

Slim Shares Sage Trapping Advice - Continued...

“So I asked whether she lived in the city or country. She said she lived on the edge of town. I asked her if she had any pets, and she told me she had a small dog.”

“Well, has anyone in your neighborhood had a pet taken by a coyote?” he said he asked her, and she admitted it had happened several times.

“So you understand the laws of nature, right?” he went on to say, and she said she understood.

“It might seem cruel to you at first glance that after I trap these animals, I kill them,” Slim acknowledged. “That might seem harsh to you, but that dog or cat that gets taken by a coyote doesn’t get a

quick death.”

Slim said he went on to explain to the woman that in some cases, nature needs to be managed to a degree to keep things balanced. Overpopulation of predators — coyotes, bobcats, hogs, foxes, etc. — doesn’t necessarily lead to starvation. What usually happens is those predators do get very hungry, but then they get weak, and then they get ill or diseased. There is no taking these animals to the veterinarian.

“So they will lay in a hole and waste away toward a long, grueling death,” Slim explained. “Now if your dog were in that shape, you would probably take him to the

vet and have it euthanized in some humane way.”

What trappers actually do gives the animals that are left a much better life, while also keeping the environment balanced between the predators and the prey, he said. In addition, knowledgeable trappers trapping responsibly save livestock — cattle, sheep, goats, etc. — and people’s pets.

Slim told the woman he spent hours upon hours studying the predators he traps, from their footprints to their habitat, to their tendencies and behavior.

“After doing that all these years, I can’t help but fall in the love with the predators that I trap,” Slim told

her. “Yes, they do die after I trap them, and yes, sometimes I skin them and sell the fur,” he said, but it’s not as though he is getting rich from varmint pelts.

“The animals that are still out there after I empty my traps are healthier because I trap,” he said.

Slim said the woman didn’t ask any more questions, and she walked away not nearly as upset as she was when she first approached him.

More conversations like that are what needs to happen to help keep trapping on secure footing in legislators’ hands, he said.

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