

Sometimes You've Got to Take a Stand for Life

It was the blackest part of a sullen night. Only occasionally did the pale moon poke its pocked face through a tear in the low veil of clouds, inspiring some hope the heavens had not folded up their majesty and gone in search of a more promising planet. The dawn's crest lay sleepily still, tucked warmly beneath the blankets of the eastern horizon, so stoutly framed in Mississippi pines.

I was missing my bed, but a man must stake an early claim if he wants to hunt a good patch of woods opening day. Thus my brother Heath had the tires of his four wheel drive whining and slapping a mean rhythm across the grooves of Interstate 55.

The warm glow of the dashboard light proved hypnotic, and exceptionally conducive to persuading a fellow to catch a few winks on the way. However, before I could even get my head bobbing proper, Heath's coffee kicked in. He began chattering on about nothing, sounding like a starving squirrel scolding a nut thief. It didn't seem to matter I was ignoring him, or shooting him looks like he was the nut.

No sooner than I'd mastered the ability to tune him out the truck jerked violently to the left. There was a loud screech. I snapped awake just in time to see our headlights whipping off the bridge railing back towards the center line. A good shimmy or two later Heath was able to straighten her out without dumping us into the river below. It was good driving.

"What are you doing," I cried.

His loose tongue must've suddenly found its way to the back of his throat, because he didn't say a word until we'd made it off the bridge and pulled over.

"There was one of those climbing deer stands out in the middle of the road!" he finally managed.

I let the severity of what had just happened sink in a moment, then asked, "Was it a good one?"

Heath just shrugged. "Must've falling out of someone's truck."

He was about to pull off when he noticed the passenger door open and saw me headed back down the bridge.

"Get back here!" he demanded.

By then it was too late. I disappeared into the darkness, before he could even add, "I saw it first!"

About eighty yards down I began to question my hasty decision. First, I still hadn't come upon the deer stand, and second, like a dummy I'd neglected to bring a flashlight. The night was so black the only thing I could see were the headlights of an eighteen-wheeler and a car racing towards me; side by side!

I guess it's in these darkest moments when reality really sneaks up on you. I heard a voice, which I later determined to be my own, say, "There's a swampy black river below, an obstacle in the road, and my narrow tail is stuck on a narrow bridge with untold tons of steel barreling towards me at eighty plus miles an hour! Hmmm... Not good."

I looked to Heath, but he couldn't help me now. I thought of making a run for it, but who was I kidding? My feet were the only thing slower than my brain.

Then the thought hit me. There were also those poor unsuspecting motorists to think of. This was not about a free deer stand anymore. People's lives were at stake. I had to make a quality decision.

I got to the deer stand just in time to scoop it off the road and realize I was caught in the piercing headlights of an impending doom. I had no place to go, no where to hide. I could jump, or I could pray for mercy.

"JESUS!" I cried.

His name was still on my lips when the car spotted me and locked the brakes. Whipping over, it left a smoldering skid mark nearly up to toe of my boots before miraculously sneaking in behind the big rig.

I was left choking on a cloud of brake dust, spitting out burning rubber, but alive. Actually more so than I'd been in years! They rolled on, but not without laying on their horns.

I found my second wind and made back for Heath's truck like I was akin to lightning, deer stand in tow.

Opening the tailgate, we looked it over. It was a sturdy model, still structurally sound. No owner information was to be found. (Yes, we checked.) Heath played his best cards trying to claim it, but in the end he knew it was mine.

But anyway- If you think about it, the current state of this planet isn't much more promising than that old bridge. Most of us are happily headed off into the darkness trying to acquire as much junk as possible, when God mercifully allows the piercing headlights of His Truth to shine upon our impending doom. Suddenly we realize there's only one way to get off this planet alive! We must trust in God's promise. (*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* **Romans 10:13** KJV)

Well, maybe this has helped shine a light on things for you. I hope so. Everybody's got to take a '*stand*' you know. I pray you take yours for life. Not only for your own, but for the sake of those coming down the path that Jesus would have you help rescue.

-Guy Sheffield 3-2-07