



Volume 26
Issue 1 *Planet Nowhere* (2017-2018 Issue)

Article 7

4-17-2018

Coyote

Josey N. Meats
Concordia University - Portland

Follow this and additional works at: <http://commons.cu-portland.edu/promethean>



Part of the [Fiction Commons](#)

CU Commons Citation

Meats, Josey N. (2018) "Coyote," *The Promethean*: Vol. 26 : Iss. 1 , Article 7.
Available at: <http://commons.cu-portland.edu/promethean/vol26/iss1/7>

This Story is brought to you for free and open access by CU Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Promethean by an authorized administrator of CU Commons. For more information, please contact libraryadmin@cu-portland.edu.

Coyote

Or “A Long Night for the Old Man in Cold July”

Josey N. Meats

The chickens were slaughtered on Tuesday. The Old Man knew something was wrong when he arose to only a starch-breath breeze. On an ordinary day, the Old Man wakes up to the bobbling of his chickens; he likes to keep his window open so he can hear their morning gossip.

His house sits in a deep draw, full of thick thistle and cotton ball trees. But the Old Man’s yard is green. On the fresh field that measures about two acres is his tiny house. It is white and green and sits in the corner of the plot overlooking the vast forest below. It has a small porch with a weathered rocking chair planted next to the door. The house is one room with another rocking chair, a wood stove, and a bookshelf holding Stephen Crane and Jack London collections. His bed is in the corner next to the window, and of course, outside the window are the chickens.

Festus, the Old Man’s orange tabby cat, sleeps at the foot of the bed. In the mornings, he crawls over to the window and perches himself on the windowsill—tormenting the brainless birds. On Wednesday morning, all that was left of Festus was a streak of blood on the Old Man’s porch. On Wednesday morning, the Old Man saw her—Coyote. She sank back into the

brush, Festus's lifeless body draped in her mouth. Her eyes were a soft caramel, but glazed like a doll's eyes.

To-night, Coyote, there will be justice.

*

The Old Man cradles the rifle his father gave him. The blue steel—cold on his calloused hands. The spring night—crisp. The Old Man's long and tired face—puckered and pink. He wears a worn flannel and wool trousers, each leg rolled twice.

It's 8:37, usually asleep by now... where are you? Surely you must think there is another treat for you tonight.

Seven minutes pass. Coyote appears. She creeps out of the darkness and into the moonlit field. The Old Man nods off in his rocking chair—creaking back and forth. The Winchester repeating rifle lays across his lap. He wakes.

It takes him a second to focus his eyes and sees her. She sticks to the edge of the clearing—she knows he is waiting. He shoulders the rifle, the metal butt plate cold through his shirt. He lines up the buckhorn sight with the pocket behind her shoulder. The bullet will rip through her lungs and they will fill with blood, killing her in seconds.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in, breathe out.

A sharp crack echoes across the mountain tops.

Regardless, in the morning there will be no bobbling.