

Wile E.: Fractured Biographies

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A Family Prop

The negative dialectic: no pictures of furry little Wile E. with mommy holding him on her lap, her furry little lap, no sand, but sand, and more sand, and the snowy scape of snow and more snow and food, all the food you can imagine, the antelope, the jackrabbit, the moose, the seal, even an eagle or two, and time actually moves, moves along one moment after another maybe even slowly.

The Cactus

He had meant for palm trees. But nothing ever came out just the way he intended and so instead of the beach, the couscous sands massaging his feet, he got cactus and gritty desert sand that got in his mouth and coated his teeth. But finally, after all this time, the cacti are a comfort somehow. Perhaps their pure physical weight, the way he slams into them and slides down with all their needles poking out so that he very much *looks* like a cactus. He feels a certain connection and talks to the cacti about the possibility of the world.

The Roadrunner

Now here was the difficult part. It was not that he *enjoyed* falling off cliffs into ravines, blowing himself up when the discharger suddenly changes semantic value and becomes the explosive, using rockets to propel himself into cliff faces, pogo jumping through an endless field of cacti, but he had come to terms with it. His face always went slack at the last moment when he realized, again, that he was about to be crushed by a boulder. This sudden rush of understanding, the lack of memory that moments ago had led him to the very spot, the very repetition of his demise. His life comes back to him in that instance and he is whole, no longer a sum of his desire—no longer so immediate, but filled out across time (repetitive as it is).



Prophecy

Wile E. unzips himself and Wile E. climbs out.

Listening In

Sobbing and laughing alternately as he blows up the female coyote, as his chest bellows out.

Self-Criticism

"I suppose I'm a little too hungry." He scratched his head pensively.

Fantasies

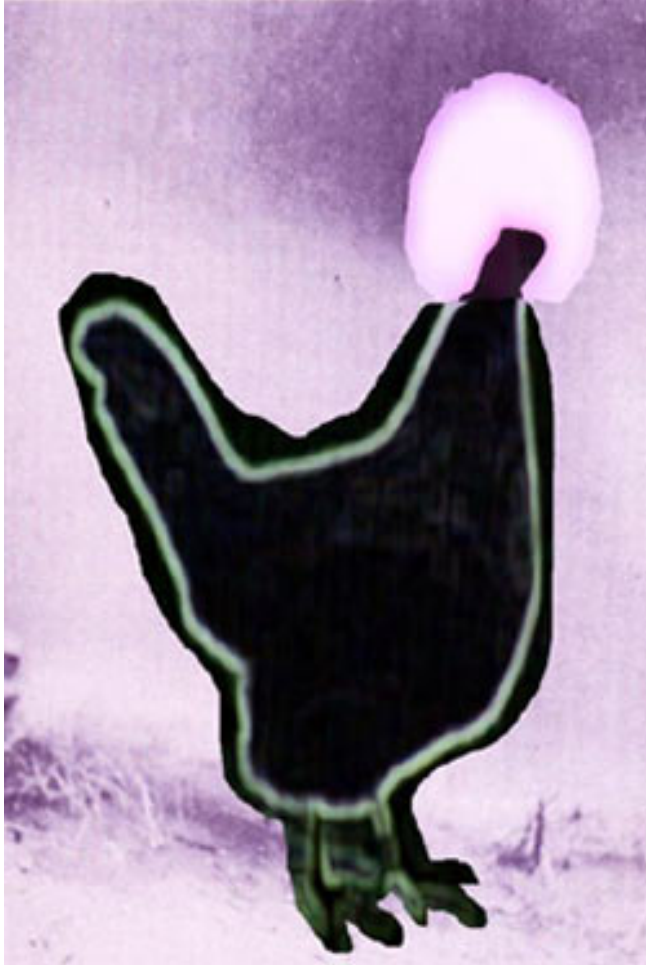
Martinis and big bands. Or some coconut drink out of the shell with a little umbrella on a lounge chair under the fronds of a palm and a sexy coyotette to serve it to him. Food. Whenever he wanted it. The undulation of the waves like circular concatenations when his mind wanders over all that has befallen him and makes him smile as if it were happening to someone else. Remember when . . .

Reprise

And I reprise: cactus, sand, plateaus, no mothers, no mothers, no mothers, sand, roadrunners that he can't see anymore.

Look at me. Look at me.

The devil's finger extends up through the sand. The cacti are full and spiked. The plateaus abruptly stop. The ravines are filled with sand. For centuries the very land has struggled for survival. The essence of every thing in the desert was baked into the thing making them impenetrable an eon ago when the last rain cloud shriveled up and made a small popping sound when it vanished: the inevitability between something and nothing, a noise. All the noises in the desert are quick and deadly. The heat even stifles these at times. A road runs through this infinite flat land framed by the white-blue sky and the golden sand though there are rarely cars. Nothing moves or changes in this frame. Next frame.



Wile E. is fast. But he is even hungrier than he is fast. He reads a book, legs dangling over the plateau's edge. The book is entitled *Meditation and Fasting* and it is published by Acme. There is no author. *There never is*, he thinks when it arrives so suddenly from... Wile E. has decided, as motionless as he has been, to try a different approach. Something else. The sand makes him thirsty to eat it and there is no water. He is not an ignorant animal and has some general knowledge of the world, though he has never seen anything but the desert. The endless desert.

The loneliness and hunger are crippling. There is no one to play tricks on either and Wile E. does not know which is worse. Wile E. has a natural inclination for tricks, the bucket of water over the door, hand-buzzer, flinging shit at people, though none of it has been put to the test. It is just something that he knows. He has a lesser capacity for creation, but whatever he creates or changes does not turn out the way he intended. He looks out sadly over the simple mess of the desert and sighs, his ribs poking through his matted brown fur. His heart beats under his ribs. In his heart the valves to the chambers open and close and the blood comes through to fill up the emptiness.

So Wile E. rationalizes by buying this book and he knows it. This book is his only friend. But he has not ordered this book (someone played a trick on him) and he puts it down in the sand next to him and scoots toward the edge of the cliff to look down between his emaciated knees. *One little move and my life is over (of course after the fall)*. Wile E. knows this is not true but plummets anyway, holding up a sign, What am I doing?

When he comes to at the bottom of the ravine, climbs out of his hole, he hears something. Perhaps a trick he played on himself?

Beep-beep?

WAITING

Coyote sits on the top of a rock holding a palm frond for shade waiting for the bus out of this barren landscape. Only problem is that there never seems to be a bus anywhere to be found unless he's standing in the middle of the street waiting for dinner. Like that time he stepped in his own bear trap and got hit by that train even though there weren't any tracks anywhere to be seen (and he did look, more than once).

The fact is, Coyote spends most of his time waiting (a close second, he spends dying, he's got more lives than a cat, maybe it's that Native American respect... he's a totem animal up North—but he's not up North now). Waiting to get slathered all over the street like a stick of butter. Waiting for a decent meal, just once. Waiting for the rain instead of just the lightening. Waiting.

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Now he's all hunched over on top of this boulder as if he were sitting in the rain. He's got something between his knees and as the camera moves up closer we see it's a can of cola. He puts the palm frond between his teeth exposing his mangy ears to the sun and takes the can in his right hand (who knew he was left-handed?). He opens it and it sprays him with sticky brown fluid. Drips off his whiskers. His ears down past his jaws.

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An infinite plateau: no end in sight.

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Maybe he'll make it out to L.A. Try a little acting. Just start walking through the desert. He's decided he'd wait a little longer up on the rock while his teeth rot from that fucking sweet cola.

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The Frame surrounding Wile E. collapses, stops moving. Just ups and quits on him. Even the technology is against Wile E. and his head is stuck in the shrinking circle. He's choking. His head pops off like a grape.



**Coyote Stark Raving Mad-
Wile E Found Wandering
Desert without Food,
Companionship**

Negativland- Wile E. was hospitalized today with only minor injuries despite the years in the desert without food or water or another living being.

It felt like eternity. Wile E. was quoted as writing on a sign attached to a plank.

He then proceeded to eat the interviewer while leaving the camera-man to watch, to observe.

While Wile E. claims to have been the only individual in the area, observers (all just traveling through the desert on lone buses) said there have been sightings of a bird as big as an ostrich, which for reasons of its speed and the fact that it seems to stick to the roads, has been labeled Roadrunner. One person even claimed that this Roadrunner drove his bus through the desertscape, appearing suddenly, then disappearing as quickly.

When confronted with this fact, Wile E grew somewhat dreamy and wrote, Ah, yes, figments of my imagination. Everything, delusions of a starved, isolated mind.

When pushed, he wrote, You see, everything out there I made: It was all a big joke.

Indeed, when we tried to make contact with this Roadrunner and the area, through reluctant directions from Wile E, there was no sign of any desert or fast birds or cactus or sand.

It has been several weeks since Wile E. was found wandering aimlessly in the suburbs of Negtivland. He has since gained some weight and become a stockbroker.

A TINY, ALMOST INAUDIBLE POP

Wile E. Forgets what it was like in the desert. He forgets what the (was it a roadrunner? He thinks it might have been a rooster or a duck or something. I mean, where would he have been to be chasing a roadrunner?) moving food looked like anymore— figments of his imagination growing smaller and smaller until they disappear with a tiny, almost inaudible pop.

Wile E. doesn't worry about birds any more—he eats them constantly. And cows. And pigs. Any other type of animal that may have at any given point in time taunted him. Or might. Or will.

But Wile E. has grown fat with abundance and is now plagued with a different set of problems: his knees hurt, he cannot control the stock market (his creations always get away from him and countless pit traps seem to open up under his feed by the minute now, instead of just several times a day), he is married and has little Wile E's running around chomping at his ankles more like cancles now, he has heart trouble, he has hemorrhoids, he has bad breath, he is impotent (though that may be a boon).

Then, one morning, he walks out of his brownstone, feeling oddly contented, and stretches, briefcase suspended from his arms extended at about 60 degrees from his side, and does not notice that directly above him, the neighbor, moving in, is hoisting a baby grand into a third storey window. Or trying.

The End

