

The Artist

Alone in an shack deep in the woods, the old man snored and rolled over in his hammock. His beard was gray, and his eyes were sunk deep into his sockets. A noise from his porch shook him awake, and he stared blearily into the darkness. There was someone standing outside his door, silhouetted against the night sky.

“Hello?” he said. The man made no response, but simply pushed against the door. It was locked, but it couldn't withstand much force and it quickly snapped open.

The old man was now standing, gripping a knife in his fingers. “Who... who are you?” he asked as the man stumbled inside.

“You know who I am.” snarled the man, pulling back his hood. “And I'm here so you can paint me something.” He pointed a gun at the other man.

“Yes, Andrew.” said the old man, fear making his voice shake. “What is it this time? Power, gold, a yacht perhaps?”

“I don't want gold or a yacht this time, old man.” said Andrew. “I'm fed up with my life now. You didn't make me powerful enough.”

“What do you want, then?”

“Make me powerful.” said Andrew, simply. “Make me into something that can destroy hundreds, make others fear me.”

The old man paled. “I thought you were... content with your present form.”

“You were wrong. Get to your easel. Now!”

The old man turned, his mind racing. He knew that what this man was asking was too much. He couldn't survive putting that much of his power into it. That was the only reason he didn't use it all the time.

He sat at his easel, raised his paint brush, aware of the other man watching him, and a loophole came to him. He began to paint.

Some time later, he took the painting and looked at it. “Well?” asked Andrew.

“It's done.”

The other man snatched it from his hands, and smiled nastily. “You won't see me again, I promise.” he said.

Now that the man had got what he wanted, he meant to kill him with his new, powerful form. The old man knew that as soon as he looked at the painting, the other man would know he had been tricked. He only hoped it would take effect before the other man could kill him.

He heard a scream as the man looked at his painting, and cringed as the man charged inside. The painting was blank.

“What are you trying to pull?!” screamed Andrew, raising the gun. “There's nothing there!”

“Oh there is.” said the old man. “You can't see the wind, but it is powerful. It can destroy, and kill. Isn't that what you wanted?”

Andrew gaped at him, the gun falling from his hand. As he reached down to pick it up, he realized he didn't have a hand anymore. His body faded away as wind roared through the shack. Andrew clawed at the ground, gave one final scream, and then he faded away into the wind.

The old man sighed, and turned back to his easel. People would never learn. Although he could bring what they wanted to life, it was risky to mess with an artist like him. He considered a blank canvas for a moment, then picked up his brush and began to paint.