down)</i></p>
<p>VAN GOGH Screaming: NO!</p>	

Unit III: Theo's Visit

<p><i>(Theo knocks. Van Gogh on bed. Theo Enters)</i></p> <p>THEO</p> <p>Vincent!! <i>(sits beside him)</i></p>	
<p>VAN GOGH</p>	

Theo?	
<p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p>I have traveled a long time to get here to see you. It's difficult to leave Paris with my wife due any day now. Yet here I am, once again.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p>My dear brother, how are you? Was it another seizure?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p><i>(confused)</i> I have felt better. How long have I been here? Theo! How did I get here?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p>You have been here only a few weeks. At first quite out of your mind—you apparently did not recognize anyone.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>They won't let me outside.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p>Are you starting to feel better? They will help you here. The doctors ...</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p><i>(Interrupts Theo)</i></p> <p>Can I stay with you? I fear being left alone here. <i>(looks around, not paying attention to Theo, looks around at the audience few times as if he sees something there)</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p>Vincent! Vincent! Listen to me! You are not well- I cannot take care of you again! For God's sake, you cut off your ear! That is not merely a seizure,</p> <p>The doctors will work hard to help you here.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>I know I need some help.....</p> <p>They won't leave me alone. That is both a comfort but it is also exhausting. But I know I will be better if I were to stay with you!</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p><i>(Looks toward door)</i> I can't give you the help you need!</p> <p><i>(In a gentle voice)</i> Vincent, you're going to be alright. I will always be here to support you.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Always?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p>Of course, you're my brother after all.</p> <p>You need to regain your health; you must eat something! Please.</p> <p><i>(VG picks up the wine bottle from the table near the bed, and starts drinking)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>It's my absinthe. It calms my mind. It helps my head hurt less.</p>	<p><i>(VG picks up the wine bottle from the table near the bed, and starts drinking)</i></p>

<p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p>Your health! It's only the afternoon! <i>(Takes wine bottle away)</i></p> <p><i>(VG grabs another wine bottle from the other side. Drinking and sitting on the bed)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p>Stop it! Stop drinking! Vincent! <i>(As he speaks, Vincent drinks. Theo pushes the bottle so it rolls on the ground)</i> This doesn't help!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Demons start stirring)</i></p> <p><i>(VG grabs another wine bottle from the other side. Drinking and sitting on the bed)</i></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>You're not here to help me! I DON'T NEED YOU! GO AWAY! LEAVE ME ALONE! <i>(Furiously yells at Theo. Glares at him)</i></p>	
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<i>(Van Gogh holding his knees, and starts rocking back and forth)</i>	
<p style="text-align: center;">THEO</p> <p>I must leave tomorrow but I will write.</p> <p>I will leave 50 francs. for you, for supplies and paints. <i>(As he places the money on the table)</i></p> <p>I will drop in tomorrow before I go.</p> <p><i>(Closes door softly)</i></p>	<p><i>(Demons fully wake up and begin creeping towards bed)</i></p>

Unit IV: Alone

<p>VAN GOGH</p> <p><i>(Walks to side table, picks up paper and pen and walks back to bed)</i></p> <p><i>(He sits down trying to write a letter.)</i></p>	
<p><i>(Writing)</i></p> <p>My dear Theo, I am very sorry about our last conversation. I have been so completely out of sorts mentally that it would have been useless to try to write an answer to</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p>You're crazy. What's wrong with you?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 3</p> <p>Paul says paint from your imagination,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p><i>(Interrupting)</i> But you won't!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 3</p> <p><i>(Reaching toward VG)</i> So much sadness. You must paint.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 1</p> <p>Your father's right! You failed with the church! You failed with Rachel! You failed with Paul! You failed with all the people in your life!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p>Don't try to run away, it's no use. The madness!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 1</p> <p><i>(Move away from Van Gogh)</i></p>

<p>your kind letter....</p> <p>I am fortunately losing the vague dread, the fear of the thing. ...</p> <p>And little by little I can come to look upon madness as a disease like any other.</p> <p>I feel quite normal so often now, and really I should think that if what I am suffering from is only a disease particular to this place,</p> <p>I must wait here quietly till it is over, even if it returns.</p>	<p>Even your father won't have anything to do with you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 3</p> <p>You should paint from your imagination! Tell Paul you will!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p>A drink will help hold back the madness</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 3</p> <p><i>(Turn to Demon 2) No! (Turn back to Van Gogh) You need to paint!</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 1</p> <p>A disease?</p> <p><i>(Demons step back into shadows)</i></p>
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Unit V: Meets Gachet

<p><i>(SFX-knock on door)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Theo? <i>(enter Dr. Gachet)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR GACHET</p> <p>Monsieur Van Gogh, good morning.</p>	
<p>VAN GOGH Who are you?</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">DR GACHET</p> <p><i>(holds out hand in greeting)</i> I am Dr. Gachet. Your brother has arranged for me to see you.</p>	<p><i>(Van Gogh looking around confused)</i> <i>(Demons step forward –DEMON4 stays in background)</i></p>
<p>VAN GOGH Who are you?</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>I had a report from the hospital-I see this isn't your first injury?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p><i>(Cuts off Dr. Gachet)</i> My wound is fine! It will heal in no time!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>Yes, it will heal.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>I have seizures. I cannot remember what happens.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>Was this injury from a seizure?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>We had been drinking. We were fighting. It was Paul, M. Gaugin, the artist who was staying with me. We were supposed to start a co-op. He is a great painter. He said he didn't like what I painted for him. He said how I paint is wrong. He was going to leave. I have not heard from him since.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>I see. Do you remember anything else?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>The horrors—they will take me if I think too hard.</p> <p>When I concentrate on anything, even painting, they are there. It is despairing.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>Well, I hope to help you Monsieur Van Gogh. But I ask that you don't drink.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Not drink? It calms me so I can paint.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>It is not good for your recovery.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 1</p> <p><i>(whispering)</i> He's tired, look at him-.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p>He looks more ill than you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p>Paul left you—he does not like you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 1</p> <p>Paul filed a police report against you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p>It's the absinthe. But you need it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 3</p> <p>He called you crazy!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMONS</p> <p>Yes! Think!</p> <p><i>(Demons start coming in closer to Van Gogh)</i></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>I would like to rest now.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>Yes, good day. I will come by again tomorrow.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">DEMONS</p> <p>We'll be waiting for you. <i>(exit)</i></p> <p><i>SR Van Gogh sleeps</i></p>
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UNIT VI: Seizure

<p>VAN GOGH <i>(Nighttime, painting)</i> Ah!! My head.</p>	
<p><i>Takes the bottle of wine/absinthe, and starts drinking as he sits on the chair</i> <i>Rolls his eyes, scratches the back of his neck, twitches</i> <i>Breathing very hard</i> <i>Tries to paint</i> <i>Looks for more to drink</i> <i>Frustrated with painting/haunted</i></p>	
	<p><i>(Demons enter, whispering)</i></p> <p>DEMON 2 You need a drink.</p> <p>DEMON 1 Yes, you need a drink.</p> <p>DEMON 3 <i>(circling the easel, watching, repeating)</i> Color. The paints, the kerosene. It's not right.</p> <p>DEMON2 Anything! Anything to drink!</p> <p>DEMON 1 Make the sadness stop?</p> <p>DEMON 2 Drink more!</p>

(He starts to drink the paint thinner)

(Seizure, collapses onto bed)

(Dr. Gachet enters in nightshirt-VG still in seizure)

DR. GACHET

(Restrains VG)

Vincent!

(Runs off stage. Reenters with medical bag.)

DR. GACHET

Monsieur Van Gogh,.....Monsieur!

I need you to relax.

(Tries to hold him)

VAN GOGH

Go away! Go away! *(Hits at the air)*

Leave me alone!! *(Still rigid)*

DR. GACHET

(Cuts him off)

What's on your face?

(Touches VG face and smells what's on his fingers.)

What is this?

Monsieur!

VAN GOGH

(Barely able to speak)

Go away!

No! Stop!

DR. GACHET

Monsieur, look at me.

Calm down!

(Tries to calm him down)

VAN GOGH

No stop!

(Gachet pulls handkerchief out of bag, and pours liquid from a bottle onto handkerchief. Places handkerchief covered with chloroform over Van Gogh's face.)

(DEMONS 1,2,3 walk around Van Gogh and then create a tableau around his bed-suffering)

(Stage right seizure matching stage left seizure)

(Demons are holding SR Van Gogh down, while he is struggling)

<p><i>(VG passes out)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>Sleep now.</p> <p>Rest now. <i>(Exit)</i></p>	<p><i>(Demons and SR VG fall asleep along with SL VG)</i></p>
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UNIT VII: Loss of Paints

<p><i>(Next morning)</i> <i>(fade up lights to medium)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p><i>(Enters with bag)</i> Monsieur Van Gogh, I have something to discuss with you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Discuss with me?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>We feel you need to take a break from your painting.</p> <p>You...you drank paint thinner, monsieur. We feel that it is the best for you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>The best for me? You do not want me to paint!</p> <p>I won't do it again!</p> <p>Don't take away my paints! Oh please... Don't touch my paints! <i>(Starts to yell)</i> <i>(Tries to hit him. Very Desperate)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>You are lucky to be alive. But what you did do could be very damaging. You will</p>	<p><i>(Demons wake up again)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p><i>(Looks at demons)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 3</p> <p><i>(gradually getting louder)</i> Yes they do not want you to paint!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 1</p> <p>You tried to make us go away. <i>(demons whispering agreement)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON2</p> <p>How could you paint anyways? You can't even get out of bed!</p>
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<p>be even more in danger if you continue to paint. <i>(Gachet gathers his paints and thinners)</i></p> <p>VAN GOGH I need my paints! I need them!</p>	<p>DEMON 1 Grab the paints!</p> <p>DEMON 2 All of them!</p> <p><i>(Demons 1, 2 start to find paints, same actions as the doctor. Demon 3 tries to stop it)</i></p> <p>DEMON 3 No! <i>(Frantically attempts to grab the paints from demon 1 and 2 but is unsuccessful.)</i></p>
<p>VAN GOGH What are you doing? Do not look at my room! Go away! Get out of my room!</p>	
<p><i>(He gestures for Gachet to stop)</i></p>	<p><i>(He gestures for the demons to stop)</i></p> <p>DEMON 2 What are you going to do?</p>
<p>VAN GOGH Leave me.</p>	
<p><i>(Gachet exits. Van Gogh curls up in bed)</i></p>	<p><i>(All of Demons walk around Van Gogh except the 3rd who reacts to losing the paints)</i></p>
<p><i>(Fade lights to low)</i></p>	

UNIT VIII: Despondency

(Spot to DSL apron/thrust- Enter Theo)

On stage, Van Goghs are pacing up and down stage, without anything to paint. Demon 1 USR facing VG. Demon 2 DS, Demon 3 sleeping by SR bed

Have you talked to Dr. Gachet?

THEO

About what?

(Van Gogh indicates easel)

Oh! About your paints?

VAN GOGH

Yes! Oh yes!

When will he return them?

THEO

Umm...I don't know yet. But I have a surprise for you!

VAN GOGH

A surprise?

THEO

Why yes!

VAN GOGH

What is it?

THEO

(Takes some paint tubes out of his bag and goes to door and gets a roll of canvas)

VAN GOGH

Paints! Oh thank-you!...

I can paint more... sceneries...

I can do them from here, looking out the window.

THEO

I know what it means for you to paint.

VAN GOGH

Thank you again. Now, tell me more of the exhibition in Brussels!

THEO

Well, I have wonderful news! I wanted to tell you in person, so that is the main reason I came. One of your paintings sold! The Red Vineyard- for 400 Francs- congratulations!

VAN GOGH
sceneries...

VAN GOGH

Ah!

(Grabs Theo's hand and shakes it)

After all these years, someone finally purchased one of my paintings. Who bought it?

THEO

Madame Boch. And there's more. Gauguin said you were "the most striking" in the show; Monet said your pictures were the best as well Vincent, this is a tremendous breakthrough. I hope that people now will begin to see your genius. A real success brother!

VAN GOGH

I am thrilled that artists are beginning to appreciate my work. Do you think the public will soon start to be interested in purchasing?

THEO

The public considers your work too... avant-garde. They don't understand art well enough to see the genius.

VAN GOGH

Mmm...

THEO

Paint...paint some portraits! Perhaps when you are well enough to leave here we can get you some commissions. Many artists are getting money from portraits these days! Or do copies, perhaps a Delacroix? They may sell.

VAN GOGH

Portraits?

I can't even leave my room. I haven't hardly stepped away from my bed since the last spell over a month ago.

DEMON 1

(Storms in and yells in VG's ear)
Hear that? A copy of a Delacroix!

VAN GOGH

Portraits...

DEMON 2

(Enters)
So that's what success looks like?

<p>THEO What did you say?</p>	<p>DEMON 3 <i>(Whispering, repeating colour lists)</i> Use Naples yellow, thicken the brush strokes...now, cobalt blue..there is nothing like it..swirl your brush strokes... Viridean and emerald green combine them...</p> <p>VAN GOGH Theo says no landscapes! <i>(Disappointed)</i></p>
<p>VAN GOGH I need my paints back.</p>	
<p><i>(Demons go to low level presence)</i></p>	
<p>VAN GOGH Please, I need them back! <i>(desperate)</i> I need those colours!</p>	
<p>THEO Why not paint a portrait of him? <i>(Indicating door)</i></p> <p>VAN GOGH Of who? <i>(Realization dawns. Then turns into worried)</i> Will he allow me to? I am not allowed to paint.</p> <p>THEO Gachet! He may return your paints, if you paint it and make a gift of it.</p> <p>VAN GOGH I shall!</p> <p>THEO Brother it has been good seeing you, but I have to go now.</p>	
<p>VAN GOGH So soon?</p>	
<p>THEO I'm sorry. I'll come back next week. And congratulations again</p>	

<p><i>(As he grabs his bag, shakes Van Gogh's hand exiting)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Please do come back soon!</p> <p><i>(VG paints portrait of Gachet)</i></p>	<p><i>(Painting, and Demons whisper around Van Gogh)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 3</p> <p>Work harder and maybe the world will understand.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 2</p> <p>Without me, you cannot concentrate.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 1</p> <p><i>(Repeating)</i> Success will have its price.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DEMON 3</p> <p>You need me to paint. I am your color.</p>
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UNIT X: A Gift for Gachet

<p><i>((Van Gogh finishes painting and puts it under his bed) Doctor knocks and enters)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Dr. Gachet. My paints? Do you have my paints? They are precious to me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>I know. We understand. And we're sorry for that, Monsieur.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p><i>(Becoming agitated)</i> Did you want my paints?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>No, I have no use for your paints. They were taken so you wouldn't hurt yourself again.</p>	<p><i>(Demons sitting around Van Gogh)</i></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p><i>(Surprised)</i> Harm myself?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>Yes. Harm yourself.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>The madness took me. I cannot recall.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>There are many people who care for you and want to see you regain your health.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Of course of course, I understand. But I truly feel I am doing much better now.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>I can see that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>What if I can prove I am ready to paint again?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>Oh, how?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Perhaps I have already painted something!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>What!? How cou- How- how did you get the paints? Where did you get the paints?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p><i>(Interrupting)</i> It's for you!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p><i>(Skeptical)</i> What? For me?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p><i>(Hesitates)</i> Theo's last visit...he came with paints. I-</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Do you not like it? (Anxious.)</p>

I didn't ask for them...

(Gachet Looks at Van Gogh in exasperation)

(Pulls out the painting of Dr. Gachet and shows him)

DR. GACHET

A portrait? Of me?

VAN GOGH

Do you not like it?

DR. GACHET

No! No! It's wonderful!

(Reaches for the painting)

VAN GOGH

Careful! It's still wet.

DR. GACHET

I am flattered.

VAN GOGH

Thank-you. But be careful-it won't be dry for many months.

DR. GACHET

(Thinking)

Well, since you seem to paint no matter what, I will consider returning your paints on the condition that when you are painting, there will be someone with you. And no alcohol in your room at all!

VAN GOGH

Will you return my paints now?

DR. GACHET

I will. But you must promise me--

VAN GOGH

I--I--- promise you! I will promise you anything! I just ...just need my paints!

DR. GACHET

You must promise me to never poison yourself again. And please trust me that I

(Demons 1,2,3 starts to whispers and fade away)

(Van Gogh covers his ears, close his eyesand the focus is on the light side)

Demon 3 moves to SL to watch the progress

<p>am trying to help you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Absolutely, yes!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DR. GACHET</p> <p>Alright then... <i>(Steps out of room and comes back with paints. Van Gogh can be setting up to paint)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>Thank you, doctor. Thank you so much.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DOCTOR</p> <p>And thank you for the painting. I must go now; I have a few more patients to visit. If anything goes wrong, if you even feel anything coming on, please call for me. I'll make a note to the nurses, in case you need them.</p> <p><i>(As he touches the doorknob,)</i> I'll see you next week, M. Van Gogh. Have a good day!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VAN GOGH</p> <p>You too! Farewell!</p>	
<p><i>(Both Van Goghs set up easels facing upstage and towards wings.)</i></p> <p><i>(They look out the window and paint starry night.)</i></p> <p><i>(Fade lights to half, back light in window if possible)</i></p>	

Unit XI: The Letter

(Theo reads this letter out loud, a focused light on the apron, Van Gogh still painting upstage.)

My dear Theo,

Thanks for your letter of today and the 50 franc note it contained. There are many things I should like to write to you about, but I feel it is useless. As far as I'm concerned, I am giving my canvases my undivided attention. Painting helps distract me from my despondency. Right now, I am painting my view from my window. The

stars are so clear and I work to capture their halos-it is shaping up to be something good, I think.

It is about the yellows and the blues. But yellow is still my favorite. I find it ironic that the canvasses people acknowledge are the ones that I seem to need to sacrifice my sanity to create. I am trying to do as well as certain painters whom I have greatly loved and admired. I noted with pleasure that the Gauguin from Brittany I saw is very beautiful, and it seems to me that the others he has done will probably be so as well.

Your brother, Vincent

(Theo picks up a second letter.)

Today I have been allowed to go out to paint, with a companion, so I will not be alone. The field was fresh after rain. I will certainly use that spot again.

Unit XII: The Sadness Will Last Forever

(On apron, curtains closed)

(Van Gogh at his easel outside painting a field scene. Both Van Goghs together, intent on painting. After several brush strokes, arm drops, and every brush stroke gets more difficult for VGs to bring up their arms.)

(Finishes painting picture. Demons can be offstage or watching from edge of stage)

(Demon 1 crosses to Van Gogh)

DEMON 1 *(To Van Gogh)*

The sadness will last forever.

(Demon 2 crosses to Van Gogh)

DEMON 2 *(To Van Gogh)*

The sadness will last forever.

(Demon 3 crosses to Van Gogh)

(Begin slow fade to black)

DEMON 3 *(To Van Gogh)*

The sadness will last forever.

(Demons' position around VGs. The duality is gone.)

(Blackout- gunshot. Everybody falls)

(Lights back up to full front, everybody dies)

The End.