

The Roadrunner, the Clown of the Desert

Forgive the hokey writing here. I wrote this in my crummy Spanish first and then translated it to English so it sounds a little like my Spanish.

My father always hated the Arizona Department of Game and Fish. One day, he showed me a magazine that the department had published. Inside, there was an article about the roadrunner. Let me summarize it for you.

The roadrunner is a crafty and clever bird that lives in the Sonoran Desert in Arizona and in other regions of the Southwest. There are other animals that live there, but none are so intelligent as he. And he's full of tricks! He likes to eat lizards and insects, but his favorite food is the rattlesnake.

According to the article, the rattlesnake likes to sleep on the desert sand during the day, beneath the hot sun so its temperature will climb to 100 degrees Celsius and its blood will begin to boil. According to the article, the rattlesnake is accustomed to doing this.

The roadrunner is forever going around hunting rattlesnakes, and when he finds one sleeping that way, he begins to do something quite unusual. He constructs a fence around the sleeping serpent—a fence made of cactus. The article informs us that the rattlesnake cannot cross over the cactus because of the spines, only it doesn't know that it can't. On the other hand, according to the article, the clever road-



Un correcaminos cerca de donde vivo

runner is very much aware of this. The roadrunner works quite busily in order to build the fence before the rattlesnake wakes up.

When the snake is completely corralled by cactus, the roadrunner begins to crow.

“Cockadoodle doo!” he says. “Cockadoodle doo!”

There are those who say that rattlesnakes are deaf, but this isn't true. The rattlesnake hears the cries of the roadrunner and wakes up. Upon seeing the

roadrunner, the rattlesnake gets scared and flees. But when he tries to cross the cactus fence, he gets stuck by the sharp spines! And the roadrunner takes advantage of his preoccupation and pecks off his head with his sharp beak.

What a clown he is! He's the clown of the desert.