



The Heart of the Princess of the Forest

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Retold Fairy Tales

Journal Log: January 15th, 1942:

I have been making my way through this vast forest, and have not found any recommendable kill that would impress the boys. The snow makes it quite difficult for me to approach an animal unannounced. Well, I better leave camp and head due north, hopefully I find a buck or a few hares for my next dinner...

The snow is soft, capturing all sound, leaving me on edge of my senses. The trees are naked except for the light dressing from the wet snow, baring all that would still live there, tempting me to come see what lies in a bird's nest. This forest is plentiful with game, a man's playground. I have brought back the fattest hares and pheasants, but what I am after alludes me till this day. A strong creature, the prince of the forest it may be called has amazing evasive tactics that is commendable. Every animal I aim for I hit, thanks to this ol' girl, my Philadelphia Fox. She's a beauty and works like a charm, a gift I gave to myself for my many kills. Wait, what is that in the open. My my my, look at that, a doe and her fawn, mother and child frolicking in the snow searching for food. Let me get myself in position here behind this tree. I aim for the mother and wait for the time. In this game, it should only take one shot to take her down. I am cleared for the shot, but the doe looks up from the grass. She could not have heard me from this far behind the trees, she couldn't have. I shoot. And missed. The two deer ran away, heading to the other side of the stream to the forest. I knew I should have brought my dogs on this trip, but alas, I was due for a good chase. I ran a few meters to get a better shot and

fires again, and BAM, the mother falls. I aimed to shoot the fawn the fawn but stopped myself, I felt no desire to kill such a young creature that has not felt the harshness of life. Besides, without it's mother, it will surely die. The doe is what I want, and I have achieved that. I approached the doe and saw that I made a clean shot to its side, the internal damage causing a fatal blow to its heart probably. I bind it and prepare it to take back. The boys are going to love this.

Journal Log: March 3rd, 1942:

It has been a few weeks since my last hunt, but the liveliness I felt after catching the doe still courses through my veins. It is now the next month's hunting meeting and I can't wait to hear the accolades of my success and cunning. Everyone will know my name...

I dress in my nicest tux and take drive to the hunting club's mansion. Every time I come here, it reminds me of the reason I hunt, for the endless animal heads that are mounted on the walls are exquisite, from the common wolf to the mysterious buck. Oh, how I wish I can capture a buck for my collection. A fellow hunter approaches. "Helloo, it is good to see you here again poor chap! What have you been up to, hopefully the season has been generous with you as it has with me," boasted the fellow hunter. He pats me on the back as one would do with an old friend. Yet, he is not a friend, for I know he and the others laugh at my expense. I replied, "Ahhh, Spencer, good evening, the season has been delightful, I have caught many woodland creatures that would leave even you in awe." Spencer chuckled at this claim and commented that he is always amused to see me in good spirit. The fool believes that just because he has taken over his father's gun shop, access to weapons to hunt any animal he so chooses, that he can look down on me. I worked hard for my pretty Fox, and it will bring me the big game. "Attention gentlemen, please find your seats and let's get this show on the road!"

So, Spencer was able to kill a brown bear. That would make a beautiful rug to lay out in his disgusting foyer. Something like that he could not possible appreciate. Either way, I will shock these boys with my catch.

I walk to the podium and feel their cold uncaring eyes staring at me, already displeased with my presence. I begin with the many smaller animals, I caught in the past season: skunks, hares, pheasants, foxes, and other creatures of the forest. My fellow hunters are not swayed by the plentiful bounty I have before them. I will give them a pass, for any experienced hunters could have captured these creatures, but I have saved the best kill for last. I say, "My good men, today, I have for you one of the beauties of the forest, the princess of the forest!" Their eyes open wide and their mouths agape. They love it. I know they must love it because even I can't stop

staring at the lifeless eyes that stare back at us, no emotions of what it felt a few months ago as it bled in the snow. A chair scraped the wood floor and the host spoke, "That's it! We have tolerated you being in this club because of your father, but you are nothing like him! John Jones was a respectable man and followed the rules. But you, you are a disgrace. Huh, I will have to revoke your hunting license and remove you from this club." What, that can't be, I am more than my father could ever be. Do they not see what I am able to do? Whispering was going on around the room, and I was able to catch the glimpse of a few words: poaching, doe killer, insane, about time, a shame. I never was fond of playing games by the rules, but can they not see that I have captured something great. And they are taking away my right, no no no, my life they are trying to take away. That is blasphemous. I see now, they never wanted me here. "The hunt is most enjoyed when you have no limits, pushing yourself to swiftly capture animals. Why not kill a doe, heck I would have killed its fawn too if it had not run out of my sight already!" I proclaim. They all shake their heads, and I say they are all fools to let opportunities pass them by because of simple rules. Our lives are to hunt, nothing shall stop that

Journal Log: March 26th, 1943:

I need to shoot and capture a buck. Then the boys will see that I am finally one of them. I need to get to it before the others do, and since the season is over, this is the perfect time for me to head back to the forest... I'm back at camp again, sitting around the campfire and feeding my dogs. I brought my dogs on this trip to help me catch the biggest prize. I need this. My hounds are one of the best in the county, holding the birds and foxes till I get there. I shot a rabbit and they seem to be enjoying it for their light lunch. I need all of their energy to be going towards the big one. The birds beat their wings overhead, there is other rustles around me. There seems to be more activity today. My dogs' ears perked up, did they hear something? "After it boys!" I yell. They were off, and I too chase after them. Seems like they are chasing a smaller animal, because I can't see it. I guess I will let them get ahead of me, they will be able to handle it. "Bam, bam, bam." Look at that, with all this commotion I was able to pick out a few more. "OOOOOOOh!" Huh? Did something happen to my dogs. I ran to where the dogs should be, and attacking them was a buck. The buck was able to crush my dogs under a pile of rocks loosened from a cliff. Something slashed into my mind, a pic of the doe and the fawn that I shot at a year ago. Could fate be so kind to this poor soul that it would bring me to the very animal that I let go. I named it Bambi at that moment, after the sound of the shot that killed its mother. I raise my gun to shoot it, and in my hastiness, my shot wasn't effective at keeping it down. It got away, for the moment. I trudged on ahead, hoping that I will be able to get to it once it is tired from its wound, but I stopped in my traps quickly. There was an

ominous smell in the air. I sniffed the air some more to see what it could possibly be. No, this can't happen. I ran back to where my camp is, well, was. To my horror, I see that my camp was lit ablaze, and was spreading like wildfire. I can not leave this forest until I catch that buck! I run, and without my dogs leading me, I have to go on my intuition. Ah, this is the thrill I missed, another chase. More animals came out of hiding as the fire spread wildly around us. The smoke grew thick and dark, blocking my view for a few meters. My heart is beating frantically; my breath is becoming chortled. Follow the animals. Wherever they go must be a safe haven. I keep running, the buck always on my mind, and I hear splashing. Good heavens, a stream must be nearby! If I could reach that, yes, the buck would be there as well. I trudge on ahead, jumping over logs and ducking under low burning branches. The fire is spreading faster than I anticipated. A loud crack bursts from ahead of me, and a tree comes crashing down over me.

My legs are caught underneath a tree. I struggle for a bit, but to no avail, I am stuck. I look back and see all the animals that were able to evade the fire cross the stream. And amongst the animals on the hill across the stream, was the buck and, another buck? This other buck was grand, majestic, and gazed back at me. A heart to heart conversation took place with no words spoken from our lips. I laugh out loud, as I know this will be my final resting place. Yet, I couldn't capture this great buck, the Great Prince of the Forest, nor its son. I pick up my faithful gun and take one last shot at them in vain. The blaze burns around me, taking them out of view. Who knows, maybe I did hit one of them. I think I can die with that. I wonder what the animals call me, the one who burned their home unbeknownst.

I am...I am...Him.

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