

The Scar

The line divides him in half. A nearly perfect horizontal incision stretching from one side of his torso to the other. It makes a valley in his otherwise flat and firm abdomen. The jungle of hair which covers most of his body does its best to hide the scar, to camouflage the damage done, but the pale white tissue which grew to seal the wound stands out against the peach-colored skin surrounding it.

A star-shaped burst of flesh sits on the upper left side of this major incision. It is small in comparison, but viewed on its own provides formidable evidence of the severity of the whole operation. Here a tube lingered after stitches were sown.

The jaggedly thick line drawn on human canvas raises questions about the medical practices of the early 1970's. On a small baby, newly emerged from its mother's form, the cut would have been only a few inches, but on a grown man who long ago reached his full potential of height and width, the scar stretches almost a foot across.

Could the doctors have understood the impact their hasty decision would have on this small creature's future appearance and self-image? Could they have known what it would mean for a gangly teenager at countless beach and pool outings? Did they have some prophetic insight that it would become a favorite stopping point for a wife's restless fingers?

For in time all wounds heal, and the scars that bear witness to old injuries often too bear the weight of happy landmarks; reminders of the imperfect nature of a physical form.