 LUCKY LUKE'S
HUNTING
ADVENTURES

Whitetail Adventures

by Kevin Lovegreen
with Illustrations by Nathan Boemer



Lucky Luke's Hunting Adventures: Whitetail Adventures

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Illustrated by Nathan Boemer

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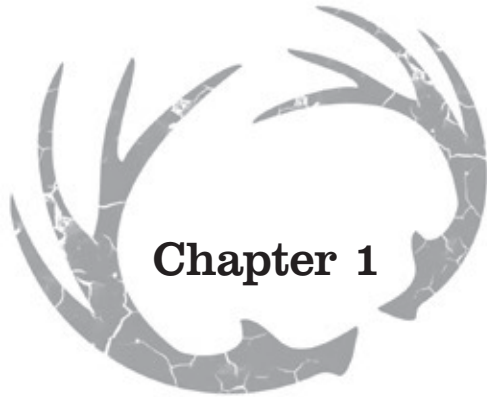
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*This book is dedicated to my dad for
introducing me to the
amazing world of hunting.
His love for the outdoors and his passion for
the hunt inspired me at a very young age to
follow in his footsteps.
I am forever grateful.*

Thanks Dad!





Chapter 1

“Please pass me another venison steak. As usual, it’s mouth-watering perfect, Dad,” I said.

“Enjoy it, because it’s our last meal of venison. The freezer’s empty,” Dad replied.

“I sure am glad the rifle season opens next week,” Crystal piped in. “Just like last November, I will have to show you boys up and shoot a nice deer to fill the freezer.”

“You just wait, beginner’s luck will help me shoot a monster buck!” I said with confidence.

“Luke, I can’t believe you’re finally old enough to be out there and show your dad how to get a big buck,” Mom smiled.

“It’s been a long wait, but I’m ready. I just hope a little of Crystal’s luck rubs off on me.”

“That’s all you need, girl luck!” Vernon teased.

“I know you’re ready, buddy,” Dad said. “You have the passion and you’ve worked hard to prepare yourself. I just hope your guide can put you in the right spot.”



When you grow up in a hunting family you're introduced to the outdoors at an early age. I can't even remember the first time my dad took me walking in the woods, looking for deer sign. There is a picture of Dad and me up on the wall at my grandparents' cabin. I'm all bundled up in a baby backpack, and they say I loved to go along for the ride, when Dad went walking in the woods.

Both Vernon and Crystal have been lucky enough to join the hunters at grandma and grandpa's cabin in northern Minnesota for whitetail deer. Grandpa's rule is that you have to be twelve years old to participate in the opening weekend of the season, which we just call the opener.

Over the last two seasons, Crystal has been really lucky and outdone Dad and Vernon. She kids that it's all skill, but

Vernon, and I know that Dad has a bunch to do with it. Dad and Crystal sat in some great spots over the last two seasons and Crystal has managed to shoot two nice does. For a girl, Crystal sure knows how to handle a gun, and she should: Dad has been encouraging her—and all of us kids—to shoot since we were little.

Crystal loves to hunt, but when it comes to shooting guns, Vernon and I can't seem to get enough. I was seven years old when I got my first BB gun. It was my birthday, and it was one of the best birthdays ever. My whole family came to celebrate: Vernon, Crystal, and all my cousins surrounded me when I opened up my BB gun. I couldn't wait to get to the cabin to try it out with dad.

Dad is always talking to us kids about gun safety. Before I even held a gun, I knew

a bunch of the rules. Things like, everyone has to stay behind the shooter. You have to know what's beyond your target. You always have to keep your barrel pointed in a safe direction (down at the ground, or up at the sky). And most importantly, you always, always make sure your safety is on.

Ever since I took that first shot with my BB gun, my brother and I have been putting holes in targets, cans, and as many squirrels as we can find at my grandparents' cabin. Vernon is three years older than me, so that gave him a head start on shooting. But that just made me practice more and try harder to be as good of a shot as him. At this point, I think I can hold my own with Vernon and Crystal both.

As all of us kids got bigger, Dad introduced us to bigger guns. After starting with BB guns, we moved on to pellet guns, a

.22 rifle, a 410 shotgun, a 20-gauge shotgun, a 12-gauge shotgun, a .44 Magnum rifle, and a .243 rifle. The BB gun, pellet gun, and .22 rifle are great guns for shooting targets and squirrels. They shoot a single round and take lots of practice to become a good shot. The .44 Magnum and .243 rifle are great for hunting deer. They are powerful enough for a clean kill on a deer but not too powerful for us kids to handle.

Shotguns, like the 410, 20-, and 12-gauge, are great for shooting clay targets and game birds. They shoot out a bunch of small BBs and have a big pattern (that means the BBs spread out a lot), so you have a better chance at hitting a flying bird. We are really lucky to have the opportunity to use all these different guns.

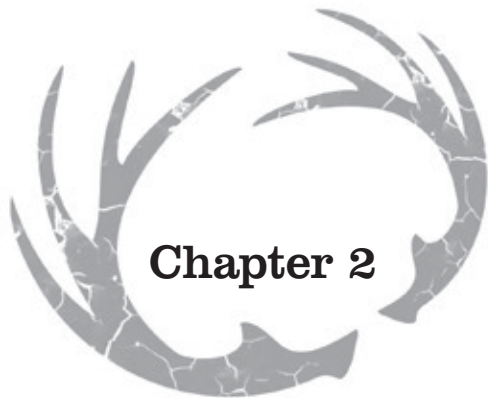
When I was nine, Dad let me carry a single-shot 410 shotgun as we walked

the woods and fields looking for grouse. I only carried one shell, in my hand, and if it was my turn and there was enough time, I could load the gun and walk in front of Dad, Vernon, and Crystal and then, if it was still there, try to shoot the grouse. It took me a long time to get my first bird, but I always loved going along and trying.

One thing for sure, by the time I was ten, there wasn't anywhere around the cabin that was a safe place for a squirrel. Grandpa had us on patrol for squirrels, the red ones in particular. He wanted us to keep them away from the cabin because they chewed their way into the attic one year and made a big mess. The best thing about squirrels, especially the big grey ones, is that they are great eating. Grandma always told me, you shoot and clean them, I will cook them. That deal was good for

squirrel, grouse, rabbit, and fish. I think she's the best cook in the world!

When I was ten years old Dad got me my first wild turkey license and he took me out that spring. We had a great time and I still think a tom turkey gobble is one of the coolest sounds an animal can make. We hunted really hard and I learned a lot that weekend, and I finally got a chance at my first turkey. That's an adventure I won't forget!



In the summers, Dad, Vernon, and I go out in the woods and scout for deer. Dad loves to follow deer runways and see where they cross each other. He's always trying to find the perfect spot for a deer stand. He watches from back in the woods while Vernon and I walk down the runways and he figures out what tree would have the best shot if we were deer. The fun really begins when we get the nails and hammers out and start building deer stands. Dad does all

the cutting and hammering. Vernon and I hand him the wood and help him hold the pieces in place. When we all work together, we can build a stand in about an hour.

Early in the archery deer hunting season, Dad takes me out with him. I love to sit and watch him try to get a deer. The time flies when we see deer and have a lot of action. I will never forget the evening we were sitting in the old deer stand off the clover field. Like a ghost, a nice eight-point buck appeared from the thick woods and began walking right to us. Dad raised his bow and drew back the arrow. I didn't move a muscle; I had my eyes locked on the buck. At just the right time, Dad made a grunt sound and the buck stopped in its tracks. Right then, Dad let his arrow fly and hit the buck perfect. That was one of the coolest things I have ever seen. I can't

wait until I get my chance at a buck like that one.

Hunting isn't always exciting. The times that we don't see anything moving, well, that tends to get a little tiring. That's when I lay my head on Dad's shoulder and take a nap. Dad says, "I'll stand guard while you take ten." Sometimes I think I go a little longer than ten minutes, but Dad never complains. One time I was taking ten and Dad nudged me. I woke up and looked down and there were a doe and fawn eating right below our stand. That was a great way to wake up.

When I was almost twelve, I was old enough to take gun safety classes offered by the Department of Natural Resources. The classes taught me a bunch of stuff about hunting and gun safety. A lot of it was stuff my dad, grandpa, and uncles had

taught me as I grew up in a family that loved hunting. But there were also new things that I learned. The classes really helped me become a safe, well-rounded outdoorsman. I was really proud when I passed my test and received my Firearm Safety Certificate. A great thing about earning my certificate is that it permits me to buy any hunting license offered in Minnesota, and I can't wait to try them all!