

Carnideer

They were to be Doctor Ampersand Relentless Struggle's (let us just say that the man had a complicated upbringing) finest creation, and a fitting revenge for human intrusion in the woods! Behold! The CARNIDEER! Genetically engineered with lupine DNA to give it a taste for meat and blood! Quake before its serrated Antlers! Tremble at the thought of its heightened senses! Fear the wrath of Mother Gaia, fools! Fear, and DIE!!!!

Yes, that was a quote from the remarkably vituperative manifesto that Dr. Struggle sent to the Sierra Club -- in time-honored fashion, the doctor reserved his most bitter loathing for the people who were merely not *quite* in absolute, full agreement with him -- announcing his glorious creation, and bane of humanity. Little-known fact, though: 'animal geneticist' and 'zoologist' are actually two separate scientific career tracks, although obviously there can be a good deal of overlap. Turns out that Dr. Struggle was one of the former, and wasn't friends with anybody who was the latter- actually, he wasn't friends with **anybody**, really.

Which is an arguable and theoretical shame, because if he had had any zoologist friends, one of them might have told the man that turning a deer into an omnivore, giving it sharp antlers, and splicing in a wolf's sense of smell doesn't get you a killing machine; it gets you a highly confused deer who can now smell human beings from *much* farther away, and who can now *much* more quickly clear a path through the undergrowth while it runs away. I mean, sure, corner a Carnideer and it might attack. But then, that happens with regular deer, too. It certainly happened with poor old Dr. Ampersand Relentless Struggle; in what could probably best be described as a terminal case of irony, the man died when a deer walked right in front of his recumbent bicycle. Apparently Dr. Struggle was a firm believer in always having the right of way.

Nobody's really sure how many Carnideer are out there right now: they tend to avoid humans, just like regular deer, and they're rather better at it. It *looks* like they breed true, but Dr. Struggle was rather bad at keeping notes, and at any rate most Mad Genetic Engineering has a relatively short half-life, reproductively speaking. Some groups are looking for the species, partially because this is an unethical mess that needs fixing, partially because the inevitable mutations might end up turning Carnideer into a

legitimate problem -- and partially because apparently these deer taste *delicious*. Better than bear meat, even! And so much, much easier to harvest safely, too.

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