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KILLER INSTINCT

By Shylar Thornton

It is a very special feeling accomplishing something for the very first time. The first time I can remember this feeling is when I killed my first deer when I was only ten years old. Killing a deer takes much more than luck; there is a certain skill one must possess to accomplish that goal.

It was late November with snow covering the ground. I could see my breath with every exhale I took. My numb fingers gripped the rough cold trigger.

"Pull the trigger," said my dad.

"I can't get on it. The gun is too heavy," I replied.

"Hurry, it is going to run away," my father kept insisting to me.

I watched the deer stand in the field with the sunbeams kissing off his majestic back. He looked over his shoulder at me and took off running towards the woods. As he ran, I saw his antlers, which looked more like trees sitting on top of his head than antlers.

Not many things in life will take the wind out of your sails like watching the deer of your dream with its perfect brown skin run out of sight. In my whole life I had never felt more like an idiot. I could only wish for another opportunity at that deer. As my dad and I sat talking to each other, I saw movement out of the corner of my eye. As I whipped my head to look, I saw the buck of my dreams standing in an opening about ten feet wide.

"Get the gun!" my father said with a new sense of excitement.

As I grabbed the gun, a loud crack sounded as I looked around in frustration. Angrily, I asked, "What was that?"

"That was hunters on the field across the way," calmly replied my father.

To me, missing that buck once again was like Dooms Day. A great sense of anger and sadness fell upon me. Never in my life had I even had a glimpse at a buck of that caliber, and when I did, I couldn't even get a shot off at him. The beautiful green and white colors coming from the snow-covered wheat field began to fade and the deer became scarce as nightfall was near. As my father and I were almost ready to turn it in for the night, I saw it again. A deer standing in an opening eating its last meal. I picked up the old brown Winchester 243 and looked through the scope at a small buck.

"Steady your breathing or you are not going to be able to get on it," my father stated.

I was able to get my breathing calmed as I steadied the gun and got the cross arrows right on the shoulder of the gorgeous deer. "Boom" the gun went as I [yanked] the trigger. I saw the deer [stagger] in his tracks and fall down.

"Let's go!" my father said proudly.

Dumbly I asked, "Did I get him?"

"Yes it was a perfect shot," said my dad.

As we walked up to him, we saw it wasn't the monster we had seen earlier in the night but it was a special moment nonetheless. My father was so proud of me. I think he was ten times more excited than I was. That moment brought us even closer than we already were.

I learned from this experience some things are too good to be true, but if you have the opportunity at something, you need to [pounce] on it. If you don't, you might end up with a 90-pound deer that looks like Bambi's brother.

