

MY CHRISTMAS GOOSE

A deep, dark night
Alone
An icy wind
Sloshing thru frigid water
Mud and Tules

Is this the way?
Flashlight flickering
Don't go out!
Searching for markers
Darkness everywhere

Mud clinging to waders
Plants tugging at legs
Deep water
Am I lost?
Which way to go?

Footing uneven
Don't fall
Legs ache
Pack heavy
Shoulders ache

Reflection in the tules
The lost marker!
OK!
This IS the way.
Thank goodness!

Dark shape ahead
What is it?
The blind!
Finally
I'm here!

Open door
Peek inside
No animals
No owls
No spiders

MY CHRISTMAS GOOSE

Step inside
Out of the wind
Out of the cold
Down with the pack
Off with the waders

An hour 'til sunrise
Perfect timing
A deep breath
Let it out slowly
Relax

1st law
"Be prepared"
Get equipment ready
Keep it dark
Quiet

Organize
Coffee on shelf
Pee can in far corner
Waders hang on a nail
Position the seat

Hunger pains
Grab the thermos
Hot, black coffee
A sweet cinnamon roll
Relax

Faint light on the horizon
Stirrings near the blind
Birds awakening
Check equipment
All is ready

Warm morning light
Slowly sweeping the water
Thru the reeds
Enveloping my blind
Enveloping me

MY CHRISTMAS GOOSE

Teal, Mallards, Gadwall
Flying in tight groups
No geese
More coffee
Keep alert

Light getting good
Stay hidden
Dark clothes
Dark gloves
Face mask

Peer thru the netting
Move slowly
Quiet
Where are they?
Will they come?

Faint sounds!
Getting louder
They're coming!
From the rice fields
Hundreds, No, thousands!

Clouds of brilliant wings
Filling the dark blue sky
Shifting waves of pure white
Speckled with black wing tips
Beautiful!

Now they're close
A wondrous sound
Avian euphoria
Pure exuberance
Shivers down my spine

Here they come
Wings set to the wind
Right at me
Light is perfect

MY CHRISTMAS GOOSE

Be calm

Closer, closer, closer
Splash down!
One, then another!
And another!
Be calm

A beauty in close
Long graceful neck
Careful preening
Joyful sounds
Sparkle in her eye

Perfect moment
Steady, steady
Finger on the trigger
Hold breath
Let out slowly

NOW!
SHOOT!
AGAIN!
AGAIN!
GOT HER!

With my Canon
Digital camera
The perfect photo
Of my beautiful
CHRISTMAS GOOSE!

MY CHRISTMAS GOOSE

Philip Robertson,
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