

The Stand

By: Eric Turner

Planning for and anticipation of deer season begins to build in its intensity as the summer moves toward fall. Cameras are strategically moved and in place, stands are moved or checked from the year before, all this in preparation for opening day. The tree stand, our old friend, is ready for opening day. As that day comes and goes the season seems to speed up. As the sweltering heat and mosquitoes of September, roll through to the fall, the leaves begin turning gold, yellow, red, and drop slowly to gently carpet the ground. The smell of the wood's change, the smell of leaves musty but inviting remind us why we come. Warm winds give way to the refreshing chill of fall breezes. The season continues to turn, each hunt met with anticipation. Eventually the season moves to late December, all the trees are bare, dormant in the woods. The cold begins to set in, and the frost has come.

Through all this time our friend has stood there faithfully standing as a sentry in the woods. It holds the memories of the months of summer anticipation, the excitement of opening day. It holds the memories of the doe and the fawn moving just yards away. It holds the memories of squirrels playfully playing in the leaves around it, it holds the memories of that shot that almost was or the harvest taken, and it stands faithful through all this time. The Stand feels no cold, it's not affected by the heat, but it is there holding more than just the leaves that gather in its empty seat, it evokes the memories of a season, the anticipation, the excitement, and the exhilaration of the hunt. The stand may be nothing more than metal and fabric, but it stands there steadfast and patient as a silent sentry watching over the woods, waiting for a new season to come to create new, exciting memories.

