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Discussion Questions for *Coyote, Master of Death*, and *The Girl Who Married the Bear*

Q1: Reflect on the Coyote's journey. How would you interpret the coyote's actions during the latter half of the story, in which he is defeated, and then wins or triumphs over his struggles?

A1: This is a symbolic interpretation of an animal, in this case, a coyote, adapting and learning from his environment in order to come out on top. Coyotes are generally seen in mythology as tricksters of some sort, and are able to shapeshift, as seen in the latter half of the story. It can be interpreted that as a trickster, he simply acts in his nature to fool others, as coyotes in mythology are often depicted. However, his actions in which he is trying to escape the tree and escape the others upon claiming his eye back can be interpreted as him, however graphically, trying to adapt to survive. By dismembering himself and throwing himself out piece by piece, he manages to escape, and by using his transformation ability to escape his pursuers, he manages to fool them and claims the victory and his eye back. By using guile and trickery, as well as his abilities to the fullest extent, he manages to adapt to his surroundings and survive, which is what wild animals do in more mundane circumstances.

Q2: Why do you think the girl refused to kill her youngest brother after killing the rest of her human family?

A2: At first, I honestly thought that it was because of her wanting to show mercy to the last member of her human family, as he was the sole survivor as far as the narrative is concerned and

she wouldn't be able to bring herself to kill all of them, especially not the youngest member of the family. Related to this theory is that, since he's the youngest, he was possibly the only one who did not partake in the bear hunts or in attacking her after she transformed into a grizzly bear, making him innocent in the affair altogether. It could also be interpreted that, as the sole survivor, he could spread a warning to others not to attack grizzly bears or eat their meat, as it's half-human meat and that they're descended from humans. By leaving behind a witness, it can propagate the myth and a warning to others not to attack them or eat their meat.