

JUAN CENIZAS IN CHATINO

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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 ki²yu ti²i, ndaya.² hu hi²i ndu²u ndya šaka
2. lo²o nde su ndaya šaka bi² ndaya ne² kisi, ngwa yaka
hi²i ndu²u ya. 3. lo²o Juan na. nu ki²yu ti²i bi² 4. lo²o
su ya. tyukwi. bi² li² ndayakwa tya²a lo²o ska mula
5. nga²a yu²ba ču² mula li² lo²o yala ngwa ti. nyi ²a ka

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.

ndy²ya mula 6. lo² nyi ²a ngwa li², yala nča. ti nguču
 kwanā yaka bi² hi²i 7. lo²o ntoho laki hu tu²ba mula
 ndya lo²o ne² kiš²i² 8. ndyala ska su č²i ²a ka kiya² kwa²a
 9. ka bi² nska² hi²i mula, ndy. ti mula 10. lo²o nu ya.
 li², ndyala su nsiya kwanā yaka hi²i 11. ndaya.² kwanā
 yaka hi²i ndu²u ya. nde to²ni²i, ndu²u tyukwi. hi²i
 12. lo²o ndyakwa tya'a lo²o ska laka²ya 13. lo²o nakwi
 laka²ya bi² hi²i si nā nā²a ska mula 14. —nā nā²a
 —nakwi 15. —tyukwi² knyi ndyi²ya mula bi² —nakwi
 laka²ya hi²i 16. —si kihe la nyi ²a ka kihe masi ska cu.²
 knyi bi² hi²i nā lo²o —nakwi laka²ya bi² hi²i 17. lo²o
 —kihe bi² hi²i —nakwi— 18. ncu²u ska nu ti. ca. kiči

could-be carrying mule 6. and how kind-of was then, quick as-a-flash
 only threw-off terciā 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 terciā wood his 11. took-hold-of
 terciā 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,

hwa ni —nakwi— 19. kihe bi? siya? ti 20. Juan Cenizas hwa?a na. nu ti. bi? ni 21. lo?o ya. li? laka?ya, lo?o ti ykwi? yala nča. ya. li? 22. lo?o ndyala to? ni?i hi?i, ti?i ti 23. ti?i ca. nu nyati hi?i nu na. Juan Cenizas bi? 24. lo?o nu kuna?a hi?i kuliya? ši 25. lo?o nu sti la. ni kuliya? ca. sti la. 26. nta?ya ca. ča? co?o hi?i

27. lo?o nakwi hi?i nu kuna?a hi?i:—ya hnya tlya ši pantalon hi?i sti ča? kaku? ši 28. lo?o hnya ska mesa lo?o hnya ska mandel škwa lo. mesa 29. lo?o hnya ska libro hi?i ča? nya?a ši 30. yala nča. ndya nu kuna?a hi?i bi? li?, ndya hnya mesa lo?o pantalon lo?o xapatu lo?o ča? ndyaku? Juan li? 31. co?o ca. ste? Juan nga?a

—said— 19. find-out that-one at-one-time only 20. John Cenizas just-like-that name the diviner that now 21. and came-back then gentleman-from-mountains, immediately only self quick as-a-flash came-back then 22. and arrived edge-of house his, poor only 23. poor very the person his who named John Cenizas this 24. and the woman his rich a-little 25. and the father in-law now rich very father in-law 26. fell-to very things good him 27. and said to the woman his: —go borrow quickly little trousers of father that can-wear-I little 28. and borrow one table and borrow one tablecloth 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

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, 22. 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 to put over it. 29. And borrow one of his books for me to look at a little. 30. So his woman rushed off then to borrow table, trousers, shoes and other things for John to wear. 31. John's clothes, as he sat in his house, were very good (i.e. John looked very well-dressed as he sat in his house). 32. Then came the time when the gentleman from the mountains

ni²i hi²i 32. lo²o ca kwa ca. ti li² ndyakwa laka²ya ngula to² ni²i hi²i 33. —si²i nde ndukwa tyi nu na. Juan Cenizas —nakwi laka²ya 34. —la kwi²—nakwi nu kuna²a hi²i 35. ni ca² laka nti² hi²i— 36. —nta² tu hi²i ²ni, ska mula knyi ²na nguna² —nakwi— 37. nta² ca² kihe mala ndu. ni², si na ndya²a yu²u ni² ca² ngula cu.² ngu² hi²i— 38. lo²o ti. ndya²a tyike. hi²i

39. la kwi² ka nsu²ba kwaci.² mula, ndya lo²o hi²i mula kiya² kwa²a 40. lo²o nakwi li² nu kuna²a hi²i ca² cka²a ši to² ni²i ka ndakwa ti 41. ka ndyi la ka. ši tyike.² ca. ti² 42 takati ca. Juan ku ngwa 43. kwa ca. li² nckwi² laka²ya lo²o caka kiya²: 44. —nda. kwaya² ka. ngu²

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?—

ni lakwa unakwi hi?i nu kuna?a hi?i 45. ndyati laka?ya lihya ni?i 46. —nyi ?a nya?a color mula ?i.nu nguna? —nakwi hi?i laka?ya 47. —ngata nya?a —nakwi nu hwa— lo?o ska carga hnyi ndyi?ya ni?—

48. ndaya.? libro hi?i nklyana nklyana nklyana ndu?ni li? laha libro hi?i 49. lo?o na hloo ti? Juan siya? ti, ni ska letra na nslo Juan 50. nyi ?a ngwa li?: —nde, nde lugar su ndu. ni? —nakwi Juan Ceniza hi?i— 51. kiya? kwa?a ki?ya yu. bi? ndu. ni? 52. ci?a ca. nya?a su ndu. ni? —nakwi— 53. kihe bi? ni ski?ya na hi?i— 54. ndu?u ndya lo?o laka?ya, ndyala lugar bi?, ndu. ti mula ndyaka? 55. lo?o ndyi?ya laka?ya na?ni hi?i ya. 56. ndyala to?

person now then? —said to the woman his 45. entered gentleman-of-mountains came-to house 46. —how like looking color mule yours which lost? —said to gentleman-of-mountains 47. —black looking —said the that —and one cargo money carrying animal—.

48. took-hold-of book his searched searched searched did then among book his 49. and not knew in-himself John at-one-time only, not one letter not know John 50. how like it-was then: —this, this place where standing animal —said John Cenizas to-him— 51. foot-of rock-face mountain earth there standing animal 52. poor looking very looking where standing animal —said— 53. find-out that now bring us (incl.) it — 54. went-out went-to with gentleman-of-mountains, arrived place that, standing only mule tied 55. and took gentleman-of-mountains

he said to John's woman. 45. 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

**nī?i Juan, ska cu.? knyi hī?i lo?o Juan ča? nkihe ma ndu.
57. lo?o li? ndya laka?ya li?.**

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.