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Subject: Re: Cold Front

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Wed, 25 Jul 2012 21:16:32 GMT

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Sunday around 3:00 pm, Montana, (Monday 11 am, Tracy Island) somewhere along the Absaroka Range...

"I can't believe she got one before I did."

Luke grinned up at his older brother. "You're just jealous."

"You bet I am," Roger replied, grinning back. "Means we're still stuck out here while she and Dad are back at the cabin!" He gestured to the snow-covered woods surrounding them.

"Maybe if your aim was better, your daughter wouldn't have gotten the first deer of the season," Luke teased.

His brother glared. "My aim is just fine."

"Whatever you say, old man." The two brothers continued through the woods, softly throwing jabs at each other. They both paused as they heard gunshots in the distance. Luke shook his head. "Remember when we were kids and we'd be out here for days without seeing anyone?"

Roger nodded. "When the government opened up the land a few years ago, the tourists really started piling in."

Luke sighed. "I know." The wind picked up momentarily and he pulled his neon orange cap down further over his ears. "There's nothing this way, not even tracks. Let's head over towards the hills. We might find something over near the rocks, there's more browse there." They moved out.

Nearly an hour later, the terrain had changed from pine trees to tall brush and shrubs surrounding a large outcropping of rock. Another shot rang out, this time closer. "Damn, they're going to spook everything. Where are they?" Roger asked, his eyes scanning the area.

"No idea," Luke replied, following his gaze, but not seeing anyone. Then his attention was caught. "Rog, here." He squatted down and pointed. "Fresh tracks. And he's big from the size of the prints." He looked up and grinned wolfishly. "Bigger than Sarah's."

Roger nodded. "Let's get him." The two hunters started out, pausing occasionally as they heard muffled voices in the distance behind them. Finally Roger stopped near the rock face and shook his head. "Tracks disappeared here in the gravel. And I'd bet that with all the noise that group behind us is making, we're out of luck for today."

Another shot rang out. "Yeah, I think you're right." Luke sighed. "This sucks. I only have another day here before we head in so I can spend some time with Mom before going back to LA."

"Yeah? Got somebody lined up that you're missing?" Roger asked with a smirk.

"Don't I wish." They turned and started skirting the rocks. "There is someone I might bring home for Christmas though."

"Oh?"

"Yeah, she doesn't have any family so rather than spend the holiday alone, I thought I'd drag her along with me."

Roger looked at his younger brother in surprise. "She? You switching teams on us there, bud?"

"Ha-ha." He shrugged. "She might not come though. She's kinda dating a guy in the...office and who knows, she might decide to do Christmas with him."

"Her loss. Especially if Mom makes meat pie."

Luke grinned. "That's one of the only times I'll eat red meat! What do you think--" His sentence was cut off as the sharp "crack" of a rifle went off, even closer this time. He heard a ping as something ricocheted off the rocks then felt a burning sensation in his back and chest. He staggered forward, suddenly finding it hard to breathe.

Roger glared across the forest. "Idiots. They're going to get someone killed." He turned to his brother, frowning at the expression on Luke's face. "Hey, you OK?"

Luke didn't answer, but stumbled to his knees.

"Luke!" Roger flew to his side, throwing his arm around his brother's shoulders. "What is it? What's wrong?" Something warm and sticky seeped onto his hand and he pulled back to find it covered in his brother's blood. "Oh God!" He peered down at the hole in the back of Luke's jacket, then carefully lowered him to the ground. Looking over his brother, he didn't find an exit wound. Roger quickly pulled out his cell phone and began dialing. "Luke, you stay with me, do you hear me? Hello? Yes, I need a med-evac immediately; my brother's been shot!" He rattled off their GPS co-ordinates.

Luke was feeling numb. Strangely, there was no pain, only a sense of weightlessness. His brother's voice was becoming a pleasant buzz in the background. He closed his eyes.

"No! Luke! God, I think I'm losing him! Luke! LUKE!!"

The voice disappeared and Luke let himself fall into the beckoning darkness.

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