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Bringing the
Game a
Little Closer
by Cameron Hopkins

Extreme Huntress 2014
Go Where
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Super Thirty!

Holland's Super Thirty,
the .300 H&H Magnum

USD 6 / DHS 25 / RS 30 / JOD 5



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BHD 3 / QAR 25 / KD 2.5 / EGP 50



Bear Hunting with Fatal Consequences!

by Roger Bäck introduced by Evelina Aslund



After three days of hunting and three great bear hunts with the dogs, it was time for the fourth day and we were all excited about what this day would give us. At 04.30 we meet up with some guys from the neighborhood team, which we borrowed as shooters and after a bit of planning we head out along the snowmobile trail that runs close against the Swedish village of Storåbränna.

When we get a couple of miles up the hill all of our dogs began to sniff up against the glacial, Lillfjället Mountain, and that made us change the plan. My friend, Karl, brings the shooters and equipment to the region which has been so good in previous years hunts. Then he continues with his two Jämthund hunting dog bitches, Essi and Raki, on up Fulverfjället mountain whilst I trek off up to Lillfjället with my Karelian bear dog bitch, Molssin Ronja and the Jämthund male, Bovattnets Nitro, to get the right wind.

When I got the okay from the others over the radio that the shooters are in position, I let Ronja free and she disappears just like a spirit into the blueberry bushes. Five or ten minutes later, I came to a scree where the raspberry bushes reaches waist high with raspberries as large as grapes. When Nitro gets up on his hind legs and sniffs I know he is keen to join the hunt so I let him off the leash to join his companion, Ronja.

A minute later I hear both dogs singing in their most powerful voices and I can tell by Nitro's barking that this is not a moose, he is extremely intense. I decide to advance toward



the dogs to see what all this noise is about and being downwind I am in a perfect position to get close without being noticed. When I am about 80 meters away the dogs barking has intensified in volume and excitement, so I have my suspicions as to what they have found.

Then, all at once, I hear Nitro scream and everything gets quiet. The silence is unbearable and my heart races in my chest as I am now certain that the dogs have found a bear... and that Nitro must be seriously injured. My senses are now on high alert as I am certain that the dogs have found a bear and that it is not too far away and could head in my direction and attack me. I know that Nitro is down and the bear will be in a very aggressive mood so I decide that the best plan is to wait for the others to bring up the GPS to see where the bear has run off to.

Ronja is wearing an electronic tag on her collar so I can track her on the GPS and I can see that she is following the bear because she is now far away. But Nitro's readings are worryingly quiet! Since the contact is broken

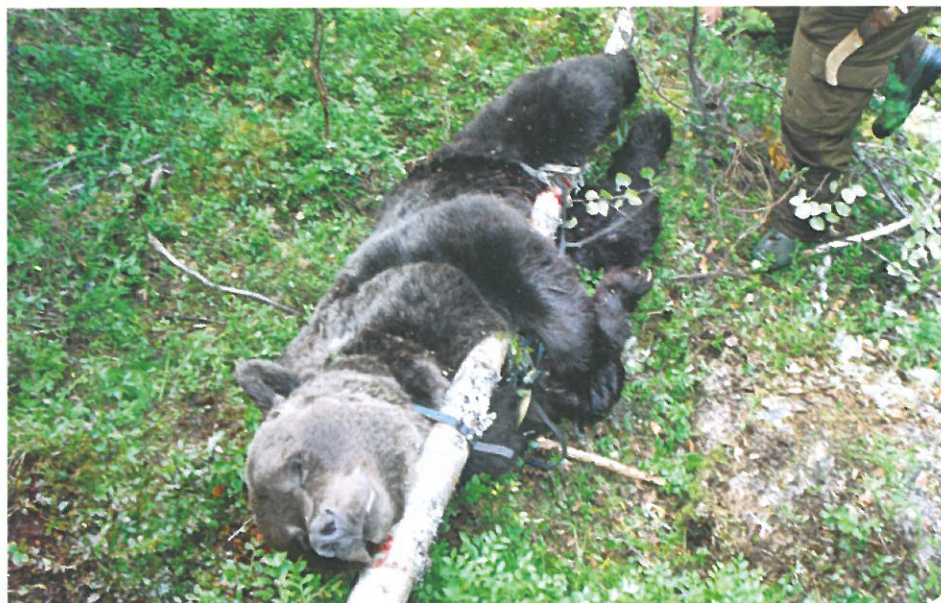
with Nitro, I go to the place where I last heard them barking...

Then, suddenly Conrad shouts over the radio that Ronja has just raced past him about 150 meters away heading into the jungle with something in front of him that looked decidedly like the bear.

After a while of searching for Nitro without results, Ronja turned up again, then immediately disappeared once more, and a minute later I hear her barking down in the ravine; and then I hear her whimpering anxiously. I run quickly up the slope and when I get to the top and look down into the ravine I can see why Ronja is whimpering as my eyes view something that I would have preferred not to see. There is Nitro taking his last breath. I quickly catch up Ronja and take her away from there, and then go back to Nitro who has been mortally disembowelled by the bear huge claws. I pat him on the head and say goodbye before doing the only humane thing I can do to put him out of his pain and as I put the barrel to his ear and say a last farewell, so I pledge revenge. »



big game hunting



I announce to the others what had happened, and by now it's getting unbearably hot so we decide to quit for the day. The best we can do now is to feed and water the dogs so that they will be fit for the next morning. It's too hot to keep on hunting right now as the temperature shows 26 degrees.


The next morning we return up to Lillfjället with Karl's Jämthund bitch, Essi and my Karelian Bear Dog bitch, Ronja, which are the two most experienced bear dogs in our group, and as we approach the site of yesterday's drama we let the two dogs free.

They are used to hunting together and we are hoping that the big raspberries have enticed the bear back to the area.

Ten minutes later we hear that the dogs have made contact and tension rises as they make a tackle and then run past, Bosse and Ante. Over the radio Ante announces that the bear passed him about 150 meters out but he didn't even get a chance to get one shot off. The dogs were up to chasing the bear for another hour and then they had to give up because of the heat, so this time we were defeated by the heat and bad luck. We

nicknamed the bear that killed Nitro, "Gold Neck", because he was light on top of the neck, and he resembled a grizzly bear.

However, as I promised Nitro, vengeance did come, and now one year later we managed to find the bear and track him down and send him to that great forest in the sky, and who knows maybe both Gold Neck and Nitro sit on the same cloud looking down on all of us.

Maybe the bear's soul does but his hide is mine! 

Text & Photo by: Roger Bäck