

The Great Artist hurried to put the last stroke on his work. It had taken Him almost a week to finish it, what with all of the other activities in His busy schedule. But He so felt the need to create!

He was very excited about the project. He felt that it might be His Masterpiece. He took another look at it and said, 'It is very Good!' There had been so many different ways that He could have gone about doing it. There were many choices to consider, many problems to solve. But in the end the work brought together all of His thoughts and feelings into one whole.

He gave an informal show to exhibit his effort. Everyone loved it and gave it rave reviews, as they were in great awe at what they saw. But the Great Artist had a Chief Rival who was very jealous when he saw it he himself had never produced anything so wonderful. Indeed, this rival could not really create, but could only draw on the ideas of others.

So in his envy, the rival came along secretly and slashed through the heart of the Great Artist's work.

Oh, the agony in *the* heart of the Great Artist when He saw what had been done? He had loved it so; He had put His whole heart into it! He could not think of doing it over, of starting from scratch to recreate it. It was not because He couldn't, but because it would be like copying rather than creating. It would be replowing old ground.

He considered destroying it completely. How could He bear having His signature attached to such a mess? But He loved it so much that He suffered greatly from the thought of doing away with it. In the end He decided to patch it some way in the hope that He could live with the way it looked.

So He began to work with it every day to put an artistic bandage on the canvas which had been so irreversibly torn. No one else would have had the creative ability and passion to do this. As he struggled to make it beautiful again, many tears flowed and fell on the canvas. Where they landed they turned to crimson and in some miraculous way the gash began to be healed. When He was finally finished, He felt very good about His work again.

The truly amazing thing was that the creation was even better because it revealed the passion of its creator. Perhaps it had not really been perfect before. The Masterpiece was now even more revered because of the patch. It showed that great love can lead to rebirth, to resurrection.

The criminal responsible for the damage was eventually caught and imprisoned for a very long time. Soon he will be completely forgotten. But the beauty of the Masterpiece even now reigns supreme among all other works and lingers on in the hearts of its viewers. It is truly inspiring to others, not for them to be artists, but to have a love like that of the Great Artist.