

The Huntsmen

Written by Tess Malijenovsky

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Four locals eager for hunting season reveal the differences among deer hunters.



One hunts deer with a bow and arrow high in the camouflage of a tree. One is a sheriff deputy

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and taxidermist who hunts by rifle with his three daughters. One hunts in fellowship as the president of a hunting club. One is a local good 'ol boy who hunts a country road by foot with a keen eye and lives off his land. These huntsmen may have different styles, but all of them cultivated a devout passion for hunting as young boys. All of them have been waiting for August 15, the first day of hunting season, in great anticipation.

It's raining lightly in the woods an hour west of Beaufort in Martin, S.C. where Carl Brown, the bow hunter, is setting up his deer stand and hunting camera two weeks prior to opening day. With the steel stand thrown over his shoulder he makes his way through the lush forest to find the tree he will hunt from this season. I follow him, stepping in his footsteps and observing the way he decodes the wildlife of the land. He points out the signs to my untrained eye—subtle deer trails, year-old antler rubs on sapling trees, hoof imprints in the wet, black earth, broken roots and mud stains from hogs, acorns the deer will eat. He crouches down by a fallen tree and pulls a single deer hair from the bark. I have never been as tuned in to a forest as the hunter before me.

In South Carolina where there is no limit to the number of deer an individual can kill nor restrictions

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