

COYOTE IMITATES MOUNTAIN LION

COYOTE WAS GOING ALONG and saw a rock rolling down a hill. It rolled down towards some deer and they jumped. Coyote wondered who was rolling stones down and looked up at the top of the hill. Another stone came rolling down past Coyote toward the deer and the deer jumped again. Then a third stone came down and the deer jumped only a little. They knew it was only a stone.

The next moment another stone came by Coyote. But this was a soft rock. It was Mountain Lion who had rolled himself up like a rock and was rolling down the hill.

“What a funny rock,” thought Coyote. “It doesn’t make any noise when it rolls.”

Mountain Lion rolled right up to the deer who were not suspicious of the rolling rocks by this time. Then Coyote saw Mountain Lion get up, jump on a big deer and kill it. Mountain Lion picked up the deer and carried it up to a cliff where he could eat it and see the country all around. The rest of the deer ran off around the hill.

Coyote thought this would be a good way to get deer.

He rolled a stone down the hill to where the deer were and they jumped. He rolled another stone and they did not jump as far. When he rolled the third stone they only looked around to see that it was just another stone. Then Coyote rolled himself up in a ball like Mountain Lion and rolled down the hill. When he got there he jumped up and tried to get a deer but he couldn’t. He was too dizzy. He just fell over and the deer ran away.

BARRY LOPEZ (1945–), United States

Mule Deer (detail),
Louis Agassiz Fuertes (1874–1927),
United States

