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To Satisfy the Sky

Torn is the son of Orion from the book of the sky. Each night, the young man stares at his father until his armor falls off and he is no longer a warrior... He is putty for Torn's imagination. He is a firm believer in the naked eye and regularly curses Lowell, Galileo, and all other so-called gazers... Nothing feels closer to him than the night sky...

Torn wears the label "helpless romantic" with a smile. Each night, he drives his beat-up Chrysler to the summit of his mountain and creates. With only the tools of the painter, he grabs a hold of all that he can while still paying fair homage to the one he adores. His work never reveals the night sky as you would expect from such a crazed admirer... His paintings resemble fish and reptiles and the pets of people he'll never meet. Torn believes that there are other civilizations in the universe and that he has the power to communicate with them... For this, he thanks the sky for being an artist...

The helpless romantic confuses himself with Michelangelo and often recites a sonnet written by the master while painting the Sistine Chapel:

"With my beard toward heaven, I feel my brain atop my hump; I'm getting a harpy's breast; and the brush that is always above my face, by dribbling down, makes an ornate pavement..."

In these words, he draws inspiration from a fellow artist who attempted to paint the heavens... Yet he questions his methods...

On several occasions, Torn has threatened to stop painting the sky. He fears that his paints scar the canvas and suffocate Orion. He wonders if the true painting is the "ornate pavement" described or even no painting at all. He wonders if his audience sees through the ills of other sky-painters... Many airplanes are allowed to leave streaks of exhaust across the sky which burn its flesh and are yet called beautiful... The most "beautiful" sunsets are adorned with magenta dresses caused by toxins in pollution... Torn between inspiration and its release, he cannot help but think that if Orion could roam the daytime sky, he would drive his sword into their evil and perhaps his...

Torn still paints the night sky and curses airplanes, sunsets, Galileo and all that represents evil to a lunatic... He is quite a pagan upon his mountain, and through his dance and chant, he offers gifts to his father. No one can watch his parade and assume that, by throwing paint at the earth, he is not a great painter... Under certain veils, Torn sits without his brush and paints the sky with only his eyes... naked eyes... For no telescope could bring the young Torn closer to the man whom he loves... Here, they are both at home.

Eric Townsend, 'RC 95