

# Coyote Concerns

Makenna York

Our Dearest Nevadans,

In our long history of symbiosis, you've stayed far away, looked on with a watchful, sometimes whimsical eye, fed us your out-door cats, and let your children giggle as they see our people cross the road at stoplights, (though we are fond of jaywalking as a species we know.)

But our friends, you've gone too far!

The council has convened, and as a product of that meeting, we deliver to you this letter of concern.

With each new house there is one less underbrush, and yes; one more tabby cat that wanders into our teeth, but one more road left for us to cross. The tragedy of the street-side corpse with sandy fur and a full belly of cotton tails has become far too abundant. In all our lives we've never seen so many chickens, but now they live in Verdi-pens decorated with the flags of your people- enclosed and teasing! We howl and whine in the night, offering our tribal music to your ears- and believe us we have listened with our wide-mouthed ears to your species' songs- twitching! Yet each of our loving yips are met with a groan or a complaint, from inside your ever-expanding dens.

The wind-chimes flicker on your wrap-around porches, and those lights from the forbidden center of your territory illuminate the sky, serving as a nightlight and a sweet, tinkly lullaby to our young as they curl into a slumber surrounded by their pack.

These acts of love from your people to ours- must never be overshadowed by the sudden disregard for our livelihoods.

The wetlands are disappearing by your hand, we hear the gunfire in the desert, we feel the heat of wildfires scorching our tails as we narrowly (or do not) escape the blazes enacted by your inconsideration. The mountains are becoming stock yards of old couches with Vegas-related stains and bullet-stricken sheet metal.

We have watched you grow from wooden houses and panhandling into a pack of hundreds of thousands, each pup brighter and more independent than the last! From the hills we peer into your dens and watch you and your young, and those docile cousins of ours cuddle into each other and sigh as we all gaze at the same moon.

The same moon our friends.

(Though the stars are becoming further away and fewer, in the night sky)

Yet, despite that gazing partnership, we have come to doubt the strength of our relationship, there are beginnings of grave coyote concerns.

But ah! The house cat! It is a symbol of our love. Of our friendship that is everlasting!

When we eat the first- you get another!

You are even gracious enough to live a fence away from the creek.

The house-cats, the most striking declaration of the strength of the pair of us, is enough to remind this council of better times, to ward off a complete severance of our divine and long term relationship. We hope you too, as a people, can see the four-pawed animals, and remember us!

So please, our loving friends, in honor of this devotion, we beg you to stop expanding; stop enclosing the chickens. We cannot fathom the reasoning behind this ludicrous idea, to watch where your sparks fly off the wheels you drive through our barren home, to drive slightly slower (or at least stop for our people when necessary,) to remember we are beautiful, and to keep sending long-haired Maine Coons. They are our favorite.

Signed,

Your Friends and Neighbors, the Coyotes