

# Olém Homáatín Huunomént'omatoy

COYOTE JUST COULDN'T FLY

Wítteem okó Olém helayk'óyt'omatoy c'aykím piwná.

*One day Coyote went to another camp to play handgame.*

Han miydí haleméyt'omatoy mihé osek'áa báəppayí...

*He lost all his valuables there...*

Han amakím okó uk'óyt'omatoy kan.

*The next day he went again.*

Han okóm p'idep'ic'é, yubuyná iskítt'omatoy polóm c'aa k'awnanná.

*When the sun was hot, he sat down in the shade under a buckeye tree.*

Han pín't'omatoy Pakaatím solíc'é.

*He heard Buckeye Ball singing.*

“Homáan nii solí solíbe mi?” hát'omatoy Olém.

*“Why are you singing my song?” said Coyote.*

“Solmén! Hatíp miyé!” hát'omatoy Olém.

*“Don't sing! Stop that!” said Coyote.*

Hac'e weté sólt'omatoy Pakaatím.

*But Buckeye Ball sang.*

Hac'e, “Kannó solménc'e benc'olinnówes ni min,” hát'omatoy Olém.

*“If you sing any more I will kick a hole in you,” said Coyote.*

Hac'e sólt'omatoy kan.

*Buckeye Ball sang again.*

Hac'e Olém ænín benc'olinnót'omatoy.

*Coyote got angry and kicked through Buckeye Ball.*

Han benc'olic'é, Pakaatím mihé payí mæðəkpáyt'omatoy.

*When he kicked, Buckeye Ball bit on to his foot.*

“Oo bendoyisé badaydaynóosi mi,” hát'omatoy.

*“When I kick a rock you will split to pieces,” said Coyote.*

Han oo bendóyt'omatoy. Hac'e weté badaymént'omatoy.

*He kicked a rock. But Buckeye Ball did not split.*

Hac'e Olém, “Hedém pennó, k'ít pennó yamanná bedok'oyisé, wonóosi mi,” hát'omatoy.

*Coyote said, “When I run up this slope, this steep slope to the hill, you will wear out.”*

Han Olém bedok'óyt'omatoy yamanná hipinná. Hac'e weté Pakaatím ínpáayut'omatoy.

*Coyote ran up to the hill. But Buckeye Ball stuck on.*

Hac'e sewná bedok'óyt'omatoy kan.

*He ran down again.*

Hac'e weté ínpáayut'omatoy Pakaatím.

*But Buckeye Ball stuck on.*

Han məkátt'omatoy mihé payí.

*And Buckeye Ball bit off his foot.*

Han oc'úst'omatoy Olém.

*Coyote sat there.*

Hac'e Peyím hipinnáan huudáat'omatoy.

*Golden Eagle flew down from above.*

Han Olé oc'usmám hoydí booyée méet'omatoy.

*He caught a jackrabbit close to where Coyote was sitting.*

Han méyt'omatoy c'olí Olé. Hac'e Olém payélt'omatoy.

*He gave the head to Coyote. Coyote ate.*

Hac'e c'owín, "Mey nik laayí kannó," hát'omatoy.

*Eating it all up, he said, "Give me a little more."*

Han "Siyéenaaká nik mi min yakkatín?" hát'omatoy.

*He said, "Can you make me like you?"*

Hac'e Peyím "Haan," hát'omatoy.

*Golden Eagle said, "Yes."*

"Otóopay siyéewes ni min," hát'omatoy Peyím.

*"I will make you tomorrow," said Golden Eagle.*

Han siyéet'omatoy Olé.

*He made Coyote.*

Han, "Nii c'olí istíbene mīyaanotín," hát'omatoy.

*Coyote said, "Leave my head as it is."*

Hac'e Peyím siyéet'omatoy mīhé.

*Golden Eagle made him.*

Han k'asip'ín, sumúum c'aa<sup>1</sup> hipinná took'óyt'omatoy Peyím.

*When he had finished, Golden Eagle took him up in a sugar pine tree<sup>1</sup>.*

Han wonón, "Makbeehoyyáas ni," hát'omatoy.

*Afterwards he said, "I will try first."*

Han Peyím huunót'omatoy sewná.

*Golden Eagle flew down to the river.*

Han mīydí watdanín k'əlapínt'omatoy sumúum c'aaná.

*He dipped there and came back to the sugar pine tree.*

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<sup>1</sup> Sugar pine is the tallest pine tree species, commonly reaching 175–200 feet in height (US Dept. of Agriculture, n.d.).

Han, “K’aak’é mi,” hát’omatoy.

*He said, “You go ahead.”*

Hac’e Olém huunosán, wittipiypiywoodáat’omatoy.

*In the attempt to fly, Coyote went into a spin and fell down.*

Han k’awí boon woonót’omatoy Olém.

*Coyote hit the ground and died.*

Miim miyém.

*That's that.*

## HELPFUL VOCABULARY

Olé	‘Coyote’
Pakáat	‘Buckeye Ball’
Pey	‘Golden Eagle’
Sumúum c’aa	‘Sugar Pine Tree’
Sol-	‘to sing’
Huuno-	‘to fly’
-t’omatoy	This word-ending means that the event took place long ago and that the storyteller did not witness the event themself.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Why did Olé get in a fight with Pakáat? Who do you think was at fault, and who won?

Why did Olé want to be like Pey in the first place?

Why do you think Olé asked Pey to leave him with a regular coyote-head when Pey transformed him? Do you think that’s why Olé couldn’t fly?

## ABOUT THIS STORY...

This is an excerpt adapted from a story told by William Joseph, a.k.a. Bill Joe, to Hans J. Uldall in the 1930’s. Bill Joe was a Nisenan man from Amador County and a respected storyteller among his contemporaries.

The second half of this story, in which Coyote tries and fails to fly, resembles other stories told by Nisenan people. For example, Lillie Williams, daughter of SSBMI Matriarch Pamela Adams, shared a Coyote Story with anthropology student Douglas Marsh in 1958 in which Coyote tries to be like the leaves floating in the breeze but falls to his death from a tree. Coyote Stories tend to be funny while also modeling how **not** to behave, and they usually end with Coyote’s actions causing his demise. Tom Cleanso, brother of Pamela Adams, remarked that “Coyote was always getting killed. Whatever he attempted, he readily died from it.”

If you have questions about the story, please contact [language@ssband.org](mailto:language@ssband.org).