

II. THE HOODWINKED DANCERS (Comanche Story) Coyote met a Skunk. "Halloo, brother! I am very hungry. Let us work some scheme to get something to eat! I will lead the way, do you follow." - "Well, I will do whatever you propose." - "Over there is a prairie-dogs' village. We will stay here until daylight. In the morning you will go to the prairie-dog village and play dead. I will come later and say to the prairie-dogs, 'Come, let us have a dance over the body of our dead enemy!' Well, go there, puff yourself up, and play dead." Skunk followed his directions. Coyote got to the prairie-dogs. "Come, we will have a dance. Stop up your holes tight, let every one come here. Our enemy lies dead before us. Do you all stand in a big circle and dance with closed eyes. If any one looks, he will turn into something bad." As they were dancing, Coyote killed one of them. "Well, now all open your eyes! Look at this one; he opened his eyes and died. Now, all of you, close your eyes and dance again; don't look, or you will die!" They began to dance once more, and Coyote commenced to kill them. At last one of them looked. "Oh, he is killing us!" Then all the survivors ran for their holes. While they were trying to get in, he killed them. Coyote and Skunk gathered all the corpses and piled them up by a creek. They built a fire and cooked them. "Well," said Coyote, "let us run a race for them! The one that wins shall have all the good fat ones." I-"Oh"! replied Skunk, "you are too swift; I am a slow runner, and can never beat you." - "Well, I will tie a rock to my foot." - "If you tie a big one, I will race with you." They were to run around a hill. Coyote said, "Well, go on ahead! I will catch up to you." Skunk began to run. Coyote tied a rock to his foot, and followed. Coyote said, "The one that is behind shall make a big fire, so there will be lots of smoke, and we shall be able to see where he is." Skunk got far ahead, and turned aside to hide. When Coyote had run past him, Skunk turned back to the meat-pile. Looking back, he saw a big column of smoke rising on the other side of the hill. He took all the meat and carried it home. He cut off all the tails and left them sticking out, with two poor little prairie-dogs for Coyote. Coyote thought Skunk was ahead of him. As he ran along, he said to himself, "I wonder where that fool is! I did not know he could outrun me." He got back to the pile, and saw the tails sticking out. He seized one, and it slipped out. He tried another one. "Oh, they are well cooked!" He tried another one. Then he got suspicious. He took a stick and raked up the fireplace, but could only find the two lean prairie-dogs. He thought some one must have stolen the meat. He ate the two lean prairie-dogs. Skunk, lying in his den, was watching him. As Coyote was standing to look around, Skunk threw one of the prairie-dog bones at him. Coyote then espied him lying in his camp. He saw all the meat around him. "Give me some of them!" - "No, we have run a race for them. I beat you, I am going to eat them all." Coyote begged him in vain for some food. Skunk ate it all. He was a better trickster than Coyote

THE DESERTED CHILDREN 1 (Comanche Story) Long ago the Indians were camping in a certain place. Four children were playing by a creek. An older girl with a baby on her back came to join them. In the mean time all the Indians moved away without the children noticing it, as they were still playing by the creek. At last one of them happened to look up towards the camp and could not see the lodges. He called out to his mates, telling them the camp was broken. They called him a liar, and sent another one to look. He reported the same way. They did not believe him, either. A third one went to look, and also reported that all were gone. It was getting late in the evening. All left the creek and tried to follow the Indians' trail. While they were going along,

Coyote met them and warned them. "Right by the side of the road a big Owl has his house. Don't talk loudly when passing there, or he will hear you." They got to the house, and the little child began to cry. Owl heard him. "Bring my nephew here!" he said. The child thought it was really his uncle, and wanted to go to him. His older sister objected, but he persisted. At last she said, "Well, let us go over there!" Then all went to the Owl. The oldest girl was afraid. "The big Owl will eat us," she said. They got there. Owl immediately wanted to eat the child. The children began to plan how to escape. They said they wanted to wash by the creek. Owl permitted them to go, but bade them hurry back. They met a Frog there. "Frog, we are in trouble, and call upon you to help us. That Owl wants to eat us." - "Yes, I will help you." - "We are going to run off," they said. "When Owl calls us, do you answer for us, 'No, we are still washing.' Just continue fooling him, so that we will have a big start before he finds out." Owl called the children. Frog answered, "We are still washing." He repeatedly gave the same reply, fooling him. Owl at last thought they had run off. He went looking for them, and every few paces he called them as he went along. Frog continued to answer, "We are still washing." At last Owl came up to him. Frog said, "For once I have fooled you. The children went away a long time ago." Owl said, "You thin-legged rascal, you have been fooling me! You have let my game run away. I will kill you." He struck at him with his cane. Just as the cane descended, the Frog jumped into the water, leaving him standing on the bank. Owl followed the children's trail. He had never been known to lose anything. After a short time he came in sight of them. They were fleeing as fast as they could. He was holding his stone club in his hand. They got to a big creek. There they saw a Fish-Crane sitting. "We are coming to you. That big Owl is after us. Help us!" He took a louse from his head, gave it to the oldest girl, and said, "Put this into your mouth. Though it tastes bad, do not spit it out before you get across to the other side. If you do this, I will make a bridge of my leg, so you can go across." She took the louse in her mouth, they crossed over, and then she spat out the louse. Owl got to Crane. "O Crane! there goes my game. Help me across! I want to catch them." Crane offered to let him cross on the same conditions as before. Owl spat out the louse in mid-stream, and fell into the river. He got out, and again pursued the children. He detected them in the open prairie. Seeing him, they were frightened. "What are we going to do?" A Buffalo-Calf was lying in front of them. "Buffalo-Calf, protect us!" - "I do not know whether I can help you, but I will try. Stand behind me!" Owl came up with his maul. "Oh, you're foolish! You know I won't retreat from you. That is my game, I will kill you." Calf stood still, pawing the ground. As Owl approached him, Calf charged on him, and threw him straight up to the moon. Hence the Owl is still sitting in the moon with its maul.

THE INDIAN AND THE BEAR (Comanche Story) An Indian was knocking about all by himself. A bear found him and gave chase. The Indian fled to the prairie. There he stood, not knowing what to do. Then he painted all his body green. "I will let him catch me." The bear caught up to him. The man stood still. The bear said, "Ah, well! I guess he died yesterday or today." He went away, but after a while he came back and stood there, smelling the man. "He must have been dead for two days. Judging by the smell, he must have been dead longer than one day," he said.

TRICKSTER TALES (Comanche Story) Coyote was thinking how he might get some money. A great many soldiers were following his trail. Coyote took his kettle and dug out a place in the bank. There he made a fire and placed the kettle over it. He put in water, which began to boil. The soldiers were coming near. Their captain approached Coyote, asking him how he was.

Coyote just continued cooking. The captain said, "You have a mighty good kettle!" - "Yes, it is a good one." - "Can't I buy it from you?" - "Oh, I think a great deal of it." The captain said, "Well, I will give you my horse for it." - "Oh, no! You must offer something I care for very much." - "Well, I will give you two horses." - "My kettle is a mighty good one." - "Well, select whatever two horses you wish for it." Coyote then picked out two very fine horses, and departed. The soldiers left with their kettle. When they camped, they set the kettle down, poured in water, and sat watching to see it boil. They had to wait a very long time. "Evidently Coyote has got the better of us," they said. From that time on, the whites have always traded with the Indians. Coyote taught us to do so.

TRICKSTER TALES, Second Version. - One white man had heard a great deal about Coyote's trickery. He said, "Oh, I want to see him! Did you ever hear of any person getting cheated right before his eyes? Go, bring him here! I'll see whether he can beat me that way." Coyote was walking along a short distance away. One of them spied him. "There is Coyote, who always cheats everybody." The white man got out to look at him. He put on very fine clothes, mounted a good horse, and loped after Coyote until he caught up to him. "Hold on, my friend! I have heard how you always cheat people." Coyote answered, "Oh, you are mistaking me!" - "Oh, no! Go ahead and cheat me out of something." Coyote said, "My stuff for scheming is not here." - "Where is it, then, the stuff you cheat people with?" - "I have it at my house." - "Well, go fetch it and fool me!" Coyote said, "Lend me your horse." - "Where is your house?" - "Over the hill." The white man dismounted and lent him his horse. The horse was afraid of Coyote. Coyote said, "Give me all your clothes, or he will be afraid of me." So the white man gave Coyote all his clothes. Coyote put them on, mounted, and loped off. "I have fooled you already. You certainly are easily cheated." The white man stood there, waving to him to return; but Coyote did not mind him, and galloped away.

TRICKSTER TALES, Third Version. - A short while after this adventure, Coyote was sauntering along a creek. He saw many people moving along with mules and horses. Coyote was eager to get some of them. He addressed the people, telling them they could camp by a certain clump of trees. They were small trees, which he had already cut into. The people followed his advice, and staked their horses to those little trees. In the night all the mules and horses broke loose. Coyote, who was watching at a distance from the camp, then drove them off. This is why Indians long ago always used to steal so many horses.

THE EYE-JUGGLER (Comanche Story) Coyote was always knocking about hunting for something. He came to a creek, where there was nothing but green willows. Two little yellow-birds were playing there. He came up to them. Laughing, they pulled out their eyes and threw them on the trees, while they stood below. "Eyes, fall!" they said. Then their eyes fell back into their sockets. Coyote went to them. He greatly admired their trick. "O O brothers! I wish to play that way, too." - "Oh, we won't show you, you are too mean. You would throw your eyes into any kind of a tree and lose them." - "Oh, no! I would do it just like you." At last the birds agreed to show him. They pulled out his eyes, threw them up, and said, "Eyes, fall!" Then his eyes fell back again. Coyote was well pleased. He pulled out his eyes himself, threw them up, and said, "Eyes, fall!" They returned to their places. "Let us all go along this creek!" said the birds. "Other people will see us and take a fancy to us." They went along playing. Coyote said, "I am going over there. I know the trick well now." He left them. He got to another creek. A common willow-

tree was standing there. "There is no need to be afraid of this tree. I'll try it first." He pulled out his eyes, and threw them at the tree. "Eyes, fall!" he shouted. His eyes did not fall. He thus became blind. He tied something around his eyes, and left. Walking along the creek, he met two young girls. "What kind of girls are you?" - "We are Ya'yarú girls." - "We all belong to the same people, then; I am a Ya'yarú young man." The two girls did not know he was blind. He asked them, "Where are you going?" - "We are going over there." - "Well, we will all go together." They de- bated the matter, then all went together. One girl said, "Just look at the buffaloes there!" Coyote laughed. "I was wondering how soon you would catch sight of them, that's why I would not tell you about them." When they had gone a little farther, one of the girls asked the other, "Why does he not kill one of those buffaloes for us?" Coyote laughed, "I was wondering how long it would take you to think of that, that's why I would not tell you before. Go around that way to the other side of the buffalo, then they won't see you. Then they will run here, and I will kill one for us." They followed his directions. The buffaloes, seeing them, ran towards Coyote. When they came nearer, he shot at them and killed one by chance. When the girls ran up, they said, "He has really killed one." Coyote laughed. "I was wondering how soon they would see it, that's what I was thinking about you." They were skinning and cutting up the buffalo. One of the girls exclaimed, "Oh, isn't he fat!" Coyote said, " Why, certainly, I was looking for a fat one. I strained my eyes mightily hunting for a fat one." The two girls said, "Doesn't he know well how to look for a fat one?" Coyote said, " Do you two cut it up, I will build us a house by the creek." He went off to make them a lodge. There were big holes in it everywhere, because he was blind. He made it of brush. The two girls came with the meat. They said, "This must be a house built by a blind man, there are holes all over." Coyote laughed. "Oh, you two don't understand. Why, I built it this way so that if lots of enemies charge on us, we might go out in any direction. There is no danger here of our being hemmed in." The girls said, "We did not think of that." They made their home there, both becoming Coyote's wives. Once Coyote said to them, "Louse me." The women sat down, and Coyote placed his head on one, and his feet on the other. For a while they loused him, then he fell asleep. One of the women said, "Let us pull off this rag from his head! He won't know anything about it, he's asleep. Let us look at his eyes." She raised the cover. "Why, he is blind! There are lots of worms in his eyes." The one on whose lap his head was resting bade her companion bring a stump with lots of ants on it. "Put it under his head, and fetch another one without ants for his feet." After they had fixed the stumps, one of them said, "Let us go now!" The older sister said, "Take hold of those bells!" They got some distance away from Coyote. Shortly after they had left, the ants began to bite him. He began butting with his head. "Oh, be easy, you two, louse me!" He tried to butt them, but only struck the ground. He woke up, and looked for their trail. Looking back, the women saw him coming. They began to run. "That is surely Coyote there. Let us beat him by that big red bluff." The older sister said, "Tear off those bells of yours." She pulled them off. " He can't see us, he is just follow- ing the bells. When we get to the red bluff, drop your bells, and he will fall over it." Coyote was pursuing them. The woman's bells were jingling as they ran along. When they got to the cliff, she dropped them. Coyote, hearing the bells, followed after them, and was crushed to pieces. The women went home.

REGULATION OF THE SEASONS;, ORIGIN OF DEATH² (Comanche Story) Coyote called all the people together to decide how many winter months and how many summer months there ought to be. They set up a large council lodge. Coyote sat down in the centre on the west side. He said, "Well, listen to me! We are to decide how many winter and summer months there are to

be." One man said, "Well, let us have six cold months; let the seventh be cold in the first half, and the remainder warm." Coyote said, "Six cold months would be too much, we should suffer from the cold. Ten summer months would be good." Another man said, "If we had ten summer months, our meat would spoil, we should suffer from heat." Then they debated. One little man sitting by the door, who was named Snow-Bird, said, "Well, let us have six cold months, with one month half cold and one half cool." Coyote was in favor of ten hot months, because he wished to play a trick on them. They were debating. The little man by the door got up, and said, "Six cold months is plenty for us." Saying, "Six months," he went out. All the assembly rose and followed him, repeating, "Six months." Coyote bade them wait. "What makes you pay any attention to that little man?" But the people did not listen to Coyote, who was thus unable to work his scheme on them. He went out last of all, saying, "We shall have six winter months." All the people laughed at him. "This is the first time you have failed to have your way." Coyote said, "Now we shall have six cold months. Now, then, let us have another council to name the months." When they had gathered, he announced, "The little man shall have just as many tongues as there are cold months." Then he named the months: "October, November, December, January, February, March, April." All agreed. "The little man will have seven tongues; every month one of his tongues will pass away until but one is left." 1 After the council was over, Coyote said, "Now, do all of you go over there! I shall join you, and we will decide whether our dead should return after the lapse of four days. Long ago that was our way. To-day I object to our dead coming back." They met. He called them all to the edge of the water. He picked up a rock, held it in his hand, and spoke as follows: "Behold, our dead people shall do as this rock!" He cast it into the water. "This rock will not come back. Similarly, our people will not return. This earth is very large; but if the dead were to come back, it would get crowded. That is why I object to it." All the people agreed with him. Since then our dead have not returned.

THE LIBERATION OF BUFFALO 2 (Comanche Story) Long ago two persons owned all the buffalo. They were an old woman and her young cousin. They kept them penned up in the mountains, so that they could not get out. Coyote came to these people. He summoned the Indians to a council. "That old woman will not give us anything. When we come over there, we will plan how to release the buffalo." They all moved near the buffalo enclosure. "After four nights," said Coyote, "we will again hold a council as to how we can release the buffalo. A very small animal shall go where the old woman draws her water. When the child gets water, it will take it home for a pet. The old woman will object; but the child will think so much of the animal, that it will begin to cry and will be allowed to keep it. The animal will run off at daybreak, and the buffalo will burst out of their pen and run away." The first animal they sent failed. Then they sent the Kill-dee. When the boy went for water, he found the Kill-dee and took it home. "Look here!" he said to his cousin, "this animal of mine is very good." The old woman replied, "Oh, it is good for nothing! There is nothing living on the earth that is not a rascal or schemer." The child paid no attention to her. "Take it back where you got it," said the woman. He obeyed. The Kill-dee returned. The people had another council. "Well, she has got the better of these two. They have failed," said Coyote; "but that makes no difference. Perhaps we may release them, perhaps we shall fail. This is the third time now. We will send a small animal over there. If the old woman agrees to take it, it will liberate those buffalo; it is a great schemer." So they sent the third animal. Coyote said, "If she rejects this one, we shall surely be unable to liberate the game." The animal went to the spring and was picked up by the boy, who took a great liking to it. "Look here! What a nice pet I have!" The old woman replied, "Oh, how foolish you are! It is good for

nothing. All the animals in the world are schemers. I'll kill it with a club." The boy took it in his arms and ran away crying. He thought too much of his pet. "No! this animal is too small," he cried. When the animal had not returned by nightfall, Coyote went among the people, saying, "Well, this animal has not returned yet; I dare say the old woman has consented to keep it. Don't be uneasy, our buffalo will be freed." Then he bade all the people get ready just at daybreak. "Our buffalo will be released. Do all of you mount your horses." In the mean time the animal, following its instructions, slipped over to the pen, and began to howl. The buffalo heard it, and were terrified. They ran towards the gate, broke it down, and escaped. The old woman, hearing the noise, woke up. The child asked, "Where is my pet?" He did not find it. The old woman said, "I told you so. Now you see the animal is bad, it has deprived us of our game." She vainly tried to hold the buffalo back. At daybreak all the Indians got on their horses, for they had confidence in Coyote. Thus the buffalo came to live on this earth. Coyote was a great schemer.

THE SEVEN STARS (Comanche Story): A very long time ago there lived a family of seven. The parents got angry at their children, four of whom were boys, and the youngest a girl. The father declared to them, "We are going to call a council of all the people. You cannot stay here. We are going to have a council to decide what all of you are to become. I am angry at you. All of you will go far off. Make up your minds as to what you wish to become." Then the oldest brother asked the other children to give their advice as to what they were to become. One of them said, "Our father is angry at us. Let us all become stars. Would that all of us might become stars! Whatever we choose, that we shall turn into. Let us wait for our father, and tell him as soon as he returns." When their father returned, he consented to let them become stars. Then they left. That is how they became stars. That is why there are seven stars looking down upon us from above. The one in the rear is the youngest child, while the young men are in front.