

My First and Last Kill

Killer and killing are probably the two most chilling words in the English language. Or any other language for that matter. Then why do so many indulge in, and seem to enjoy the pastime. Of course it depends on what or who one is killing I suppose. If your reasons for killing is to get rid of vicious gossips, groundhogs or rabid animals, I suppose it could be considered more serious than killing to eat, or for the sheer joy of it.

They tell me that our maker created all species for a reason. But with the exception of vicious gossips, groundhogs and rabid animals, I have trouble with all kinds of killing.

There is a school of thought that killers and killing are a necessary evil. Otherwise how would we keep the population down, they reason. I suppose they believe that that natural phenomena, wars, pestilence, and just going around inciting riots just isn't enough. They seem to feel that mother nature needs a helping hand in this area of her domain. I just wish killers of all stripes would be more selective, that's all. I could make a few recommendations if some of these killers would only consult me first.

I belong to the class that looks askance at



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killing. Especially if the killer seems to be sizing me up.

If killing isn't your bag, don't despair. There are other ways to vent your frustrations. Like writing, for instance. Like, for example, I hate vicious gossips, groundhogs and rabid animals, in that order. But not quite enough to pull the trigger. I can write out my frustrations, then discard the scribbling. Once you have pulled the trigger, or set your dog to kill, there is no turning back.

My aim here isn't to coach you on ways to kill a nasty gossip, nor to provide you with a list of reasons for doing so.

When I was a lad growing up on our farm at

Venosta, Quebec, many years ago, the killing of the farm animals for the family's consumption, and to sell, was done around the farm buildings. The carcasses were hoisted to beams, with heads still attached, and left hanging there for what seemed forever, eyes open, staring accusingly at me as I went about my chores.

These periods were out and away the most difficult of my life. Can anything be more doom inspiring than watching a pig that you have teased and chased the day before, spewing its life's blood in a red flood in the snow? Or watching a hen that let you play with her chickens, without flying at you with all her fury, flopping around on the ground, minus her head?

I wasn't chicken in the full sense, but killing just wasn't in my blood. This aberration was difficult to hide, and made me the butt of ridicule at times.

When the slaughtering was taking place in the fall, I sought out my most secure hiding place. But some snitch in the family soon pointed out my absence, and a few well placed kicks sent me bleating back to the arena. There to spend endless hours shaving the hair from a pet pig, now dead, or plucking the feathers from a pet hen. (To be continued next week.)