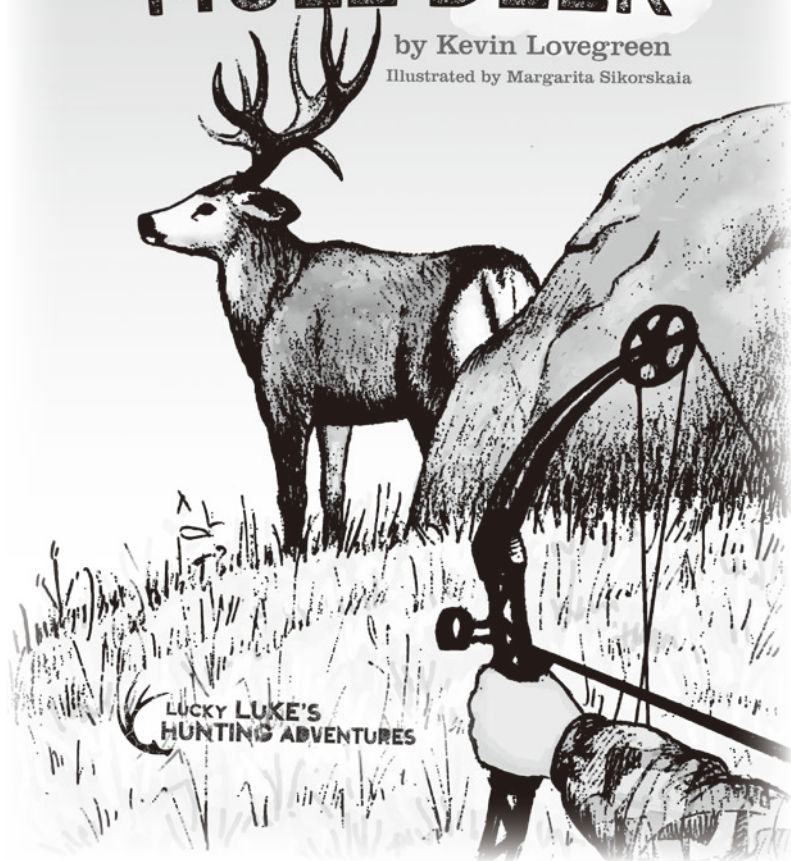


# MONSTER MULE DEER

by Kevin Lovegreen

Illustrated by Margarita Sikorskaja



LUCKY LUKE'S  
HUNTING ADVENTURES

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ISBN 13: 978-0-9857179-6-4

Printed in the United States of America

First Printing: 2015

19 18 17 16 15 5 4 3 2 1

Cover and interior design by James Monroe Design, LLC.

Lucky Luke, LLC.

4335 Matthew Court

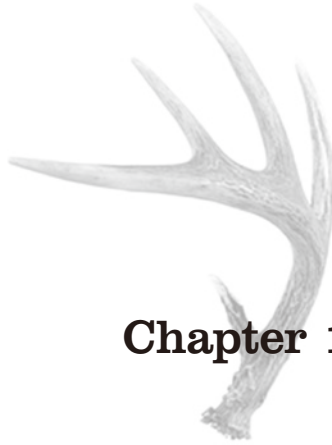
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Quantity discounts available!

*This book is dedicated to my  
great friend Mel. Going on hunting  
adventures is amazing in itself,  
sharing them with a good friend  
makes them that much better.*





## Chapter 1

There wasn't a cloud in the sky on this gorgeous October day and here I was on my belly, crawling like a special forces Marine through a golden wheat field. After rummaging across the length of four football fields, the only thing aching more than my knees was my right palm. The light glove wasn't providing much relief from the rock-hard ground. My left arm wasn't much better off, visibly shaking from slowly lifting and pushing my bow in front of my face for the hundredth time. As the sweat dripped off

my forehead and on to the black dirt, I could finally see the tree I was straining to reach.

When I made it, the job only got harder. Ever so slowly I rose to my knees. The giant mule deer buck was standing in silence and had no idea I had just snuck up behind him. I clenched my jaw and with all my might pulled my bowstring toward my right cheek. I aimed carefully, then released my arrow, piercing the air as it headed right toward the monster mule deer . . . BING! “Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for flying with us. We will be landing shortly. Local time is 9:36. The current temperature is twelve degrees Celsius, which is about fifty-five degrees Fahrenheit for the Americans on board. It looks to be a beautiful October day in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Flight crew, please prepare for landing,” the captain announced.

My eyes popped open and I was back in the airplane sitting next to Dad. Whoa! What a crazy dream. One that I hope will come true on this hunting adventure.

I get a little nervous on landings, so I gripped the armrest tight and prepared for the wheels to touch down. To my amazement, I barely felt the wheels hit, but when the louvers on the wings turned up to slow the plane down, it was loud and I was shoved forward in my seat. Dad's comforting hand on my right shoulder helped calm me down. The plane quickly slowed to a crawl and suddenly everything was quiet. My anxiety melted quickly into excitement, knowing another amazing hunting adventure had begun. I looked at Dad and we shared a big smile. He knew this feeling well; this was not his first rodeo. Dad has been on a lot of hunts, but this will be our first time hunting mule deer with a guide. This is a two-on-one

guided trip, which means one guide will be helping both Dad and me get our deer. I can't wait to see how good of a hunter this guide will be and to see what I can learn from him.

“We made it!” I said, taking a relieved breath.

We fist bumped with our usual little explosion sound at the end. We were fired up and ready for this adventure to begin.

It seemed like an hour before it was finally our turn to file off the plane. Now the only thing on my mind was my bow and hunting gear. I hoped they both made it safely. Like a herd of African animals looking for the watering hole, we followed the line of people to the baggage claim area.



“You go look for our bows over there and I will wait for our bags,” Dad said, pointing to the oversize luggage pickup area.

“On it,” I replied.

I was relieved when the doors opened and our bow cases came sliding down the slick steel ramp. I grabbed a handle in each hand and went to find Dad. His bag sat next to him and he was patiently waiting for mine to come out of the big square chute. Most people already had their bags by now, so I was feeling a little nervous again. After a short wait, my green duffle bag popped out and slowly rolled down the conveyor belt. When it reached the bottom, I grabbed for the strap and heaved it over my shoulder.

“We’re set now!” I said in relief.

With a heavy duffle bag in one hand and the bow case in the other, we headed for the door. I felt like my arms were stretching out of their sockets, but I wasn't about to let Dad think I couldn't carry my own gear.

Standing by the door was a tall, thin guy, with a clean white cowboy hat and a huge belt buckle. His long sleeve camo shirt was ironed as smooth as his blue jeans. He seemed to be somewhere between Dad's and my age. "You guys from Minnesota, eh?" he asked.

"We sure are. Are you Cody?" My dad asked.

"Yep. Welcome to Canada."

Cody reached his hand out to me. "Howdy. You must be Luke. I'm anxious to

see if you're as lucky as your dad told me over the phone." Cody had a friendly smile.

"It's nice to meet you. My dad calls me Lucky Luke because I have had some really good luck hunting and fishing. I sure hope some of that luck came with me on this trip," I said with excitement.

"Well, let's get moving and find out." Cody grabbed Dad's duffle bag from his hand.

We dodged our way through the crowd and made it to the glass doors that led to the open air. It was easy to pick out Cody's truck in the line of vehicles; it matched his hat! It was a spotless white four-door pickup with huge wheels. It had a rodeo sticker in one window and a picture of a huge mule deer buck in the other. Cody opened the back gate and slid our gear in.

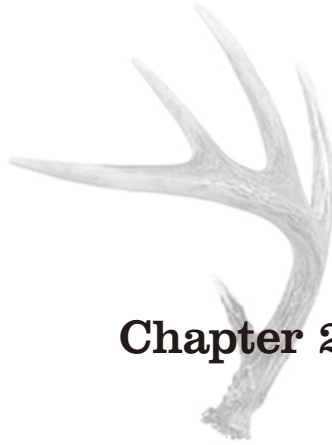
“This sure is a nice pickup,” I said.

“Thanks Luke. Yeah, it gets the job done,” Cody replied.

I walked over to the rear passenger door and popped it open. I used the handle above the door to launch myself up and in. The brown leather seat was smooth and clean.

“Good luck, Dad. Let me know if you need a hand,” I said with a smirk.

Dad pulled himself in, clicked his seatbelt and gave me that disgusted look. I smiled back, knowing he can take a little harassing. I was pushed back into my seat as Cody shot away from the curb and found a gap in the line of cars heading out of the airport.



## Chapter 2

On the drive to Cody's place he told us all about the mule deer he had been seeing. I listened intently as he explained that Canadian mule deer are a lot bigger than the whitetail we are used to seeing back in Minnesota. The average mule deer buck weighs about two hundred twenty pounds compared to our one hundred sixty pounders. He also said that hunters don't typically sit in deer stands waiting for animals to walk by, like you would for whitetails. Instead, Cody explained that in the evenings, hunters

will sit at the edges of fields, but the real fun is hunting in the morning, when they use binoculars to spot and then stalk the deer.

“So that means we try to find a deer bedded down and then sneak up close enough to get a shot, right?” I asked.

“You got it. It takes patience, skill, and lots of luck, Luke. These deer are smart and have incredible hearing. It’s a tremendous challenge.” Cody said.

When I looked out the truck’s window, to my surprise, the city was quickly fading away. We were heading into the country, where there were very few houses. The landscape was filled with what looked like hay and wheat fields, and lots of trees in between. It was wide open around here.