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***Death at my Heels:
Running from the Bear***

By Scott Myers

We all have dreams as children, some of them are good and some that are horrible. As we grow older we tend to forget our dreams; it seems that the horrible dreams tend to stay in our minds longer than the pleasant ones. There are people that suffer from recurring dreams, pleasant if the dreams are good and nightmarish if they are bad. I am of the latter group and I will share with you one of mine.

I wake in a cold sweat nightly, with screams on my tongue ready to be released; I frantically screen the room, looking for death. It's just the dream again, the same horrible dream that has been haunting me since my youth. The dreams of a kodiak bear stalking me, chasing me, and sometimes devouring me. The dream always begins the same way. I

find myself deep in the woods, miles from anyone or anything. It is getting dark, so I start heading home. I come across a field at the end of the woods, and I stop. I have this gut feeling that if I enter that field "he" will be there waiting for me.

I know deep in my heart that he is out there staring at me, crouched, ready to spring as soon as I cross into the open, as he has done on countless nights before. I am scared I don't want to go, but I have to. It's the only way home. He knows I am scared, he can smell my fear, he sees me and starts crashing around in the brush, and I see the trees bending. He is massive, the biggest bear I have ever seen, and I am scared, so scared, he is going to chase me down and tear me apart. I run, I run as fast as my feet can move me. I hear him. The trees are exploding behind me, and the ground is resonating with the impact of his great paws tearing into the earth chasing after me. I hear bestial screams I don't know if it is him or me making them, but it propels me on even faster.

I run and think "Oh God, is today the day he is going to catch me?" I dare to look back. He is closing in. I dash under a tree and jump a creek. I look left and there he is, so close, and getting closer I am not going to make it. He is screaming at me I see teeth as big as me, and he is gnashing them. There is drool coming off in great big gloats. His hair and ears are flat on his head; his eyes are glowing with hatred. He is moving closer to me and I am running as fast as I can go, but he still seems to be gaining.

The end is near I see the fence, and I know there is a farm and safety on the other side. I run harder. I am crying, so scared, I feel him behind me. He is so close to me I can feel the hate pouring off of him. My feet hurt I think they are bleeding. The bear is laughing at me. He hates me; I feel the hate coming from him it makes me run faster. He is on my heels. I smell the stink of his breath. I feel the pain as a claw rips through my legs. I fly through the air. I hit the ditch and see him stand before me. He drops on all fours and growls so loud that my ears are bursting, I cry. I see the teeth, huge yellow teeth, descending on my face. I scream in pain as his teeth sink into my flesh. I wake screaming, sometimes at that exact moment, sweating, thanking God that it was a dream. Thanking God that Kodiaks live on an Island 3,000 miles away from my home, and that I made it through another night. Then my day starts off with dread because I know in my heart that, when I sleep again, he will be there waiting for me.