

# LETTER to BENJAMIN

– LARRY’S SHORT STORIES #131 –

Dear Benjamin,

For generations, fathers and grandfathers have been guiding young men like yourself on their first deer hunt; it was my honor and pleasure to be with you when you harvested your first doe, during the opening weekend of Missouri’s deer season. She came out of the woods from the north and started walking our direction about 8:35 AM; your excitement was pretty evident! After we identified her as an adult, I was certain you’d shoot her as soon as she came a bit closer. Sure enough, at 8:40 and from 90 yards out, you made a great shot.

We got down, took some pictures and pulled the doe into the shade, then climbed back into the stand to wait for “Mr. Big”; he must have been somewhere else that morning. Your father and brothers were hunting a short distance away and came to see your doe after they left their stand. Nathaniel and Oliver were in awe of their older brother; their time will come.

You probably hadn’t thought much about what Aunt Sara had in mind for you, after breakfast. She’s been gutting deer since she was your age and is a very patient instructor. It must have been stressful, gutting a deer all by yourself with everyone else watching, but you did a great job!

“Mr. Big” was our target that afternoon, from the same blind – and we saw him, a nice ten pointer; unfortunately he was



*It was a beautiful November day and you have a memory that will last a lifetime.*

225 yards out, a bit far for an 11 year old. Sunday morning we hunted from the Gettysburg stand on Moniteau Creek. It was warmer and we saw a coyote and four bucks, but nothing big enough to hang on the wall – so no buck this year; shucks.

Orion the Hunter greeted us from the Western sky as we walked in; how appropriate!

**“...you made a great shot.”**

Over time, you may not remember all the other deer sightings we recorded in the Redneck Diary, or that there were 54 turkeys in the field at one time, and several that came within ten yards of us. You may even forget about how cold your feet got, and that we climbed down, walked back to the truck and sat with the heater on full blast for 15 minutes, before walking back to the blind. I’m certain, however, that you’ll always remember your first doe. I do hope you’ll come back next year and we get to hunt together again. Your first doe is surely a memory we’ll both cherish for years to come.

Love, Grandpa.



Larry Potterfield  
Morningstar Food Plot  
Patton Farm  
Howard County, Missouri  
14 November 2015



*The Redneck blind kept us out of sight, but it was 32 degrees that morning and we needed a heater; sorry, I should have brought one.*



*You gutted your own deer – all by yourself, while everyone watched; (l-r) Aunt Sara, Oliver, Eliza, Margaret, Nathaniel and Jay.*