Harmony with the Wild: Unraveling the Patterns of Nature, Time, and the Hunt

*We the People* have been graced with abundant natural resources and the time to appreciate them. Sadly, we take this for granted far too often, particularly in contemporary society. In the past, people relied more completely on what the natural world has to offer and of particular importance was intimate knowledge of the relationship between time and nature. Prior to commercially prepared and industrialized food, many people understood the best time for sowing a particular crop, for supplementing the herd’s grazing, and for setting a foot trap; they interacted with nature, as in a well executed waltz, with precise timing. If people did not follow the natural cycle, they could not survive. Now that we can just go to the store, or better yet, instacart, we are losing what was once a deep connection to the cycles of natural resources around us. Unfettered access tends to blind us to how much these resources are limited. Let’s look at apples; there is an apple season for a specific duration of time, during which the trees bud and bear fruit and the fruit ripens and is then perfect for eating, but this cycle is distorted by the constant availability of apples in a supermarket. Time and nature are powerful forces. Most people have lost their synchronicity with these forces.

Not for all, but for the majority, reconnecting with nature creates a positive symbiosis with our surroundings. I catch myself taking the intimate connection between time and nature for granted. However, my appreciation for both grows as I become more conscious of the role they play in my life. With hunting, there is an optimal opportunity of time and place that coordinates
with natural occurrences. Hunters prefer to hunt near fields and apple trees. It is easy to pattern
deer using the abundant food sources of autumn; later in the season it tends to get more difficult,
but there is still a pattern. Deer have a propensity to scavenge in the woods in the morning and
wander in fields at night seeking a mate. These patterns can be woven into a plan of action.

Learning how to hunt, I thought it was going to be easy seeing deer, that they would be
handed to me. I relied on the same thing to happen every year, like the comforting rhythm of
nature's heartbeat. My skill grew when I listened and responded to the shifts of nature. When the
timing of nature altered and brought a killing rime that coated the tender pink and white buds,
cast in sparkling globes by a buffeting wind, that was when my perspective changed. The past
couple of years the apple buds have died in early frost and the resultant crop dwindled; the frost
was a humbling experience; the frost was a very humbling experience.

This experience has taught me to adjust and shift to nature’s patterns, notice how the
timeframes vary slightly throughout the years, take what is given to us to stay in harmony with
nature, not to force patterns we would prefer. Some hunters found it easy to choose to replace
nature’s abundance with instacart’s, buying apples and baiting their stands (which is illegal). I
fled the shadow cast on my conscience by such a choice. Instead I shifted to rely on the different
patterns that nature and time presented me. Instead of hunting near apple trees, I could hunt near
corn fields. By October the corn is already grown so the frost does not affect it. There I was
twenty-five feet up in the tree, watching over the corn fields, listening to the squirrels bark, as
five even ten deer emerged. I will no longer take for granted the gift I received, but will work in
harmony with the interconnectedness of nature and time.