

Running After Antelope Study Guide

Running After Antelope by Scott Carrier

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Plot Summary

"Running After Antelope" by Scott Carrier is the autobiographical account of his life-long fascination with the idea of running down an antelope on foot and capturing him without weapons. Counterbalancing that dream was Scott's struggle in his personal life and career and the rugged and risky life of a war correspondent in a world where weapons ruled.

Scott is six years old when he is awakened by his seven-year-old brother to go "hunting." His brother is intrigued and mystified by all creatures and captures a myriad of snakes, lizards and frogs that he finds in the area surrounding their Salt Lake City, Utah, home. His brother takes the creatures to the basement of their home and puts them in cages so he can study them. Scott's brother tells Scott that he figured out how to run farther and longer and that he feels he could run forever.

As the boys mature, Scott's brother solidifies his love of animals and becomes serious about a career in studying and researching them. The boys become intrigued by Indian tribes of yore who chased down swift-footed antelope eventually capturing them without weapons. The theory was that when man evolved to an erect stature, it allowed for a superior pulmonary system to develop. Man could not run as fast as a cheetah or an antelope but because of his erect position, his heart and lungs could out last these faster animals for a longer time and in a farther distance. Man was not as swift but he had more endurance and superior stamina. The tribesman would chase the antelopes until they were literally exhausted and collapsed. Therefore, without weapons, the Indians had captured a large antelope that could feed the entire tribe.

Scott's life went in a different direction than that of his brother. His brother went on to study animals at an academic level and pursued a doctorate degree. Much of his study was on the advantages that animals have that, like man, can breathe and run at the same time. Scott attended college but wound up unemployed for much of his youth and got into drinking and drugs. He married and had children but his career never took off and he seemed somewhat lost as to who he was and what he wanted to do. The only definitive thing he wanted to do, the only thing he seemed to have any passion for was to one day chase down an antelope on foot with his brother.

Scott drifted into becoming a writer. He was never ambitious about writing; it seemed to pursue him more than he pursued it. However, it was obvious that he had a talent and was able to secure employment although his behavior and his rebellious nature often put his career in jeopardy. Although his heart wasn't necessarily into his career, he had the opportunity to become a war correspondent for a well-known man's magazine. As it turned out, Scott was just what the magazine was looking for. They didn't want a reporter who would just report the wins and losses in a day of war, they wanted someone who would get the story behind the story. They wanted an off-beat approach to war reporting and they found the perfect off-beat person to fill that role.



Scott witnessed to the horrors of war and experienced the utter misery that is the harsh and living reality of so many suffering people around the world. Scott was dedicated to reporting their story and he risked his own life in order to do it. In between Scott's international assignments as a war correspondent, he would return to the peace and simplicity of the Utah desert where he dreamed of chasing down an antelope without any weapons.

Pages 3 through 18

The first chapter begins with Scott Carrier being awakened by his brother to hunt. The hunt would always begin at sunrise. Scott was six and his brother seven years old at the time. His brother always had a knack of catching animals, sometimes in neighbors' yards - snakes, lizards and turtles among them. He brought them home and put them in cages in the basement so he could study them. He had a garter snake trapped under Mrs. Gooch's porch. She came outside to see what the ruckus was. Mrs. Gooch said that there was no snake under her porch and chased the boys away with her broom. They ran fast. Scott's brother figured out how to run and not get out of breath. He claimed he could run as fast and as far as he wanted.

When he was twelve, Scott played on a football team. Scott would call the plays and formations as the free safety and captain of the defense. Scott decided to try something different and in the huddle told his teammates that he would call a haiku. He called the haiku and no one knew what to do. The coach wanted to know what he was doing. He called a haiku - "The wind brings dry leaves, enough to build a fire." Obviously, it didn't work and Scott, slightly embarrassed, asked if they could move on.

Scott, his brother, and some other friends went on an outing in the Alpamayo Mountains in Peru. At day's end, Scott was making dinner. His brother wanted Scott to teach him some Spanish. He taught him how to say "bones of the condor." Their friends, Jenkins, Mitsunaga and Wyatt had tried on three different days to make it to the mountain top but had failed. Mitsunaga fell fifty feet on one of their treks but survived the fall. On another day, they all freaked out when a blizzard hit and stayed in a snow cave all night. The three climbers were all twenty-one and had been friends for a long time. Wyatt wanted to be a professional climbing guide and needed the climb for his resume. Jenkins was tall and strong and the son of a judge. Jenkins and Wyatt had been on many climbs before. Mitsunaga was the least experienced. He would soon be entering law school. He had recently married and all he wanted to do was get the climb over with and get home. Scott's brother was fascinated with a condor and tracked it partway up the mountain.

After the blizzard passed, the three climbers decided to come back to the base camp to restock their food supply but there was no food. The next day all five friends walked down to a village at 12,000 feet where they bought food and supplies. They lingered in the village that night to relax and drink some beer. They laid around on a grassy area that night and looked up at the stars which being in the Andes were all as bright as planets. Scott's brother asked the woman working at the shop in Spanish if she had any "condor bones."

Scott's brother was a master's student in the biology department of the University of Utah. He asked Scott to help him with an experiment. He showed Scott his freezer which was full of animals he had collected, roadkill he called it. To clean the bodies and wind up with just bones, he placed the dead carcasses on what he referred to as a beetle box. Beetles would eat the skin, sinew and cartilage off of each dead animal



placed in their "box." After the beetles were through, he measured and studied the bones.

Scott and his brother went to the football field - they were the only ones there. He placed a Styrofoam cup over Scott's mouth and told him to run around the track four times. The four laps would equal a mile. He and his colleague, Dennis, were studying how "running" impacted animals. Scott had a difficult time with the run. He was out of shape and was smoking too much. His brother believed that humans ran differently than quadrupeds and had more endurance because of their erect posture. Scott commented that bipedalism was a poor design. His brother didn't like the response and said that man was designed to run farther than almost any other animal.

Scott's brother's theory was that man was designed to have superior endurance when they ran because they had to run down game without using weapons. He had found evidence to support his theory all over the world. He tried running some animals the summer before but it didn't work out. He was hoping that Scott would help him this year. He wanted them to try to run down an antelope. Scott reluctantly agreed but thought it was a half-baked idea.

When Scott was nineteen, his mother bought him a house for \$10,000 and told him he could live there if he kept it clean and took care of it. It was near the woods and just down the road from the University of Utah. His neighbor, Bob Kerry, dropped by to say "hi." He gave him a rundown of the people in the neighborhood. There were two "old lesbians" down on the corner. Next to them there was a crazy hag from Tennessee. Bob had been there longer than anyone else. His mother owned the house but she was living in San Francisco for the time being.

Bob used to work in construction and concrete but he hurt himself on the job and could no longer work. He was on disability which gave him only enough money to get by on. Bob volunteered to help Scott renovate his house. In fact, he could fix just about anything - even beat someone up for him or make them disappear.

Scott gutted the little house and existed with only a fridge and a stove for a while. He slept on the floor on a camping pad. Bob got in the habit of coming over every day to drink beer. Bob would bring Clarence, a white-haired guy who was sixty, and was staying with Bob for a short while. He was waiting to go to prison for killing his wife. Bob and Clarence would wind up drinking too much and getting into vicious arguments. When Clarence went to the penitentiary, he wrote Scott advising him to go straight and not make the same mistakes he did. Scott asked himself how he wound up with no job and with Bob Kerry, who had a sawed-off shotgun, as his best friend. The lesbians asked Scott to build a block wall around their house. They were afraid of Bob.

One late night Bob came over in a very somber mood. He wanted to say goodbye to Scott. He behaved suspiciously and seemed very nervous. He told him that he might not be back for a while. He went somewhere that night but was back in Scott's living room the next day. He never uttered a word about the conversation the night before. Bob was gone for a ten-day spell on another occasion. It turned out he was in the



hospital with a broken leg. He was upset with his treatment and he hired a lawyer to sue him. He expected a huge settlement, maybe one even in the millions.

Bob decided to return to school and get a degree in technical drawing. He was doing well in school and even found a girlfriend at school, someone around his own age. He had a big party one night when Scott was out of town. When Scott returned, Bob's house was a wreck with drug paraphernalia strewn all about. Someone at the party shot the ceiling up with Bob's sawed-off shotgun. Scott never saw the shotgun or the girlfriend around again. Bob's lawsuit was settled but not for the million dollars that Bob was hoping for. It was probably more like several thousands. He was too depressed to talk about it so Scott didn't question him. One day he left a note saying he was going to San Francisco to live with his mother. Scott left town soon after that and he never saw Bob again.



Pages 19 through 34

In the summer of 1984, Scott and his brother went to Wyoming to fulfill their dream of running down an antelope. They had no delusions that they could run faster than a pronghorn - only cheetahs were faster - but his brother's theory was that man could run farther and longer in the heat of day. His brother predicted that the antelope could only last about two hours and then it would collapse. They drove off a dirt road and immediately spotted antelopes everywhere. They start out by running after a buck and two does. The antelope were fast but stopped for rests, their endurance seemed to be just as his brother predicted.

A few times, Scott got close and the antelopes would stare him down. But they'd take off like lightning and Scott would be after them again. There were so many antelopes around that the brothers lost track of which ones they had been chasing. At times they found themselves chasing a whole herd of twenty or more animals. They tried to chase an antelope for two full days but with no success.

Scott had fallen in love. He fantasized about spending the rest of his life with the woman. She was small and frail and a modern dancer. He'd seen her perform and he was amazed at her unique style and flexibility - even though he wasn't a big fan of dance. Until he met her, Scott had been living alone and not liking it. He had a house, a car, a dog and no job. He had been awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to produce a radio story about chasing antelopes. The girl had fallen in love with Scott, too, and moved in with him.

Scott's brother had gone away to get a PhD at a big university back east. The idea of chasing antelopes had, out of necessity, been put on the back burner. Scott wanted to leave Salt Lake in a way but it seemed like he was just too attached to it. No place in the world was more beautiful than the city and its surrounding areas. Scott planned to get in better shape and live like a primitive. Man had been a hunter/gatherer for ninety percent of his existence. He decided he needed to go back to basics and become a hunter/gatherer. But it was just a fantasy. He knew that was impossible. He wasn't about to start living naked in the wilderness. Instead of becoming a hunter and gatherer, he tried to get in shape by running in the mountains and skiing cross-country. Part of his regimen became smoking marijuana and taking LSD and eating mushrooms. He was trying to get lost to the point that he would feel humbled.

The sun went down on three families camped beside a trout stream in southern Utah. Two of the women were sisters and were there with their husbands and kids. One woman just had an affair and planned on asking her husband for a divorce but had changed her mind. Another woman was comforting her toddler who was recovering from an earlier burn. The third woman was two days pregnant and sleepy. One of the men was thinking about calling his broker. Another was contemplating running up the mountain road and smoking a joint. The third man was looking in the water wondering if the fish ate grasshoppers. Also present was also the spirit of an Indian who lived and died on that same spot. This trip was the beginning of a story about the husband who



realized his wife was unfaithful, about how the Indian died, and how the two-day old fetus became a beautiful and artistic young woman.

Scott found an ethnography that was written by anthropologists and dated 1935 about the Tarahumara tribe and its ability to run down antelopes. There was no way to verify the account however there was other literary evidence that the Tarahumara were great runners, running as much as 300 miles in three days. It made Scott yearn to live like them.

One of the worst ways to be woken up was in the floodlight of a police car. Scott was outside Lawrence, Kansas, sleeping in a field by his car. One of the cops was in his car looking for drugs. The second cop was a short distance away, covering the other cop with his drawn revolver. He told the cops that he was a producer of a radio program and was driving to Kansas City in the morning to interview the mayor. The cops had heard of the show and the host who Scott called Friendly Man because that was his persona. Twelve million people across the country listened to Friendly Man's five-minute feed every morning. He always delivered a positive and upbeat message. The cops allowed Scott to stay where he was and keep sleeping.

People would have been surprised to learn that Friendly Man didn't write or produce his own show. He was in New York and the executive producers were in San Francisco. The first story Scott produced for the Friendly Man was about some people who lived in Tuscon, Arizona, and who were making America "better" by sending juvenile delinquents to a teen court where they would be judged by their peers - other delinquents.

Scott's suggestion for a few changes was met with resentment and the reminder that he was to write what he was told. For the next stories he was to do, he asked if he could go on the road and interview the actual people. They gave him no advance and he had to pay his own expenses other than mileage which they would reimburse. Scott met with Kansas City Mayor Emanuel Cleaver, a black mayor of the black town. He was also a Methodist minister. Scott was interviewing him about "midnight basketball," a program designed to keep juveniles off the street and decrease crime. The mayor was criticized by his political opponents for the cost of the program which hadn't decreased crime. But the Mayor saw the good in the program. Playing basketball taught kids how to operate in a team effort and a few of the kids had gotten basketball scholarships and went on to college.

Scott visited one of the centers that had the midnight basketball program. While he was watching the game, someone had gone through his bags and some some items including the audio tape which he used to record the interview with the mayor. The interview was lost. He didn't have time to ask for another interview and drove on to St. Louis for an appointment there. The story in St. Louis was about poor black people who lived in a nursing home. They would perform chores for each other and earn "time dollars" which they were allowed to exchange for food, clothing and other items they needed. It was a program of neighbors helping neighbors and getting rewards for doing so. When Scott saw the "time store" he knew the whole thing was a sham. There were



only a few items that included baby wipes and fabric softener and not much more. He called his executive producer who basically told him that if he didn't get the story from the mayor in Kansas City, he was fired. He drove back and slept on the grass by his car once again and was prepared to tell the cops that he was a radio producer and had a meeting with the mayor in the morning.

Pages 35 through 51

The Seri Indians of Mexico were another people who had a method for running down deer, antelope and mountain sheep which was documented in a 1895 report by William McGhee to the Smithsonian Institution.

Scott's brother spent five years working on earning his doctorate degree. It was a struggle for him; he even developed a serious heart condition called ventricular fibrillation. He would become faint from the lack of proper blood circulation. Scott wrote an angry letter to his brother's adviser warning him to not let anything happen to his brother or he'd be dead. Scott decided to deliver the letter in person.

Scott visited his brother at his campus lab in Ann Arbor. It was late at night but his dedicated brother was still working in the lab, studying a three-foot-long monitor lizard. He had implanted electrodes into the anesthetized reptile. His research found that lizards didn't breathe when they ran because of the way their body design. He had to do a lot of his experiments a second time because he upset the "dinosaur people" at the school. It was his theory that dinosaurs ran more like mammals than lizards and that it was an evolutionary step.

Scott invited his brother to go to Mexico with him where he planned to run down a deer with the Tarahumara. His brother had to decline because he couldn't get away just then. Scott decided not to deliver his death-threat letter to Scott's adviser.

Scott was hired to interview people who were on Medicaid in Utah for the treatment of mental illness which was generally characterized as schizophrenia. Scott's assignment was to try to learn the effectiveness of the Medicaid treatment they were getting. His wife had just announced that she was leaving with the kids. He had quit his job as a radio producer because he wanted to kill his executive producer. He was unemployed and separated from his wife and children which was why he took the job.

Part of his job was to test the subjects for anxiety, anger, paranoia, hallucinations, depression and other emotional conditions. He was trained to assess the answers and assign a score between one and seven to each response. One client, a young woman, heard voices warning her she was going to be burned alive. An elderly man was tied to his bed and answered every question with the response that he didn't remember. A patient who was a former prostitute had quit her work when she realized she was surrounded by zombies. A young Navajo man heard satanic voices and was obsessed with the sorry that his shoes were not stylish.

The people Scott interviewed seemed to have thin souls, like ghosts and demons. One patient had a crystal that he would hold up in front of people to learn if they were good or evil. He also had the gift of telepathy and told Scott that he sent a message to his brain. One woman told her minister that she was having sex with several archangels. The minister told her to get medication to stop her hallucinations or else he'd see to it



that her daughter was taken away from her. She had recently stopped taking the medication because she missed the visits of the archangels.

At one point, Scott gave himself the test and realized he wasn't in very good shape either. If he had written up a report on himself it would have said that he was thirty-six years old and lived alone. He had gutted his house after his wife left so he could live like a primitive. He felt a darkness that kept him from getting close to other people. He believed that if he could say the right words, he could make that darkness disappear. He went fishing by himself and was proud of his skills as a fisherman. He fixed up his house and felt better. He was thinking about begging his wife to return.

Scott's study of animals focused on their pulmonary system. The better and more quickly an animal could get around the better his chances were of getting food and avoiding dangers. Scott always thought that if he and his brother could run down an antelope like they always wanted to do, that they could provide his running hypothesis. It was different than the hunting and gathering hypothesis which both theorized that man's separation from apes began when he stood up erectly and was able to carry things around. But to Scott, that theory was lacking and uninspiring. The running hypothesis held that man stood up erectly so he could breathe better in order to increase his stamina and endurance. On a metaphysical level, man's ability to take in more air increased his spirituality and and consciousness.

A low point in Scott's career was when he worked as a carpenter's assistant for his younger brother. They did renovations and built additions. His younger brother was thirty-two at the time and had worked as a carpenter since he graduated from college. He had elevated his career as a carpenter into that of a sub-contractor.

Scott didn't like the work because he resented the money people had to throw into their house - \$40,000 to redo their bathrooms or extend their garages. He also had problems with some of the men his brother hired. One carpenter tried to convert him to Christianity. Another worker swore that there was a conspiracy and that evil people were inserting microchips into new born babies so they could be identified as members of Satan's army. Another new hire had his own personal conspiracy. He was from Boston and lived under the fear that Ted Kennedy was out to get him. Scott saw a connection between all of the men his brother hired and Jesus Christ - perhaps because they were all carpenters. Most of them were into the Book of Revelation and believed that everyone who had done them wrong would soon have their comeuppance.

Scott concluded that people used religion for different reasons. They wanted to connect with their spiritual nature but they also used it as a way to bring a sense of justice to their social existence. Scott put up with the men because he needed the work but it all exploded one winter afternoon. A city inspector told them they'd have to tear down a three story add-on that they had framed. Scott couldn't believe how calmly his brother took the news. He'd have to pay everyone out of his pocket for the mistake when it was actually the architect's mistake. It made him realize that his brother had chosen this field and loved everything about it.



Pages 52 through 64

Scott was out of money. His wife had returned but was threatening to leave again. There was the promise of money from a New York publishing house. She wanted him to fly there and get an advance so the mortgage wouldn't be late - again. But they had no money for him to fly so he said he would hitchhike - 2,200 miles from Salt Lake to New York. He was too old for that but she left him off on the eastbound I-80 and he stuck his thumb out. When he was young, he thought hitchhiking was the only way to see America. In his time, he had hitchhiked with a wide variety of people. One young guy was a world-class surfer. They smoked pot together and the guy talked about the joys of taking acid. Another woman picked him up and told him to call her if he didn't get a ride out of town. He could stay with her family for the night. Scott didn't get a ride and the woman's husband picked him up. He was grateful that he had a warm place to stay for the night. He learned from the husband, that the woman was dying of bone cancer. He could see that the husband and kids were trying to be cheerful but that they were all in deep pain.

Scott got a ride to Cheyenne, Wyoming, where he hitched a ride with a semi-truck driver. As luck would have it, the driver was going all the way to New York. The driver's name was Zarko Jurisic and was a Serb from Belgrade. He asked Scott all about his writing and then showed him a pamphlet of an art gallery located on the bottom floor of his house. His cousin was an artist and he was trying to help him launch his career. There were photos of his cousin's work in the pamphlet. Many of the photos were religious in nature. Scott told him that this type of art was out of style but Zarko responded that spiritual works could never be considered passe. They would be driving through Pennsylvania where Zarko's house was located. Scott could view the artwork in person. Zarko was sure Scott would have a spiritual reaction to them. He was hoping that Scott could somehow help his cousin.

They stopped in Omaha to sleep. Scott took the top bunk but Zarko had it so hot in the cab that Scott couldn't sleep. He remembered being at the same truck stop years before when he hitchhiked through as a young man on his way back from a trip to India. The next morning Zarko got stopped for speeding. He complained about America becoming a police state. The cop didn't cite him for speeding but he did cite him for an infraction in his logbook. The cop also did a record check of Scott and found out that he was not a wanted felon. They dropped off a load in Chicago and then another in Pennsylvania where they stopped by Zarko's house to see the art gallery. Scott told Zarko that the paintings were good but didn't want to give them too much praise because the chances of selling them were, in Scott's opinion, not great. The next day they drove to New Jersey to Zarko's girlfriend's house. Scott said goodbye to Zarko and took a train into New York City.

Scott read as much as he could find on pronghorn antelopes although there hadn't been much written about them. According to his brother's theory, the mysterious pronghorn had evolved into creatures with an increased stamina and endurance. They are among



the most evolved animals on the planet. The pronghorn have twice the blood and a more highly developed pulmonary system than other comparable animals.

According to Stan Linstedt, a biologist at Northern Arizona University, the pronghorn had exceptional endurance which was in line with Scott's brother's theory. On a personal level, Linstedt found them as affectionate as house dogs. They were said to have ten times the vision capability of a human which meant that they could see the rings of Saturn. They were the only antelopes who shed their horns and who had horns that were branched or pronged.

When Scott drove across the desert, he observed three pronghorns outrun a freight train. In northwestern Nevada a herd of fifty pronghorns ran alongside his car and then sped off ahead. He'd watched the same male pronghorn for years. He had seen him alongside the road with other deer and he saw him alone one day looking up at a jet fighter flying overhead. His horns were shaped like a heart and his coat swirled in a curly white question mark on his chest. Scott also observed him courting two does. On one occasion he spotted the buck through his binoculars. The deer seemed to be looking right back at him. The buck approached within thirty feet of Scott and didn't seem afraid.



Pages 65 through 79

Since Scott's calendar was clear, he accepted an offer for an all-expenses paid trip to Cambodia for four days. His assignment was to write a story about Cambodia for a new public radio travel show. He went on the trip with four other travel journalists. Raffles International, a company that specialized in renovating grand hotels, was sponsoring the trip. Unfortunately, after they spent millions renovating two hotels in Cambodia the prior year, the country broke out in a civil war. The country now was allegedly stabilized and the company wanted to stimulate tourism. The journalists stayed at the Le Royal Hotel in Phnom Pehn.

Instead of taking a tour with the other journalists, Scott set out on his own to explore the city. He rented a motorbike so he could get around on his own. The owner of the rental shop told him not to stop for any military personnel along the way because it could be dangerous. He drove to the United Nations office where the security officer advised him against driving to Siem Riep. The road was ruled by the Khmer Rouge and they might shoot him or take him as a hostage. The security officer recommended if he was stopped anywhere in the country, he should offer a bribe. The officer told him to talk to the reporters who hung out at the Foreign Correspondents Club in the evenings. When he returned to the hotel, he was scolded by the group organizer for missing the planned tour and told him he would report his behavior to his producer and to the director of the hotel.

Scott went to the Foreign Correspondents Club that evening. He introduced himself to a reporter and asked for his advice. The reporter told him that the country was still in economic and political chaos. Most of the country's revenue was coming from heroin and hardwood. This reporter had done a lot of exposés on the strife and was only alive because killing him would only bring more attention to what was going on.

The country had a long history of violence. The US dropped 600,000 tons of bombs on it between 1969 and 1973. During the Communist revolution, 1.5 million people were tortured and murdered. He personally knew of thousands of amputees. The reporter thought it would be a good thing to try to stimulate tourism. It would bring money into the country and shine light on the real status of the country. The next day, Scott stayed with the group. They visited a handicraft center which employed handicapped people - mainly children. One boy had lost both eyes and they had been shut with crude suturing in the form of two large exes. They performed a song for the visitors. One girl was missing a foot and a boy was missing an arm. After lunch, Scott opted to visit the killing fields with a small group. They first stopped by the Toul Seong Prison which had been a high school. During the rein of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, some 14,000 men, women and children had been imprisoned there. Prisoners who were doomed for execution weren't killed by firing squad; they were executed by farm implements. One man literally had his face scraped off by a shovel. Scott hated to look too closely but when he got a glimpse of some of the photos displayed in the prison, he saw that many of the victims were children. The tour group was too nauseated to go on to the killing fields and opted to return to the hotel.



The next day the group flew to Siem Riep. They stayed at the Grand Hotel d'Angkor which was more lavish than the hotel in Phnom Pehn. But the area just beyond the hotel was poverty stricken. At lunch, they met with the provincial governor who was proud of the city and region. People from all over the world came to tour the Angkor temples. He assured the reporters that they make every effort to provide a safe environment for tourists. De-miners were working everyday to locate and disarm landmines. The area by the temples had been swept clean. The next morning the reporters were taken to see the sun rise over the most famous temple, Angkor Wat. It was a custom to bring visitors to the huge temple. At the center of the temple was a shrine, perhaps six or seven stories in height, which depicted Mt. Meru, the home of Vishnu, the "sustainer of the universe" (p. 75).

Scott had the opportunity to have an extended conversation with the tour's interpreter. He spoke about the horrid, terrifying days when Pol Pot ruled. He was a young man and said that most people his age had lost their parents. Interrogators of children would taunt the children about their parents. They would brainwash them to the point that they were convinced that it was a good thing to reveal where their parents were in hiding or even to agree to kill them. Many children who survived were in hiding because they were ashamed to return and face their relatives. The interpreter had lost his parents but he had not killed them. He, like the other young people he knew, had tried to put the horrors behind them and move on.

On his last night in Cambodia he spoke with the hotel director, a man from the a middle west state in the US. He told Scott that he had his principles but learned that a missionary zeal to change a country was not enough to change things. He was there to do his job which was to restore the hotel and attract tourists. By doing so, he would help the country more than if he got on a soapbox and preached about the state of the country. He tried to teach people how to have a future.

Many of the images of Cambodia and the stories he heard, stuck with Scott for a long while. He did think that telling people to go to Cambodia was a good thing.



Pages 80 to 93

Although Scott was always anxious to visit the Tarahumara in Mexico, four members who were going to participate in the hundred-mile marathon through the Wasatch Mountains came and stayed with him. Their manager was a back-country tour guide from Tucson and arranged the trip to bring focus to the tribe and their families who were all starving. The men preferred to eat outside because that was what they were accustomed to. Scott asked them if they ever ran down a deer. They didn't know why but the deer had largely disappeared. They heard stories about deer running being done in the past. Three of the four tribesmen finished first, second and fourth in the marathon.

Scott took a job from a well-known men's magazine. The editor had liked his work on Cambodia. The magazine needed a war correspondent but not a typical one. They wanted someone to go to the really messed up places and find the story behind the story. His first assignment was to return to Cambodia.

Scott flew into Anlong Veng in a Russian Mi-8. All the passengers except Scott and his interpreter were Royal Cambodian soldiers. Anlong Veng was a former stronghold of the Khmer Rouge and home to Pol Pot himself. His brothers who were responsible for the genocide of two million people also lived there. They were given a seat at the UN yet they abducted and tortured and killed tourists and foreign aid officials. When ninety percent of the Khmer Rouge military defected, it all fell apart. Hun Sen consolidated his base and the country was not at present in a civil conflict. But the misery was not over. Just as they were deplaning, a soldier was being carried past them. He had just lost a foot in a land mine.

Anlong Veng had no town square or post office or police station. The most remarkable thing about it was a large man-made lake in the center of the town that had a small isle at its center. In that isle was a cluster of dead white trees. Against the aqua water and blue skies, it was strangely beautiful in the day but looked like the Lake of Doom at night. Scott was told he could roam about but should not leave town or, between the Khmer Rouge and the land mines, he could be killed. As he and his interpreter walked around, the townspeople looked at them suspiciously.

Scott learned that the Khmer Rouge's end was triggered by a suspicious Pol Pot who had a KR officer assassinated. He also ordered the assassination of a dozen members of the man's family. After that, Pol Pot was arrested and tried for killing the KR officer not for the thousands of war crimes he committed. Even with relative peace, the country was still in social and political decline and the government was corrupt. Scott was able to tour the biggest house in Anlong Veng which had belonged to one of Pol Pot's cruel brothers, Ta Mok, a one-legged man who was known as Ta Mok, the butcher.

Scott and his interpreter returned to the meeting hall where they were staying. Captain Souen, their host, told Scott about the rein of terror when Ta Mok's men would come at night and kill entire families. Skulls still lined the river banks. Even though the people



were starving, Ta Mok would threaten the execution of anyone caught eating mangoes that they picked from trees. Two weeks before Pol Pot died, he had his last interview. He had no remorse and would only say that what he did was for the good of the people - not mentioning that he murdered millions of them.

Scott met one former KR soldier who hid in the jungle for years and finally had the nerve to come back into town. While he was a soldier, he was forbidden to listen to the radio but he disobeyed that order and listened to the Voice of America where he learned what was really going on. All the man ever hoped for for the rest of his life was enough money to buy rice. He had no need for any money beyond that. Even after Hun Sen took over there was unrest. People only whispered his name because of the presence of the KR. The people had no trust in Hun Sen. Citizens were still dying after he came to power. Scott bribed the officials on the day they were to leave to make sure they would actually get out of the very scary town.

Scott convinced a few friends to come to Puddle Valley in Salt Lake to try to run down an antelope. Legend had it that the Goshute Indians used magic and music to lure the antelopes to them. They camped in the area where Scott had often seen the male antelope. Although they set up and scouted about for deer, they found none. It was the first time that Scott had been in the area and had not seen the big male.



Pages 94 through 111

Kashmir had a long religious history. Saints, holy men, poets, and philosophers were drawn to the beauty of this country. There was even a legend about Jesus roaming the countryside and there was a tomb of the "giant Jesus" in the capital city of Srinagar. But just outside the tomb, the streets were filled with violence and the city was war torn. It was not safe to be on the streets. In the past nine years, 50,000 Kashmiris had been killed. Kashmir had long been a contested area because of its central location on the trade routes. The dispute over Kashmir had been raging since the creation of India and Pakistan. When the British pulled out of India in 1947, Gandhi wanted a united India but the Muslims wanted their own state with Allah in charge. The territory remained disputed. In 1988, the border unrest turned into civil war. Kashmiri youth were armed and trained in Pakistan and Afghanistan. India sent in 250,000 troops to occupy Kashmir. In the end the people didn't know who to trust and as a result trusted no one.

At one point, tourism had been the number one industry in Kashmir but that had ended. Majid, Scott's driver in Kashmir, took Scott to meet with leaders of the political opposition. Scott also met with Yasin Malik, a leading insurgent who had been imprisoned. He told Scott that he had no regrets and that his people just wanted to live in dignity and honor. He denied that the majority of the military was foreigners from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia. Even though the movement was outnumbered, they would soldier on. The enemy would not break the will of the people.

Majid drove Scott through the congested streets of Kashmir and through the surrounding idyllic farmland. The innocent looking farmers holding scythes that he observed could well have had machine guns in the nearby bushes. The militants bombed many bridges which were immediately rebuilt by the army. The soldiers killed villagers and burned their houses down. In the jails in Baramulla there were no less than 2,000 militants imprisoned. In Kupwara, there was a major battle as recently as a few weeks before Scott passed through it. Although Scott was allowed to enter Kupwara and talk to the locals, many appeared to be frightened of retaliation and would not say much. One young man told of the slaughter of nineteen civilians in the nearby village of Jaggarapora.

They drove through the Himalayas to an area where the fighting was at a lower level but still continued. After the snows melted, the Pakistanis positioned themselves high up in the mountains and shelled the village of Kargil down below, killing six people. The shops were closed in Kargil because the shelling could take place morning, noon and night. The locals showed Scott where a young mother was killed by shrapnel. When asked, one man couldn't really say why the fighting was going on. Scott attended a press conference held by the commanding officer of the region in Kargil in the evening. Scott was asked by the commander why he was there. He responded that he wanted to find out why India and Pakistan were killing civilians. The commanding officer wouldn't answer and deflected the question to other conflicts going on in the world. He said they were not engaged in a war - it was merely friendly fire. On the way back, Majid laughed



heartily at the comment that the conflicts were "friendly fire." He had no idea what fate awaited Kashmir. "Only God knows," he told Scott.

Scott created a non-profit corporation and raised money to make a documentary about running down antelope. He and his crew traveled to the Sea of Cortez to tape interviews with the Seri Indians who were said to still be practicing this skill. Scott also brought along his friend, Creighton King, who had been an extremely fast runner in his prime. Scott felt that Creighton might be able to keep up with the Seri in an antelope chase.

They arrived in Punta Chueca, a small village located on a strip of sand between the desert and the sea. Two hundred Seri Indians lived in the village. Ernesto Molina was a Seri fisherman and tourist guide. He spoke perfect Spanish and would serve as their interpreter and guide. He said that the Seris at one time, before they had rifles, would run down deer until they dropped from exhaustion. The young men in the tribe would mentally prepare all winter for the task. In the summer, they would be given a special drink to increase their power and stamina and then would go off alone to chase the animals until they collapsed. Scott asked if there would be some members of the tribe willing to try to chase an antelope with them. The answer was a resounding no. Scott and Creighton drove home kind of sad. It seemed that there were no longer any people on earth who hunted without weapons.



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Scott first saw her in a crowd in San Cristobal de las Casas. They were both on the street outside the conference hall where Zapatista leaders were meeting with legislators. The Zapatistas had emerged from the jungle after being in hiding for two years. There was a crowd of 200 people waiting to see what would happen. He ran right into the girl. She was tall and blond and slender. Scott had been having a rough time. He had been abandoned in the jungle by Mexican journalists, found his way back but was robbed, losing everything.

Scott thought the girl looked American and introduced himself. She said that the negotiations didn't go anywhere. The girl, Sarah, was twenty-three and from Oregon and was serving as an international human rights observer. He told her that he was a reporter and was writing a report on the situation. He asked her to be his interpreter when he interviewed some of the Zapatista leaders. She agreed but only if he could get official permission. He had been sent to Chiapas specifically to interview subcommander Marcos who was the leader who read the Zapatista Declaration of War in 1994. Marcos was well educated and worked as a university professor for several years. He lived with the Indians in the Lacandon jungle and eventually joined the Zapatista Liberation Forces. He had only granted one interview in the last two years but Scott wanted to give it his best and try to get an interview with him.

Scott stayed in San Cristobal for the three-day conference but there was still no progress. The Zapatistas wanted their own region but the Mexican government said it wasn't possible at the time. After the conference, Scott made his way through a series of rides into the jungle to La Realidad. He told the officials who checked his papers there that he had a letter requesting permission to conduct interviews. The officer checking his papers told him he would get the letter to the commanders. It could take up to a week to get permission. But he could wait all that time only to hear that his request had been denied. He slept on the porch of a storehouse in a sleeping bag that night.

The next day, Sarah came by the storehouse and spotted Scott. He told her he was waiting for official permission to conduct his interviews. Sarah was brutally honest telling Scott that she didn't like journalists. All they did was come there to get a quick story and leave. They don't care about the people. No matter how he tried to convince her that he was different, she wasn't interested in helping him. Scott waited for days. He'd hear gunfire in the distance in the day time and be eaten alive by fleas at night. He began to wonder if the officer had actually given his letter to the commanders.

Some of the locals must have felt sorry for him. They'd come by everyday and talk with him. Pedro was one young man he talked with regularly. He had been involved in conflicts in Guatemala. He had literally stood in front of machine guns to prevent the murder of civilians by the Mexican military. The Zapatistas lived in the jungle but the military controlled the road. Scott asked Pedro if the Mexican government would eventually have to pay the Zapatistas off. Pedro told him that the Zapatistas could never be bought off. Sarah was helping some farmers pick coffee beans and stopped by a few



times to talk to Scott. She was beginning to warm to him. She sometimes would reveal tidbits about her life but then she would become hostile at something Scott would say and clam up again. After six days, Scott got the word that his request was denied. Perhaps he could try again the next year. When he drove off, he saw Sarah standing in the road crying.

While at his mother's house, Scott told his brother that he and Creighton are going out to the desert to try to chase down an antelope. To Scott's surprise, his brother said he wanted to join them. There were five guys in all who went on the desert outing: Scott, his brother, Creighton and two other friends, Calvin and Brian who were both excellent runners. They camped on a hillside overlooking Puddle Valley. It was 2 p.m. and 100 degrees as they sat trying to work out a strategy. Scott's brother began to worry that federal agents in the area might spot them. They got into the car and drove down a bit and saw the lone male. They got out and started chasing him. Scott wound up alone and thought he lost the deer when suddenly it came over a rise right in front of him. Scott continued running after the deer and figured that the deer was probably getting near his limit in endurance. Scott felt that he had everything he needed. The wilderness was unfolding in front of him.



Important People

Scott Carrier

Scott Carrier is the author of "Running After Antelope" and his life is the subject of this coming of age story. Throughout the majority of his life, Scott and his older brother dreamed of chasing down an antelope on foot without using weapons. The idea came from Indian legends of yore that told of braves who employed the practice of running down antelope until they were exhausted. Once the animal collapsed, the tribesman had food for their hungry tribe.

Scott lived in Salt Lake City, Utah. There was a part of him that wanted to get away from his homeland but the beauty of the surrounding area and the allure and tranquility of the desert had him hooked and no matter how far away he roamed he always returned. Although he went to college, he was unemployed for much of his youth. He drank too much and smoked pot. He had a small house and a dog but no job and no one to care for. He fell in love and married a young dancer. They were in love and had children but his irresponsible behavior eventually drove her away.

Scott had several gigs as a writer and producer. He never pursued writing but it seemed to pursue him. He had a natural writing talent and he had a unique way of looking at stories; he didn't just write a report he sought the story behind the story. Eventually, he found his niche when he was hired as a war correspondent for a man's magazine. They wanted just the off-beat approach to their reporting that Scott was able to provide. He saw the horrors of war up close. The erstwhile slacker became an outstanding reporter who was dedicated to getting the story even at the risk of life and limb.

When the scenes of war and suffering became too much, Scott knew that he could always return to his beloved desert and try to live out the dream of chasing an antelope on foot without weapons.

Scott's Older Brother

Scott Carrier had a brother who was just a year older than he was. Scott does not reveal what his older brother's name is in this work. As a young boy, his brother was fascinated with snakes, lizards and frogs all of which were in great supply in the desert near their family home. He would find the critters, bring them home, and put them in cages in the basement so he could observe and study them.

He took this passion to adulthood and pursued a career in the study of animals even earning a doctorate degree in his studies. His research focused on the pulmonary systems of animals. He theorized that although humans could not run as fast as the antelope or the cheetah, because they became bipeds and their bodies had evolved into an erect position, their heart and lung capacity gave them a stamina and endurance capability that was superior to that of four-legged animals. Scott's older brother was the



inspiration for Scott's lifelong dream of running after antelope, exhausting them and then capturing them - like Indian tribes of yore reportedly did.

Scott's brother spent five years working on earning his doctorate degree. During that time he developed a serious heart condition called ventricular fibrillation. The condition made him faint at times from the lack of proper blood circulation. As the story ends, however, his brother was in good enough shape to try one more time to chase an antelope down with Scott.

Scott's Younger Brother

When Scott was unemployed, he went to work for his younger brother as a carpenter's assistant. His younger brother had parlayed his career as a carpenter to that of sub-contractor. Scott does not provide the name of his younger brother.

Scott's Wife

Scott fell in love with his wife who he describes as a small fragile woman who was a modern dancer. Scott's failure to hold down a job eventually drove her away.

Sarah

While in Chiapas, Mexico, Scott met Sarah (not her real name). She was a young American from Oregon who was serving as an international civil rights monitor during the Mexican government's negotiations with the rebel Zapatistas.

Majid

Majid was Scott's driver in Kashmir. He warned Scott of the dangers inherent in the city and believed that God would bring peace to the region someday despite nine years of war.

Pol Pot

Pol Pot was the leader of the Khmer Rouge the name for the brutal soldiers who were responsible for the genocide, torture and maiming of millions.

Ta Mok

Ta Mok was the brutal brother of Pol Pot. He would raid homes at night and murder entire families. He was known as Ta Mok, the butcher.



The Lone Buck

When Scott went on outings in the desert in Utah, he would often see a large pronghorn buck. The buck was often by itself and was identifiable by the large swirl of white fur on his chest that looked like a question mark and his unusual horns that formed a heart.

Creighton King

Creighton King was a fast runner and a friend who Scott invited along on several outings into the desert to run down antelope.



Objects/Places

Salt Lake City, Utah

Scott Carrier was born and raised in Salt Lake City, Utah, and spent most of his adult life in the area.

New York City

Scott Carrier hitchhiked from Utah to New York City to meet with a publisher. He didn't have enough money to fly and needed to get an advance from a publisher so he could pay his mortgage.

Chiapas, Mexico

Scott traveled to Chiapas, Mexico, where the Mexican government was negotiating a peace with a rebel faction called the Zapatistas.

Cambodia

Scott's first assignment as a war correspondent was to Cambodia where there were still dangerous pockets of the notorious Khmer Rouge soldiers.

Kashmir

Scott was assigned to cover the conflicts in Kashmir that had been going on for nine years and making life unbearable for the people.

Alpamayo Mountains in Peru

Scott and his older brother travel with three other friends to the Alpamayo Mountains in Peru. The three friends were climbers and although they tried for three days they never reached the peak they aimed to conquer.

University of Utah

Scott's brother was a master's student in the biology department of the University of Utah. He went on to earn his doctorate degree.



La Realidad, Mexico

Scott traveled into the dangerous area of Le Realidad, Mexico, to seek permission from government officials to interview the leaders of the insurgency.

Srinagar, Kashmir

While in Kashmir, Scott visited the tomb of the "giant Jesus." There was a legend in Kashmir that Jesus didn't die on the cross but roamed Kashmir until he was 125 years old. According to lore, this Jesus was gigantic.

Puddle Valley

Puddle Valley was a desert region near Salt Lake City, Utah. Scott and his brother tried to run down antelope there and it was the region in which Scott would often see the large pronghorn buck.



Themes

Coming of Age

Self-discovery is one of the main themes in this coming-of-age story entitled, "Running After Antelope" by Scott Carrier. The author tells his own story of growing up bright but with no ambitious, talented but untested and with a caring heart but confused about how to use it and where to focus it. Perhaps Scott suffered a bit from self-identity having a brother just a year older who always seemed to know what life was about and where he was going. As a young boy, his brother's passion was animals, a passion that he maintained into adulthood and made it the focus of his career.

But Scott stumbled into adulthood. He didn't know where he was going and his indecision and confusion kept him immobilized for years. Perhaps his mother "giving" him a house enabled him to stay unemployed and do nothing. Scott became isolated at a young age and, like many lost souls, turned to drink and drugs for a period. Getting married and having children gave him a little more incentive and impetus to do something with his life but he failed to stay employed and his young family suffered from financial woes. Eventually, his wife was forced to leave him.

There was a yearning within Scott which he always interpreted as a need to be primitive and leave modernity behind him. That desire to be one with nature manifested itself in his dream of running after antelopes, something his brother inspired him to dream about. But it was a false and impossible notion that he held out before him. He associated that elusive pronghorn buck that he had dreamed of chasing and capturing with a happiness that was just as elusive. If he could just do the impossible he would find himself. But his dream of catching an antelope was just as impossible as catching the wind.

Scott had a hidden talent all along. He was a great writer and journalist but didn't pursue it but fortunately it seemed to pursue him. Although he may have matured a little later than some, as he aged he began to look within himself and realized that he had a lot to offer. With quite a few bumps in the road along the way, Scott developed into a dedicated journalist who was assigned to some of the most dangerous hot spots in the world. He learned to put his story and the people who needed their struggles exposed before even his own safety.

Spiritualism

There is an underlying theme of spiritualism that is threaded throughout "Running After Antelope." Scott Carrier and his brother admired and were intrigued by the rituals that various Indian tribes employed in running down antelope. One tribe used magic and music to lure the animal. Another tribe required its young men to prepare mentally for the antelope run all winter and then drink a special concoction that would give them



superior strength and stamina for the challenge ahead of them. It was important for the young tribesmen to be successful in capturing the antelope but doing so in a respectful way and come to the challenge unarmed like the antelope.

Known as having a kinship with nature and animals, the Indian tribes had great respect for Mother Nature, many believing that she was the mother of all living things and that man was therefore related to everything in nature. Scott and his older brother became fascinated with the rituals involved in trapping the animals and always dreamed of emulating that skill and wanted to feel the spirituality of being one with nature themselves. Scott often commented that in order to feel whole, he needed to live the primitive life and leave modernity behind him.

Scott encountered religion and spirituality at different levels and in vastly differing circumstances in his life and career. Once when he was out of work he worked for his younger brother as a carpenter's assistant. It seemed to Scott that every other worker that his brother hired was a religious zealot who wanted to save Scott. He doesn't mention his own religion in this story but it is obvious that he was not a Christian or at least not a practicing Christian and he resented when others tried to convert him. He finally concluded that the other men who were life-long carpenters felt in sync with Jesus Christ because they were all carpenters.

When Scott was in war-torn Kashmir, he asked his driver when he thought the bloodshed would end. His driver told him that God only knew. Scott silently admired the man who didn't seem bitter but trusted in God that the misery would someday be alleviated. In Kashmir, there was a legend that Jesus Christ had roamed the countryside in Kashmir and hadn't died on the cross. This Jesus was of superhuman size and there is a tomb of the "giant Jesus" in Srinagar, Kashmir.

For Scott Carrier, he found his spirituality and inner peace on the tranquil desert in Utah. It was where he could run and be with nature and run after antelope.

Contrasts

Although an element of "Running After Antelope" presents a gentle innocence and dream-like desire to return to simpler times and to be one with nature the story is juxtaposed against some of the worse suffering that man has been made to endure. The fantasy that Scott and his brother have about running down antelope and capturing them by foot without weapons is counterbalanced by the ravages of war and the cruelty and violence that man inflicts on man. It seems that the need to run down pronghorns intensifies each time the author experiences first-hand the horrors of war that include torture, murder, imprisonment and sheer terror.

Leaving behind the simple life in Utah where pronghorns run free and wild, Scott Carrier's job as a war correspondent take him to Cambodia which is still struggling in the aftermath of the Vietnam War and the reign of terror of Pol Pot, his malevolent brothers and the vicious Khmer Rouge. One brother was called Ta Mok, the butcher, and he was



not your friendly butcher at the supermarket. Pol Pot and his regime were responsible for literally millions of deaths. A reporter that Scott talked with in the aftermath of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge said he personally knew thousands of amputees who were victims of torture or the treacherous landmines that literally were still everywhere.

The war was technically over, but there were still mercenary soldiers who would kill without provocation and the landmines that were still killing and maiming innocent civilians including children would take years to find and remove. The Khmer Rouge were particularly cruel to children. They would threaten and taunt youngsters and brainwash them through fear and intimidation to reveal the location of their parents and in some cases agree to murder their parents. One young man that Scott talked to told him that most young people his age had no parents. Scott toured the Toul Seong Prison where people were tortured and killed - many of them children. The prison was so disturbing that he and the others on his tour could not take any more and abandoned plans to see the infamous killing fields.

A return to the peace and sanity of Utah and the open desert where the pronghorn ran was a natural escape for Scott. Although he planned for years to catch an antelope on foot, he never accomplished this goal. Perhaps he really didn't want to. It was a dream - a dream of facing an opponent without weapons and quite a departure from the horrors that he saw as a war correspondent. His respites in the desert gave him strength for the next time he was assigned to find the real story in a war zone.



Style

Style

Perspective

"Running After Antelope" by Scott Carrier is an autobiographical work and is recounted from the author's point of view. He tells about the struggles of his early life, his fascination with an elusive dream and finally discovering who he was and where he belonged in life. Quite naturally, no one could know the thoughts, challenges, and struggles that Carrier faced than the author himself.

The writer is able to give the reader insight into his progression from an out-of-work and out-of-luck young man into a dedicated and courageous war correspondent who didn't let a little war stop him from pursuing the story behind the story. He went into many dangerous areas that he was warned not to venture into. He had great empathy for the people who were suffering under deplorable and life-threatening conditions and was determined to get his story no matter what.

Scott Carrier began his writing career as an independent writer and producer for National Public Radio's "All Things Considered." He was also a contributor to Ira Glass's "This American Life." He has had articles appearing in Rolling Stone, Harper's and Esquire. He was a war correspondent and wrote incisive reports about conflicts in dangerous hot spots such as Mexico, Kashmir, and Cambodia.

Tone

There is a dreamy, languid quality to "Running After Antelope" by Scott Carrier. It is a coming-of-age story of a young man who seemed to be destined for failure and unhappiness; a young man who was obsessed with pursuing the impossible and the elusive. As a young boy Scott admires his older brother and his penchant for trapping a myriad of animals around their semi-desert home. The idolatry he has for his brother leads Scott to a life-long obsession that he co-opted from his brother to run like the Indians, to run like the wind and to run after antelope.

There is a measure of symbolism in this autobiographical work. Just like the elusive large pronghorn buck that Scott would often see in the desert, happiness and success were elusive for Scott. There was something within him that made him believe that he had to live the primitive life, had to be chasing the buck and exhausting and defeating it to find happiness. Instead he learned that success and happiness were only elusive because he hadn't looked deeply within himself to discover what a satisfying life really meant to him. And when he finally did, he found that in order to be fulfilled he had to look without himself - to others who were suffering and in need. Although he could do little to help the people in the war-torn countries that he reported on, he performed a very important function by shining light on very dark and deadly regions of the world.



There is a satisfaction in seeing the growth of a young man who doesn't care about much to a maturing and dedicated journalist who cared about a lot and cared enough to step into dangerous and foreign worlds from which there was no guaranteed exit.

Structure

"Running After Antelope" by Scott Carrier is separated into small chapters that are named but not numbered. The structure of the story of Scott Carrier's life-long semi-obsession to run down an antelope on foot does not follow in a strictly chronological order. The chapters are more episodic and some contributions are stand-alone accounts of events or times in Carrier's life and have little connection to the chapters preceding or succeeding them.

Although the book is non-fiction and, of course, based on true events, there is a post-modern quality to the writing in that the author does not tie up the accounts into neat bows. He allows the reader to imagine how his life proceeded after certain events. For example, when Scott's wife leaves him he is naturally upset and takes on a job that will take him away from it all and be a distraction from his personal problems. However, he writes about how through self-analysis he addresses his short-comings and improves himself and indicates that he was thinking about begging his wife to come back.

However, the author does not inform the reader if he did ask his wife to come back and if he did ask her what the outcome was. There is only a vague reference to her again when she is threatening to leave him but it's not clear if it was the first time she left or if she was leaving again. By allowing issues like this to conclude with loose ends, the author indicates that his intention to bring his focus to other matters which in this case was finding himself and being at one with the world he lives in.

Quotes

"He's crawling around breaking branches and I hear the front door open and there's our neighbor, Daisy Gooch, in her bathrobe. She looks ten feet tall and 900 years old" (p. 3).

"I was in love with the air, the smell of the grass, the warm light in the cottonwood trees at the edge of the field" (p. 5).

"The idea is not to run faster than the antelope - only cheetahs can run faster than pronghorn antelope - but to run longer and farther in the heat of day" (p. 19).

"I see culture as being the ability to make something out of nothing, a kind of magic" (p. 23).

"But the mayor was passionate about the value of teaching kids to play basketball. He said that team sports teach kids the best values: they learn to cooperate and play by the rules, they learn to love the game, and through the love of the game they learn to love themselves and each other" (p. 30).

"He says there's a darkness that separates him from other people, a heavy darkness, like looking at a person from the bottom of a well. He believes that if he could say the right words, then the darkness would go away" (p. 44).

"A work of art is something that speaks to us. It says 'We are going somewhere. Have faith. We just need to learn to use this stuff - these bodies and these minds'" (p. 57).

"In Cambodia, one out of ten babies die at birth. In Cambodia, one out of five children die before the age of five. Sixty percent of the population is under the age of twenty-six" (p. 71).

"The feeling of freedom is bigger than the feeling of revenge" (p. 77).

"As many as two million Cambodians died during the four years that the Khmer Rouge was in power. I was an agrarian revolution, and many who died were killed with farm tools - shovels, picks, digging sticks. Some were asphyxiated with plastic bags. Some were drowned. Many were ratted out or killed by their own children" (p. 85).

"Kashmir is the most beautiful place in the world, but there are many places just as beautiful, and few if any, are as sad" (p. 95).

"He [Marcos] was asked, 'Why the masks?' and said that politics in Mexico was a 'a culture of coverings,' and that 'I am willing to take off the ski mask if Mexican society takes of the mask that the anxieties of foreign vocations have already been imposing for many years'" (p. 114).

Topics for Discussion

What was Scott's brother's theory about running after antelopes? Why did he think that a man would be able to catch a swift-footed antelope without a weapon?

What was Scott's view of religion? What encounters with people told a lot about how he felt about religion?

What were the different Indian tribes who practiced antelope chasing? Why did members of one of the tribes visit Scott?

What was the symbolism behind Scott's life-long desire to chase an antelope? What meaning did the lone buck have for Scott?

Why risks did Scott take when he first went to Cambodia? Who were the Khmer Rouge? Who was Pol Pot?

What was there constant unrest in Kashmir? What other countries made claims to Kashmir? Why did other countries find Kashmir a desirable piece of land to possess?

Who were the Zapatistas? Who were they at war with? What did they want from the government?