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The Snipe Hunt

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Rachel Merriam

Logan, Utah

November 2018

The Snipe Hunt

Rite of Passage

Informant:

Rachel Merriam is my youngest sister. She was born and raised here in Cache Valley, she is 18 years old, and she is currently a senior at Logan High School. Rachel has a twin brother, Stewart, who is 7 minutes older than she is. She is a very talented artist and can freehand just about anything. She is an amazing soccer player and has played on Logan High's Girls Soccer Team for the past 3 years. Rachel is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Context:

I interviewed Rachel on a couch in the basement of my parent's home during the commercials of a Hallmark TV show. There were family members that were also present during the interview, but they weren't disruptive in any way. The feeling of the interview was casual and relaxed since Rachel is my younger sister.

Snipe hunting is done at girl's camp, which is an annual camping trip that we went on with our church organization and lasted about a week. Snipe hunting took place on the first night you were at girl's camp and would involve all the girls that were there. The leaders never participated with the actual snipe hunt but would occasionally take pictures or provide the toothpaste needed to attract the snipes. Snipe hunting is just as much of a prank as it is a rite of passage. As a Beehive, you hate it that you are being lied to about snipes, but after you realize that you really haven't experienced girl's camp if you never go snipe hunting. Once you have experienced snipe hunting, you then help put it on the following years of girl's camp for those new Beehives that are in the same place you were your first year of girl's camp.

Text:

Okay so, snipe hunting is put on by the oldest in the group which are the Laurels so they plan everything and it's kind of like a rite of passage so every year, usually on the first day [night] of girl's camp the Laurels get all the Beehives together get everyone super excited about it we've been talking about snipe hunting all day, and we tell them there's these creatures that are kind of like these rodents, kinda like muskrats kinda like squirrels that are just overrun, over run Utah and we're allowed to hunt them because they're, they're just so over populated. So we get them

[the Beehives] all hyped about it, how like how fun it i – how fun snipe hunting is, and how good they taste in the morning like we eat them for breakfast and, and how we put toothpaste on our faces it it cause the mint attracts them and all this crazy exotic stuff that we – its like an entire prank that we play on all the new the newbies the Beehives that have never gone to camp before this is their first year. And so then we take ‘em out at night so they their vision they can’t see as well and then we have every Laurel has a flashlight and then we have pillow cases and we pretend to catch snipes, [voice emphasized pretend] and but really we just have like a slipper in the pillow case, and then, uh we, keep playing up the story that we actually caught a snipe, and then we get back to the camp and then we, let everyone feel the slipper in the bag [pillow case] no one can see it but they can just feel it so they think it’s real and then we dump it out on the floor and it’s just a slipper and then we said “Welcome to girl’s camp!” [said in a sing-songy voice].

Texture:

When Rachel told me about this rite of passage, it seemed like she was almost reminiscing about her experiences with snipe hunting. She would smile at parts that she remembered being funny and her eyebrows would go up when she was talking about the Beehives only being able to feel the slipper, but not see it. Having attended girl’s camp for six years, Rachel was involved in a lot of snipe hunts. The attitude she had about this rite of passage was that it was fun and something that she always looked forward to each year because it always united the girls that were at girl’s camp. Plus, it was always something fun to look forward to. The way she talked about it also made me remember the first time I had gone snipe hunting and the good memories that were associated with that year of girl’s camp.

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