



Nearing Shelter

How can anyone justify this scene, this whitetail doe near death, that mean arrow stub protruding from her side? Benny sniffs the doe's hoof, her heaving belly, then settles against her flank. She's beyond rising, but her eyes flare as I near. To ease her bleak passage, I speak softly of sweet meadow grasses she'll soon nuzzle, the cooling springs she'll frequent, the sheltering thicket close by where she'll gather with her kind. Until then, I'll keep vigil beside her. No one can tell me her eyes aren't sorrowful in the autumn sun warming the wild rye pillowing her head.

— Darrell Petska, USA

Darrell Petska is a writer from Madison, Wisconsin. His fiction has appeared or is forthcoming in Flash Fiction Magazine, Flash Frontier, Nixes Mate Review, Right Hand Pointing, Boston Literary Magazine, The Drabble and The Centifictionist. See his published work at conservancies.wordpress.com.