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Age 17

## The Bow Hunt

I got my first bow, a used Diamond by Bowtech, in October of 2012. I spent all hunting season waiting on my strings to be replaced. When I finally got my bow back it took me all summer to sight it in. My dad and I put me a stand up and I threw corn out at least once a week to draw the deer in. When October 2013 rolled around I could shoot a pear dead in the center 30 yards away. I was still worried about not being able to aim steady at a moving deer. There was also the issue of my weak arms only being able to pull back about forty pounds.

Finally it was time to set out. My dad gave me permission to shoot any deer, as long as it was legal, since it was my first bow hunt. He also told me it would be best if I did not shoot anything more than thirty yards away, because of me only being able to pull back forty pounds. The first hunt was a bust. Along with the second. I only heard some deer snort from deep in the woods. I never saw anything more than a raccoon, loads of squirrels, and plenty of birds.

It was Monday, October 7th. I did not have work after school so I decided to slip out for a hunt. Before every hunt I would shoot the target at least once. So, I went to practice. I missed. I missed the whole target! My arrow flew way off to the right. I was horrified. Desperately I went to search for my lost arrow in the tall grass. As I stood looking I felt something move under my boot. In fear, I lifted my foot and a snake shot out from under me. Being terrified of snakes, whether it is one of those little green snakes, or a huge rattlesnake, I took off running and screaming like a little girl. So, of course I was shaken up after my terrifying experience. I even debated if I actually wanted to go hunting, fearing I would see another snake.

Despite my fear, I went hunting anyway. I cautiously walked to my stand, threw corn out and climbed up. I was only there for ten minutes when a squirrel came close to climbing up my leg. My nerves had finally settled and I was waiting comfortably. Time ticked by slowly and my eyes got heavy. I started dozing off as the sun began to dip behind the trees.

Leaves rustled loudly, breaking me out of my nap. I looked around, expecting more squirrels, or birds, but to my great surprise it was actually a deer. Two deer! Two big bodied bucks with little antlers. They were about forty yards in front of me, covered by bushes and trees. Then they looped around and walked behind the big tree twenty yards in front of me. I had my chance. I slowly stood up, while their heads were behind the tree, I pulled back. My heart was pumping so loudly I was sure the deer could hear it. The bigger deer appeared to my right first. He was in the perfect spot. He began chewing at my corn when I let go. To this day I do not understand how I hit him because I am pretty sure my eyes were closed when I released. The arrow hit behind his shoulder and he took off running about fifty or sixty yards, then he tripped and flipped over twice. All was still. I turned my head around to my left, the smaller deer was still eating on some low leaves, clueless that the other deer was long gone. I sat and watched him for about ten minutes before he shot off into the woods, snorting. I pulled out my phone, adrenaline still shaking my body, and called my dad. He told me to go to the house and wait for him to get home with some ice.

Fifteen minutes later I see my dad's headlights pull in the driveway. I raced out to meet him, ready to see my prize. We hooked a small trailer to my blazer and I drove to my deer. Up close I saw that what I thought was only a four-point was actually a six point. We loaded the deer on the trailer, and brought him to the barn to clean him. Carefully we pulled out my broadhead

and about five inches of my arrow. As I retold my dad about my day with the snake, losing an arrow, the squirrel, sleeping, then the two deer I began to be thankful that I did not let my fear get the best of me and cause me to not go hunting that day.