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Untitled

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Narrative

SETH MANILOVE

PHOTO: JACK DAVIDSON

Black bears were not known to feast on human beings, but if disturbed, they often did attack. I was aware of the amount of damage that a creature such as this could cause, and began to panic. With its massive eyes, the bear took one horrifically long stare at the two of us. As the bear began to take its first steps toward us, I realized that she was defending her two cubs. We were sprinting as fast as we could away from this monstrosity of a creature, without ever looking behind us.

It was five o'clock in the evening. The brilliant sun was creeping its way down the mountainside; a cold wind furiously stampeded through the thick forest. The mountains of western North Carolina were illuminated in the distance. This region of the state was notorious for being the home of tens of thousands of black bears. I was hiking through the wilderness with nothing but my loyal dog who stood alongside me. She stopped. What I thought was just a humongous boulder began to move.

This vivid image remains in my head, and being chased by such a large animal is something that has permanently scarred me.