

The Ex-Arboureal Porcupine Blues

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Not too fast, and with a swing feel (divide pairs of eighth notes about 3:2 instead of 1:1)

(These quarter notes outline the general shape of the melody.

It needs to have extra syllables added to fit the lyrics.

The next section shows one way to sing the first verse.)

Here's the si-tu-a-tion I want you to con-si-der if you please

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Now, it seems that por-cu-pines are ac-ci-dent-ally fal-ling out of trees.

For complete lyrics, see the next page

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Here's the situation I want you to consider if you please: (2x)
Now, it seems that porcupines are accidentally falling out of trees.

It's been happening for a while, as a search through museums has revealed: (2x)
One finds lots of skeletons with evidence of fractures that have healed.

One might hypothesize falling would make them ill (2x)
Through infection secondary to the self-impalement on a quill.

Well, that's not the case, for the lubricant that helps a quill glide (2x)
Through the flesh of an attacker is also a bactericide.

Now, the fisher is a weasel with a mighty fine coat of fur (2x)
Who has been extirpated from most places he used to occur.

The quick, clever fisher is an animal that's able to dine (2x)
Upon the flesh of the slow but prickly porcupine.

He goes for the face, which is toothy but is lacking protection, (2x)
Circling to avoid the tail, slashing from the other direction.

The porcupine, exhausted, is flipped on its back, (2x)
Leaving the unprotected belly open to attack.

When thin branches tempt a porcupine with buds or fruit, (2x)
Ex-arbouration can be the consequence of their pursuit.

It's safer to nip off the twigs and eat the treats out of hand, (2x)
Which tends to leave a lot of stunted, funny-looking trees on the land.

And those who are managing a forest for its lumber or a park (2x)
Don't like to have too many porcupines a-nibbling at the bark.

So, the fisher has been introduced again to play his old role (2x)
In keeping the tree-nibbling porcupine under control.

I've a major reference to cite for you before I close: (2x)
The North American Porcupine, by Uldis Roze.

References:

- Adrian Forsyth. Mammals of the Canadian Wild. Camden House, 1985, pp. 162-163 [Fisher] and 224-227 [Porcupine]
Uldis Roze. The North American Porcupine. Smithsonian Institute Press, 1989.
Uldis Roze. How to Select, Climb, and Eat a Tree. Natural History [American Museum of Natural History], 1985, 94(5), 62-69.
Mark Stabb. At a Porcupine's Pace. Seasons [Federation of Ontario Naturalists], Spring 1992, 32(1), 24-29.