

DAVID M. HARRIS
DON COYOTE

I never felt much sympathy
for the Road Runner. Invulnerable,
inarticulate, malicious. He could
run away from trouble, but baits and taunts
his co-star. Wile E. wants nothing but a square
meal. A specific meal.

I feel his pain.

We're about the same age, and we've both
made some bad choices. My careers have wound
down, and his has reached a dead end. But what else
could he do? He trained to be a specialist, mastered
the art of hunting that one bird. I, at least, found variety
in failure—publishing, teaching, marriage—until
the boulders landed on me.

I got out from under
and found new landscapes to inhabit.

Poor Coyote returned to his obsession, noble
in futility. Sisyphus earned his frustration.

Wile E.'s comes from his soul. He is driven
by his dream, driven to exceed his grasp,
longing always for the perfect plan,
perfectly executed, requiring no medical
intervention. I got used to disappointment,
but not he. There is no disappointment for him,
only new opportunities to prove his devotion,
knowing his only possible success
lies in his unending failure.

And how could he be disappointed, living forever
in the sure and certain knowledge of pain
and resurrection, of best-laid plans?