

Three Days without Pay!

by John Cantey Knight

“Y’ore the boss, ain’t you?”

Between a narrowing squint, pupils like
flint arrowheads worked up from
the damnyankee’s belly, over egg-stained
polyester to the puffy cheeks
and walrus mustache, to linger deliberately
on the other’s piggish eyes.

“Reckon you can do what you want.
I ’preciate the days off. That deer I kilt
yesterday weren’t fit to eat. Gut shot
her. Meat’s ruint when they
run that fer. When I come up the creek,
she was still kickin’. I had me a chaw.
Hit weren’t worth wastin’ another shot.
She was a’goin to die soon ’nough.”

The damnyankee’s mouth opened
stupidly. He cut him off. “I can tell y’ore
a edgeecated man. Reckon you
finished high school back up north.
Hit ain’t yore fault you ain’t larned nothing
yet about the hill country, is hit?”
His thumbnail scratched chin stubble.

“No hard feelin’s. Why a day off work
huntin’ does a fellow good. I know places
whar a man could lose hisself. Hell, you lay
out’a work tomorrow and tag ’long
with me. We’ll kill us somethin’. You been
huntin’ a’fore?” Slick-ass blue pants walked
towards the office, as tobacco juice splattered
where the Gawddamn Yankee had stood.