

A Girl's Hunt

By: Kayleena Fike

It was muzzleloader season, at the peak of the rut, I went to try my sister's spot in the middle of an oak stand on a ridge. The air was chilly and brisk and there was a breeze that stirred up the smell of dead leaves. There was something about the taste of the air and the feel of the atmosphere that seemed promising. I walked quietly through the woods, cautiously placing each step, stopping every five paces to listen and look around. When I was almost to my spot I saw a huge deer scrape on the ground that was freshened earlier that morning.

I sat on a log, near a swamp, facing down into a valley under a big tall oak tree. It wasn't long before the squirrels and birds came back out and started rustling and running around. After a couple of hours of scanning between trees, close to sunset, a flock of geese flew in an arrow over me heading toward the swamp. The sky was a beautiful pink color with a few clouds. It looked like it was going to rain a little later. It was getting close to dark and I had been sitting still for a while and I needed to shift. I slowly looked around and didn't see any deer so I set my gun next to me so that I could shift. Right about the time I set the rifle down I caught movement out of the corner of my eye. My heart started to race. I looked and saw that it was a buck coming up from the valley heading toward me. He had his head to the ground and was oblivious to anything around him. He looked like a decent meat-deer, probably a four point. I felt for my gun and carefully got it to my lap. I started to raise it, each second my target getting closer and closer. At this point my heart was beating so loud I could hear it in my ears. The stock of my muzzle loader was almost in my shoulder and the deer looked up and I freeze. My arm was almost shaking. I was trying to control my nerves. The deer put his head back down and kept walking and now he was almost directly to my left. I finished getting my gun in my shoulder. I

looked down range and saw that the deer had made a loop around one of the oak trees and was heading back down the hill. I still had a decent view of him. I found him in my scope. I took a deep breath and put the crosshairs behind his shoulder. I could see his muscles flex in my scope. My heart was still racing. I let out half of my breath and squeezed the trigger. The sound blew up the woods, my ears were ringing, and the white hots hung in the air. I knew I made a good shot. I looked around the smoke and saw the deer stumble a little and race away toward the swamp. My teeth chattered with excitement. I couldn't stop shaking. I didn't have much time. I was losing light which would make it hard to track him down. I started to look for blood

It started to rain and it was dark and the blood was going to be washed away before long. I saw a few splashes of blood and scuff marks on the hill where he had fought for grip against the steep slope. It wasn't long before my dad showed up to help me track him. When we first saw him from the top of the hill, he was lying in a creek. It wasn't until we got closer that we truly realized how big he was. I tried to see around my dad as he lifted up the rack that was stuck in the mud. When he got the head up we realized that it was a huge eight-point buck. About an hour later when we finally got him home, muscles sore from battling with steep, wet slopes, he dresses out to be 166 pounds. I have God to thank for such an amazing hunt.