The following text was recorded on tape and written down in phonetic characters by Kitty and Leslie Pride in the Chatino language of Tataltepec de Valdez, District of Juquila, Oaxaca. The informant was a young man, Eleuterio López H.

The story, an ancient European theme borrowed by the Chatinos from the Spanish conquerors deals with the trickster Juan Cenizas.

TEXT

1. ska nu ki?yu ti?i, ndaya.? hu hi?i ndu?u ndya šaka

LITERAL TRANSLATION

1. one the man poor, took-hold-of rope his went-out went-to firewood
2. and here where went-to firewood this went-to in country, was wood his went-out came-back 3. and John name the man poor this 4. and where came-back trail this then met together with one mule 5. was-there cargo back-of mule then and quickly was aware what kind-of

FREE TRANSLATION

1. One day a certain poor man picked up his rope and went out to get firewood. 2. He had to go out into the country to get his firewood. He got his wood and was on his back. 3. The name of this poor man was John. 4. And on his way back on the trail he met a mule. 5. This mule had cargo on its back, and he realized very quickly what kind of thing the mule was carrying.
could-be carrying mule 6. and how kind-of was then, quick as-a-flash only threw-off tercia wood this his 7. and put-into pulled rope mouth mule went-to with into country 8. arrived one place poor looking at foot-of rock-face 9. at there tied to mule, standing only mule 10. and when came-back then, arrived where lay tercia wood his 11. took-hold-of tercia wood his went-out came-back to edge-of house, went-out trail his 12. and met together with one gentle man-from-mountains 13. and said gentleman-from-mountains this to-him if not seen one mule 14. —not seen —said 15. —just-completely money carrying mule this —said gentleman-from-mountains to-him— 16. if find-out more how like can find-out even-if one side-of money that of ours (incl) for-it —said gentleman-of-mountains this to-him 17. then: —find-out this him —said— 18. there-is one the diviner very town there now

6. So this was what happened. As quick as a flash he threw off his load of firewood, 7. and reached out and pulled the rope round the mule's nose, and went off with it into the country. 8. He came to a very rough looking spot at the foot of a rock-face, 9. and tied the mule up there, where it was standing. 10. Then he went back to where his bundle of wood was, 11. picked it up and left to return to his house. He had just started on the trail, 12. when he met with a gentleman from the mountains.

13. The man asked him if he hadn't seen a mule around. 14. —No, I didn't —said John. 15. —The mule's cargo was all money— the man from the mountains told him. 16. I'm prepared to give up to a whole side of our money to whoever has any way of finding out what happened to it —the man told him. 17. Then John said: —We can find him. 18. Down in the town there,
There is a very good diviner. 19. He will find it for you in an instant. 20. The diviner's name is John Cenizas. 21. So the man from the mountains went away, and immediately John Cenizas himself returned as quick as he could, back to his own house, a very poor one. 23. This man whose name was John Cenizas was a very poor man, 24. but his wife was quite rich. 25. His father-in-law was in fact very rich, 26. and had a large number of good things.

27. So John spoke to his wife (woman): —You go quickly and borrow some trousers from your father for me to wear for a while, 28. and borrow a table and a table-cloth put over table. 29. And borrow one book his that see-I little 30. quick as-a-flash went-to the woman his this then, went-to borrow table and trousers and shoes and things wear John then 31. good very clothes-of John was-there house his 32. and at times-of
coming only then appeared gentleman-of-mountains arrived edge-of house his 33. —not here is home-of the named John Cenizas? —said gentleman-of-mountains 34. —the very-same —said the woman his— 35. what thing is went from-him?— 36. want-I cert him -ainly, one mule money of-me lost —said— 37. want-I that find where standing animal, if not moving freely animal because drew-out side person it—. 38. and motionlessly walking stomach his

39. the very-same one placed hidden mule, went-to with him mule foot-of rock-face 40. and said then the woman his that sit-down little edge-of house his over just-there only 41. in little more come little hot very felt 42. carefully very Juan already was 43. when late then spoke gentleman-of-mountains to-her another time: 44. —give measure come arrived at his door. 33. —Is this where the man called John Cenizas lives? —the man from the mountains said. 34. —The very same —said John's woman to him. 35. —What is it that you want him for?— 36. —I sure want him badly. I have lost a whole mule load of money —he said— 37. I want to find where the animal is, if it isn't perhaps wandering around freely because somebody pulled it to one side.— 38. And John's heart stood still (all the time the man was speaking) (or John listened breathlessly).

39. He his very own self had hidden the mule, when he took it with him to the foot of the rock face. 40. Then his woman told the man to sit down a little there at the door. 41. John would come in a little while: he had been feeling very hot. 42. John sat there very still. 43. Then later the man from the mountains spoke to her once again:— 44. Is it time to come in yet?—
So the man from the mountains came into the house. 46. —What was the colour of the mule which you lost? —John asked the man. 47. —It was black, and was carrying a cargo of money —said that man to him.

48. So John took his book, and searched and searched and searched among the leaves. 49. Now John himself absolutely did not know even one letter. 50. So this is what happened: —here, here is where the animal is —John said to him—. 51. It's standing there at the foot of the rock-face, at the mountain of earth. 52. It's a very rough looking place where the animal is standing. 53. We will find it as soon as we go and fetch it—. 54. He went out with the man from the mountains, and they came to the place where the mule was just standing tied up. 55. Then the man brought his animal back, 56. to the door.
animal his came-back 56. arrived edge-of house John, one side-of money his to John that found where standing 57. and then went-to gentleman-of-mountains then.

of John's house, and gave one side (of cargo) of the money to John because he had found where the animal was. 57. And then the man from the mountains left.