

Lurking in the shadows



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Grandfather's Porch: A Descriptive Essay The wooden porch creaks, I stop the sway of the splintered old chair in which I had been rocking so absently-mindedly, and the fawn that I have been watching scampers between the doe's steady legs. It is early morning, the scattered clouds overhead are as white as a baby's bottom, and the rays of the penetrating sun spew scattered patterns on nature's floor. The bite of the breeze is temperate, cooler than cold, and the occasional passing of the clouds allows my body a frequent enough warming of the skin. My mood contrasts sharply with the more visible trepidation of doe and tender fawn. I am relaxed, away for a few days from any responsibility save peering into nature from the back porch of my grandfather's cabin; the doe and the fawn, meanwhile quiver at and dart suspicious glances at the mere change in the direction of the wind, the flutter of a bird's wings overhead, or the aforementioned creaking of the old rocking chair. So I try to put them at ease. I uncross my legs slowly so as not to draw their attention. I steady the rocking chair and I become very still. I am as still as a thousand year old stone; stiller, in all reality.

I relax and then adjust my vision. I breathe softly, in measured breaths, and study these fascinating creatures anew. The distance is not close; indeed, there is an open field over which I must peer before reaching the edge of the wooded field where the doe keeps her fawn close by her side. The wheat in the open field rolls as the wind passes by, and the wooded field is studded with oak and pine. The fawn blends at times with the yellow of the wheat field and the brown of the woods. The fawn is at one moment visible and then nearly imperceptible; it is the down, with a darker brown color, that allows me to keep focused most precisely. The trees are crowded closely together, a shadow almost when compared with the brightly rolling yellow

field of wheat, and the deer are perceptible only in their occasional movements. I inhale and I smell the pine wafting with the wind from the nearby woods; I tilt my head and I can hear the crackling of leaves and small sticks as the deer adjust their positions; and I can taste the moisture in the air that is non-existent in the big city where I normally stay. I am not observing nature. I have become a part of nature.

My field of vision narrows and I detect a constant movement, a circling by the fawn, protecting the wayward steps of her doe. If I am relaxed, they are wary. They seem conscious of threats, some danger of which I am unaware, and the doe prevents the curious fawn from straying too far. She does this by lowering her head and nudging the fawn back in a particular direction or by circling and blocking the fawn's directions. I whistle and both doe and fawn stand erect. They are still, quiet, and I can see their hearts pumping through their skin and their fur. The wind then howls unexpectedly and they are gone; the mother pushing her fawn into a frantic trot, and gone into the protective cloak of the wooded area. Perhaps there was something to fear on this quiet, chilly morning, in which the winds howled and birds fluttered quickly overhead; then again, perhaps it was just the cycle of nature from the perspective of my grandfather's porch.