

Third Letter to BENJAMIN

– LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #204 –

This was our third deer season, and the first one in which you didn't get a deer. But deer hunting isn't just about getting your buck; it's also about what you learn and the memories that stay with you – sometimes for a lifetime.

On Saturday, hunting the same stand as last year, a 10 pointer came out right after sunrise. He was just average, so we waited. Thirty minutes later a bigger one appeared, with a couple of kickers. You decided this was your buck. Shortly, he stood broadside at 80-yards. As I watched through the binoculars; your shot was quicker than I expected. The buck ran 40 yards, stopped, looked around, then walked into the woods – a clean miss. As your guide, I should have coached you step-by-step through that shot; sorry! But, every hunter misses; you got your finger on the trigger before getting the crosshairs on the deer.



This picture is to remind you never to put your finger on the trigger until you have the crosshairs on the deer.

Later, as we were returning to the cabin for breakfast, I asked if you wanted to drive – and of course, you smiled and said yes. Last year you had driven the farm road, but this was a real, county road – with possibly other vehicles. So you drove the four miles back to the cabin, and the return trip that afternoon. You may remember your concern each time we topped a hill, when you couldn't see the other side; you did great!



Someone credited your careful tending of grandpa to your Boy Scout training; so, here's to the Boy Scouts. Don't forget your Eagle!

Returning early Sunday morning, I drove. It was frosty, so I applied the emergency brake as we parked. We walked in the dark to the stand – about 600 yards. You stood at the bottom of the steps with your rifle, while I went up. But, on the platform trying to get the door open, I slipped and fell. Cannot imagine what went through your mind as I hit the ground, but do remember your words:
"Grandpa, Grandpa, are you hurt; do you want me to call an ambulance?"

**"...this was
your buck."**

I was hurt and asked you to go for the pickup, giving you the keys, and explaining how to open the lock on the gate. You hurried away. The next time we spoke was from across the bean field (still dark), as you explained that the truck wouldn't move. Ah, forgot the emergency brake; so, I explained where it was, and how it worked. Shortly you pulled it into the field. Our deer hunt was over; but with memories to last a lifetime.

Midway^{USA}

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Morningstar Food Plot
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You may remember this buck; it's the one you missed. George Weiberg shot him a few days later, from the same stand.