

# How Rabbit Fooled Puma: A Seri Text

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The following text was given orally by Roberto Herrera to Edward Moser in 1969. It was transcribed and edited with the help of Mr. Herrera and first published with other stories in an illustrated Seri reading book in 1976 (Herrera and Morales 1976).

## SUMMARY OF STORY

In this story, Puma catches Rabbit and notices that his back is very yellow. Rabbit explains that it was caused by his carrying pumas on his back after he had caught them to eat. Rabbit then asks his companions in a nearby cave to roll the head of the last puma to the opening so that he can finish eating it. They roll a 'cactus boot' (scar tissue from a bird's nest in a columnar cactus) toward the front, and the noise fools Puma, who runs away. The rabbits then all run to a bush and Rabbit asks to get far in the back.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

The first line of the text is given in the practical orthography used by the Seri people. A few morphemes which are normally written joined to the preceding word have been separated for the purpose of text glossing; these are indicated with an equal sign (=) preceding them. Some words which form idioms or other fixed expressions are joined with an underline character (—) in order to facilitate glossing.

The second line of the text is given in a phonemic transcription; potential word stresses are indicated in this line.

The third line gives underlying forms of the morphemes, although not all derivational morphemes are identified.

The glosses of the morphemes appear in the fourth line. The following abbreviations appear in this text:

AdvP, Adverbial Prepositional element	DefS, Definite article, Seated position
AdvS, Adverbial Suffixal element	DefU, Definite article, Unspecified position
Aux, Auxiliary particle	DemDt, Demonstrative Distal pronoun
Aw, Away	DemPro, Demonstrative Pronoun
AN, Action Nominalizer	Dt, Distal
Dec, Declarative	DSRI, Different Subject, Realis
DefE, Definite article, Erect position	Em, Emphatic
DefL, Definite article, Location	Foc, Focus
DefPr, Definite article, Prone position	I, Intransitive

Im, Imperative	SN, Subject Nominalizer
Ind, Indefinite article or pronoun	<SR>, Stress Retracting
IrD, Irrealis Dependent	To, Toward
IrI, Irrealis Independent	US, Unspecified Subject
M, Multiple	1P, first person possessor
OM, Object Marker	1sSI, first person singular Subject Intransitive
Pl, Plural	1sST, first person singular Subject Transitive
Px, Proximal	3IO, third person Indirect Object
Pv, Passive	3P, third person Possessor
RI, Realis	

Word glosses are given in the fifth line. The glosses indicate the meanings of the words as they appear in the context. If no word meaning is possible or desirable, an asterisk is used.

The last line of each unit is a relatively free translation.

## TEXT

### Title

Hapxa	quih	xazoj	quih	cöihaasitim	ac
?ápXa	ki?	Xášox	ki?	k*í?áasitim	ak
?apXa	k?	Xášox	k?	ko-i-?-aasitim	?ak
cottontail.rabbit	DefU	puma	DefU	3IO-3P-AN-fool	DefL
cottontail.rabbit	*	puma	*	how.he.fooled.him	*
"How Rabbit Fooled Puma"					

### 01.1

Hant_cöm_iti_cöihca	ac	hiz	cötahca	/
?ánt_kom_íti_k*fi?ka	?ak	?íš	k*tá?ka	/
?ant_kom_i-ati_ko-i-Ø-a?ka	?ak	?iš	ko-t-a?ka	/
earth_DefPr_3P-on_3IO-3P-AN-be.located	DefL	here	3IO-RI-be.located	/
it.happened	*	here	it.was	/

hax	ta	=ma
?áX	ta	ma
?aX	ta	ma
almost	Aux	DSRI
just	*	*

'It happened on the earth some time ago,'

## 01.2

<b>xica_ccam</b>	<b>com</b>	<b>toc</b>	<b>cotom</b>
Xíka_kkám	kom	tok	kótom
Xika_k-kam	kom	tok	ko-t-oom<SR>
thing/Pl_SN-alive	DefPr	there	3IO-RI-be.lying.down
animals	the	there	they.were

'the animals were there.'

## 01.3

<b>hant</b>	<b>com</b>	<b>iti</b>	<b>toom</b>	/	<b>toc</b>	<b>comom.</b>
ʔánt	kom	íti	tóom	/	tok	kómom
ʔant	kom	i-ati	t-oom<SR>	/	tok	ko-mi-oom<SR>
earth	DefPr	3P-on	RI-be.lying.down	/	there	3IO-Px-be.lying.down
land	the	on	they.were	/	there	they.were

'they were there on the earth.'

## 02.1

<b>Ox_tpacta</b>	/	<b>toc</b>	<b>cöihca</b>	<b>iti</b>
óX_tpakta	/	tok	kʷíiʔka	íti
oX_t-pakta	/	tok	ko-i-ø-aʔka	i-ati
thus_RI-appear	/	there	3IO-3P-AN-be.located	3P-on
then	/	there	it.was	while

'Then, when it was like that,'

## 02.2

<b>xazoj</b>	<b>tintica</b>	<b>hant</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>itaa</b>	/	<b>toc</b>
Xáʃox	tintika	ʔánt	ʃ	itáao	/	tok
Xaʃox	tintika	ʔant	ʃo	i-t-aa	/	tok
puma	DemDtAw	earth	Ind	OM-RI-pass	/	there
puma	the	place	a	he.was.passing.it	/	there

**conticaha.**

kontíkaʔa  
 ko-nt-k-aa<SR>\_=?a  
 3IO-Aw-SN-move(I)\_Dec  
 he.was.going

'Puma was there passing a certain place.'

## 03.1

<b>Ziix</b>	<b>quih</b>	<b>ccam</b>	<b>taax</b>	<b>oo</b>	<b>ipocaaho</b>
ʃfiX	kiʔ	kkám	táaX	oo	ipokáaʔo
ʃiiX	kʔ	k-kam	taaX	oo	i-po-kaa_=ʔo
thing	DefU	SN-alive	DemPro	AdvP	OM-IrD-look.for_Dec
thing	*	alive	that	*	he.was.looking.for.it.perhaps

'Perhaps he was looking for something alive,'

## 03.2

<b>ox</b>	<b>xah</b>	<b>zo</b>	<b>haiiha.</b>
óX	Xaʔ	šo	ʔáiiʔa
oX	Xaʔ	šo	ʔa-aaʔ-Cii_=ʔa
thus	and	Ind	SN-Pv-feel_Dec
thus	*	*	it.seems

'so it seems.'

## 04.1

<b>Toc</b>	<b>contiha</b>	<b>iti</b>
tok	kontíʔa	íti
tok	ko-nt-i-ʔ-aa<SR>	i -ati
there	3IO-Aw-3P-AN-move(I)	3P-on
there	he.was.going	while

'While he was going there,'

## 04.2

<b>zaaj</b>	<b>pac</b>	<b>toc</b>	<b>cötahca</b>	<b>=ma / cötafp</b>	<b>=ma</b>
ʃáax	pak	tok	kʷtáʔka	ma / kʷtáʔp	ma
ʃaax	pak	tok	ko-t-aʔka	ma / ko-t-aʔp	ma
cave	some	there	3IO-RI-be.located	DSRI / 3IO-RI-arrive	DSRI
caves	some	there	they.were	* / he.arrived.to.them	*

'he came to some caves there,'

## 04.3

<b>hapxa</b>	<b>pac</b>	<b>ano</b>	<b>toii</b>	/
ʔápXa	pak	áno	tóii	/
ʔapXa	pak	ano	t-oi	/
cottontail.rabbit	some	3P/in	RI-be.located/Pl	/
cottontail.rabbits	some	in.it	they.were	/

**toc cöcoiia.**

tok	kʷkóiiʔa
tok	ko-k-oi =ʔa
there	3IO-SN-be.located/Pl _Dec
there	they.were

‘(and) there were some rabbits in it.’

## 05.1

<b>Zo</b>	<b>toc</b>	<b>cotom</b>	<b>=ma</b>	/	<b>itipjc</b>
šo	tok	kótom	ma	/	itípxk
šo	tok	ko-t-oom<SR>	ma	/	i-t-ipxk
Ind	there	3IO-RI-be.lying.down	DSRI	/	OM-RI-grab
one	there	he.was.lying	*	/	he.grabbed.it

‘One was lying there, he (Puma) captured it,’

## 05.2

<b>hant</b>	<b>iqui</b>	<b>itasnan</b>	<b>=ma</b>
ʔánt	íki	itásnan	ma
ʔant	i-aki	i-t-asnan	ma
earth	3P-toward	OM-RI-hold	DSRI
land	against	he.held.it	*

‘(and) he held it against the ground,’

## 05.3

<b>toc</b>	<b>cotom</b>	/	<b>yoque.<sup>1</sup></b>
tok	kótom	/	yókæ
tok	ko-t-oom<SR>	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>
there	3IO-RI-be.lying.down	/	Dt-US-say
there	he.lay	/	it.is.said

‘(and) it lay there (the rabbit), it is said.’

<sup>1</sup>The sentence final ‘it.is.said’ indicates that this is not firsthand information. It is not always included in the free translations.

## 06.1

<b>Xazoj</b>	<b>cop</b>	<b>ox</b>	<b>tee</b>	/	<b>yoque,</b>
Xášox	kop	óX	tææ	/	yókæ
Xášox	kop	oX	t-ææ	/	yp-ka-ææ<SR>
puma	DefE	thus	Rl-say(I)	/	Dt-US-say
puma	the	thus	he.said	/	it.is.said

'Puma said,'

## 06.2

<b>«Ctam</b>	<b>hipcom</b>	<b>islicot</b>	<b>ac</b>	<b>hax</b>	<b>xomasolo!»</b>
ktám	?ípkom	islíkot	ak	?áX	Xomásolo
ktam	?ípkom	i-slikot	?ak	?aX	Xo-masol-o
male	DemPxPr	3P-upper.back	DefL	almost	Em-yellow-AdvS
male	this	his.back	*	very	it.is.very.yellow

'"The back of this male is really yellow!"'

## 07.1

<b>ox</b>	<b>itai</b>	/	<b>yoque.</b>
óX	itái	/	yókæ
oX	i-t-ai	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>
thus	OM-Rl-tell	/	Dt-US-say
thus	he.told.him	/	it.is.said

'he said to him.'

## 08.1

<b>Ox_tpacta_ =ma</b>	/	<b>hapxa</b>	<b>com</b>
óX_tpákta_ma	/	?ápXa	kom
oX_t -pakta_ma	/	?apXa	kom
thus_Rl-appear_DSRI	/	cottontail.rabbit	DefPr
then	/	cottontail.rabbit	the

<b>ox</b>	<b>tee</b>	/	<b>yoque,</b>
óX	tææ	/	yókæ
oX	t-ææ	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>
thus	Rl-say(I)	/	Dt-US-say
thus	he.said	/	it.is.said

'Then Rabbit said,'

## 08.2

## «Ox yopacta.

óX yopákta  
 oX yo-pakta  
 thus Dt-appear  
 thus it.is

‘“This is how it is.”

## 09.1

<b>Xazl</b>	<b>quih</b>	<b>ctamcö</b>	<b>quih</b>	<b>caacöl</b>	<b>quih</b>	<b>htacotim</b>
Xá šl ki?	ktámkʷ	ki?	káakʷl	ki?	ʔákotim	
Xašl k?	ktamkʷ	k?	k-aakʷl	k?	ʔ-t-akotim	
puma/Pl	DefU	male/Pl	DefU	SN-big/Pl	DefU	1sST-Rl-kill/M
pumas	*	males	*	big	the	I.have.killed.them

‘I have killed big male pumas’

## 09.2

<b>taa_iti</b>	<b>hihacosotimihi.</b>
táa_iti	ʔiʔakósotimiʔi
taaX_i-ati	ʔi-ʔ-akósotim_=ʔi
DemPro_3P-on	1P-AN-carry.on.back/M_Dec
then	I.carried.them

‘(and) then I carried them on my back.’

## 10.1

<b>Ox</b>	<b>yopacta,»</b>	<b>ox</b>	<b>tee</b>	/	<b>yoque.</b>
óX	yopákta	óX	tææ	/	yókæ
oX	yo-pakta	oX	t-ææ	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>
thus	Dt-appear	thus	Rl-say(I)	/	Dt-US-say
thus	it.is	thus	he.said	/	it.is.said

‘That’s how it is,” he said.’

## 11.1

<b>Ox</b>	<b>tee</b>	/	<b>itaxi</b>
óX	tææ	/	itáXi
oX	t-ææ	/	i-t-aXi
thus	Rl -say(I)	/	OM-Rl-finish
thus	he.said	/	when.he.finished.it

‘When he finished saying that,’

## 11.2

<b>mos</b>	<b>ox</b>	<b>tee</b>	/	<b>yoque</b>	/	<b>hapxa</b>	<b>com,</b>
mos	óX	téæ	/	yókæ	/	ʔápXa	kom
mos	oX	t-ææ	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>	/	ʔapXa	kom
also	thus	Rl-say(I)	/	Dt-US-say	/	cottontail.rabbit	DefPr
also	thus	he.said	/	it.is.said	/	cottontail.rabbit	the

'Rabbit also said (to the rabbits in the cave),'

## 11.3

<b>«Xazoj</b>	<b>ilit</b>	<b>zo</b>	<b>toc</b>	<b>cöyij.</b>
Xášox	ilít	šo	tok	k"yfix
Xašox	ilit	šo	tok	ko-yo-iix
puma	3P -head	Ind	there	3IO-Dt-be.seated
puma	his.head	a	there	it.is

'“There is a puma's head there.”'

## 12.1

<b>Tiix</b>	<b>hapx</b>	<b>ihcaaitajc.</b>
tíiX	ʔápX	iʔkáaitaxk
tiiX	ʔapX	ʔ-kaaitaxk
that.one	outside	Im-put/Pl
that.one	outside	put.it!

'Put that (head) out.'

## 13.1

<b>Zo</b>	<b>hpoohit</b>	/	<b>ihpooxi</b>
šo	ʔpóoʔit	/	iʔpóoXi
šo	ʔp-po-aʔit	/	ʔ-po-aXi
Ind	1sSI-IrD-eat	/	1sST-IrD-finish
one	I.will.eat.it	/	when.I.finish.it

'When I finish eating part of it,'

## 13.2

<b>hizac</b>	<b>conthapa</b>
ʔíšak	kontʔápa
ʔíšak	ko-nt-ʔp-po-aa<SR>
here	3IO-Aw-1sSI-IrD-move(I)
here	I.will.go

'I'll go along here,'



## 13.3

<b>xazoj</b>	<b>ihmiha</b>	<b>cohseectim»</b>
Xáʃox	iʔmíʔa	koʔsəæktim
Xaʃox	i-ʔmíʔa	ko-ʔ-si-iktim
puma	3P -footprint	3IO-1sST-IrI-cross
puma	his.footprints	I.will.come.across.them

'I'll come across (another) puma's footprints,'

## 13.4

<b>ox</b>	<b>tee</b>	/	<b>yoque.</b>
óX	téæ	/	yókæ
oX	t-ææ	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>
thus	Rl-say(I)	/	Dt-US -say
thus	he.said	/	it.is.said

'he said.'

## 14.1

<b>Ox_tpacta_ma</b>	/	<b>zaaj</b>	<b>quij</b>	<b>ipot</b>	<b>tahac</b>
óX_tpákta_ma	/	ʃáax	kix	ípot	taʔak
oX_t-pakta_ma	/	ʃaax	kix	i-apot	taʔak
thus_Rl-appear_DSRI	/	cave	DefS	3P-under	DemDt
then	/	cave	the	back.of	*

'Then from the back of that cave'

## 14.2

<b>taax</b>	<b>xcatnij</b>	<b>xah</b>	<b>yopah</b>
táaX	Xkátnix	Xaʔ	yopáʔ
taaX	Xkatnix	Xaʔ	yo-p<A>-aʔ
DemPro	cactus.boot	and	Dt-Pv-say
that	cactus.boot	*	it.is.called

—it's called a "xcatnij" (cactus boot)<sup>2</sup>—

<sup>2</sup>"Xcatnij" (cactus boot) is "woody callus tissue lining a nest hole made in the stem [of a columnar cactus] by a woodpecker. After the plant dies, and the fleshy parts of the stem decay, the boot and the woody ribs ... remain" (Felger and Moser 1985:245).

## 14.3

<b>mojepe</b>	<b>cöcootij</b>	<b>quih</b>	<b>ano</b>	<b>quijiha.</b>
moxæpæ	kʷkóotix	kʔ	áno	kíixiʔa
moxæpæ	ko-k-ootix	kʔ	ano	k-iix_=ʔa
saguaro.cactus	3IO-SN-dry	DefU	3P/in	SN-be.seated_Dec
saguaro.cactus	dry	the	in	it.is

'it's in a dry saguaro cactus.'

## 15.1

<b>Taaxah</b>	<b>zo</b>	<b>haa</b>	<b>mota</b>	<b>=ma</b>
táaXaʔ	ʃo	ʔáa	móta	ma
taaX_=aʔ	ʃo	ʔaa	mo-t-aa<SR>	ma
DemPro_Foc	Ind	there	To-RI-move(I)	DSRI
those	one	there	it.was.coming	*

'One of those was coming out.'

## 15.2

<b>hapx</b>	<b>iqui</b>	<b>tahqueetx</b>
ʔápX	íki	taʔkæætX
ʔapX	i-aki	t-aaʔ-kæætX
outside	3P -toward	RI -Pv -place
outside	toward	it.was.being.placed

'it was being placed outside.'

## 15.3

<b>hant</b>	<b>tahmaasilim</b>	<b>=ma</b>	<b>/</b>	<b>hanso</b>	<b>ʔaxaxim</b>	<b>=ma</b>
ʔánt	taʔmáasilim	ma	/	ʔánso	táXaXim	ma
ʔant	t-aaʔ-amaasilim	ma	/	ʔanso	t-aXaXim	ma
earth	RI -Pv -make.roll/M	DSRI	/	just	RI-make.scraping.noise/M	DSRI
land	it.was.rolled	*	/	just	it.made.scraping.noise	*

'it was rolled along the ground, it just made a scraping noise.'

## 15.4

<b>xazoj</b>	<b>cop</b>	<b>itii</b>	<b>/</b>	<b>ziix</b>	<b>ticom</b>	<b>itacatx</b>
Xáʃox	kop	itíi	/	ʃíiX	tíkom	itákatX
Xaʃox	kop	i-t-ii	/	ʃiiX	tikom	i-t-akatX
puma	DefE	OM-RI-hear	/	thing	DemDtPr	OM-RI-leave.behind
puma	the	when.he.heard.it	/	animal	that	he.released.him

'(and) when Puma heard it, he released that animal (Rabbit).'

## 15.5

<b>hapx_iqui_tpanzx</b>	/	<b>yoque.</b>
ʔápX_íki_tpanšX	/	yókæ
ʔapX_i-aki_t-panšX	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>
outside_3P-toward_Rl-run	/	Dt-US -say
he.ran.away	/	it.is.said

‘(and) he ran away.’

## 16.1

<b>Tojoz</b>	<b>=ma<sup>3</sup></b>	/	<b>hapx_iqui_tpanzx</b>	<b>=ma</b>
tóxoš	ma	/	ʔápX_íki_tpanšX	ma
t-oxoš	ma	/	ʔapX_i-aki_t-panšX	ma
Rl -flee	DSRI	/	outside_3P-toward_Rl-run	DSRI
he.fled	*	/	he.ran.away	*

‘He (Puma) fled, (and) he (Rabbit) ran away,’

## 16.2

<b>hapxa</b>	<b>coi</b>	<b>mos</b>	<b>hapx_hant_cõteme</b>
ʔápXa	koi	mos	ʔápX_ʔánt_k <sup>w</sup> tæmæ
ʔapXa	koi	mos	ʔapX_ʔant_ko-t-æmæ
cottontail.rabbit	DefPl	also	outside_earth_3IO-Rl-arrive.at/Pl
cottontail.rabbits	the	also	they.rushed.out

‘(and) the (other) rabbits also rushed out,’

## 16.3

<b>hapx_iqui_tpancoj</b>	/	<b>yoque.</b>
ʔápX_íki_tpankox	/	yókæ
ʔapX_i-aki_t-pankox	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>
outside_3P-toward_Rl-run/Pl	/	Dt-US-say
they.ran.away	/	it.is.said

‘(and) they ran away.’

<sup>3</sup>It is important to note the different-subject marking here.

## 17.1

<b>Ox_tpacta_ =ma</b>	/	<b>haa</b>	<b>ntihat</b>	<b>iti</b>
óX_tpákta_ma	/	ʔáa	ntíʔat	íti
oX_t-pakta_ma	/	ʔaa	nt-i-ʔ-aat<SR>	i-ati
thus_RI-appear_DSRI	/	there	Aw-3P-AN-move(I)/Pl	3P-on
then	/	there	they.were.going	while

‘Then while they were going there,’

## 17.2

<b>hehe</b>	<b>cöcootij</b>	<b>ox</b>	<b>quisoj</b>	<b>an</b>	<b>quinej</b>	<b>zo</b>	<b>haa</b>
ʔæʔæ	kʷkóotix	óX	kísox	án	kínæx	šo	ʔáa
ʔæʔæ	ko-k-ootix	oX	k-isox	ano	k-inæx	šo	ʔaa
plant	3IO-SN-dry	thus	SN-very.big	3P/in	SN-empty	Ind	there
bush	dry	thus	huge	in.it	empty	a	there

<b>toom</b>	<b>=ma</b>
tóom	ma
t-oom<SR>	ma
RI-be.lying.down	DSRI
it.was	*

‘there was a very large dry bush with an empty area (under it),’

## 17.3

<b>tiix</b>	<b>an_hant_cösiime_ta</b>
tiiX	án_ʔánt_kʷsímæ_ta
tiiX	ano_ʔant_ko-si-æmæ_ta
that.one	3P/in_earth_3IO-IrI-arrive.at/Pl_Aux
that.one	they.were.about.to.rush.into.it

‘they were about to rush into it,’

## 17.4

<b>cötazcam</b>	<b>=ma</b>
kʷtáškam	ma
ko-t-aškam	ma
3IO-RI-arrive/Pl	DSRI
they.arrived.to.it	*

‘they arrived at it,’

## 17.5

<b>o x</b>	<b>tee</b>	/	<b>yoque</b>	/	<b>ziix</b>	<b>cöcaasitim</b>	<b>quij,</b>
óX	tææ	/	yókæ	/	šíiX	kʷkáasitim	kix
oX	t-ææ	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>	/	šiiX	ko-k-i-aasitim	kix
thus	Rl -say(I)	/	Dt-US-say	/	thing	3IO-SN-OM-fool	DefS
thus	he.said	/	it.is.said	/	animal	who.fooled.him	the

‘the one who had done the fooling said,’

## 17.6

<b>«He</b>	<b>ipot</b>	<b>iicp</b>	<b>ac</b>	<b>iicp</b>	<b>hasom</b>	<b>=aha.</b>
ʔæ	ípot	íikp	ak	íikp	ʔásom	aʔa
ʔæ	i-apot	i-akp	ʔak	i-akp	ʔp-si-oom<SR>	ʔa_=?a
1Pro	3P-under	3P-side	DefL	3P-side	1sSI-IrI-be.lying.down	Aux_Dec
I	under.it	its.side	*	its.side	I.will.lie.down	*

‘“I’ll lie down way in the back.”

## 18.1

<b>He</b>	<b>haa</b>	<b>cohptaasitim</b>	<b>=ma</b>
ʔæ	ʔáa	koʔptáasitim	ma
ʔæ	ʔaa	ko-ʔp-t-aasitim	ma
1Pro	SN/be	3IO-1sSI-Rl-fool	DSRI
I	who.is	I.fooled	*

‘I was the one that did the fooling,’

## 18.2

<b>toii_nthamat,»</b>	/	<b>o x</b>	<b>tee</b>	/	<b>yoque.</b>
tóii_ntʔámat	/	óX	tææ	/	yókæ
toii_nt-ʔa-mi-aat<SR>	/	oX	t-ææ	/	yo-ka-ææ<SR>
away_Aw-1pS-Px-move(I)/Pl	/	thus	Rl-say(I)	/	Dt-US-say
we.escaped	/	thus	he.said	/	it.is.said

‘(and) we got away,” he said.’