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Coyote Calls

Shirley Benedick 2004

Yes, I've heard Coyote. His cry, so sad, lonesome, heartsick, or just horny? You think he howls for you. You want to join him, sing along. You think you'll be the one to change his song. Watch out for Coyote, my girlfriends said. It's his own face he sings to in the moon. When you hear Coyote, shut your ears. Turn away quick. He walks a wandering path. He'll lead you astray. No. No. Don't follow Coyote! Oh, I know he's smart, Coyote. He takes what he can, and never says no. Then he slips out fast. You blink and he's gone. Don't trust Coyote! That's what everyone said. Then one night, there he was, nonchalant, waiting by the trail. When he smiled, through his teeth, that long tongue hanging out, looking at me like I was what he'd been a long time hungry for, I just forgot what I knew.