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Turkey Hunting

I am up before the sun as I prepare for another battle with the king of spring. The sky is still dark with nighttime, the moon and the stars the only light shining down as I walk through the dark woods. The only noises I can hear are the dead leaves cracking beneath my feet and the cicadas and song birds chirping as the forest awakens. I get to my spot and take in everything around me, admiring all of God's creations. The fog rises from the river and the sun burns above the trees. I can see my breath in the cold morning of early spring. As the sun continues to rise into the sky, I can start to hear the wild turkey wake up and gobble in the trees around me. It's here, the best time of the year.

Turkey hunting is something that I am passionate about and prepare all year for. It requires a very skillful hunter with traits such as patience, determination, and both mental and physical strength. It is, in my opinion, the most challenging thing an outdoorsman can conquer. The wild turkey is a smart animal. They have terrific eyesight and incredible hearing. Everything has to be perfect to harvest one of these beautiful creatures and just when you think you have out smarted a turkey, you haven't.

It was spring of 2020, and I had hunted all year with no luck. I woke up before the sun on an April morning and headed for a spot to listen for turkeys gobbling. I was worn out both mentally and physically after hunting hard for the past several days. I wasn't going to let the exhaustion get to me, so I stuck it out and stayed in the woods to chase the wild turkey. It was a cool, beautiful April morning and the turkeys were gobbling all around me. I got within a couple hundred yards of a turkey's tree and I sat down and waited for it to fly down. I imitated the sounds of a female turkey looking for a mate. The gobbler responded to me every time. His gobble echoed through the forest, my heart almost beating out of my chest. I trembled as this turkey closed the distance between us. I continued to call to the turkey and persuade him to move closer. After what seemed to be hours, which was only about ten minutes, I could see the turkey's head peak over a fallen down tree about fifty yards in front of me. My heart was racing even faster at this point and I tightened the grip on my gun, waiting for a shot. The turkey scanned its surroundings, trying to find the source of the calling he had heard all morning. After about thirty seconds, the turkey's head went back behind the log, and I never saw him again.

Turkey hunting has taught me many lessons, and showed me many challenges, in my life. It has taught me patience and that hard work does pay off. It has taught me to never quit no matter how hard it gets, and when all hope seems to be lost, there's always another day, and there's always another hunt. Being in nature and seeing the woods come to life in the early morning has brought me closer to God and has taught me to appreciate the little things. Turkey hunting will humble you, and kick you to your knees, but the glorious reward of harvesting a wild turkey keeps us all going.