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The Hunt

Phoebe Cave

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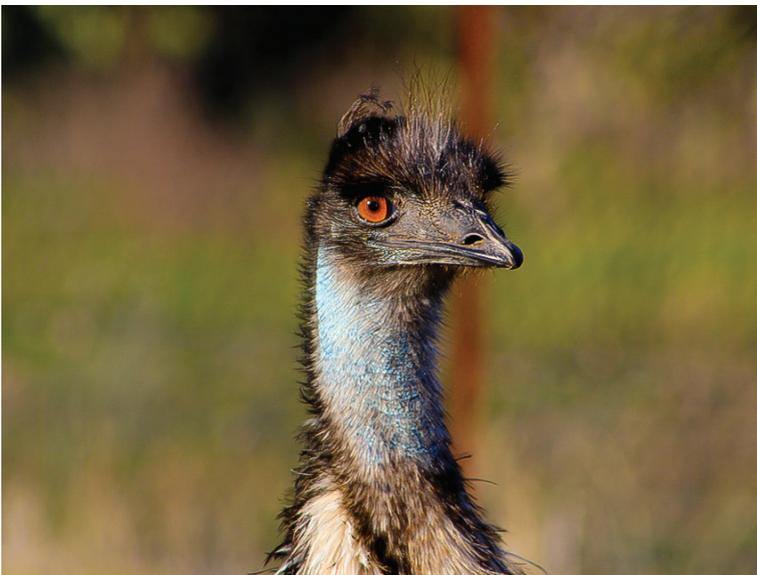
It was calm. Incredibly calm. It had been a while since she had seen such perfect hunting conditions. On a normal hunting day, she would find it tedious, even boring, to sit there, motionless, in her hand-picked vantage point, waiting for anything that could be considered food to walk by, but today, she simply stood perfectly still and soaked in the world around her with all senses. The sight of the explosions of color the midsummer bloom of the grand oaks brought, the sound of their many leaves dancing and swaying as if a grand celebration was taking place between the branches that was unseen by the human eye, the wholesome smell of the rich earth that was stirred up by the recent thunderstorm and smelt oddly satisfying, the taste of the meal that was constantly on her mind, and the feeling of the swirls and curves engraved into the wooden bow she held firmly poised and loaded, ready for any unfortunate and unsuspecting animal whose destiny was to end up her dinner. It was relaxing, so relaxing that she nearly dozed off into the soft dewy grass, which wasn't entirely a bad thing with how much sleep she had gotten in the past couple of months, but she needed food more than she needed sleep. Luckily, the joyous stomach pains of hunger kept her awake and alert. It had been a while since she had eaten, far longer than she liked. She would've gone hunting sooner, but as glorious and breathtaking as summer was, it brought rain in its wake, and rain meant all the prey was nestled in comfy shelters, including herself. But even still, she valued her time spent watching the rain fall gracefully from the sky, down the leaves, and pool at her feet; even if she was starving while she did it. A twig snap brought her wandering thoughts of serenity, peace, and food to a screeching halt as a wild turkey awkwardly wobbled into her line of sight. Turkey was fine; not her favorite food, but good under the circumstances. She tilted her head away

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from her bow to get a better view for calculation. The turkey was visible but too far away for her arrow to do anything other than startle it. She had to get closer, but that meant noise and if the turkey got scared off, she'd have to spend another night hungry and that was something she couldn't bear the thought of. She got low to the ground, her knees firmly pressed into the soft soil until they felt cold from the moist mud beneath. Slowly, she began to shift her body closer to the turkey who was stupidly pecking at the ground. She held her breath tightly against her chest as she continued to silently crawl towards her victim. Her clothes were starting to soak up the mud around her, and her back was beginning to hurt from the position she was awkwardly moving in, but she was going to get that turkey if it killed her, as not getting it probably would. As she continued to move her legs, she suddenly heard a soft crackle of fallen leaves underneath her. She stopped dead and dared not move. The turkey heard the leaves too, as it looked

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up and began frantically glancing from side to side. A slight sigh of frustration escaped from her lips. She was still a little too far, but she couldn't move any closer; she'd have to risk it. She raised her bow, this time centering the black flint arrow tip with the wild turkey's heart. The turkey was very suspicious now; she had to move with speed and perfection; luckily, that was her specialty. She pulled the bowstring tight, feeling the muscles down her arm work together in harmony to pull the bow into a deadly position. Ready to let go, she felt the breeze of the afternoon push her blood-red hair softly across her face, and she paused. In all her struggle and hunger, she forgot she was standing in a miracle; a living, harmonious miracle, and all of it hit her. The trees exploding with every possible shade of green, the melody of the leaves dancing merrily in the wind, the earth's wholesome and mysterious aroma, the taste of the turkey already on her tongue, the feeling of her bow at her fingertips, ready to summon death. She exhaled, and released her grip.



I Got an Eye on You

Lance M. Pender