

The Buddhist and the Hunter

By Randall L. Eaton

He wrote about the two wounded deer he killed
That wandered onto his place
After 30 years of hunting
I wrote about the “Deer I Never Killed”

His excuse for eating meat is that his place
Lies above the good soil and water zone
My excuse for eating meat is that I’m not a Buddhist

He’s a vegetarian who eats bacon for breakfast
Only when “necessary”
I’m an enlightened carnivore who eats veges
When there’s no meat in the house

For raiding the summer kitchen he shot a raccoon
To teach the rest of its tribe a lesson
For raiding the flock he shot a bobcat
But regretted it

He admires predators
So do I

After a raccoon raided the cat food in our barn for a year
I threatened to kill one if I saw it on the road

We moved instead

He gave up chickens to buy eggs at the market
More economical
To avoid causing “unnecessary harm,”
We go without eggs when our chickens don’t lay

His mother nursed him,
Mine didn’t
He won the Pulitzer prize
I didn’t

Once I won a lifesize statue of Elvis – in cardboard

He likes to chop wood – and probably carries water
It disgusts him that I’d rather pump iron

He’s anything but a dead beat
“You can’t party all the time”

We’ve both been to Kathmandu

He’s admired my women
And I’ve admired his
We both love the earth

He hunts consciousness
And I hunt consciously

He sits in a zendo
I sit in a tree

Zen is all about the art of hunting!