

Odd running moment

I went out running this morning. Tuesdays vary, but today was my hill work day. A few blocks away there's a reasonably large open space with hills and I decided I'd work there. The terrain is different enough from my usual sidewalk running that it's good for me.

It was about 4:15 AM when I saw the first coyote. It was running across the hill I was running up. It stopped and looked at me, partially silhouetted against the still-dark sky and the light spilling over from a nearby street lamp. It was a striking and beautiful moment. The coyote kept going and so did I.

Later in my run I decided to do a little work on flat ground to ease off on my legs a little bit. There's a very large lawn area and I started running the perimeter. I saw a flicker of movement out of the corner of my eye and, when I turned, there were two more coyotes wrestling and tumbling on the grass. They didn't notice me at first, or maybe just didn't pay attention, since I wasn't very close to them. After I'd run around them on the edge of the grass a few times, they both noticed me and stood, very still, watching me. As I continued my run, the third coyote made another appearance. All three of them began following me from about 30 feet away.

The sky was still fairly dark. I don't think that coyotes generally attack people, but they were watching and following me and it made me a little nervous, silly as that sounds. I felt stalked. I kept checking behind me as I ran to make sure they weren't getting closer. One of them was less fearful than the others and got to within 15 feet or so, trotting slowly behind me. I decided that maybe a street run was better today and got out of their territory.

As I finished my run, I heard their voices barking and yipping

on the hillside. I don't think they would have hurt me, but despite being in the middle of the city, I was definitely in their space. It was a little surreal to be followed by such wild creatures in the middle of a city run, but it isn't something I will forget soon. I think I might start running that particular hill during the day rather than quite so early in the morning in the future.