

Viscious Nature - Chapter 15 - Old Snarl

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This story contains extreme sexual content, delves into the feelings of love, lust, hatred and sinisterly evil fate, to lastly climax in an end worth waiting for, whereby each chapter will build upon the other and hopefully create that necessary emotional attachment. Chapter 15 - Old Snarl - It didn't see him coming nor could it hear him over the sound of Tommy's mortal cries, its lust for blood and sustenance making it blind to the danger that was upon him.



Published on
Booksie

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Chapter 15 â Old Snarl

Joe is sitting on his porch if you can call it that, a slate of dry rotted wood planks slapped over debarked wooden trunks that parallel the front of an old yellow and white single wide trailer. Heâs a big man, a huge man by any standard and he knows it. At the age of fourteen he wasnât anything but normal, just your everyday kid at school except that maybe his clothes were more worn than those of his fellow students. He wasnât the smartest and he wasnât the dumbest and by golly there were quite a few winners in his class. It was out of nowhere that he began to grow, at least as far as any doctor might be concerned. Most children added as much as a foot to their height by age eighteen, he put nearly two and a half to his, towering head and shoulders over everyone he knew.

At heart he wasnât a bad man always considering what is right and wrong, a trait his mother instilled in him since childhood and a little known fact by any other. His freakish growth had brought him grief as a teen, what with being slender and tall as bean stalk. The boys would trip him in the hall, laughing as they yelled for everyone to hear âTimber! Tree falling!â The girls, far from beautiful as those from remoter areas are known to be, would not have anything to do with him, vying for the hands of the stronger lads of the area, hoping to hitch the knot with someone they thought could provide well for them out in the secluded woodlands.

The dark skin of his forehead furrows, the three long dark scars run from his left temple to his nose, they rise from his face forming something of a rock ridge where valleys of skin meet, an expression one might take as pure meanness even though at this moment he is puzzled. No longer young, the once thick black hair is now streaked with gray, a storm cloud over the weathered and baked surface of what is his face.

He had heard of the murder of the hunter out by Pennbrook. A lot of the folk are saying it was a bear. Bull shit, no bear would cause that kind of carnage to a body and not have eaten half or even the entire corpse. Whatâs more, there isnât a bear big enough in Michigan that could kill like that, there are only black bears and it would take a grizzly, or a polar bear, maybe even Kodiak bear to render a human to the chunks of flesh that are being spoken of. Hell, even those three top predators would have a hell of time with that feat of strength.

A finger goes to the scars at his face, A finger, huge as a water bottle ran the length of the middle scar, the one that disfigured his nose, the talon from which the scar had been caused dug so deep into his flesh that the tip penetrated through the roof of his mouth and gouged his tongue. Those scars, the sole remnants of a battle of life and death that he himself had with an old grizzly, a 12 footer and fifteen hundred pounds of muscle, teeth and claw, a battle that he won but only by the skin of his teeth. Joe knows what damage a big bear can do and the description of that killing up in Pennbrooke didnât fit at all.

It was in California, high in the upper mountains of the coastal ranges where he had been logging. The area north of Crescent City has some of the largest timber on earth, the Sequoia. Although long banned by the state of California from logging, most of the other trees were still fair game in areas designated by the state government. Grizzlies, though far and few between, still roam this country, Gods country. It was on one hot afternoon, on a mountain side flanked by a cliff that dropped to a small river, in a manmade clearing full of large tree stumps and tangles of pine branches that the two had met. An old grizzly, it had patches of bare skin showing and was thin, very thin for this late in the year. Joe had been the last of the cutting crew down in the clearing, one final look to ensure that no tools were left behind and he would be heading up the hill and out of the trees when next to the cliff, here comes old Snarl huffing and puffing.

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It wasn't exhaustion from his tour along the river ridge that had old snarl all pumped up, he had just lost a fight over prime fishing rapids to a younger rival, a loss that comes after losses over the last couple of weeks with bears half his age and this time he carries a wound to his left rear paw, a lucky bite from his rival that may cost him his life. The salmon are running, it is high season for them to spawn and every bear in these northern territories are at the rivers stuffing themselves full of this protein filled diet that will fatten them for the long winter months of hibernation. These last days, snarl has only been feeding on what half spoiled berries he can find left on the ground, some grubs and the head of an elk stolen from a pack of fully gorged wolves.

“HEY JOE! YOUR EIGHT O’CLOCK!” his friend Tommy cries from the landing above, arm thrown into the direction that old Snarl had appeared. Out here in the woods, far from any other human life, if a colleague, friend or foe, playing or serious, calls out to you with a direction, it can mean only one thing, danger is coming at you from that side. You don't question that person's judgment, you react. The course you take depends on what the rest of your body sees, hears and feels. From below the landing Joe can see a second person emerge from over its lip, a short stout man with a rifle in his hand, a 450 Marlin, a gun made for hunting bears. With that thought Joe felt the hair on neck stand just as a blast of air, hot and moist, blew across his shoulders and head.

With the reaction of a mountain lion, lightning fast for a man his size, he ducks and turns, pivoting on his left foot, bobbing head and shoulders as far down and out of the way of that oncoming train as he could. The sharp bitter sweet smell of old wet fur fills his nostrils, the stink of decaying flesh nearly gags him, of all people large and strong and indestructible, it gags him to the point that he nearly tosses his cookies directly into the face of this oncoming menace.

Not twenty yards from the cliff, Joe's thoughts are on making a blind jump, run for the cliff and throw himself over. He is no match for a bear, not one that is in such a rage that it could tear the wheels off a dump truck. Escape is the only choice, to stand and fight would mean the end of him. His huge boots already planted firmly in the ground, his knees bent from his duck under the jaws and paw of the animal that would have taken his head off, he springs through the air just as the crack of a rifle sounds out. His flight is downhill, towards the water and his jump carried him nearly a quarter that direction when he heard the distinctive impact of a large bullet into flesh. Hoping without hope, he glanced over his shoulder just as he touched down to see the bear tumble after him, the impact taking its feet from beneath it. The bear summersaulted right passed him at the last second splaying out its legs as it slid off the cliff in a cloud of dust, tossed pine needles and branches.

Luck was on his side, luck beyond just your everyday finding a dollar bill on the road, this was winning the lottery, twice in a row.

The two colleagues, Tommy and Randy came hurdling down the hill, jumping and skipping this way and that, dodging brush and bouncing from stumps until they stood panting at Joe's side.

“Fuck man, did you see that thing! A fucking monster!” Randy's laugh blasting his sentences into waves of euphoria. “I got that bastard! Did you see that! A fucking heart shot!”

Tommy wasn't so sure of that last statement, he was already at the edge of the cliff to see if the bear had survived.

“Nothing down here Randy, you may have hit it but it ain't down below.” Tommy's belief in a good hit dwindling fast.

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Joe watches in bewilderment and a rush of adrenaline that just set in as the two start into a heated discussion, "I am fucking alive" he thinks to himself, "and they are arguing whether the bear is dead or not." He shakes his head and heads up the hill.

Randy is the company owner's son, a forty year old asshole that thinks he knows all there is about the woods and the wood. As foreman of the group of woodsmen, he decided it was upon him to ensure the bear was dead and not suffering and would therefore go looking for it if someone were to volunteer to join. "Joe, you're going with me, it was your ass that I saved. How about it?"

His demeanor is that of a rat and it irks Joe but he answers with a civil tongue if bluntly. "I'm not going after thing now or any time today. If you only wounded it, then we'll be on that bears menu. No thanks, you go ahead if you like." There is a murmur among the fellow lumber jacks and unanimous consensus of "Go to hell with that idea" as the last answer.

At camp, about eight miles from the clearing and old Snarl's introduction, the men eat their supper in front of a large open fire. The tale of the bear was the main topic of the evening, Randy bragging about his shooting capabilities and the dead center shot that sent Snarl over the cliff. The subject soon found an end and next weeks new harvesting grounds a couple miles past the last clearing came to light, especially because it would take the team to the edge of the property of lovely lady they had met on the mountain road. Joe remembers the event well, it was everyone's turn to say that they would be the one to pop that woman's cherry before they finished the job.

It was that second day, clearing the trees along the edge of her property that all hell had broken loose. Debbie Garner had been the reason for clearing the state land of trees next to her property. She breeds horses and summer fires over the past years had come with hundreds of yards of her home and livelihood. Upon her request, the bordering states land was to be cut clean and used as a fire break.

Tommy was out front, and felling the trees, one after the other, dropping them precisely where he wanted them, not a talent but by hard earned experience. Joe's job was to limb the trees, an O 56 Stihl saw his friend for the job. It was an easy job, the saw flying through the air around the trees like a humming bird, dropping the branches to ground just as the bird might take a shit, easy swift and efficient.

The fences that encircled Debbie's substantial property were wooden, rough cut and effective, even crossing that same river next to the last clearing although here it was shallow, flat and swift. The horses were free to roam during the day and willingly returned to their barns in the evening where their buckets of oats and fresh hay awaited them in dry stalls.

It was over the hum and brap of his two stroke chain saw that the neighing and whining of a horse in distress was heard followed by that unmistakable scream of a woman in death's grip.

Joe's heart freezes and his hands clench the arm of the chair he is sitting in at the memory of that day. It is a day that he would never forget and was certain to haunt him the rest of his days.

He recalls standing there over that tree, his eyes looking in the direction of the fence in time to see Snarl, thin and patches of missing hair, throw a devastating blow of his paw across the head of the horse, tearing flesh and bridle as though they were paper. He could see his good friend Tommy, heavy chain saw in hand, already heading to the woman's aid, seeing the bear just seconds before the attack.

The horse in its death throes is immediately covered by Snarl, the woman her foot pinched to the ground by the horse's weight just inches from death. Fear is a feeling that Joe's heart has never truly known, not like humility, scathing rage, or love. At this moment, it wasn't a feeling that sent him to the woman's aid

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but instinct alone. The embedded instinct of an alpha male, strongest and meanest, a wolf, a grey back ape, a protector of his kind sends him to the woman's aid. He jumps from the fallen tree he is standing on the saw in his hand, its blade snags in the middle of the huge branch he had been cutting. The force with which he vaulted from the trunk of the tree tore the machine apart. The blade bent, the chain jumps from its track both tearing the bolts that hold it in place from the motor, popping off like shots from gun.

Before Joe could sprint the sixty yards, Tommy was upon them. Running between the trees, Tommy slid to a stop, legs spread wide as his heavy awkward saw arced back from over from behind his right shoulder aiming for the humped back of the beast about to befall the woman pinned to the ground. Joe could hear the motor revving as the blade was swung and so did old Snarl. It was a blur of fur and teeth, a dark brown smudge of color that no eye could follow such was the speed of that old bear. Tommy's left arm was severed from his body at the shoulder by a clawed paw the size of a baseball mitt.

Joe was but seconds away, twenty yards at the most but before Tommy could fall from that devastating blow, Snarl had struck again, a sweep of his other paw opening Tommy's abdomen as easy as slicing through the belly of a forty pound salmon. That big saw dropped to the ground as lifeless from its high arc as a duck shot by hunter in midflight.

The broken saw, motor still running and held fast in his hand, Joe came upon the bear just as it was going to tear into Tommy's head with its dagger sized teeth.

Joe knew he was too late, he knew the moment he sprang from his perch on the tree that he wouldn't be there in time to help Tommy. Rage had welled up in him in the seconds it took to be at his friend's side, rage and fury that later turned to sorrow and hate, hate of everything that makes him who he is. Hate that he was not fast enough and three strides closer and taken that pain from his friend. A hate and a pain from deep within his gut that he had been so consumed with his pleasure of being in those beautiful woods doing the work he so loved that he did not see that which had transpired just a few seconds sooner.

Snarl didn't see him coming nor could it hear him over the sound of Tommy's mortal cries, his lust for blood and sustenance making him blind to the danger that was upon him.

With the speed of an oncoming semi-truck, Joe launches at the bear, head and shoulders ramming Snarl's rib cage with such force that Tommy's head was coughed from his closing jaws and the wind in his lungs expelled like a gale wind. The two crash head on into a tree, the snapping of large branches accompanied by Snarl's grunt of pain and surprise.

The impact with the tree was perfect, Joe had hit the bear broad side and completely by surprise. A perfect stick that one might see in a professional football game, where the defensive end punishes the massive tight end for catching the ball, no grabbing, no pulling, just a solid hit to then roll off to the side and watch your foe wither in pain.

Snarl, as if hit by a demolition ball, was dazed and winded but decades of harsh life in the wilderness and fending off the largest of bears and packs of wolves, backed by instincts sharp as razor blades formally felt the next blow coming.

Rolling off that bear's wide back Joe twisted and skidded to a stop on one knee, his right arm, saw in hand was already winding back for the next blow. He knew from the bottom of his heart that if the woman was to survive, if he was to survive, he could not give that bear one chance to recover. His very life depends on ending this now. Like an Olympic hundred yard track star, he bolted from his kneeling position, the thirty pound saw about the weight of a hammer in a normal man's hands, swung wide and lightening fast was aimed at the rear of Snarl's skull, a blow that if it didn't kill the bear immediately would at least buy Joe

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another second or two to deliver another blow, possibly his last.

The saw came crashing down, a glancing blow off the side of Snarl's head to smash onto his right shoulder, shattering its socket. Snarl had narrowly escaped death but knew that his life had been cut short regardless. With the energy and power of a trapped and scared animal, he turned and lashed out with that mighty left paw just catching Joe's face.

The claws sank into his flesh. It was without pain, the rending of his flesh felt like three feathers had been whisked across his face the only difference being that he was pulled from his feet and thrown like a doll in the hands of child. The world before Joe's eyes went black then bright white, then normal but for the dark stars that floated around like busy bees.

His time had come, Joe knew it, that one misjudgment of the animal was all it was going to take and his life was forfeit. Rage filled him, every fiber of his body on fire as if the lava of a volcano were pouring into his soul.

Snarl had been beaten, like so many times in the past weeks, he had now been beaten and broken like he has never been before. The blow he threw at his unseen assailant was desperate and not intended to kill but ward off that which had already broken him. He was on the retreat, backing away on three legs, favoring the one that had been crushed. There was no fury, no more hunger, only the uncontrollable need for flight, the need to escape this threat that would take his fresh kill and possibly his life.

It was with a guttural cry and a cloud of dust that Joe rose from the blood spattered ground to meet his death. Crouching low, the chainsaw planted firmly on the ground, Joe awaited a battering that did not come. The bear reared before him then turned and ran, doggy tracking like car on a bent frame.

Joe rubs the scar on his face reliving that moment in his life, He can feel the hot wet blood gushing from the wounds, the searing pain of the hole in the side of his nose that clove through the pallet of his mouth, the taste of blood that streamed from his sliced tongue choking him with every breath. A tear runs from his right eye, both the memory Tommy and that blinding pain of his nose send that single drop dashing down his cheek.

Yes, a bear would have the strength and the tools to dismember a man but hunger would have kept it from doing so.

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