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from

coyote

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THE STORY OF COYOTE *in which*
Coyote longs for the Chief's daughter, and sends his love to her.
She bathes each night in the cursive Yampa.
Upstream, Coyote slips out of his coat
and into the water.
He howls: *yes, yes, yes*



Downstream, the girl goes coruscant—her bones of quartz, electric plexus.



THE STORY OF COYOTE *in which*

Kingfisher jumps off the roof. Coyote follows.

The resulting belly flop may have broken
a rib. The water runs down from the glaciers
and is exquisitely cold. He lets his body float awhile.

Sometimes I feel I cannot breathe.

Later, Coyote brings a fish home from the grocery store,
wrapped in cellophane. His wife does not say *I told you so.*

It hurts to inhale and especially to laugh,
but he can't help it.

THE STORY OF COYOTE *in which*
Coyote rescues the buffalo herd from a monster's cave,



as well as a small boy, whom he found weeping in the molt.

She took away your vole, oh no. She swatted down the killdeer.

Your mother is a monster, boy, she gives you only bison.

You cannot pet that burr-tail dog. Don't feed it from her table.

Coyote drinks the child's tears: *But Mom, I want, but Mom.*

Your mother is a monster and dear children never stay.

They call it rescue. They call this freedom.