

# Diogenes's Invectives

## My Passion for Setting Suns

*Atlas - Air France n°86 – August 1973*

There was a boom. I woke up with a start and realized that once again I was lucky.

I was lucky, for two very beautiful brand new cars had just collided at less than ten feet from my barrel. I had a ringside seat.

After the boom, there was a moment of silence and stillness, during which I admired the powerful abstract composition formed by the two interlocked cars, one red, the other blue.

Then a door opened and a gentleman leaped out of the blue side of my abstract painting. He too was blue, especially his right eye, which was rapidly developing stunning reddish-purple highlights. As a crowd assembled, he undertook to explain to them the wrongs committed by the red side. Without any possible doubt, in fact, the red side was at fault. The blue man was indignant, I was indignant, the crowd was indignant.

The voice of the blue man was just beginning to get a bit hoarse when a red door opened, and out stepped a second figure from the abstract.

It was a woman. The impact of the collision had tilted her hat precariously forward, but one could hardly doubt that her expression, though half-hidden, was one of utter vexation.

Since her vocal chords were fresh, she had no trouble in demonstrating that if the blue side had gone slower, had kept to the right, had not accelerated at a yellow light, had not, in short, committed at least fourteen moving violations, then never would such misfortune have befallen the brand new car and lovely hat of a defenseless woman. At which point she burst into tears, and only the arrival of a police officer saved the blue man from lynching.

The officer examined the abstract painting with the eye of a connoisseur. He then took out his notebook and pencil, wrote down names and license numbers, and asked the two adversaries to present their cases — beginning, out of courtesy, with the woman.

When she had finished, there was no doubt that the blue man had authored the abstract. His moving violations, in this second, more detailed exposed reached seventeen or eighteen.

The blue man, in rebuttal, insisted that he had never heard such a pack of lies in his life, and he then proceeded to tell what really happened. It was soon clear to us all that the fault lay wholly with the red lady and her large hat. I leave it to you to ponder this predicament.

My own humble opinion is that the blue man's right eye was beautiful. It resembled a setting sun, and I have a passion for setting suns.

Diogenes