

TRANSHUMAN

ART



V a n G o g h

"Van Gogh is the artist who summed up the human condition in paint, with more passion and honesty than anymore before or since" - Robert Hughes



"Lanterns of Solitude"

Vincent van Gogh

(imagined, Auvers-sur-Oise, 1890)
Oil on canvas, 73 x 92 cm (framed)

"LANTERNS OF SOLITUDE"
VINCENT VAN GOGH
(IMAGINED, AUVERS-SUR-OISE, 1890)
OIL ON CANVAS, 73 x 92 CM (FRAMED)

Painted in the final months of Van Gogh's life, "Lanterns of Solitude" would have marked one of the artist's last and most haunting meditations on light, isolation, and the fragile boundary between nature and human invention

In this fictional work, a winding country road cuts through tall grasses, flanked by a procession of rustic light poles whose globes burn with a subdued, almost living glow. Unlike the violent brilliance of fire or the ethereal radiance of stars, these lamps flicker softly, echoing human presence in the vast emptiness of night. Their warm halos extend into the surrounding darkness, casting long shadows across the road and fields, suggesting both refuge and abandonment.

The sky, swirling with deep blues and restless movement, recalls *The Starry Night* but with a crucial difference: here, the heavens remain largely indifferent, a cold backdrop against which the fragile lights of mankind try to assert themselves. The moon hangs above like a pale guardian, observing this tenuous dialogue between earth and sky.

Scholars of this imagined piece have speculated that the painting could be interpreted as a final allegory of van Gogh's state of mind. The road, empty of figures, winds toward an uncertain horizon: a metaphor for the solitude that haunted his last years in Auvers. The light poles—modern, utilitarian, yet strangely organic in form—might represent van Gogh's recognition of fleeting moments of warmth and companionship in a life otherwise consumed by shadow. Each globe of light becomes a fragile beacon, simultaneously comforting and futile against the vastness of night.

No documents exist to suggest that van Gogh ever conceived of this motif, but its plausibility rests on strong foundations. His late works often juxtaposed the eternal with the transient, the natural with the human, in charged symbolic arrangements. *Café Terrace at Night* and *Starry Night Over the Rhône* both explored artificial light against nocturnal landscapes. “The Lanterns of Solitude,” had it existed, would stand as their darker twin: a vision not of conviviality and warmth, but of the loneliness of illumination itself.

Reconstructed today through imagination and homage, the work extends the arc of van Gogh's search for meaning in the night. It is not only a landscape, but a psychological testament—one where every brushstroke vibrates with longing, fragility, and the aching beauty of light in darkness.

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