

Mosi's Coyote

Mosi lived in the desert of the western United States, although he was alive before it was called the United States—before the Europeans came and took control of the land. His large family worked very hard, constantly moving, following food and water. The past season was devastating. Most of the animals died from drought and soon there would be famine among the people.

There were also strange occurrences, unexplained deaths, and twisted stories of strange creatures lurking in the dark. Mosi's people scoffed at these stories, but secretly Mosi believed them because he believed in Skinwalkers; humans who could take the shape of animals in order to satisfy their bloodlust. He had seen them in the night, strange skin-changers and shape-shifters who had the bodies of humans but would take on coyote, dog, or bear skins and crawl on all fours, staking out their victims at the edge of the encampment. So far, they hadn't attacked any of Mosi's people, but Mosi knew that with the animals dying out or moving on, the Skinwalkers might soon come after humans.

Mosi saw how clever the Skinwalkers were. Patient and stealthy, they wore the skin of any animal whose abilities they wished to possess. If they needed speed, they would take the coyote. If they needed strength, they chose the bear. One evening, Mosi was determined to catch the transformation of one of the Skinwalkers. He sat at the base of a red rock and waited. After a long while, he fell asleep and awoke to fierce cries and yelps of pain. Mosi's eyes grew wide as he witnessed the moonlit transformation of a human form into a coyote's lean shape.

Mosi cursed his tired eyes, for he wanted to know the identity of the human. Suddenly, the man-coyote turned to Mosi. Mosi remained motionless, watching, not knowing if he should be frightened. The man-coyote loped over to Mosi who, still seated at the base of the rock, was eye-level with the animal. His beady eyes pierced into Mosi's, and Mosi now understood why his family had been saved. He recognized his own grandfather in the coyote's dark expression. In an instant, the animal dashed off into the desert, leaving Mosi alone and scared in the moonlit night.

NOTES

1. why are symbols effective?
2. where do writers use symbols?
3. what might a writer expect symbolically in the life of a young man?

Rumpelstiltskin

NOTES

Once upon a time there lived a poor miller who had a beautiful daughter. This miller was quite a braggart, and one day he told the King that his daughter could spin straw into gold. The King was very impressed and demanded that this girl be brought to him. The next day, the miller's daughter came to the King's palace. The King locked her in a room at the top of a tall tower and told her that she must spin straw into gold; and if she did not perform this task by morning, she would die.

The miller's daughter was distraught. How was she to spin straw into gold? Deep into the night, a small man-creature entered the locked room and asked the girl why she was so upset. She explained to the man-creature her predicament, and he told her he could help her if she were to give him gifts. The miller's daughter was relieved and agreed to pay him whatever he asked. The first night, he asked for her necklace, and she gladly gave it to him. By morning all the straw had been spun into rich gold. The King was overjoyed, but then became greedy and told the miller's daughter he wanted more. This time, the miller's daughter promised the man-creature her jeweled bracelet, and again he spun all the straw into gold. The King was so pleased that he said he would take the miller's daughter as his wife if she could do it one more time.

The miller's daughter was ecstatic, for she would no longer be poor if she were to marry the King. She waited in her locked room for the man-creature to reappear. When he did, the miller's daughter realized she had nothing left to offer for his services. The man-creature asked for her first-born child; and she, believing that it would not happen for a long time, agreed. All the remaining straw was spun into gold, and the King took the poor girl as his wife.

Time passed, and after one year the miller's daughter, now the Queen, gave birth to a baby. That evening, while the Queen was rocking her baby, the man-creature crept into the room and demanded the child. The Queen panicked, she could not give up her first-born. The man-creature told her that he would give her three days, and if she could discover his name within that time,