

The Painter

An original screenplay by
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FADE UP FROM BLACK

On Screen

"The Sight of the Stars make me Dream."
Vincent van Gogh

EXT DAY "WHEATFIELD WITH CROWS" SUMMER

We see the hands of a painter, the brush gliding across the canvas. Vincent van Gogh is in a field bathed in brilliant sunlight. He uses his paints thick and liberally. Looking up into the blue sky he sees a single crow.

Back upon his canvas, he adds several crows in the painting of the field. Staring at his canvas, he wipes his finger against the yellow paint, and licks his fingers

MUSIC AND CREDITS BEGIN

EXT EARLY EVENING SAME DAY THE ROAD IN AUVERS-SUR-OISE

Vincent walks back toward his little apartment, carrying his canvas on his back. Towns people greet him, he is friendly but not talkative. He arrives at the yellow building where he lives and goes up the stairs

CUT TO:

INT NIGHT HIS APARTMENT

He stares at his painting of the wheatfields by candlelight. Getting a brush, he blends some of the paint. Placing it against the wall, we see The Starry Night and others. He pours a drink from a bottle, lights his pipe and sits by the window, through which we see the brilliant stars of night.

CUT TO:

INT NEXT MORNING CAFE

We see a very attractive young woman in an apron, she is carrying dishes from the back of the cafe. She approaches Vincent at his table and serves him sausages, bread and coffee. Next to him at his table are many of his finished canvases, carefully bundled and tied in rolls.

CUT TO:

EXT SAME MORNING RURAL ROAD

Vincent walks along the road, the sounds of a summer morning surround him, he listens as though it is music. He sees a sunflower and picks it up, holds it close and studies it.

CUT TO:

EXT SAME AFTERNOON RURAL ROAD

He comes near a small town in the distance

CUT TO:

EXT SAME DAY

Vincent comes to a white house, knocks on the door. A stern looking woman comes to the door

Vincent
Mother

CUT TO:

INT MOTHERS HOUSE

Vincent sits on a chair, his mother on the couch. An array of renaissance art frames on the walls. They are silent but for a clock ticking in the back.

Mother
Do you still ride the back of Theo?

He sits silent. She gets up and looks through his canvases. She holds one up to the light and shakes her head.

CUT TO:

EXT DAY FRONT PORCH

His mother holds the canvases as Vincent readies to leave

Mother
Go visit your brother

CUT TO:

EXT DAY GRAVESITE

He sits on the ground next to a gravestone that says "Vincent Willem" He stays in silence and as he is getting ready to leave, he touches the headstone and **GOLDEN YELLOW SPARKLES LIKE STARS FALL FROM THE HEADSTONE**

He is startled, rises quickly and looks around.

CUT TO:

EXT SAME DAY

We see Vincent walking away from the house. His mother takes the paintings and goes to her goat barn. Entering, she tosses them into a corner with several other canvases. She sees a hole on the wall of the barn, picks up a painting, rips some of the canvas and uses it to fix the hole in the barn

CUT TO:

EXT LATE AFTERNOON FIELD

He sits in a field of sunflowers as the sun sets. He looks at the stain of paint on his hands, on his pants. He pulls the pipe from his pocket and tries to light it, but it doesn't work.

CUT TO:

INT CAFE THAT NIGHT

We see Vincent at his table, he is writing a letter. The pretty teenage waitress brings him sausages and bread, a bottle of Absinthe is on the table.

Waitress

You look tired

Vincent doesn't respond, but stares at his plate.

Waitress

Will you paint me?

Vincent

If I paint you no one will want the painting because I am the one who did it. You would deserve better

Waitress

(MORE)

(cont'd)

I would love to have a painting no
body wants because you painted it.
Paint me?

She waits for an answer but he says nothing. She leaves and
returns to the kitchen. As he gets ready to leave, he walks
up to her,

Vincent

I can't paint you. There is no room
on the canvas for all that you are.

Two teenage boys at another table watch Vincent and make fun
of him as he leaves.

CUT TO:

INT VINCENT'S ROOM SAME NIGHT

He sits on his bed washing his brushes in a can, whistles a
soft melody. He stands and looks out his window, again seeing
the array of stars. Lighting his pipe, he pours a glass of
liquor. He blows out his candle and stands in the window,
bathed in the moon and star light.

CUT TO:

EXT DAY NEXT MORNING FIELD

He sits on the ground surrounded by wheat, his easel is set
up and a canvas, blank and empty, is positioned and ready.
Tapping his pipe, he lights it and looks into the distance,
searching for inspiration. Reaching into his bag he pulls out
a tube of yellow. Opening the cap, he places the tube to his
mouth and squeezes yellow oil paint onto his tongue.

CUT TO:

EXT THAT AFTERNOON PATHWAY

Vincent is walking back to his apartment. The teenage boys
from the cafe pass him and see the paint on his mouth and
begin laughing at him as they pass.

CUT TO:

INT THAT AFTERNOON ARTSTORE

Vincent is in the art store. Pere Tanguy stands behind the counter

Pere

Vincent, the yellow is on your lips again

Vincent wipes his mouth with his sleeve. Looks at the Japanese print on the wall

Vincent

New! The lines are so...

He sees one of his own unsold paintings on the wall.

... Old.

Pere

Ah don't worry. Your red vineyard is in the hands of Anna, she paid you even. Look, you are a success now. And your Uncle Cor ...

Vincent

Family are not good customers

Pere

But your brother is a good benefactor. More artists should be so well cared for as you.

Vincent picks up some brushes

Vincent

He is not well

Pere (laughs)

Of course he's not well. Look what he spends his money on, paint and brushes for other crazy people.

Vincent

Crazy keeps you in business, Pere.

CUT TO

INT GALLERY THEO IN PARIS

Theo is standing in front of a wall cluttered with Vincent's painting holding some rolled up canvases. His wife Joanna walks into the room holding their young child. She looks annoyed.

Joanna

More?

Theo places the canvases on a table and unrolls one, it is the painting of The Church at Auvers

Theo

This will be a challenge

Joanna

So you are leaving your position at the gallery for (beat) this?

Theo

I'm leaving so we can have our own enterprise (coughs)

Joanna

You can hardly make ends meet as it is, no less sell this nonsense. What of us? What of your family?

Theo

Vincent is my family

Joanna

No, WE are your family

She picks up a canvas and unrolls it and we see Wheat Fields at Auvers Under Clouded Sky

It doesn't even look like a painting. Your own children can do better

Theo

Joanna, please. I'm trying to do the best for everybody. I told him that I can't support him much longer

Joanna

We could have owned a fine home with all that you have given all these years. And his response? To condemn you because you can no longer afford it? The ungrateful peasant.

Theo

He is my brother

Joanna

I am your wife. This is your child. Perhaps you need to decide who is more important. I can not live like this any more.

She looks at the array of canvases against the wall

All he can do is scream and yell at you, demanding more of what is a gift.

Theo

It's not a gift, I own the paintings

Joanna

You "own?" Own? You own nothing. It's all worthless. Burning it would be only a kindness.

Theo unrolls another canvas and we see a Vincent self portrait as Theo sighs and shakes his head.

CUT TO:

INT cafe that evening

Vincent is at his table, empty dinner plates and glasses clutter as he tries to finish his letter

Waitress

If you painted me as long as it takes you to write that letter I would be hanging on a wall by now.

Vincent (smiles)

It is to my brother Theo. He will send me more paints and canvas. I might go to Paris and paint. If there is any left over, I might paint you after all.

She rubs his chin and he pulls back

Waitress

Look, more paint. Why do you eat this yellow?

Vincent

It is the color of sunshine, it makes me happy.

Waitress

And the turpentine, why that?

Vincent

I don't deserve sunshine

Waitress

It will make you sick. You are a strange one.

She sits in a chair at the table

I want to go to Paris. You take me with you. I will make you happy like the yellow.

Vincent smiles and shakes his head. She leans over and whispers,

You can squeeze me like a tube of
your paint.

CUT TO:

INT EVENING THAT NIGHT VINCENT'S APARTMENT

Vincent sits at a table in front of his candlelight. An unfinished canvas is on his bed, paper in front of him as he draws. We come over his shoulder and see he is sketching the likeness of the waitress.

He seems tired, so he places his paper and sketch pencil down. He turns to the candle to blow it out, and again **GOLDEN SPARKLES LIKE STARS fall from the candle.**

He is again startled, almost afraid. We see him in the glow of moonlight through the window, sweating and breathing heavily.

CUT TO:

INT MORNING VINCENT'S BEDROOM

He is stretching canvas over a wood frame as he nails tacks into the wood.

CUT TO:

EXT PATHWAY MORNING

He walks down a pathway with the canvas on his shoulder, carrying his case of paints and brushes. He stops at a post office and walks in. Handing the attendant an envelope and some coins. The attendant looks at the envelope, addressed to his brother Theo.

CUT TO:

EXT PATHWAY DAY

He walks outside of his village and comes up to an odd array of **tree roots** on a hillside, at the edge of some woods. He appears fascinated by it, studies it. Sets up his easel and begins painting. We watch him sketch the outline. Opens the paints and spreads them on his palet. We watch him dip his brushes and apply his paints

CUT TO:

EXT LATE AFTERNOON

We see his painting, almost finished. The painting of Tree Roots is strong and colorful, rich with yellow paints.

He likes the painting and as he stares at it, opens his tube of yellow paint and licks the contents.

As he does, he hears laughter behind him. It is the teenage boys from the cafe.

Boy One

He is eating his paint for dinner

Boy Two

He will turn color like a banana

Vincent sees a girl with them

Vincent

Go home, leave me.

Boy One

Look, the girl wears yellow, will you eat her?

The boys laugh. They push the girl toward him.

Boy One

Do you want a taste, Yellow Man

Boy Two

A yellow man with orange hair.

Vincent

Don't touch me, leave me now.

The girl falls against the easel and the painting falls to the ground.

Vincent, yelling

Get away, What are you doing. Go home.

He grabs the girl and shoves her away. She falls to the ground and yells.

Boy Two

Leave her alone, Yellow man.

The boy grabs Vincent's case of brushes and turns it over.

Vincent

Stop. Stop this. Go home. Go away.

He lunges toward boy number two, ready to punch him.

There is the sound of a gun shot. We see the first boy on his knees with a small pistol, smoke rising from the barrel.

Vincent falls to the ground and the two boys and the girl run away. He rolls onto his back gripping his abdomen. Blood begins appearing on his hand.

He stands, staggers, then picks up his case of paint and brushes. Grabs his finished canvas and starts walking home.

CUT TO:

EXT LATE DAY SUN SETTING ARTSTORE

Vincent makes his way back into town, he enters the art store and yells at Pere and hands him his painting.

Vincent

Keep this

Pere

Fine, but where are you ...

Vincent turns and abruptly leaves. Pere sees red drops on the floor.

Pere

You are leaking. You are leaking
red paint on my floor

As he bends over and touches the drops

You're ... this is ...

CUT TO:

INT CAFE SAME DAY

Vincent makes his way into the cafe, leaves his case on a table. The waitress watches him rush through the cafe to the staircase leading up to his room. The cafe owner yells at Vincent as he goes up the stairs

Owner

This is not a storage loft. Come back here

Waitress

I will take it.

She goes up the stairs with his case and hears his door slam. Knocking on his door, he does not answer, so she leaves the case at his door step.

CUT TO:

INT VINCENT'S ROOM

He sits in his chair, holding his stomach. Grabbing a bottle of his turpentine, he pours it onto his bloody shirt and rubs the wounds. He goes to his bed, clutching his shirt and rolls over onto his side.

CUT TO:

INT CAFE NIGHT

The cafe is full, many are talking and some are laughing, yelling. It is busy. A man comes rushing down the stairs to the cafe owner.

Man

Next door, why does he yell and groan so much?

Owner, to the waitress

Go see.

She runs up the stairs, opens the door and sees Vincent, covered in blood on the bed. She screams for the owner. He comes through the door and, upon seeing Vincent, grabs the waitress by the shoulders and yells

Owner

Gachet, go get Dr Gachet.

CUT TO:

EXT MORNING OUTSIDE THE INN

We see the window of Vincent's room, and hear the groans coming from inside

CUT TO:

INT MORNING VINCENT'S ROOM

Dr Gachet is at the bedside, cleaning the wound

Gachet

Who did this. Who hurt you?

Vincent does not answer

Gachet

I did not know you had a gun. Did you? How did this happen to you, tell me.

Vincent does not respond

Vincent

I'm thirsty

Dr Gachet helps him with a drink of water.

Gachet

We have sent for Theo, he will be here soon.

Vincent

He is not well

Gachet

My friend, YOU are not well. Tell me who did this to you.

There is a commotion at the stairs as Theo comes rushing into the room. He goes to Vincent's side and touches his face, then his bloody shirt

Theo

How?

Vincent
I'm sorry I hurt you

Theo, to Dr Gachet
How?

Gachet
He will not say

Theo, to Vincent
Who did this? Did you do this?

Vincent
It was just a mistake, blame no
one.

Theo looks to Gachet and the Inn owner and takes them aside

Theo
Blame no one? Did he do this?

Owner
A man does not shoot himself in the
belly. The mouth, the temple. Not
the belly

Gachet
Let him have plenty of water, keep
the wound clean. I'll come back in
a while. Maybe he will talk in the
morning

CUT TO:

EXT SUNRISE THE INN

The sun begins to rise as darkness gives way to light. The deep red sun rays shine upon the Inn, turning yellow and bright as the sun rises.

CUT TO:

INT VINCENT'S ROOM

The sunrise begins to shine through the bedroom window, a single yellow ray comes through the window and begins to glow over the bed.

Theo is on the cot next to his brother, holding Vincent who is barely breathing.

Theo
I'm here

Theo combs his brothers hair with his fingers, then coughs into his hand. Vincent opens his eyes and turns toward his brother.

Vincent, weak
I'm sorry.

Theo
Stop saying that. Johanna says I should bring you home with me

Vincent closes his eyes, his breathing laboured

Theo
Vincent, did you do this? Who? Why?

He checks the wound, reaches over for a rag and presses the bullet hole. Dr. Gachet enters the room holding his medical bag and a cup of hot tea, he approaches Vincent as Theo gets up from the bed. Dr gently lifts Vincent's head from the pillow.

Dr. Gachet
Drink. Slow.

He looks over at Theo and shakes his head

The ray of sunlight turns into **glowing, dancing stars** and begin to center atop Vincent's bed. Theo kneels down on the floor next to his brother,

Theo
You wrote to me once how the stars made you paint. You said there was nothing more artistic than to love

Softly

I am not an artist, but I love you
so, my brother

MUSIC reaches a crescendo as the light turns darker and darker blue. **The stars swirl faster** around Vincent as he closes his eyes, slowly opening them one more time

VINCENT

I see them ...

and the screen goes

BLACK - SILENCE

TRANSITION TO MODERN DAY

We hear the faint sounds of a hospital ward, Doctors and nurses murmuring, suddenly

CUT FROM BLACK:

INT NIGHT HOSPITAL

The light over an operating table explodes onto the screen with the **golden stars swirling around them** and quickly fading away. We see Vincent with an oxygen mask in a modern hospital room and a Doctor connects him to a monitoring machine.

Doctor

What do we have

Nurse

Gun shot, some homeless guy

Attendant

Does he have ID? An insurance card?

Nurse

He's homeless for god's sake

Attendant

Who is he?

Doctor

Who cares. It's a bullet in his lower abdomen. Let's prep for surgery

Attendant

And who will pay for it?

Nurse

Who cares.

CUT TO:

INT DAY HOSPITAL ROOM

Vincent is in a bed as doctors and nurses tend to him. He slowly wakes up, opens his eyes then shuts them again.

Doctor

Welcome back

Vincent doesn't respond. The doctor checks his chart.

Doctor

You have a gun shot wound to your lower chest. Do you know who did this?

Vincent opens his eyes, suddenly looks scared and whispers

Vincent

Theo? Gachet?

A detective dressed in a suit enters the room and offers ID

Detective

Is he talking?

Doctor

It doesn't seem self inflicted, but it might be. He had what looked like paint around his lips, it could be lead poisoning as well. All I know is he is terrified.

Detective, to Vincent

What happened, sir. Can you say
what happened?

Vincent looks more scared and gets agitated. He begins
pulling and yanking at his bed sheets. He sees the electric
monitors he is connected to and screams

Doctor

Nurse, get the straps

The Doctor and nurse strap him down.

Vincent, yelling

Theo

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL ROOM

Vincent in his bed, connected to IV and oxygen. A nurse tends
his chart as Vincent opens his eyes. The nurse sees him.

Nurse

Welcome back. You've had a nice
long rest.

She presses the call button

How do you feel? Do you want water?

As Vincent becomes more alert, he gets scared again, notices
he is strapped down and begins churning in the bed. The
doctor comes in and they hold Vincent down, he administers a
shot and Vincent passes out.

CUT TO:

INT SAME HOSPITAL ROOM

Vincent is still in bed, he is alert. The bed has been raised
so his head is elevated and he watches nervously the nurse in
the room. He looks at the IV in his arm and the machine with
its blinking lights.

Nurse

You are a quiet one.

Vincent does not respond. Another older nurse enters the room

Nurse 1

Do you know where you are? You are in a hospital. You've been in a coma for several weeks.

Nurse 2

He has no relatives, no one claiming him

The Doctor enters the room

Doctor

Finally. Welcome back Mr. Smith, or Jones. Do you know your name?

Vincent whispers

Vincent

Theo?

Doctor

Tay-Yo? Your name is Tay-yo?

Vincent

My brother

Nurse 1

Now we're getting somewhere. Where does your brother live.

Vincent looks around the room

Vincent (weakly but urgent)

What is this place, Who are you?

Doctor

Don't be scared. You are fine. Safe. We are taking care of you.

The Doctor takes the chart from the nurse

Do you know where you are?

No response

Do you know what day this is? What year?

Vincent begins clutching his fist

You are in a hospital. This is New York City. It is November. Do you know your name?

Vincent
Vincent

Nurse 1
Vincent. Hello Vincent

Doctor
Do you have a last name?

Vincent
Van Gogh

Nurse 2
What?

Vincent
Van Gogh

Nurse 1
He said he's Vincent van Gogh

Doctor
Lovely

Nurse 2
And I'm Bridget Bardot

Nurse 1
Who?

Nurse 2

Well he ain't no Vincent van Gogh

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL WARD DAY

A nurse wheels Vincent in front of windows overlooking a parking lot with trees. He touches his abdomen, follows the IV tube into his arm. He fiddles with the chair wheels and turns himself around. On the wall is a print of his sunflowers painting. Vincent stares at it for the longest time, first in surprise, then frustration.

He gets agitated and starts yelling as nurses and attendants rush toward him.

CUT TO:

INT VINCENT'S HOSPITAL ROOM

He is in his bed, the DOCTOR enters followed by a phycologist.

Doctor

Vincent, this is Dr. Emmons. He would like to talk to you, is that OK?

Vincent looks nervous but does not respond.

Dr. Emmons

It's nice to meet you Vincent. Can I sit next to you?

Sits in a chair next to the bed as the Doctor leaves the room

You've been through a lot.
Do you know how you got here?

Vincent reaches for his abdomen.

Yes, that's right, you got shot. Do you know who shot you? Who hurt you?

Vincent

It was a mistake

Dr. Emmons

A mistake. Did some one hurt you or did you hurt yourself?

Vincent

A mistake

Dr. Emmons reads Vincent's chart. He looks at Vincent and notices a piece of his lower ear is missing.

Dr. Emmons

So, you are Vincent van Gogh? What do you do?

Vincent

I am a painter.

Pauses

Where is Theo

Then agitated

I need Theo

Dr. Emmons

Theo? Your brother? He died a few months after you did.

Vincent shakes his head, looks at his arms and his hands.

Vincent

But I am here

Dr Emmons

Do you have family we can call?
What do you need, how can we help you.

Vincent

I want my brother. I want my pipe.
I want to go home.

Dr Emmons

(MORE)

(cont'd)

No smoking in a hospital. Is there anyone we can call?

Vincent, weeping

Theo

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL VINCENT'S BATHROOM

Vincent in a wheel chair, hesitantly at the doorway of his washroom. The nurse shows him the switch

Nurse

See? Like this

She turns the light on and Vincent is startled, staring up at the lights. The nurse leaves as he turns the switch on and off. He goes to the sink and sees the levers, turning one as the water comes out of the faucet. Seeing the commode, another handle. He presses and a large sounding "swish" fills the room as Vincent quickly wheels backs away.

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL HALLWAY

Vincent walks slowly down the hall as he gains strength from his injury. He makes his way past the nurses desk to the patient ward. Making his way in the room, past the windows to the wall with his **Sunflower** painting.

He stares, then touches the print as an attendant comes to him. At first very moved almost emotional, then frustrated, angry.

Attendant

You ok?

Vincent

This is not mine

Attendant

No shit, Sherlock

CUT TO:

EXT HOSPITAL ENTRANCE DAY

Vincent is at the hospital entrance in a wheelchair with a nurse behind him.

He stands and leaves the hospital, still walking carefully. He looks with surprise at the traffic and cars. He backs toward the brick wall as though trying to protect himself.

CUT TO:

EXT NEW YORK SIDEWALK LATE AFTERNOON

He walks with his hands over his ears from the noise. Leans against a light pole. As dusk and shadow takes over the sidewalk, the street lamp turns on, startling him

CUT TO:

EXT NEW YORK SIDEWALK TWILIGHT

He walks past shops and stores, people pass him by as though he is not there. He comes upon a man putting graffiti on a brick wall with spray cans.

Artist, looking at Vincent
You got a problem dude?

Vincent doesn't respond, just stares

You like this? It's great right?

The artist takes a can of yellow and sprays against the wall. Vincent looks excited and touches the wet paint, then tastes it, making a face then spitting it out

Artist
Dude, don't do that. You crazy

Vincent looks at the spray can

You like this? Want to try one?
I'll let you.

The artist shakes the can and hands it to Vincent. Vincent takes the can, looks at it and pushes the nozzle down, but it faces the wrong way and sprays the man in the face.

Artist, screaming
You son of a bitch, what the hell?

He starts hitting Vincent, grabs the spray can and tries to spray Vincent in the face.

Vincent responds by getting violent, punching and hitting. They are interrupted by a policeman who wrestles Vincent to the ground, handcuffs him and calls in

Officer

500 central I have a 1-40 at the corner of 5th and Harper, I need an ambulance

CUT TO:

INT NIGHT POLICE STATION

Vincent is in a jail cell as two officers talk at the desk.

Officer 1

No ID, no papers, no money. I'm pretty sure he's homeless

Officer 2

He says his name is Vincent van Gogh

Officer 1

Nice, a cultured homeless guy ... maybe he can paint my living room

They look at Vincent in the cell, Officer 1 comes to him

Officer 1

Do you need anything? Hungry? I can get you some water

Officer 2

Is there someone you want to call? A friend?

CUT TO:

INT COURTROOM

A judge at his bench, reviewing the police report. Vincent is at a table with his public defender and the arresting officer behind them

Judge

No ID at all?

Public defender

None. It seems he was found with a bullet wound to the lower chest. About 3 months at St Mary's Hospital, most of that time in a coma. He was released three days ago.

Judge

And already in jail. You move fast Mr ... Van Gogh?

Public Defender

He, uh, says he's Vincent van Gogh.

The Judge leans against his hand, drums his fingers on the desk and shakes his head.

CUT TO:

INT HOMELESS SHELTER OFFICE DAY

Vincent and his public defender sit in front of the desk of the shelter director, a black man in his late 60's

They wait as the director goes through the paperwork.

Director

His name?

Defender

He says he's Vin ...

Director, firm

His REAL name?

Defender

For now, that is his name. No background, no history. Not even a social security number.

Director

Well Mr Van Go, we need to find you a place to stay and, hopefully, a job. We need to find you some employment

Vincent
Gogh

Director
what?

Vincent
Gogh, my name is Vincent van Gogh

Director
Right. And I am Paul Gaughin

Vincent
But ... no

Director
No WHAT?

Vincent touches the Director's black hand

Vincent
You can not be, you are the wrong
color

Director, to the Defender
Is this man's accent for real?

Defender
I have no idea

CUT TO:

INT HOMELESS SHELTER DINING ROOM, FOOD LINE

Vincent stands in the food line, looking at his empty plastic tray. The kitchen helper, a portly Hispanic woman, slops mashed potatoes, corn, soup beans and a bread roll on his plate

CUT TO:

INT HOMELESS SHELTER DINING ROOM TABLE

Vincent sits at the table with several others, quiet. Listening to the chatter. He looks at each man sitting, slowly eating his crust of bread.

On the wall he sees a drawing obviously made by a child.

Above the wall hangs a TV, Someone clicks the screen on. Vincent gets startled and quickly stands, points at the screen

Vincent yelling

No

Attendants come to calm him down

Director

Easy, Michelangelo. It's OK

After a calming moment

Director

Settle down. Eat your lunch.

Vincent's eyes explore the room, and the men at the table again. He looks at the drawing on the wall. Taking his corn, he shapes a half moon on the table. With the mashed potatoes, stars in a swirling position. With the beans he shapes the man sitting in front of him.

Suddenly a cloth wipes it all away.

Kitchen lady

You no like the lunch, you no draw
with the beans

CUT TO:

INT NIGHT SHELTER DORM

Vincent lies on his bed, the faint light from the hallway barely lights the room. The Director approaches and sits on the bed.

Director

Look, I know you live scared. We
all do. It will be ok. Just stay
calm. When you feel bothered, don't
react, just ask

He reaches into a paper bag

Here you go, Rembrandt. This will
work better than your breakfast.

He hands Vincent a drawing tablet and some pencils.

CUT TO:

INT LATE MORNING SHELTER COMMUNITY ROOM

Vincent sits in a chair, drawing others sitting at a table on his tablet. One of the men gets up and comes to see what he is doing.

HOMELESS MAN 1
Let me see?

Vincent hands him the tablet. One of the other men come over

HOMELESS MAN 2
Dude, that sucks. If you're an
artist I'm a brain surgeon

Vincent
What is "sucks?"

**HOMELESS MAN 1, looks at his friend
annoyed**
It means he LOVES it

HOMELESS MAN 2
Vincent van Gogh my ass, dude is
Vincent van Sucks.

Vincent takes back his tablet.

Vincent
What is "dude?"

CUT TO:

INT NIGHT THE DORM

Vincent lies in the dark, pulling the covers over him. He is scared and confused. Very slowly, starts weeping.

CUT TO:

EXT NEXT MORNING

The director walks with Vincent we are at the front of the New York City Employment office

CUT TO:

INT OFFICE

The Director and Vincent sit in a supervisor's office. Vincent looks out the window and sees a glimpse of a bus that looks like it has one of his paintings advertised on the side. He jumps up toward the window.

Director

Slow down da Vinci. What's wrong?

The supervisor enters the office

Supervisor, to the Director

Bobby ... so what do we have here?

Director

We have a displaced male, about 35, no known priors, no previous address on record, no known employment, no ID and no family that we know of.

Supervisor

And that's the good news?

Director

He likes to draw and says he's Vincent van Go.

Vincent

Gogh. Van Gogh

Director

Right, he says it like "rough"

Supervisor

OK, well. So, where did you live before all of this?

Vincent
Auver-Sur-Oise

Supervisor
In France?

Vincent just looks down. The supervisor starts typing a search on his laptop. He shows Vincent a pic of a large yellow building.

Supervisor
What is this?

Vincent stands and yells
That is it. That is it. My home.
How do you know?

Director
Calm down, Cezanne

Vincent becomes agitated and starts shaking. The supervisor types again on his computer and opens The Starry Night

Supervisor
And this? It's a painting by the
real Vincent van Gogh

Vincent
But I AM the real Vincent. It is
ME.

Vincent breaks down and starts screaming.

What is happening? I don't
understand. I want Theo

He throws a chair against the wall. A secretary rushes to the door

Supervisor
Call 911

CUT TO:

INT POLICE STATION

We are close up on the cell lock as keys turn around, and the door opens. Vincent sits on the floor in the corner, knees to his chin and rocking slowly.

Officer 1, with a kind tone

You're becoming a regular. Come on,
you have a visitor

CUT TO:

INT POLICE STATION INTERROGATION ROOM

Vincent enters a small interrogation room. Seated at a table is his social worker, LaToya Harris, a 40-something black woman, kind but serious.

LaToya

Nice to meet you. I've heard a lot
about you and I guess you've had a
tough time of it.

No response

I understand if you feel
uncomfortable. It must be very
difficult. Can I sit closer? Is
that OK? I want to help you, I'm
here to help you the best I can.

She moves to the chair next to him.

You call yourself Vincent van Gogh.
Is that your real name?

Vincent looks exasperated, frustrated.

Vincent

I don't know what to say

LaToya

That's alright. Let's take it slow.
I hear you are a very fine artist

Vincent, upset

I see my paintings ... on walls.
But Theo is not here. I am here but
Theo is gone.

She looks at her note pad

LaToya

Theo ... he is your brother?

Vincent

Find him, please.

LaToya

And if I could, where should I look, is there an address?

Vincent

I don't know. I don't know. I don't ...

Almost weeping

They told me he died after me ... (shouting) but I am here. How can that be? Here I am. I don't know why. I don't know how. Why is this happening? Why is Theo gone and my paintings are on a wall?

A policeman enters the door, alarmed. LaToya waves him off, mouthing "it's alright." Vincent is emotional, he grabs her arm and buries his head on her shoulder.

Vincent

I am Vincent, I am just a painter. I have nothing. I need my brother to help me.

LaToya looks over to the policeman at the door, and then to Vincent

LaToya

Let's go for a walk, I have an idea.

CUT TO:

EXT DAY NYC SIDEWALK

LaToya and Vincent are walking down the sidewalk. He sees neon signs and billboards.

They stop when they come upon a street busker and Vincent watches people simply walking by the singer as though he was not even there.

CUT TO:

EXT DAY NEW YORK MUSEUM OF ART ENTRANCE

They come near the entrance and see a large poster advertising a Van Gogh original art display. The poster has a close up of the swirling stars of The Starry Night.

Immersive Van Gogh

He stops and starts trembling.

This is a very emotional moment as he realizes his work has become a major art event.

LaToya

Are you ok? Do you want to go in?

CUT TO:

INT DAY MUSEUM

They enter the museum and the Van Gogh art exhibit. Vincent sees his framed paintings on display, with protective barriers and an audience, **he stares in disbelief. We let the camera tell his emotions here, no words needed.** Soon he becomes frustrated and confused.

Vincent

How ... ?

LaToya

See? Here is the real Van Gogh. He is the most famous artist in the world. What do you think?

Vincent

But ... I am ... I ...

He stands in front of his "**Wheatfields**" painting, the same painting our script began with, and he starts trembling,

Vincent

No. No. This is not possible.

(MORE)

(cont'd)

LaToya

Come on, wait till you see this.

CUT TO:

INT DAY MUSEUM - IMMERSIVE ROOM

She leads him into a large area for the **Immersive Digital** display. He stands in the middle of the room surrounded by projections of his work, huge and moving. At first he is overwhelmed and moved by the beauty of it all.

Vincent

This ... these are mine.

He is engulfed by the cascading images of *Starry Night* and more.

LaToya

See? The most amazing painter in history. Do you love it?

Vincent begins hyperventilating, almost passing out.

Vincent, loudly

I can't ... I don't understand. How is this even possible?

He turns and runs out of the room

CUT TO:

INT DAY MUSEUM VAN GOGH EXHIBIT HALL

He runs back into the exhibit hall of his paintings, sweating and out of breath. He is getting tense and agitated. LaToya and a security guard follow behind.

LaToya

Vincent?

Vincent, shouting

These are not yours. The paintings are mine.

Vincent turns over an easel with a poster of his likeness and hurls it to the floor. More security is called as he is restrained and escorted out of the museum.

FADE TO BLACK

ON SCREEN

"THREE WEEKS LATER"

UP FROM BLACK

EXT DARK DAWN OUTSIDE THE MUSEUM

Vincent stands outside the museum from across the street. His breath hangs heavy in the cold early morning. The grand billboard showing the Van Gogh display is prominent and he has a melancholy, confused expression.

CUT TO:

EXT FULL DAWN SAME DAY

He continues walking and comes upon the Hudson River. At the shore is a young woman, Toshi Tahara, with an easel, painting the river landscape. Vincent quietly approaches. She notices him standing near.

Toshi

You are very close to me. Maybe too close?

Vincent says nothing, just stares at the canvas.

Toshi

You are a safe person? You don't want to hurt me, I can call 911. I have a gun.

Vincent hears that and steps back

Vincent

No more guns. No more please.

Pauses, softly

I just want to watch the painting.

Toshi relaxes her stance and stares down Vincent.

Toshi

OK then. Stay where you are and you can watch. Any closer and I call 911, ok?

We see Toshi CLOSE, her brush strokes and the paint on the canvas and the morning light gets brighter. Vincent is transfixed and begins moving his hands in tandem to hers on an imaginary canvas.

Toshi

You like art, do you?

Vincent

It is a comfort to me.

Vincent stares at her canvas.

Toshi

Does this comfort you?

Vincent

What would life be if we had no courage to attempt anything?

Thoughtfully

Your painting, it is too real.

Toshi

Too real? That could be a compliment but it didn't sound like one. My name is Toshi, what is yours?

No response

She reaches into her bag and pulls out a canvas board. She selects some brushes and spreads paint on a pallet, handing it to Vincent.

Toshi

Don't just watch ... do.

Vincent accepts the bundle, sits on the shore and looks into the distance. Toshi walks up to him and hands him a pencil.

Toshi

You might want to start with this

Vincent, quietly

I don't need it

He starts outlining the canvas with his brush, choosing bold colors, the paint thick. Toshi watches in complete amazement, not just the speed, but the passion he has for the painting. The morning sun rises behind them, shining on the mountains and shoreline in the distance. Vincent finds the light and expresses it on the canvas.

As he finishes, he dips his finger in the yellow paint and puts it on his lips.

Toshi

Don't do that, you'll get sick

She picks up his painting and stares at his wild strokes and the thick paint.

You use the black to outline. You have done this before. You are a painter? Yes? Your style looks so familiar to me.

Vincent stands and hands back the brushes.

Vincent

Once ... I was once.

Toshi hands back his canvas but Vincent refuses it.

Toshi

Take it, you can sell this.

Vincent

No. I don't ... it was not something they ... but now.

He looks into the imaginary distance of the Museum

I don't know anymore ...
You can keep it.

Toshi watches him turn and walk away.

Toshi

Wait. Who are you? What is your
name?

CUT TO:

INT NIGHT TOSHI'S APARTMENT

She sits alone in her loft apartment, a glass of wine at her side. She has a warm sweater on and her couch is next to a heater. She is staring at Vincent's canvas leaning against the wall. She reaches over and positions it on her lap.

Toshi

Remarkable ...

She reaches onto the canvas and dips her finger into the still damp yellow paint. Looks at it on her finger tip and tries a taste.

She makes a scowl and wipes her finger clean.

CUT TO:

EXT STOREFRONT NEXT DAY

We see the signage of the "Brooklyn Music & Arts Supply" store. Another sign on the window reads,

**Make Music like Mozart
Draw like DaVinci
Pay with PayPal**

CUT TO:

INT DAY ART STORE

Toshi waits while the owner, Wilfred Benitez, finishes with a customer. Behind the register is a sign,

**"Wilfred Benitez, owner. I am also
an Artist so be nice."**

She is holding Vincent's canvas. It is a combination art supply store with a few second hand instruments hanging on the wall. Posters of classic artists including van Gogh's "Iris" and "Sunflowers" hang in frames.

Wilfred

Hey, Toulouse La-Toshi. What do you carry?

Toshi

Hey Uncle Benny, what's the word.

Wilfred

Cash. Today it's "cash." What you have there

Toshi

I want to show you, it's still soft so be gentle.

Wilfred carefully looks at the canvas.

Wilfred

I like this. Very much

Toshi

The content?

Wilfred

No ... the paint. It's so thick. He would be a good customer.

Toshi

Seriously, please ... the painting?

Wilfred looks closer, the brush strokes, the lines of color.

Wilfred

He is a fan of van Gogh

Toshi

He? A man? Why do you say.

Wilfred

Look, the mountains are angry, dark and violent. It is a man.

Toshi

Good call.

Wilfred becomes captivated

Wilfred

You know ... he obviously likes van Gogh, Gauguin, Monet. He has classic style. Neo-impressionism. People do not paint like this anymore. Who is he? There is no signature.

Toshi

I have no idea.

CUT TO:

INT SMALL MARKET MORNING

Vincent has a job stocking shelves in a small market. He is arranging fruit, mixing colors and items to create a display like it's a canvas. The manager, a young man with a heavy NYC accent

Manager

Vinnie, what the hell are you doing?

Vincent

Here is more color, the yellow and the reds. It is not just fruit, it is art.

Manager

Dammit, do the job, don't change the job. This is a grocery store, not an art gallery.

CUT TO:

INT EVENING HOMELESS SHELTER

Vincent sits in the TV room with several others. Watching the large screen TV on the wall, a program ends and we see a first commercial. Then a second, which uses one of his paintings as a backdrop

"Harris Paints, from your living room to your front porch, make your home a masterpiece even van Gogh would be proud of."

Vincent gets up. Starts yelling and throws a chair at the TV.

Attendant

Leave now. Get out or I'll call the cops. Out!

CUT TO:

EXT NIGHT NEW YORK SIDEWALK

Vincent is walking in the chilled night air. He comes upon the same graffiti artist as before. He stands and watches while he works.

Vincent

The blue, Add the blue

The graffiti artist turns around.

Artist

You again? Dammit, fool. Mind your business.

Vincent backs up.

You want to eat my paint again? Get away, creep. Go!

CUT TO:

EXT EARLY MORNING NEW YORK SIDEWALK

Vincent is asleep on the sidewalk outside of the market. The light of early dawn hangs like fog from his breath. We are CLOSE on his face and see a foot push his shoulder awake.

Manager

Vinnie, yo dude, wake up. What the hell?

Vincent startles awake. Sitting up he tries to clear his head.

Manager

You're early, my man. Get inside where it's warm, we can make coffee and you can rearrange the bananas to look like a fireplace.

He helps Vincent to his feet.

CUT TO:

EXT SMALL MARKET LATE AFTERNOON

It is after his shift, he is sitting on the sidewalk, his back against the wall with the plate glass window of the market above him. Drinking his coffee, he finishes and puts the empty cup on the concrete next to him

A well dressed elderly man, **Douglas DuPree**, comes upon Vincent while walking, sees the cup

Dupree

Greetings young man. I'm with the DuPree family over on 54th, and who might you be if I can be so bold and ask.

Vincent, pointing to the store front

This man calls me Vinnie, but I don't understand why.

DuPree

Then you are a Vincent

Vincent looks suddenly anxious

Vincent

Yes. Yes I am. I've tried to tell them

DuPree, looking at the empty coffee cup, pulls out his wallet

Hard times, no doubt. Can I put some dollars in your empty cup?

(MORE)

(cont'd)

It doesn't look like it's going so well.

Vincent places his hand over the cup

Vincent

I don't need money. This man pays me to ruin his fruit display

DuPree

No money? That is a first. You are an honorable man, Mr. Vincent

He puts his wallet back in his pocket

What can I help you with? What do you need?

Vincent

I want a ticket to that Museum

DuPree

The Museum of Art but no money? You are indeed a surprise. Why don't you just go?

Vincent

The man who calls me Vinnie makes me wait for the money. You work, you should get paid, not wait. I work now, pay now. Everybody is told to wait for everything.

DuPree

At my age, waiting is not recommended.

Thoughtfully

Tell you what, Mr. Vincent. Let's go to the Museum. Me and you, my treat.

CUT TO:

INT EVENING MUSEUM OF ART

DuPree pays for their ticket and they enter the museum. They make their way down a grand hall of statues and art. They come to the entrance of the Van Gogh exhibit. Vincent stops, hesitant. DuPree pats him on the shoulder,

DuPree
Come on

They enter the huge gallery and Vincent sees his framed paintings on the wall, with guard rails in front of each one. He looks up at the **florescent lights**,

Vincent
The brightness, this light ... it
is not real

They walk up to the first painting, "**Landscape with Snow**" Vincent looks overwhelmed seeing it. He reaches out his hand to touch it, but it's too far away.

DuPree
You like this one?

Vincent
No. I came to Arles for the sun,
but it was so cold. I came off the
train to ice and snow.

DuPree looks startled by the comment, but says nothing. They go to the next paining, "**The Potato Eaters**"

DuPree
Now this. Amazing, is it not

Vincent
It was so dark, no light. The
people were sad, and they smelled
terrible. Nothing to eat but
potatoes. I couldn't help them, so
I painted.

DuPree
You? ... painted?

Vincent

I didn't understand the light

DuPree

I see.

An attendant recognizes Vincent from before and alerts security.

DuPree

So you painted this? In Arles?

Vincent

No, it was in the Wood Land

The attendant hears this

Attendant

He means Holland, it was called the Wood Land when Van Gogh painted.

DuPree

Ah, the Netherlands

They move to the next, a startling, dark and disturbing self portrait (1889). Vincent stands silent in front of it.

DuPree

He stares from the corner of his eye

Vincent

I wished they would only take me as I am. But they would not, so I was ashamed

Attendant

Van Gogh was in the insane asylum

Vincent (sharply)

I was just sad, that is all. It did not sell so it doesn't matter

The attendant signals to the security to get closer.

It was all so hard. I couldn't face you, so I looked aside. They wouldn't let me paint, and then Theo made them.

DuPree looks at the painting, and then notices Vincent's left earlobe is gone, back at the painting.

Vincent

I hated it, so I would not sign it.
It was worthless, nobody cared

Attendant, laughing

This is worth millions, what are you talking about. These paintings are priceless. The Potatoe painting sold for 20 million dollars

Vincent gets angry

Vincent, loud shouting

Nobody cared. It meant nothing. 20 million? 20 million potatoes would be too much. How could it even be. What is going on, why do you even have these.

The security guard and attendant escort Vincent out of the Museum

CUT TO:

EXT NIGHT MUSEUM ENTRANCE

DuPree dusts Vincent's coat off. Vincent stands with his hands over his face, almost weeping

Vincent

I am so sorry. I don't understand any of this

DuPree

Well, my friend, at the very least you certainly have a deep knowledge of your hero.

Vincent

Everybody knows me ... but nobody knows me. I don't know how this is even happening. I don't know who to be. I just want Theo

DuFree

Ah yes, Theo

He reaches into his coat pocket for his wallet and pulls out two \$100 bills.

I'm not Theo, but as an old man, this has been the biggest adventure I've had in years. Take this ..

He stuffs the bills in Vincent's pocket.

... no need to wait, right? Go make Theo proud. I hope you find peace.

CUT TO:

INT NIGHT TOSHI'S APARTMENT

She is alone in her loft, working on a painting set on her easel. Behind the easel, on a shelf, sits Vincent's painting. She stops, takes his painting and sits on her couch, staring at it. Pouring a glass of wine, she goes to her bookshelf and finds a volume "**The Works of Vincent van Gogh**"

Opening the book to color photos, she compares them to the brush strokes on the canvas.

Toshi, softly
Incredible.

CUT TO:

EXT MORNING ART STORE

We are CLOSE on the art store sign "**Brooklyn Music & Arts Supply**" Vincent stands outside, staring at his two \$100 bills

CUT TO:

INT ART STORE

Vincent stands in front of the brush display, feeling each brush and the texture of the bristles on each one.

Wilfred

Are you going to paint with it or
date it?

Vincent pulls out his bills and lays them on the counter.

Vincent

Will this buy a brush?

Wilfred looks surprised at first, then laughs.

Wilfred

Tell you what, you pick what you
want first, I will let you know if
it's enough.

Vincent goes through the store, picking out tubes of primary
paint, black and white, several brushes.

Vincent

These brushes are not hog hair

Wilfred

They're close. Synthetic. We save
the pigs

Vincent

Close is not real

Vincent continues to mull the shelves

Vincent

Canvas?

Wilfred points to a wall shelf of canvases.

Vincent

But I always stretch my own.

Wilfred

Honestly, get these. You will have
more for the money. And it's
easier.

Vincent

Everything is loud. Bright, Noisy.
Now it's easy.

They pile everything up on the counter by the register. As Wilfred goes through the prices, Vincent sees his "Iris" poster on the wall.

Vincent

Did that also cost you \$20 million?

Wilfred

Ha! Right.

Vincent, staring at the poster

It was so hard. The days felt so long. But they left me alone to paint. I painted every day, sometimes three each day. But this one, this was the first one. Every petal changes.

Wilfred, surprised

Yes, that is true. He did. It was.
Did I catch your name?

Vincent, looks at the bills on the counter

Is it enough?

Wilfred

You have some change. Maybe more colors?

Vincent

No, I always mix my own.

Wilfred

Who are you? Should I know you?

Vincent

I am just a painter

Wilfred

(MORE)

(cont'd)

Who do you paint like? Everybody
paints like somebody.

**Vincent, points to the poster on
the wall of his own painting**

I can paint like him.

Wilfred laughs, then stops. Looking suspicious at first. Then
he thinks he understands.

Wilfred

I bet you can ... The whole world
wishes they could paint like that
guy.

Thoughtful

Tell you what, if you can paint
like him, take your paints over by
the easel. Make me a painting and
if it looks like his, you can have
it all. Free. No charge.

Vincent walks up to the canvas and paints an image from his
imagination, the young woman artist he met along the river.
Wilfred watches him paint, fast and intensely, using the
paint in thick layers and bold colors. Wilfred is watching in
amazement as the painting quickly takes form and when Vincent
is done the store owner is shocked.

Wilfred

I think I've heard about you. Yes?
You met my niece along the river.
That's her in the painting.

He gets on the phone and called his niece.

Clean your brushes and come.
Quickly. Come!

CUT TO:

INT DAY CAFE

We are CLOSE on a cup of coffee in front of Vincent. There
are several. Vincent is nervous and confused and upset.

Toshi

You drink a lot of coffee.

He puts his cup down and pushes it away

Toshi

No it's ok, drink up. My uncle is paying for it.

As he takes another drink, she notices the paint on his hands and coat sleeve, the injury to his left ear. Outside the cafe window, it starts to lightly snow.

Toshi

You really believe you're Vincent van Gogh? THE Vincent van Gogh?

Vincent

All I want to do is paint, I don't want to talk. I don't want to think.

Toshi

Why?

Vincent

Because it doesn't make sense. This world doesn't make sense. None of this makes sense. Twenty million for a painting Theo could not sell ... **(raises voice)** DOES NOT MAKE SENSE

Toshi

Well, it was a lot more than that.

The waiter and Cafe manager come to the table.

Manager

Everything OK here?

Toshi

Just give me the bill.

CUT TO:

EXT EVENING CAFE ENTRANCE

As the snow continues to fall, they stand silent for a moment outside the Cafe. Vincent holds his canvases and bag of paint supplies.

Toshi

Where do you live?

Vincent

I ... I don't know. They won't let me back, I'm sure of it.

Toshi

You really need to control your temper. Your mood swings are worse than mine. Do you have money?

Vincent

Your uncle still has it.

Toshi

Ah, the paints you could have for free cost everything you had. Typical.

Vincent stands quiet and does not reply.

Toshi

I have an idea. Let's go back to my uncle.

CUT TO:

INT SAME NIGHT ART STORE

Vincent looks at a poster of a Picasso work, tilts his head and says

Vincent

Why in the name of all that is holy ...?

Toshi and Wilfred are in a passionate discussion in the back of the store while Vincent waits.

Wilfred
But he's crazy

Toshi
Crazy people keep you in business

Toshi and Wilfred walk up from the back of the store.

Toshi
Vincent, we have a proposal for
you. But first

Wilfred hands Vincent his two \$100 bills.

Wilfred
I have a room, a nice loft above
the store

Toshi
It's an attic

Wilfred
Anyway, we can make it nice for
you.

Toshi
It's a dump.

Wilfred
ANYWAY, here's what I do ... you
can live there, I will give you all
the canvas and paint and the
brushes. All I want is half

Toshi
Twenty percent

Wilfred
Dammit. Twenty percent ownership of
your work.

Vincent
Do you really want 20% of nothing?

Toshi

Good, it's done. Welcome home.

CUT TO:

INT SAME NIGHT LOFT

Wilfred and Toshi set up a cot, a table and chairs, a lamp in the loft ... Vincent's new home. Vincent looks out the large window across the New York City skyline, the lights are brilliant.

Wilfred is setting up his easel.

Wilfred

So, you can have as many canvases and paint that you want. Just keep painting.

Vincent

Why?

Wilfred

Because, you're very good sir. We will make some money and shake up the art world ... I just have a hard time calling you van Gogh.

Vincent

Just don't call me Gauguin.

Wilfred

Why not Paul Gauguin?

Vincent

He was very mean to me.

Wilfred

Right. Of course. OK, then. The washroom and shower is downstairs. Well, good night.

CUT TO:

EXT SAME NIGHT OUTSIDE THE ART STORE

Toshi and Wilfred are saying goodnight

Toshi

Yes he's good, he knows virtually everything about van Gogh. It's creepy and it's strange.

Wilfred

He must've gone to college or an art school before he went crazy.

Toshi kisses him on the cheek

Good night, Uncle Benny

CUT TO:

INT THAT NIGHT VINCENT IN HIS LOFT

He lays in his bed, bathed in the blue light of the moon shining through his loft window. He can't sleep, so he gets up and walks to his table, there is a paper coffee cup that he empties onto his tongue. He looks out of his window to see the stars above the glaring city lights.

Vincent

Too much light, I can't see.

He looks over to his easel. Placing a canvas with his back to the window, he begins to draw, looking over his shoulder to see the night landscape and crescent moon.

CUT TO:

INT THAT NIGHT ART STORE

Wilfred is downstairs, cleaning up and ready to shut off the lights and leave. He listens at the base of the stairs, then shuts the stairway door.

CUT TO:

EXT NEXT MORNING NEW YORK SKYLINE

The dawn drifts over the skyline of the city, cold fog lingers over the city skyline in the horizon.

CUT TO:

INT SAME MORNING VINCENT'S LOFT

We see up CLOSE his brush strokes, layering on the finishing touches upon his canvas, but we do not see what he has painted. He looks at his finished canvas, picks it up and lays it against the wall.

He finally goes to his bed and lays down to rest. The cameras slowly goes across the room and IN toward the finished canvas. It looks like "**Stars Over the Rhone**" but includes the NYC skyline.

CUT TO:

INT DAY MUSEUM OF ART LOBBY

Wilfred stands waiting, holding four completed canvases and a satchel. An executive, Larry Davis, comes down the hall and calls to him,

Davis

Mr. Benitez, how are you

Wilfred

Larry, thank you for taking the time

CUT TO:

INT DAY LARRY DAVIS/ OFFICE

Larry Davis is bending over the canvases, laid out on a table with a bright overhead lamp. He uses a head-brace magnifier.

Davis

Yes ...

Wilfred waits impatiently at the table

Davis

Fascinating ...

Wilfred

And? Well?

Larry stands up, taking the head brace off and turning off the lamp.

Davis

I've never seen a forgery based on an otherwise original piece of art that has not been copied.

Wilfred

What the hell does that mean?

Davis

It means it's a perfect copy of van Gogh's style, but it is a completely original image. Van Gogh didn't paint this, but it looks exactly as if he did. Amazing.

Wilfred

I knew it. I did.

A knock at the door, a woman curator enters.

Curator

Is this it?

Davis motions for her to analyze the canvas. After a moment.

Curator

You're right. It is a perfect counterfeit of an otherwise original piece of art. Ironic, right? Who did this?

Wilfred

Well, this part is interesting ...

INT DAY HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF LARRY DAVIS'S OFFICE

A pause, and then we hear him from inside the office

Davis

You mean the crazy guy that does all the screaming in the museum?

CUT TO:

INT NIGHT RESTUARANT PART OF A BAR

Toshi and Vincent sit at a table. He looks around and sees couples sitting at tables staring into their phones. Outside the cafe windows, the streets of New York City getting covered by light snow.

Vincent takes a drink of his coffee, Toshi has white wine.

Toshi

Do you want something stronger?

Waiter

How are we doing here?

Vincent

A glass of Absinthe please

Waiter

What?

Toshi

You might as well order kerosene.

He'll have a white wine

Toshi gets a message tone on her phone.

Vincent

So many speak to their hands and
not to each other.

She ignores the phone. The waiter brings plates of dinner

Vincent to Toshi

Thank you ... for helping me. You
and your uncle.

She watches him look at the array of forks and spoons in front of him, selects one and begins his meal.

Toshi

Tell me, what happened to your ear?

Vincent

I was sad, my friend was leaving
me. I didn't want to be alone, so I
got angry

Toshi
I see.

He fiddles with his hair to cover his left ear

Toshi
Your painting, have you always been
an artist? Why do you paint?

Vincent
A great fire to paint burns within
me, but no one stops to warm
themselves, others only see a wisp
of smoke. My uncle has seen my work
and he thinks it's frightful. No
one cares.

My mother, now she was an artist. I
would watch her.

Toshi
Your family?

Vincent
I am the second Vincent. He died
and I was called after him, then
Theo came

Toshi
You were named after a dead
brother? Talk about an identity
crisis.

Vincent
My mother was always angry. She
wished I was the other Vincent, but
I was only me. I wanted to be only
one Vincent. But there were two.
And now, I want to be only one
Vincent ... but there is another
one I do not recognize.

She picks up her phone and searches Google

Toshi
(MORE)

(cont'd)

They said at the Museum you claimed to paint the **Potato Eaters**, that you wanted to help them?

Vincent

For many years, I wanted to be a minister. I lived in their poverty but I failed them, so I became a painter.

Toshi

If your mother was a painter, she must have been proud of you?

Vincent

She hated me. She didn't like my work. She wished I would die and go away. My mother was ashamed of me, only Theo would help.

Toshi

Ah yes, Theo again. Uncle Benny is your Theo now, yes?

Vincent

No. Maybe. I don't know ... this is all ...

Toshi

Tell me about Theo

Vincent, brightens up

My brother, he would help me, sending me money for my painting and brushes. Every month without fail. I would send him the canvases. I painted, he would sell.

Pauses

But none he could sell. But for one, to Anna. And some to an Uncle, but family do not make good patrons.

Toshi

(MORE)

(cont'd)

You really love your brother, you call for him often

Vincent

Theo is my savior. But I have made him sad. His wife put up with so much, and his child. He is leaving the gallery to start his own but my paintings he can not sell, they are no good. He won't be able to help me. I got very angry with him because I knew he was leaving me.

Gets upset

What can I do without Theo? How can I keep working if he can not help me? But I can not be a burden on his new life. And now he is not well.

The waiter looks over at the commotion, Toshi waives him off

Toshi

It's ok, just calm down. You really need an anger management class. Or a Valium

Vincent takes a deep breath and a drink of wine, calming down. She looks up a photo on her phone and shows Vincent

Toshi

And this?

Vincent

Gachet. My friend. He came to me after they ... when it happened ... and then Theo

Vincent reaches for his abdomen

Toshi

The gunshot? And he was your doctor? But not the doctors at the New York hospital?

Vincent's expression turns dark

Vincent

I can not explain them. I don't know ... I don't know what is happening.

Toshi

Well, you certainly know your Wikipedia.

Her cell phone rings

Toshi

Yes? ... it's Uncle Benny, hello?
... What? No way, Jose ... Really,
oh my God

CUT TO:

EXT EARLY NEXT MORNING

We see the front of the Museum at early dawn

CUT TO:

INT MORNING MUSEUM CONFERENCE ROOM

Larry Davis, the Curator, Wilfred, two other museum executives at a conference table. One is getting coffee, another yawns. The clock on the wall shows 7:38

Davis

So, let's figure this out. It's either a good idea or a waste of time

Curator

We have a man with no records, fresh from a hospital with a gun injury, given to temper tantrums that claims he is Vincent Van Gogh

Wilfred

Who paints EXACTLY like van Gogh

The Curator shrugs agreement

Davis

And that can be worth a fortune if we manipulate this correctly. He likes to paint, so let's get him to paint.

Curator

But this man actually thinks he's Vincent Van Gogh. This is insane, the man himself is insane. He could scare the Starry Night out of everybody.

Davis

Or be endearing, like the act that it is. Give him an easel and let him paint in the Van Gogh room. If it doesn't work, he's gone

Executive 1

A painting display and easel in the Van Gogh room?

Executive 2

A Van Gogh imitator painting like Van Gogh. Brilliant. Dress him up ... The hat and pipe.

Davis

\$500 a week and a commission if he sells any

Wilfred, raising his hand

I get 20%

The intercom rings

"Mr. Davis your 8am has arrived"

CUT TO:

INT VAN GOGH ROOM MUSEUM

Vincent and Toshi in the Van Gogh Exhibit room with the team and Wilfred.

Vincent

You want me to make believe I am me
and paint like me in front of my
own paintings?

Davis

We want to give you a job to be the
painter we know you can be. What
better place than by the very
artwork that you love so much

Toshi, to Vincent

This can be very good. Say yes. I
will stay with you until you feel
comfortable.

CUT TO:

INT VAN GOGH ROOM MUSEUM

Davis and a technician set his workspace up in the Van Gogh
room. He has his easel, canvas, paints, pallet and brushes.
They bring him a smock and a straw hat.

Davis

Ah, yes. The final touch.

Handing Vincent a pipe

Vincent

Finally. I need tobacco

Davis

Oh, you can't smoke in the museum.
But you can Vape

Vincent

What?

Toshi

Vape. It's fake smoking.

CUT TO:

INT VAN GOGH ROOM MUSEUM

We are CLOSE on the canvas and see a brush glide paint over the form, we HEAR the murmur of a museum crowd

We see him at his easel as the crowds gather, many in amazement. Many holding up their cell phones taking photos of Vincent painting. A well-dressed gentleman and his lady come close and watch

Man

Amazing, just amazing

Vincent is painting the piece hanging on the wall in front of him.

Man

You even look like him. But your style, so very close to the real thng. Brilliant.

Lady

And unique. How did you even think of this, painting a painting of a van Gogh painting?

Vincent

They want me to make believe I am me to paint like I am me, so I am painting a painting of a painting I painted already.

Man

Just incredible

Watching Vincent paint

Is it for sale?

Vincent

You've got to be kidding.

CUT TO:

INT VAN GOGH ROOM MUSEUM

Vincent is working on a painting of a vase full of flowers. Students mill around and some watch.

Teacher

This is interesting, come. A man
imitating he is Van Gogh.

Vincent looks annoyed. Toshi comes near and touches his
shoulder.

Student

You are outlining it, like a
cartoon. Very sloppy

Teacher

Vincent was a failed painter during
his lifetime, he only sold one
painting

Vincent

My uncle bought 19

Teacher, annoyed

Family are not considered patrons.
Only one.

Student 2

You are not as good as the real
guy.

Toshi

Stay calm, just ignore

Vincent becomes more and more agitated by the commotion.
Toshi tries to get him to calm down and settle his mood to
keep working.

CUT TO:

EXT VAN GOGH ROOM MUSEUM

TV cameras and reporter interview Davis and the Curator,
Vincent stands next to them ... and the news portrays him as
a Vincent clone and a copycat.

Reporter

(MORE)

(cont'd)

A historic display of the most revered artist in world history, paintings worth untold millions made even more educational by a Van Gogh imitator who's painting style is remarkably similar to the original

CUT TO:

INT VINCENT'S LOFT, LATE AT NIGHT

A prolonged scene. He lies in his bed, staring up and bathed in the blue light of midnight. We hear the constant sound of the city, traffic and noise. He breathes heavier and heavier, getting more deeply troubled. He puts his hands over his face

Vincent

Theo ... please. Help me

CUT TO:

INT TOSHI'S APARTMENT SAME NIGHT

She sits in her bay window, looking out to the city. A blanket around her, holding a cup of tea. Above the city sky line a bright crescent moon. She looks at it, intrigued. **Suddenly the stars begin to move in a swirl.** She jumps up scared and drops her tea

CUT TO:

INT VAN GOGH ROOM MUSEUM

Vincent is in the background, crowds gather around his easel. Davis is talking to the executives.

Davis

It's working well. Tickets are up 27% and he has been staying calm. He even sold three canvases.

CUT TO:

INT VAN GOGH ROOM MUSEUM

Vincent is painting. Several people including tattooed teens stand around and watch. As he paints, he reaches for some yellow paint and licks his fingers.

Teen 1
Dude, that's awesome

Teen 2
Does that make you high

Teen 1
It's like huffing, man

Teen 3
What did you do to your ear?

Vincent puts down his brush, puts up his hands like he surrenders, and walks away.

CUT TO:

INT MUSEUM HALLWAY

Vincent walks slowly down a hall, taking a break. He is approached by two fans

Fan
Look, it's him

Fan 2
Can we get your autograph?

They present some paper and a pen, One takes a cell phone photo and Vincent signs his first name

Fan
Cool, you even do the signature
like him

Fan 2, as they leave
Thank you!

Vincent enters an exhibit hall called **NORMON ROCKWELL EXHIBIT**

CUT TO:

INT DAY MUSEUM NORMAN ROCKWELL EXHIBIT ROOM

Vincent goes from painting to painting, crowds mill around him. He sucks on his pipe, deep in thought until he stands next to a thin, lanky man also with a pipe.

Vincent looks at the style and strokes of "Freedom from Want" then "The Song of Bernadette," and then "Saying Grace"

The two men end up standing side by side, their pipes protruding and moving in unison

Vincent

It's like different men painted each one

Norman Rockwell

It depended on what mood I was in

Vincent

You? You are this artist?

Norman

Ha. I don't call myself that. Too honorable. I am just an illustrator

He looks at Vincent

And you? You are the one everyone is enamoured with

Vincent

I am just a painter. But you, this is art. You paint with your heart, and such sadness. It is real.

Norman

It is rubbish. Most of it was commissioned, not what I wanted.

Thoughtful

Real art springs from the heart, not the wallet. Now, Van Gogh, he was a *real* artist

Vincent

(MORE)

(cont'd)

Nobody ever bought any of ... **(then to a frame on the wall)** ... the way you use light.

He looks around them as so many have cell phones taking pictures of the paintings. Norman looks as well

Norman

It's a new world, my friend

Vincent

It is all fake. They speak into a little box in their hands and not to each other. They look at the little box in their hands instead of their lover's eyes. They put the painting into the box and look at a fake picture of it.

Taking his pipe out his mouth

And they even smoke fake

Norman, laughs

Indeed

And then thoughtfully

We are living among the first generation in human history that gets art and music as a small screen, flat, digital, two dimension image. Quite remarkable, yet sad at the same time.

Vincent

These people, their lives are filled with nothing. Their life is a little box in their hand, and another box on their wall, they die and they get put into another box.

He shakes his head, then waves to the people in the room

Life is real, not this. Art is real, not this.

(MORE)

(cont'd)

Art should be seen and touched, it needs light to give the shadows of the paint. And, oh my God, how they judge. They elevate themselves by criticizing what they do not know. They sit in judgment of what they can not do.

Nothing ... nothing has changed.

Norman, looking intrigued

You have much passion. Admirable, and rare anymore. I like you friend, what is your name

Vincent

I ... I am ... I am only a painter

Norman gazes into Vincent's eyes

Norman

Only? My friend ... Here is what you need to know. All your hard work you thought denied, all your heart and spirit you thought ignored, your broken heart and your broken spirit. Every dab of paint, each brush stroke, every single canvas rolled and tossed in a closet. All of it has become treasure, all of it has become gold, each hurt you felt has become healed in time.

Vincent

But how? Why?

Toshi walks up to him in the Rockwell room

Toshi

You doing ok?

Vincent

Yes, I'm talking to this great artist

The camera pulls back and we see Vincent standing alone in front of the paintings.

Toshi, looking around
Who?

Vincent looks and there is no Norman Rockwell. He turns and walks away.

CUT TO:

INT DAY CAFE

Vincent sits alone at a table by a large glass window, deep in thought while looking over a city street. The gay male waiter walks up to the table, a bus outside with a large sign with the likeness of "Vincent Van Gogh" on the side advertising the museum exhibit.

Waiter, looking at the passing bus
You kinda look like that guy. What can I get you?

Vincent
Do you have sausage, bread and coffee.

Waiter
Well this is a vegan restaurant. How about a plant based burger and an artisan ciabatta?

Vincent
Do you have tomatoes and chestnuts?

Waiter
How about tomatoes and avacado?

Vincent
I don't know what ... ok, whatever.

Waiter
And a swirl on your latte?

CUT TO:

INT DAY MUSEUM LABORATORY ROOM

The curator and technician analyzes paintings on the table. She carefully uncovers a real Van Gogh, **a portrait of Felix Rey**. Then brings over Vincent's "painting of his painting." Studies and compares them both.

Curator

Remarkable. The Van Gogh painting of Dr. Rey and this guys technique are virtually indistinguishable. How does he do it? The impasto and brush strokes.

The technician hands her a group of x-rays.

Technician

You're gonna love this, it seems Dr. Rey had some company.

Holding up an x-ray sheet, she looks intense, then excited.

Curator

Oh my god, I can't ... I don't believe this. This will be worth a fortune!

CUT TO:

INT EARLY EVENING MUSEUM VAN GOGH ROOM

Vincent is cleaning up after a long day. Many still linger around the exhibit. Toshi arrives carrying two coffee cups

Vincent

For me?

Toshi

Both are for you. I figure by now you need two full cups and an IV tube.

Vincent guzzles the first cup. The old man DuPree comes into the room, overjoyed to see Vincent

DuPree

I saw you on the news. I was so proud to tell my family you are my friend. They didn't believe me.

(MORE)

(cont'd)

I told them that was perfectly appropriate considering your story.

Toshi

You know each other

DuPree

Consider me a new friend and a very minor investor.

The Curator, Steve, Davis and some attendants enter the hall carrying another exhibit painting to hang. Vincent, Toshi and DuPree come near.

Wilfred enters carrying some coffee.

Wilfred

I brought the painter some coffee, the drug of choice.

They watch as the frame is hung and then the cover removed. All stand to look at the new addition

Curator

What do you think, we are especially excited for this one. Very rare

Vincent

It is Felix

Curator, stunned.

It is. Yes, very good.

Davis

Felix Rey, he was Van Gogh's doctor

Vincent

No, Gachet was my doctor, Felix was only at the hospital in Arles. He made me very sad.

Toshi

Why did he make you sad?

Vincent

He wouldn't let me paint, but Theo convinced him.

Toshi

It must be nice for every artist to have a Theo

Wilfred

Uncle Benny isn't bad

Vincent approaches the painting, looking deeply

Vincent

I gave this to him as a gift, but he didn't like it

Technician

That's right, he basically gave it away.

Vincent goes to touch the canvas, but the Curator stops him

Curator

We can look but not touch

Vincent

He hated it and threw it away, but he didn't know he also threw away his daughter

Curator

WHAT?

Then to Larry

What????

Vincent

First I painted his daughter, but I didn't have another canvas, so I painted Felix over his daughter. He didn't know

Curator to Davis
Come with me

CUT TO:

INT SAME EVENING MUSEUM HALLWAY

Davis
Why are you upset?

Curator
How could he possibly know??

Toshi comes near and listens

Tell me ... How could he possibly?

Davis
What do you mean?

Curator
That canvas was x-rayed only last week. We saw there was another image underneath the painting of Dr. Rey

Davis
An image of what?

Curator
It looks like an image of a young girl. How in god's name would this man possibly know this?

Toshi hears this, turns in shock. She walks back into the exhibit hall.

CUT TO:

INT SAME DAY EXHIBIT HALL

Davis and the Curator stand next to TOSHI. Vincent is looking at the new painting, we see his profile and then to his side is the Van Gogh self portrait painting.

Curator

Is it even possible?

Toshi

It is. But how?

Toshi walks up to Vincent, takes his hand and says

Come talk to me. Come.

She walks through the Van Gogh exhibit, to **The Starry Night**

This one. This is my favorite. Tell me about it.

Vincent stares deeply at the canvas

I was in the asylum in Saint Remy. I was very alone. I needed God but I couldn't find him. I saw the stars at night but I painted during the day. The stars make me dream, so I painted my dream. The church, the village, are my dream. I saw the vision from the bars on the window of the asylum. And I prayed the painting.

Toshi

You love to paint your dreams. You love art.

Vincent

What is done in love is done well. There is nothing more truly artistic than to love.

Toshi, thoughtfully

That doesn't sound like Wikipedia to me

Vincent

It doesn't matter. It didn't sell, nobody liked it. Theo tried but it is worthless.

Toshi, exasperated

Do you not know? Really?
Do you even know what happened to
the person you think you are?

She points to The Starry Night

Twenty years ago this painting
auctioned for \$82 million. Today
the value is over **one billion
dollars**, it is one of the most
priceless paintings in the world

Vincent becomes fed up, agitated and loud.

Vincent, loud

How is this possible. Why? And what
is happening, I don't understand
any of this. What good is a billion
of anything? Where were these
people when I painted? When they
would laugh at me? When every
gallery in France and Holland would
ignore me? Where were they when I
was nothing but a burden to Theo.
It is nothing.

Toshi

But now ...

Vincent, loud shouting

Now means nothing!

Toshi

Now is good, now is all we have

A security guard comes near, followed by the Curator

Security Guard

Everything OK here?

Curator

Again? Really? What exactly is
going on with you?

Vincent gets upset, screams in frustration and runs out of the Museum followed by Toshi

CUT TO:

INT NIGHT VINCENT'S LOFT

Vincent is in his room sitting motionless in front of an easel in the dark. There is a knock, the door opens and Toshi enters. They sit quietly, not talking and after a while she looks at him intently and asks,

Toshi

Who are you. Really?

Vincent

My name is Vincent. I am just a painter.

Toshi

I'll be right back

She leaves Vincent in the darkness of his room. He looks out the window trying to see the stars in the sky but they are overshadowed by the glare of the city. Toshi comes back with a bottle of wine, she looks out the window with Vincent.

Vincent

This world looks so noisy and full of rage. I don't hear peace in what I see. There is no love. I don't know how to paint that.

Toshi

Oh, I'm sure you can.

Pouring a glass of wine they sit and talk

Toshi

When I was a little girl, my mother painted the Japanese Nihonga, very elegant. I didn't understand it and she rejected my journey. When I was 14 I moved to America and lived with my Uncle Benny.

Vincent

He is not Japanese

Toshi

He is from Mexico, but his wife is my mother's sister. She passed away shortly after I came, and Uncle Benny takes care of me, I take care of Uncle Benny.

Vincent

He is not Benny

Toshi, laughs

No, he is Wilfred, but as I was learning English that was too difficult to pronounce, but Benitez was easy, Benny was easier

Vincent

I am so grateful to you both.

Toshi

When I went to college, I majored in art studies. I learned from everyone, all the great painters. Monet, Rembrant, Picasso, Michelangelo and even Van Gogh. Especially Van Gogh

Vincent

Nobody thinks I am a great painter, nobody thinks I'm very good at all.

Toshi

Then why do you paint?

Vincent

Because I love. You must have love to paint.

He looks out the window,

Vincent

I love it all. But love is painful. The cost is great.

Toshi

Then if you are Vincent van Gogh
you must know how wealthy you can
be.

Vincent, frustrated

I can't even buy paints, my brother
buys them for me. If not for Theo I
would be less than nothing. My
brother is great, I am not.

Toshi

But nobody knows your brother. They
know who you are.

Vincent

How could that be possible, he was
everything

Toshi

Theo. Theo. You talk about Theo,
the world talks about Theo. It
wasn't even Theo that made Vincent
famous. It was a frustrated,
heartbroken, lonely woman taking
care of a fatherless child who had
nothing ... that's who made van
Gogh famous.

Vincent

What? Who?

Toshi

Let me fill you in. With all your
talking and admiration for your
brother Theo, it wasn't him that
made those paintings so famous and
valuable.

Vincent

But he believed, he tried so hard,
he stayed so loyal and let me work.

CUT TO:

BLACK AND WHITE MONTAGE BEGINS

We see a flashback visual of what Toshi describes, we hear the conversation as a **VOICE OVER**

Toshi

He was loyal, yes. He did the best he could, yes. But it wasn't Theo. He didn't have time

Vincent

What, what does that mean?

Toshi

Theo died only a few months after Vincent did, did you know that? Theo's wife Joanna was left with scores of rolled up canvases in her apartment, and she did not know what to do with them.

Vincent

I know. I know I was a burden. Theo and I fought, and I was so hurt that he was leaving the Gallery. Without his job he could not send me money to paint. I was scared. I was selfish. Joanna was resenting me, I could tell.

Toshi

The real Vincent was a great drain on Theo's finances, and you are right ... Joanna was getting very frustrated and angry.

Vincent

And Theo is not well.

Toshi

No he was not. And he died from syphilis just months after he held Vincent as he died in the yellow house.

CUT TO:

RETURN TO ACTION**Vincent**

My brother? He was so alive ...

Gently weeps

It was him ... But HE took care of the paintings, HE's the one who worked so hard. Why do you say it was not him?

Toshi

You do not know very much about the person you say you are.

Vincent

How is that possible if I wasn't even there?

Toshi

Good point. So let me tell you.

CUT TO:

BLACK AND WHITE MONTAGE BEGINS

We see a flashback visual of what Toshi describes, we hear the conversation as a **VOICE OVER**

Toshi

It took her 10 years, but after Vincent and Theo died Joanna finally got a gallery owner to present Vincent's paintings. Ten years of near poverty and she kept all of those rolled up canvases even when her friends made fun of her ... ten years until she could find someone to show them properly.

Vincent

Joanna did this? 10 years?

Toshi

Ten long, lonely years. She could have been angry and thrown over 200 canvases away, but she didn't.

(MORE)

(cont'd)

She decided to love what her husband loved ... because she loved HIM very much. And when she finally got a gallery in Paris to show the paintings, the name of Vincent van Gogh became legend.

It was Joanna that turned Vincent van Gogh into a worldwide superstar of the arts. It was Joanna that gave Vincent van Gogh his reputation. It was Theo's wife, the one who resented Vincent so much, that turned all of those rolled up canvases into precious treasure.

VINCENT

But Theo ...

BLACK AND WHITE MONTAGE ENDS

CUT TO:

Toshi

Not Theo ... It was Joanna. After you died, and then Theo died, when your paintings began to sell, did you know she spent yet another decade finding and editing all those letters you wrote to your brother?

She reaches into her bag and pulls out a book.

Look, I wasn't sure I should even show you this. It's the book of all your letters.

Vincent looks at the book and the handwritten prints of his letters to his brother.

Vincent

Joanna? Not Theo?

Toshi

It was Joanna who made Vincent van Gogh famous all over the world.

Turning the pages in her book

She even dug up your brother's
grave and brought him to rest next
to your grave. She buried Theo next
to you in a garden. See?

Toshi opens a page of the grave photos in the book. Vincent
simply looks shocked

She knew how much Theo loved you,
and how much he wanted to see you
loved in return. And when it
happened, she honored her husband
by honoring the brother he loved.

Vincent
Joanna?

He takes the book and embraces it against his chest.

I put my heart and my soul into
every canvas, and I feel like I
failed Theo, and poor Joanna ..
What she did. What she went through
because of me. I have lost everyone
and everything I have loved. And I
lost my mind in the process.

Toshi takes his hand.

I don't deserve any of this

She looks at the paint on his fingers.

Toshi
Of course you do

Vincent
Why?

And then she says with confidence,

Toshi, slowly
Because you ARE Vincent van Gogh.

(pause)

You ARE.
I can't believe I said that. I
can't believe I actually believe
it.

Vincent starts to silently weep.

Vincent

This has been so hard. I don't know
what's happening. I don't know how
I got here. I just want to go home.

They both get quiet. Vincent moves to the window and stares into the dark, starlit skyline above the city. She lights a candle, moves to the window with Vincent then takes his hand and holds it close to her chest and quietly says,

Toshi

Paint me. I want you to paint my
portrait.

Vincent

If I paint you no one will want the
painting because I am the one who
did it. You deserve better

Toshi

I would love to be a painting no
body wants because you painted it.
Paint me.

She waits for an answer

Vincent

There is no room on the canvas for
all that you are.

She moves to his pallet and takes a tube of yellow. She puts a dab on her finger and brings it to her lips.

Toshi

Then make room

She puts another dab on her finger and brings it to Vincent's lips. As she does, **golden sparkles like stars drip** from his lips and around his head. This time she does not move or react.

With her back to the camera, she drops her dress, a nude silhouette in the moonlight.

Vincent simply stares at her for the longest time. Then he picks up a brush and moves to the canvas.

CUT TO:

EXT MORNING MUSEUM

Three school buses line up and unload students

CUT TO:

INT VAN GOGH HALL

We see him at his easel, wearing his smock and hat, as the crowds and students gather, many holding up their cell phones taking photos of Vincent painting. Vincent becomes more and more agitated by the commotion.

Student 1

This guy actually thinks he's
Vincent Van Gogh

Student 2

He's whacko

Teacher

Come on, stop, show a little
respect

Toshi enters, bringing him two cups of coffee. She sees the crowd and tries to get him to calm down. She touches his fingers.

Toshi

It's OK, ignore them

The Curator enters the room.

Curator

Sir we need to speak. Right now.

Vincent leaves his easel, followed by Toshi

Curator, to Toshi

Privately, please.

Vincent, or whatever your name is,
what is going on?

(MORE)

VINCENT (cont'd)
 How can you possibly know these things about van Gogh. What are you pulling?

Vincent

I have deceived no one

Toshi hears and walks back

Toshi

What is your problem, Lady?
 Honestly!

Curator, sternly

I am more than uncomfortable with all of this. The museum can not be dragged into this ... masquerade. It's implausible and, frankly, dishonest. If you are sick get help. If you are a crook, leave. Either way, I think we've had just about enough of this deception.

Vincent, loud and shouting

I can't, I can't do this ... they are treating me badly all over again only now they are paying me. They think I am insane but your world is insane.

It becomes too much and Vincent leaves the museum with Toshi running close behind him.

Curator

We won't be paying you anymore,
 crazy idiot!

CUT TO:

EXT DAY SCENES OF THE CITY

Vincent runs and passes things in the city that look oddly like scenes from his own paintings. There is snow on the ground but it starts to rain.

CUT TO:

EXT DAY CENTRAL PARK

He runs into Central Park and stops at a tree grove, and is seen by teenage boys. Sitting on a stone, one sees Vincent and scrolls on his phone

Boy 1

Yeah, yeah ... look, it's him!

Boy 2

The Van Gogh guy. I bet he's loaded.

Boy 1

He's a human Bit-Coin, man.

They see Toshi calling out to him

And now enter the chick. Perfect timing

Boy 2

Go for the purse, I'll grab Bit-Coin's wallet

CUT TO:

INT MUSEUM VAN GOGH ROOM

The Curator looks for Vincent. She sees the empty easel, reaches for a brush and touches the yellow paint on the bristles. The **golden stars drip from the paint** and she tosses down the brush, startled

CUT TO:

EXT SAME DAY THE PARK

Vincent is angry and yells back. One grabs Toshi

Boy 1

Bitch ain't got no purse, dammit

He punches Toshi in the chest and she drops to the ground, splashing into an icy puddle, stunned. The two boys are angry and they get in Vincent's face and they start hitting and slapping him, looking for money in his pockets.

Toshi screams for them to stop

Toshi

Leave him alone, he has nothing

One of the young boys takes out a gun, waving it as a joke, and looks at his friend, who is laughing. Vincent sees an opening and lunges at the laughing man. The first boy crouches in a shooting position and as Vincent lunges to hit his friend, fires, shooting Vincent in the abdomen

Toshi sees the gunshot hitting his chest, and there is an **explosion of golden stars**

CUT TO:

INT EMERGENCY ROOM HOSPITAL

We see Vincent on a bed in the hospital, Toshi is at his bedside as he struggles to breathe. His chest is covered with blood. The doctors are working on him and Toshi refuses to leave

Doctor

Who is he?

Toshi

He is an artist ...

Nurse

Does he have insurance? His name?

Vincent struggles to breath and opens his eyes. Toshi leans in and gently kisses him. As she does **the room fills with golden stars.**

Doctor

What the hell?

The **stars swirl faster and faster**, the music rises in intensity. As it reaches its crescendo the screen suddenly goes silent and

SCREEN GOES TO BLACK and SILENCE

AFTER SEVERAL SECONDS

TRANSITION BACK TO 1890

CUT TO:

INT VINCENT'S BEDROOM IN FRANCE 200 YEARS AGO

We are **CLOSE to his face** as he makes an abrupt gasp. He's back on his cot from 200 years ago. The camera pulls back and Theo is cradling him in the bed

Theo

It's OK I am here

Gachet

Vincent, please. How did this happen

Vincent, weak

Don't ... it was just a mistake

Theo

I will take care of you. I will bring you home and Joanna will make you soup and bread, you can paint and rest. I will see to it.

Vincent

Joanna, take care of Joanna. Help her

Takes a breath

I so love you, brother. More than all else. I am so sorry.

Theo

No, no. I am the one who is sorry. I have completely failed you

Vincent

No, you didn't. Brother, they will know you because you loved me. They will all know you ... because you did so well.

As Vincent fades he becomes more delirious,

She will find me at the river.

Theo kisses his brother on his forehead and when he does the room fills with the swirling, golden stars.

Theo

Who will? What is happening. What is this?

Vincent

I see them.

Gachet sees the stars and then Vincent fading away

Gachet, urgently

Vincent, stay with me. Do you know this day? Talk to me. Do you know your name?

As the camera comes close to Vincent's face he simply says

Vincent

I am Vincent, I am a painter.

THE SCREEN FILLS WITH SWIRLING GOLDEN STARS and goes black as the music rises. As credits roll the gravestones of Vincent and Theo very slowly come onto the screen.

THE END