

# POPOL

The Mayan Book  
of the Dawn of Life

REVISED EDITION

*Translated by*

DENNIS TEDLOCK

with commentary based on the  
ancient knowledge of the modern Quiché Maya

# VUH



A TOUCHSTONE BOOK

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# PART ONE



**T**HIS IS THE BEGINNING OF THE ANCIENT WORD, here in this place called Quiché. Here we shall inscribe, we shall implant the Ancient Word, the potential and source for everything done in the citadel of Quiché, in the nation of Quiché people.

And here we shall take up the demonstration, revelation, and account of how things were put in shadow and brought to light by

the Maker, Modeler,  
named Bearer, Begetter,  
Hunahpu Possum, Hunahpu Coyote,  
Great White Peccary, Coati,  
Sovereign Plumed Serpent,  
Heart of the Lake, Heart of the Sea,  
plate shaper, bowl shaper, as they are called,  
also named, also described as  
the midwife, matchmaker  
named Xpiyacoc, Xmucane,  
defender, protector,  
twice a midwife, twice a matchmaker,

as is said in the words of Quiché. They accounted for everything—and did it, too—as enlightened beings, in enlightened words. We shall write about this now amid the preaching of God, in Christendom now. We shall bring it out because there is no longer

a place to see it, a Council Book,  
a place to see “The Light That Came from  
Beside the Sea,”  
the account of “Our Place in the Shadows.”  
a place to see “The Dawn of Life,”

as it is called. There is the original book and ancient writing, but the one who reads and assesses it has a hidden identity. It takes a long performance and account to complete the lighting of all the sky-earth:

the fourfold siding, fourfold cornering,  
measuring, fourfold staking,  
halving the cord, stretching the cord

in the sky, on the earth,  
the four sides, the four corners, as it is said,  
by the Maker, Modeler,  
mother-father of life, of humankind,  
giver of breath, giver of heart,  
bearer, upbringer in the light that lasts  
of those born in the light, begotten in the light;  
worrier, knower of everything, whatever there is:  
sky-earth, lake-sea.

**T**HIS IS THE ACCOUNT, here it is:

Now it still ripples, now it still murmurs, ripples, it still sighs, still hums, and it is empty under the sky.

Here follow the first words, the first eloquence:

There is not yet one person, one animal, bird, fish, crab, tree, rock, hollow, canyon, meadow, forest. Only the sky alone is there; the face of the earth is not clear. Only the sea alone is pooled under all the sky; there is nothing whatever gathered together. It is at rest; not a single thing stirs. It is held back, kept at rest under the sky.

Whatever there is that might be is simply not there: only the pooled water, only the calm sea, only it alone is pooled.

Whatever might be is simply not there: only murmurs, ripples, in the dark, in the night. Only the Maker, Modeler alone, Sovereign Plumed Serpent, the Bearers, Begetters are in the water, a glittering light. They are there, they are enclosed in quetzal feathers, in blue-green.

Thus the name, "Plumed Serpent." They are great knowers, great thinkers in their very being.

**SOVEREIGN PLUMED SERPENT:** *Here he is seated, holding a snake in his hand. On his back he wears a quetzal bird, with its head behind his, its wings at the level of his shoulders, and its tail hanging down to the ground. From the Dresden Codex.*



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

And of course there is the sky, and there is also the Heart of Sky. This is the name of the god, as it is spoken.

And then came his word, he came here to the Sovereign Plumed Serpent, here in the blackness, in the early dawn. He spoke with the Sovereign Plumed Serpent, and they talked, then they thought, then they worried. They agreed with each other, they joined their words, their thoughts. Then it was clear, then they reached accord in the light, and then humanity was clear, when they conceived the growth, the generation of trees, of bushes, and the growth of life, of humankind, in the blackness, in the early dawn, all because of the Heart of Sky, named Hurricane. Thunderbolt Hurricane comes first, the second is Newborn Thunderbolt, and the third is Sudden Thunderbolt.

So there were three of them, as Heart of Sky, who came to the Sovereign Plumed Serpent, when the dawn of life was conceived:

"How should the sowing be, and the dawning? Who is to be the provider, nurturer?"

"Let it be this way, think about it: this water should be removed, emptied out for the formation of the earth's own plate and platform, then should come the sowing, the dawning of the sky-earth. But there will be no high days and no bright praise for our work, our design, until the rise of the human work, the human design," they said.

And then the earth arose because of them, it was simply their word that brought it forth. For the forming of the earth they said "Earth." It arose suddenly, just like a cloud, like a mist, now forming, unfolding.



**THE HEART OF SKY, NAMED HURRICANE:** *Here he peers out from among swirls of smoke and flame (or clouds and lightning) that come from the obsidian mirror on his own forehead. From a Late Classic vase from the lowlands.*

DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

THUNDERBOLT: A lowland Maya Chak or Thunderbolt god, holding a lightning-striking axe in his left hand and a representation of the sound of thunder in his right. From the Dresden Codex.



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

Then the mountains were separated from the water, all at once the great mountains came forth. By their genius alone, by their cutting edge alone they carried out the conception of the mountain-plain, whose face grew instant groves of cypress and pine.

And the Plumed Serpent was pleased with this:

"It was good that you came, Heart of Sky, Hurricane, and Newborn Thunderbolt, Sudden Thunderbolt. Our work, our design will turn out well," they said.

And the earth was formed first, the mountain-plain. The channels of water were separated; their branches wound their ways among the mountains. The waters were divided when the great mountains appeared.

Such was the formation of the earth when it was brought forth by the Heart of Sky, Heart of Earth, as they are called, since they were the first to think of it. The sky was set apart, and the earth was set apart in the midst of the waters.

Such was their plan when they thought, when they worried about the completion of their work.

**N**OW THEY PLANNED THE ANIMALS OF THE MOUNTAINS, all the guardians of the forests, creatures of the mountains: the deer, birds, pumas, jaguars, serpents, rattlesnakes, fer-de-lances, guardians of the bushes.

A Bearer, Begetter speaks:

"Why this pointless humming? Why should there merely be rustling beneath the trees and bushes?"

"Indeed—they had better have guardians," the others replied. As soon as they thought it and said it, deer and birds came forth.

And then they gave out homes to the deer and birds:

"You, the deer: sleep along the rivers, in the canyons. Be here in the meadows, in the thickets, in the forests, multiply yourselves. You will stand and walk on all fours," they were told.

So then they established the nests of the birds, small and great:

"You, precious birds: your nests, your houses are in the trees, in the bushes. Multiply there, scatter there, in the branches of trees, the branches of bushes," the deer and birds were told.

When this deed had been done, all of them had received a place to sleep and a place to stay. So it is that the nests of the animals are on the earth, given by the Bearer, Begetter. Now the arrangement of the deer and birds was complete.

**A**ND THEN THE DEER AND BIRDS WERE TOLD by the Maker, Modeler, Bearer, Begetter:

"Talk, speak out. Don't moan, don't cry out. Please talk, each to each, within each kind, within each group," they were told—the deer, birds, puma, jaguar, serpent.

"Name now our names, praise us. We are your mother, we are your father. Speak now:

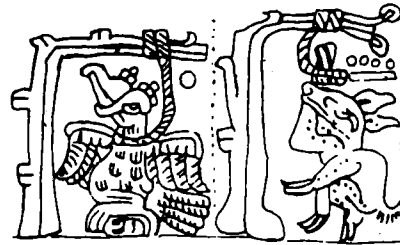
'Hurricane,  
Newborn Thunderbolt, Sudden Thunderbolt,  
Heart of Sky, Heart of Earth,  
Maker, Modeler,  
Bearer, Begetter,'

speak, pray to us, keep our days," they were told. But it didn't turn out that they spoke like people: they just squawked, they just chattered, they just howled. It wasn't apparent what language they spoke; each one gave a different cry. When the Maker, Modeler heard this:

"It hasn't turned out well, they haven't spoken," they said among themselves. "It hasn't turned out that our names have been named. Since we are their mason and sculptor, this will not do," the Bearers and Begetters said among themselves. So they told them:

"You will simply have to be transformed. Since it hasn't turned out well and you haven't spoken, we have changed our word:

JUST LET YOUR FLESH BE  
EATEN: A turkey (left) and  
deer (right) caught in  
bent-tree snares. From the  
Madrid Codex.



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

"What you feed on, what you eat, the places where you sleep, the places where you stay, whatever is yours will remain in the canyons, the forests. Although it turned out that our days were not kept, nor did you pray to us, there may yet be strength in the keeper of days, the giver of praise whom we have yet to make. Just accept your service, just let your flesh be eaten.

"So be it, this must be your service," they were told when they were instructed—the animals, small and great, on the face of the earth.

And then they wanted to test their timing again, they wanted to experiment again, and they wanted to prepare for the keeping of days again. They had not heard their speech among the animals; it did not come to fruition and it was not complete.

And so their flesh was brought low: they served, they were eaten, they were killed—the animals on the face of the earth.

**A**GAIN THERE COMES AN EXPERIMENT WITH THE HUMAN WORK, the human design, by the Maker, Modeler, Bearer, Begetter:

"It must simply be tried again. The time for the planting and dawning is nearing. For this we must make a provider and nurturer. How else can we be invoked and remembered on the face of the earth? We have already made our first try at our work and design, but it turned out that they didn't keep our days, nor did they glorify us.

"So now let's try to make a giver of praise, giver of respect, provider, nurturer," they said.

So then comes the building and working with earth and mud. They made a body, but it didn't look good to them. It was just separating, just crumbling, just loosening, just softening, just disintegrating, and just dissolving. Its head wouldn't turn, either. Its face was just lopsided, its

face was just twisted. It couldn't look around. It talked at first, but senselessly. It was quickly dissolving in the water.

"It won't last," the mason and sculptor said then. "It seems to be dwindling away, so let it just dwindle. It can't walk and it can't multiply, so let it be merely a thought," they said.

So then they dismantled, again they brought down their work and design. Again they talked:

"What is there for us to make that would turn out well, that would succeed in keeping our days and praying to us?" they said. Then they planned again:

"We'll just tell Xpiyacoc, Xmucane, Hunahpu Possum, Hunahpu Coyote, to try a counting of days, a counting of lots," the mason and sculptor said to themselves. Then they invoked Xpiyacoc, Xmucane.

**T**HEN COMES THE NAMING OF THOSE WHO ARE THE MIDMOST SEERS: the "Grandmother of Day, Grandmother of Light," as the Maker, Modeler called them. These are names of Xpiyacoc and Xmucane.

When Hurricane had spoken with the Sovereign Plumed Serpent, they invoked the daykeepers, diviners, the midmost seers:

"There is yet to find, yet to discover how we are to model a person, construct a person again, a provider, nurturer, so that we are called upon and we are recognized: our recompense is in words.

Midwife, matchmaker,  
our grandmother, our grandfather,  
Xpiyacoc, Xmucane,  
let there be planting, let there be the dawning  
of our invocation, our sustenance, our recognition  
by the human work, the human design,  
the human figure, the human form.  
So be it, fulfill your names:  
Hunahpu Possum, Hunahpu Coyote,  
Bearer twice over, Begetter twice over,  
Great Peccary, Great Coati,  
lapidary, jeweler,  
sawyer, carpenter,  
plate shaper, bowl shaper,  
incense maker, master craftsman,  
Grandmother of Day, Grandmother of Light.

You have been called upon because of our work, our design. Run your hands over the kernels of corn, over the seeds of the coral tree, just get it done, just let it come out whether we should carve and gouge a mouth, a face in wood," they told the daykeepers.

And then comes the borrowing, the counting of days; the hand is moved over the corn kernels, over the coral seeds, the days, the lots.

Then they spoke to them, one of them a grandmother, the other a grandfather.

This is the grandfather, this is the master of the coral seeds: Xpiyacoc is his name.

And this is the grandmother, the daykeeper, diviner who stands behind others: Xmucane is her name.

And they said, as they set out the days:

"Just let it be found, just let it be discovered,  
say it, our ear is listening,  
may you talk, may you speak,  
just find the wood for the carving and sculpting  
by the builder, sculptor.  
Is this to be the provider, the nurturer  
when it comes to the planting, the dawning?  
You corn kernels, you coral seeds,  
you days, you lots:  
may you succeed, may you be accurate,"

they said to the corn kernels, coral seeds, days, lots. "Have shame, you up there, Heart of Sky: attempt no deception before the mouth and face of Sovereign Plumed Serpent," they said. Then they spoke straight to the point:

"It is well that there be your manikins, woodcarvings, talking, speaking, there on the face of the earth."

"So be it," they replied. The moment they spoke it was done: the manikins, woodcarvings, human in looks and human in speech.

This was the peopling of the face of the earth:

They came into being, they multiplied, they had daughters, they had sons, these manikins, woodcarvings. But there was nothing in their hearts and nothing in their minds, no memory of their mason and builder. They just went and walked wherever they wanted. Now they did not remember the Heart of Sky.

And so they fell, just an experiment and just a cutout for humankind. They were talking at first but their faces were dry. They were not yet

developed in the legs and arms. They had no blood, no lymph. They had no sweat, no fat. Their complexions were dry, their faces were crusty. They flailed their legs and arms, their bodies were deformed.

And so they accomplished nothing before the Maker, Modeler who gave them birth, gave them heart. They became the first numerous people here on the face of the earth.

**A** GAIN THERE COMES A HUMILIATION, destruction, and demolition. The manikins, woodcarvings were killed when the Heart of Sky devised a flood for them. A great flood was made; it came down on the heads of the manikins, woodcarvings.

The man's body was carved from the wood of the coral tree by the Maker, Modeler. And as for the woman, the Maker, Modeler needed the hearts of bulrushes for the woman's body. They were not competent, nor did they speak before the builder and sculptor who made them and brought them forth, and so they were killed, done in by a flood:

There came a rain of resin from the sky.

There came the one named Gouger of Faces: he gouged out their eyeballs.

There came Sudden Bloodletter: he snapped off their heads.

There came Crunching Jaguar: he ate their flesh.

There came Tearing Jaguar: he tore them open.

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HE GOUGED OUT THEIR EYEBALLS: A human eye in the beak of a king vulture, still attached by the optic nerve. From the Madrid Codex.



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

They were pounded down to the bones and tendons, smashed and pulverized even to the bones. Their faces were smashed because they were incompetent before their mother and their father, the Heart of Sky, named Hurricane. The earth was blackened because of this; the black rainstorm began, rain all day and rain all night. Into their houses came the animals, small and great. Their faces were crushed by things of wood and stone. Everything spoke: their water jars, their tortilla griddles, their plates, their cooking pots, their dogs, their grinding stones, each and every thing crushed their faces. Their dogs and turkeys told them:

"You caused us pain, you ate us, but now it is *you* whom *we* shall eat."  
And this is the grinding stone:

"We were undone because of you.

Every day, every day,  
in the dark, in the dawn, forever,  
r-r-rip, r-r-rip,  
r-r-rub, r-r-rub,  
right in our faces, because of you.

This was the service we gave you at first, when you were still people, but today you will learn of our power. We shall pound and we shall grind your flesh," their grinding stones told them.

And this is what their dogs said, when they spoke in their turn:

"Why is it you can't seem to give us our food? We just watch and you just keep us down, and you throw us around. You keep a stick ready when you eat, just so you can hit us. We don't talk, so we've received nothing from you. How could you not have known? You *did* know that we were wasting away there, behind you.

"So, this very day you will taste the teeth in our mouths. We shall eat you," their dogs told them, and their faces were crushed.

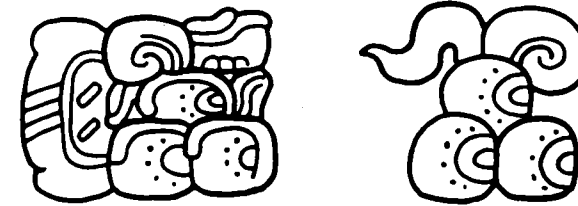
And then their tortilla griddles and cooking pots spoke to them in turn:

"Pain! That's all you've done for us. Our mouths are sooty, our faces are sooty. By setting us on the fire all the time, you burn us. Since *we* felt no pain, *you* try it. We shall burn you," all their cooking pots said, crushing their faces.

The stones, their hearthstones were shooting out, coming right out of the fire, going for their heads, causing them pain. Now they run for it, helter-skelter.

They want to climb up on the houses, but they fall as the houses collapse.

They want to climb the trees; they're thrown off by the trees.



THEIR HEARTHSTONES WERE SHOOTING OUT: According to Classic Maya inscriptions, three hearthstones entered the sky and formed a new constellation at the end of the world that preceded the present one. The glyph at left (from a stele at Quiriguá) reads yax ox tunal, "new three-stone place," and repeats the sign for "stone" (tun) three times; the glyph at right (from a stele at Toniná) adds signs for smoke and flames to the stones.

DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

They want to get inside caves, but the caves slam shut in their faces.

Such was the scattering of the human work, the human design. The people were ground down, overthrown. The mouths and faces of all of them were destroyed and crushed. And it used to be said that the monkeys in the forests today are a sign of this. They were left as a sign because wood alone was used for their flesh by the builder and sculptor.

So this is why monkeys look like people: they are a sign of a previous human work, human design—mere manikins, mere woodcarvings.

THIS WAS WHEN THERE WAS JUST A TRACE OF EARLY DAWN on the face of the earth, there was no sun. But there was one who magnified himself; Seven Macaw is his name. The sky-earth was already there, but the face of the sun-moon was clouded over. Even so, it is said that his light provided a sign for the people who were flooded. He was like a person of genius in his being.

"I am great. My place is now higher than that of the human work, the human design. I am their sun and I am their light, and I am also their months.

"So be it: my light is great. I am the walkway and I am the foothold of the people, because my eyes are of metal. My teeth just glitter with jewels, and turquoise as well; they stand out blue with stones like the face of the sky.

"And this nose of mine shines white into the distance like the moon.



Since my nest is metal, it lights up the face of the earth. When I come forth before my nest, I am like the sun and moon for those who are born in the light, begotten in the light. It must be so, because my face reaches into the distance," says Seven Macaw.

It is not true that he is the sun, this Seven Macaw, yet he magnifies himself, his wings, his metal. But the scope of his face lies right around his own perch; his face does not reach everywhere beneath the sky. The faces of the sun, moon, and stars are not yet visible, it has not yet dawned.

And so Seven Macaw puffs himself up as the days and the months, though the light of the sun and moon has not yet clarified. He only wished for surpassing greatness. This was when the flood was worked upon the manikins, woodcarvings.

And now we shall explain how Seven Macaw died, when the people were vanquished, done in by the mason and sculptor.

# PART TWO



**H**ERE IS THE BEGINNING OF THE DEFEAT AND DESTRUCTION OF THE DAY OF SEVEN MACAW by the two boys, the first named Hunahpu and the second named Xbalanque. Being gods, the two of them saw evil in his attempt at self-magnification before the Heart of Sky. So the boys talked:

"It's no good without life, without people here on the face of the earth."

"Well then, let's try a shot. We could shoot him while he's at his meal. We could make him ill, then put an end to his riches, his jade, his metal, his jewels, his gems, the source of his brilliance. Everyone might do as he does, but it should not come to be that fiery splendor is merely a matter of metal. So be it," said the boys, each one with a blowgun on his shoulder, the two of them together.

And this Seven Macaw has two sons: the first of these is Zipacna, and the second is the Earthquake. And Chimalmat is the name of their mother, the wife of Seven Macaw.

And this is Zipacna, this is the one to build up the great mountains: Fireplace, Hunahpu, Cave by the Water, Xcanul, Macamob, Huliznab, as the names of the mountains that were there at the dawn are spoken. They were brought forth by Zipacna in a single night.

And now this is the Earthquake. The mountains are moved by him; the mountains, small and great, are softened by him. The sons of Seven Macaw did this just as a means of self-magnification.

"Here am I: I am the sun," said Seven Macaw.

"Here am I: I am the maker of the earth," said Zipacna.

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THE BOYS TALKED: Hunahpu (left) and Xbalanque (right). The latter, known as Yax Balam in lowland Maya texts, has patches of jaguar skin on his face and body. Classic Maya painting from the cave at Naj Tunich, Guatemala.



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

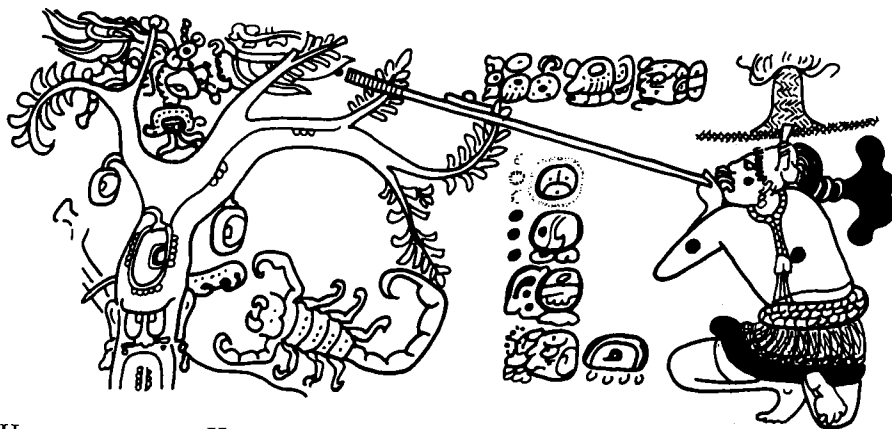
"As for me, I bring down the sky, I make an avalanche of all the earth," said Earthquake. The sons of Seven Macaw are alike, and like him: they got their greatness from their father.

And the two boys saw evil in this, since our first mother and father could not yet be made. Therefore deaths and disappearances were planned by the two boys.

**A**ND HERE IS THE SHOOTING OF SEVEN MACAW BY THE TWO BOYS. We shall explain the defeat of each one of those who engaged in self-magnification.

This is the great tree of Seven Macaw, a nance, and this is the food of Seven Macaw. In order to eat the fruit of the nance he goes up the tree every day. Since Hunahpu and Xbalanque have seen where he feeds, they are now hiding beneath the tree of Seven Macaw, they are keeping quiet here, the two boys are in the leaves of the tree.

And when Seven Macaw arrived, perching over his meal, the nance, it was then that he was shot by Hunahpu. The blowgun shot went right to his jaw, breaking his mouth. Then he went up over the tree and fell flat on the ground. Suddenly Hunahpu appeared, running. He set out to



HE WAS SHOT BY HUNAHPU: Seven Macaw is perched at the top of the tree at left. Xbalanque is hidden behind its trunk, with only his pawlike hand showing just below the fruit that dangles from the base of the tree's right limb. Hunahpu, with his blowgun on target, crouches at right, shaded by a straw hat. From a Classic Maya vase.

DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

grab him, but actually it was the arm of Hunahpu that was seized by Seven Macaw. He yanked it straight back, he bent it back at the shoulder. Then Seven Macaw tore it right out of Hunahpu. Even so, the boys did well: the first round was not their defeat by Seven Macaw.

And when Seven Macaw had taken the arm of Hunahpu, he went home. Holding his jaw very carefully, he arrived:

"What have you got there?" said Chimalmat, the wife of Seven Macaw.

"What is it but those two tricksters! They've shot me, they've dislocated my jaw. All my teeth are just loose, now they ache. But once what I've got is over the fire—hanging there, dangling over the fire—then they can just come and get it. They're real tricksters!" said Seven Macaw, then he hung up the arm of Hunahpu.

Meanwhile Hunahpu and Xbalanque were thinking. And then they invoked a grandfather, a truly white-haired grandfather, and a grandmother, a truly humble grandmother—just bent-over, elderly people. Great White Peccary is the name of the grandfather, and Great White Coati is the name of the grandmother. The boys said to the grandmother and grandfather:

"Please travel with us when we go to get our arm from Seven Macaw; we'll just follow right behind you. You'll tell him:

'Do forgive us our grandchildren, who travel with us. Their mother and father are dead, and so they follow along there, behind us. Perhaps we should give them away, since all we do is pull worms out of teeth.' So we'll seem like children to Seven Macaw, even though *we're* giving you the instructions," the two boys told them.

"Very well," they replied.

After that they approached the place where Seven Macaw was in front

GREAT WHITE PECCARY: A white-lipped peccary wearing a cloth headdress. From the Dresden Codex.



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

of his home. When the grandmother and grandfather passed by, the two boys were romping along behind them. When they passed below the lord's house, Seven Macaw was yelling his mouth off because of his teeth. And when Seven Macaw saw the grandfather and grandmother traveling with them:

"Where are you headed, our grandfather?" said the lord.

"We're just making our living, your lordship," they replied.

"Why are you working for a living? Aren't those your children traveling with you?"

"No, they're not, your lordship. They're our grandchildren, our descendants, but it is nevertheless *we* who take pity on *them*. The bit of food they get is the portion we give them, your lordship," replied the grandmother and grandfather. Since the lord is getting done in by the pain in his teeth, it is only with great effort that he speaks again:

"I implore you, please take pity on me! What sweets can you make, what poisons can you cure?" said the lord.

"We just pull the worms out of teeth and we just cure eyes. We just set bones, your lordship," they replied.

"Very well, please cure my teeth. They really ache, every day. It's insufferable! I get no sleep because of them—and my eyes. They just shot me, those two tricksters! Ever since it started I haven't eaten because of it. Therefore take pity on me! Perhaps it's because my teeth are loose now."

"Very well, your lordship. It's a worm, gnawing at the bone. It's merely a matter of putting in a replacement and taking the teeth out, sir."

"But perhaps it's not good for my teeth to come out—since I am, after all, a lord. My finery is in my teeth—and my eyes."

"But then we'll put in a replacement. Ground bone will be put back in." And this is the "ground bone": it's only white corn.

"Very well. Yank them out! Give me some help here!" he replied.

And when the teeth of Seven Macaw came out, it was only white corn that went in as a replacement for his teeth—just a coating shining white, that corn in his mouth. His face fell at once, he no longer looked like a lord. The last of his teeth came out, the jewels that had stood out blue from his mouth.

And when the eyes of Seven Macaw were cured, he was plucked around the eyes, the last of his metal came off. Still he felt no pain; he just looked on while the last of his greatness left him. It was just as Hunahpu and Xbalanque had intended.

And when Seven Macaw died, Hunahpu got back his arm. And Chimalmat, the wife of Seven Macaw, also died.

Such was the loss of the riches of Seven Macaw: only the doctors got the jewels and gems that had made him arrogant, here on the face of the earth. The genius of the grandmother, the genius of the grandfather did its work when they took back their arm: it was implanted and the break got well again. Just as they had wished the death of Seven Macaw, so they brought it about. They had seen evil in his self-magnification.

After this the two boys went on again. What they did was simply the word of the Heart of Sky.

**A**ND HERE ARE THE DEEDS OF ZIPACNA, the first son of Seven Macaw.

"I am the maker of mountains," says Zipacna.

And this is Zipacna, bathing on the shore. Then the Four Hundred Boys passed by dragging a log, a post for their hut. The Four Hundred Boys were walking along, having cut a great tree for the lintel of their hut.

And then Zipacna went there, he arrived where the Four Hundred Boys were:

"What are you doing, boys?"



THIS IS ZIPACNA, BATHING ON THE SHORE: *With bands of sky above and water below, this lowland version of Zipacna takes the form of a caiman. From a Classic Maya vase.*

DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

"It's just this log. We can't lift it up to carry it."

"I'll carry it. Where does it go? What do you intend to use it for?"

"It's just a lintel for our hut."

"Very well," he replied.

And then he pulled it, or rather carried it, right on up to the entrance of the hut of the Four Hundred Boys.

"You could just stay with us, boy. Do you have a mother and father?"

"Not so," he replied.

"We'd like some help tomorrow in cutting another one of our logs, a post for our hut."

"Good," he replied.

After that the Four Hundred Boys shared their thoughts:

"About this boy: what should we do with him?"

"We should kill him, because what he does is no good. He lifted that log all by himself. Let's dig a big hole for him, and then we'll throw him down in the hole. We'll say to him:

'Why are you spilling dirt in the hole?' And when he's wedged down in the hole we'll wham a big log down behind him. Then he should die in the hole," said the Four Hundred Boys.

And when they had dug a hole, one that went deep, they called for Zipacna:

"We're asking you to please go on digging out the dirt. We can't go on," he was told.

"Very well," he replied.

After that he went down in the hole.

"Call out when enough dirt has been dug, when you're getting down deep," he was told.

"Yes," he replied, then he began digging the hole. But the only hole he dug was for his own salvation. He realized that he was to be killed, so he dug a separate hole to one side, he dug a second hole for safety.

"How far is it?" the Four Hundred Boys called down to him.

"I'm digging fast. When I call up to you, the digging will be finished," said Zipacna, from down in the hole. But he's not digging at the bottom of the hole, in his own grave; rather, the hole he's digging is for his own salvation.

After that, when Zipacna called out, he had gone to safety in his own hole. Then he called out:

"Come here, take the dirt, the fill from the hole. It's been dug. I've really gone down deep! Can't you hear my call? As for your call, it just echoes down here, it sounds to me as if you were on another level, or

two levels away," said Zipacna from his hole. He's hidden in there, he calls out from down in the hole.

Meanwhile, a big log is being dragged along by the boys.

And then they threw the log down in the hole.

"Isn't he there? He doesn't speak."

"Let's keep on listening. He should cry out when he dies," they said among themselves. They're just whispering, and they've hidden themselves, each one of them, after throwing down the log.

And then he did speak, now he gave a single cry. He called out when the log fell to the bottom.

"Right on! He's been finished!"

"Very good! We've done him in, he's dead."

"What if he had gone on with his deeds, his works? He would've made himself first among us and taken our place—we, the Four Hundred Boys!" they said. Now they enjoyed themselves:

"On to the making of our sweet drink! Three days will pass, and after three days let's drink to dedicate our hut—we, the Four Hundred Boys!" they said. "And tomorrow we'll see, and on the day after tomorrow we'll see whether or not ants come from the ground when he's stinking and rotting. After that our hearts will be content when we drink our sweet drink," they said. But Zipacna was listening from the hole when the boys specified "the day after tomorrow."

And on the second day, when the ants collected, they were running, swarming. Having taken their pickings under the log, they were everywhere, carrying hair in their mouths and carrying the nails of Zipacna. When the boys saw this:

"He's finished, that trickster! Look here how the ants have stripped him, how they've swarmed. Everywhere they carry hair in their mouths. It's his nails you can see. We've done it!" they said among themselves.

But this Zipacna is still alive. He just cuts the hair off his head and chews off his nails to give them to the ants.

And so the Four Hundred Boys thought he had died.

After that, their sweet drink was ready on the third day, and then all the boys got drunk, and once they were drunk, all four hundred of those boys, they weren't feeling a thing.

After that the hut was brought down on top of them by Zipacna. All of them were completely flattened. Not even one or two were saved from among all the Four Hundred Boys. They were killed by Zipacna, the son of Seven Macaw.

Such was the death of those Four Hundred Boys. And it used to be

said that they entered a constellation, named Hundrath after them, though perhaps this is just a play on words.

And this is where we shall explain the defeat of Zipacna by the two boys, Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

**N**OW THIS IS THE DEFEAT AND DEATH OF ZIPACNA, when he was beaten by the two boys, Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

What now weighed heavily on the hearts of the two boys was that the Four Hundred Boys had been killed by Zipacna.

It's mere fish and crabs that Zipacna looks for in the waters, but he's eating every day, going around looking for his food by day and lifting up mountains by night.

Next comes the counterfeiting of a great crab by Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

And they used bromeliad flowers, picked from the bromeliads of the forests. These became the forearms of the crab, and where they opened were the claws. They used a flagstone for the back of the crab, which clattered.

After that they put the shell beneath an overhang, at the foot of a great mountain. Meauan is the name of the mountain where the defeat took place.

After that, when the boys came along, they found Zipacna by the water:

"Where are you going, boy?" Zipacna was asked.

"I'm not going anywhere. I'm just looking for my food, boys," Zipacna replied.

"What's your food?"

"Just fish and crabs, but there aren't any that I can find. It's been two days since I stopped getting meals. By now I can't stand the hunger," Zipacna told Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

"There is that crab that's down in the canyon. A really big crab! Perhaps you might manage to eat her. We were just getting bitten. We wanted to catch her, but we got scared by her. If she hasn't gone away you could catch her," said Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

"Take pity on me, please come point her out, boys," said Zipacna.

"We don't want to, but you go ahead. You can't miss her. Just follow the river, and you go straight on over there below a great mountain. She's clattering there at the bottom of the canyon. Just head on over there," said Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

"But won't you please take pity on me? What if she can't be found, boys? If you come along I'll show you a place where there are plenty of birds. Please come shoot them, I know where they are," Zipacna replied. They consented. He went ahead of the boys.

"What if you can't catch the crab? Just as we had to turn back, so will you. Not only didn't we eat her, but all at once *she* was biting *us*. We were entering face down, but when she got scared we were entering on our back. We just barely missed reaching her then, so you'd better enter on your back," he was told.

"Very well," Zipacna replied, and then they went on. Now Zipacna had company as he went. They arrived at the bottom of the canyon.

The crab is on her side, her shell is gleaming red there. In under the canyon wall is their contrivance.

"Very good!" Zipacna is happy now. He wishes she were already in his mouth, so she could really cure his hunger. He wanted to eat her, he just wanted it face down, he wanted to enter, but since the crab got on top of him with her back down, he came back out.

"You didn't reach her?" he was asked.

"No indeed—she was just getting on top with her back down. I just barely missed her on the first try, so perhaps I'd better enter on my back," he replied.

After that he entered again, on his back. He entered all the way—only his kneecaps were showing now! He gave a last sigh and was calm. The great mountain rested on his chest. He couldn't turn over now, and so Zipacna turned to stone.

Such, in its turn, was the defeat of Zipacna by the two boys, Hunahpu and Xbalanque. He was "the maker of mountains," as his previous pronouncements had it, the first son of Seven Macaw. He was defeated beneath the great mountain called Meauan, defeated by genius alone. He was the second to magnify himself, and now we shall speak what is spoken of another.

**A**ND THE THIRD TO MAGNIFY HIMSELF IS THE SECOND SON OF SEVEN MACAW, NAMED EARTHQUAKE.

"I am the breaker of mountains," he said. But even so, Hunahpu and Xbalanque defeated the Earthquake. Then Hurricane spoke, Newborn Thunderbolt, Sudden Thunderbolt; he spoke to Hunahpu and Xbalanque:

"The second son of Seven Macaw is another one, another who should

be defeated. This is my word, because what they do on the face of the earth is no good. They are surpassing the sun in size, in weight, and it should not be that way. Lure this Earthquake into sitting down over there in the east," Hurricane told the two boys.

"Very well, your lordship. There is more to be done. What we see is no good. Isn't it a question of your position and your eminence, sir, Heart of Sky?" the two boys said when they responded to the word of Hurricane.

Meanwhile he presses on, this Earthquake, breaker of mountains. Just by lightly tapping his foot on the ground he instantly demolishes the mountains, great and small. When he met up with the two boys:

"Where are you going, boy?" they asked Earthquake.

"I'm not going anywhere. I just scatter the mountains, and I'm the one who breaks them, in the course of the days, in the course of the light," he said when he answered. Then the Earthquake asked Hunahpu and Xbalanque:

"Where did you come from? I don't know your faces. What are your names?" said Earthquake.

"We have no names. We just hunt and trap in the mountains. We're just orphans, we have nothing to call our own, boy. We're just making our way among the mountains, small and great, boy. And there's one great mountain we saw that's just growing right along. It's rising really high! It's just swelling up, rising above all the other mountains. And there weren't even one or two birds to be found, boy. So how could it be that you destroy all mountains, boy?" Hunahpu and Xbalanque said to Earthquake.

"It can't be true you saw the mountain you're talking about. Where is it? You'll see me knock it down yet. Where did you see it?"

"Well, it's over there in the east," said Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

"Good. Lead the way," the two boys were told.

"Not so. You take the middle. Stay here between us—one of us at your left, the other at your right hand—because of our blowguns. If there are birds, we'll shoot," they said. They enjoy practicing their shooting.

And this is the way they shoot: the shot of their blowguns isn't made of earth—they just blow at the birds when they shoot, to the amazement of the Earthquake.

And then the boys made fire with a drill and roasted the birds over the fire. And they coated one of the birds with plaster, they put gypsum on it.

"So this is the one we'll give him when he's hungry, and when he

THE BOYS MADE FIRE  
WITH A DRILL: Two  
figures turn a fire drill  
while sparks fly up from  
the wooden platform where  
the point of the drill is  
inserted. They are seated  
beside a road, marked by  
footprints. From the  
Madrid Codex.



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

savors the aroma of our birds. That will be victory, since we've covered his bird with baked earth. In earth we must cook it, and in earth must be his grave—if the great knower, the one to be made and modeled, is to have a sowing and dawning," said the boys.

"Because of this, the human heart will desire a bite of meat, a meal of flesh, just as the heart of the Earthquake will desire it," Hunahpu and Xbalanque said to each other. Then they roasted the birds and cooked them until they were brown, dripping with fat that oozed from the backs of the birds, with an overwhelmingly fragrant aroma.

And this Earthquake wants to be fed, his mouth just waters, he gulps and slurps with spittle and saliva because of the fragrance of the birds. So then he asked:

"What are you eating? I smell a truly delicious aroma! Please give me a little bit," he said. And when they gave a bird to Earthquake, he was as good as defeated.

After he had finished off the bird, they went on until they arrived in the east, where the great mountain was.

Meanwhile, Earthquake had lost the strength in his legs and arms. He couldn't go on because of the earth that coated the bird he'd eaten. So now there was nothing he could do to the mountain. He never recovered; he was destroyed. So then he was bound by the two boys; his hands were bound behind him. When his hands had been secured by the boys, his ankles were bound to his wrists.

After that they threw him down, they buried him in the earth.

Such is the defeat of Earthquake. It's Hunahpu and Xbalanque yet again. Their deeds on the face of the earth are countless.

And now we shall explain the birth of Hunahpu and Xbalanque, having first explained the defeat of Seven Macaw, along with Zipacna and Earthquake, here on the face of the earth.

# PART THREE





AND NOW WE SHALL NAME THE NAME OF THE FATHER OF HUN-AHPU AND XBALANQUE. Let's drink to him, and let's just drink to the telling and accounting of the begetting of Hunahpu and Xbalanque. We shall tell just half of it, just a part of the account of their father. Here follows the account.

These are the names: One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu, as they are called.

And these are their parents: Xpiyacoc, Xmucane. In the blackness, in the night, One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu were born to Xpiyacoc and Xmucane.

And this One Hunahpu had two children, and the two were sons, the firstborn named One Monkey and the second named One Artisan.

And this is the name of their mother: she is called Egret Woman, the wife of One Hunahpu. As for Seven Hunahpu, he has no wife. He's just a partner and just secondary; he just remains a boy.

They are great thinkers and great is their knowledge. They are the midmost seers, here on the face of the earth. There is only good in their being and their birthright. They taught skills to One Monkey and One Artisan, the sons of One Hunahpu. One Monkey and One Artisan became flautists, singers, and writers; carvers, jewellers, metalworkers as well.

And as for One and Seven Hunahpu, all they did was throw dice and play ball, every day. They would play each other in pairs, the four of them together. When they gathered in the ball court for entertainment a falcon would come to watch them, the messenger of Hurricane, Newborn Thunderbolt, Sudden Thunderbolt. And for this falcon it wasn't far to the earth here, nor was it far to Xibalba; he could get back to the sky, to Hurricane, in an instant.

The four ballplayers remained here on the face of the earth after the mother of One Monkey and One Artisan had died. Since it was on the road to Xibalba that they played, they were heard by One Death and Seven Death, the lords of Xibalba:

"What's happening on the face of the earth? They're just stomping and shouting. They should be summoned to come play ball here. We'll defeat them, since we simply get no deference from them. They show no respect, nor do they have any shame. They're really determined to run right over us!" said all of Xibalba, when they all shared their thoughts, the ones named One and Seven Death. They are great lawgivers.

AND THESE ARE THE LORDS OVER EVERYTHING, each lord with a commission and a domain assigned by One and Seven Death:

There are the lords named Scab Stripper and Blood Gatherer. And this is their commission: to draw blood from people.

Next are the lordships of Demon of Pus and Demon of Jaundice. And this is their domain: to make people swell up, to make pus come out of their legs, to make their faces yellow, to cause jaundice, as it is called. Such is the domain of Demon of Pus and Demon of Jaundice.

Next are the lords Bone Scepter and Skull Scepter, the staff bearers of Xibalba; their staffs are just bones. And this is their staff-bearing: to reduce people to bones, right down to the bones and skulls, until they die from emaciation and edema. This is the commission of the ones named Bone Scepter and Skull Scepter.

Next are the lords named Demon of Filth and Demon of Woe. This is their commission: just to give people a sudden fright whenever they have filth or grime in the doorway of the house, the patio of the house. Then they're struck, they're just punctured till they crawl on the ground, then die. And this is the domain of Demon of Filth and Demon of Woe, as they are called.

Next are the lords named Wing and Packstrap. This is their domain: that people should die in the road, just "sudden death," as it is called. Blood comes to the mouth, then there is death from vomiting blood. So to each of them his burden, the load on his shoulders: just to strike people on the neck and chest. Then there is death in the road, and then

PEOPLE SHOULD DIE IN THE ROAD: A Xibalban (right) stabs a merchant god (left) on a road (indicated by the footprints). From the Madrid Codex.



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

they just go on causing suffering, whether one is coming or going. And this is the domain of Wing and Packstrap.

Such are those who shared their thoughts when they were piqued and driven by One and Seven Hunahpu. What Xibalba desired was the gaming equipment of One and Seven Hunahpu: their kilts, their yokes, their arm guards, their panaches and headbands, the costumes of One and Seven Hunahpu.

And this is where we shall continue telling of their trip to Xibalba. One Monkey and One Artisan, the sons of One Hunahpu, stayed behind. Their mother died—and, what is more, they were to be defeated by Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

AND NOW FOR THE MESSENGERS OF ONE AND SEVEN DEATH:

"You're going, you Military Keepers of the Mat, to summon One and Seven Hunahpu. You'll tell them, when you arrive:

"They must come," the lords say to you. "Would that they might come to play ball with us here. Then we could have some excitement with them. We are truly amazed at them. Therefore they should come," say the lords, "and they should bring their playthings, their yokes and arm guards should come, along with their rubber ball," say the lords, you will say when you arrive," the messengers were told.

THESE MESSENGERS OF THEIRS ARE OWLS:  
The great horned owl appears as a bird of omen in lowland Maya art, serving as the messenger of the merchant lord of Xibalba.  
From the Dresden Codex.



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

And these messengers of theirs are owls: Shooting Owl, One-legged Owl, Macaw Owl, Skull Owl, as the messengers of Xibalba are called.

There is Shooting Owl, like a point, just piercing.

And there is One-legged Owl, with just one leg; he has wings.

And there is Macaw Owl, with a red back; he has wings.

And there is also Skull Owl, with only a head alone; he has no legs, but he does have wings.

There are four messengers, Military Keepers of the Mat in rank.

And when they came out of Xibalba they arrived quickly, alighting above the ball court where One and Seven Hunahpu were playing, at the ball court called Great Hollow with Fish in the Ashes. The owls, arriving in a flurry over the ball court, now repeated their words, reciting the exact words of One Death, Seven Death, Demon of Pus, Demon of Jaundice, Bone Scepter, Skull Scepter, Scab Stripper, Blood Gatherer, Demon of Filth, Demon of Woe, Wing, Packstrap, as all the lords are named. Their words were repeated by the owls.

"Don't the lords One and Seven Death speak truly?"

"Truly indeed," the owls replied. "We'll accompany you.

'They're to bring along all their gaming equipment,' say the lords."

"Very well, but wait for us while we notify our mother," they replied.

And when they went to their house, they spoke to their mother; their father had died:

"We're going, our dear mother, even though we've just arrived. The messengers of the lord have come to get us:

"They should come," he says,' they say, giving us orders. We'll leave our rubber ball behind here," they said, then they went to tie it up under the roof of the house. "Until we return—then we'll put it in play again."

They told One Monkey and One Artisan:

"As for you, just play and just sing, write and carve to warm our house and to warm the heart of your grandmother." When they had been given their instructions, their grandmother Xmucane sobbed, she had to weep.

"We're going, we're not dying. Don't be sad," said One and Seven Hunahpu, then they left.

**A**FTER THAT ONE AND SEVEN HUNAHPU LEFT, guided down the road by the messengers.

And then they descended the road to Xibalba, going down over the edge of a steep slope, and they descended until they came to the mouth where the canyons change, the ones named Rustling Canyon, Gurgling Canyon.

They passed through there, then they passed through Scorpion Rapids. They passed through countless scorpions but they were not stung.

And then they came to water again, to blood: Blood River. They crossed but did not drink. They came to a river, but a river filled with pus. Still they were not defeated, but passed through again.

And then they came to the Crossroads, but here they were defeated, at the Crossroads:

Red Road was one and Black Road another.

White Road was one and Yellow Road another.

There were four roads, and Black Road spoke:

"I am the one you are taking. I am the lord's road," said the road. And they were defeated there: this was the Road of Xibalba.

And then they came to the council place of the lords of Xibalba, and they were defeated again there. The ones seated first there are just manikins, just woodcarvings dressed up by Xibalba. And they greeted the first ones:

"Morning, One Death," they said to the manikin. "Morning, Seven Death," they said to the woodcarving in turn.

So they did not win out, and the lords of Xibalba shouted out with laughter over this. All the lords just shouted with laughter because they had triumphed; in their hearts they had beaten One and Seven Hunahpu. They laughed on until One and Seven Death spoke:

"It's good that you've come. Tomorrow you must put your yokes and arm guards into action," they were told.

"Sit here on our bench," they were told, but the only bench they were offered was a burning-hot rock.

THE LORDS OF XIBALBA SHOUTED OUT WITH LAUGHTER: *This lowland Maya death lord, whose skull and joints have no flesh on them, sits on a throne made of bones. From the Dresden Codex.*



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

So now they were burned on the bench; they really jumped around on the bench now, but they got no relief. They really got up fast, having burned their butts. At this the Xibalbans laughed again, they began to shriek with laughter, the laughter rose up like a serpent in their very cores, all the lords of Xibalba laughed themselves down to their blood and bones.

"Just go in the house. Your torch and cigars will be brought to your sleeping quarters," the boys were told.

After that they came to the Dark House, a house with darkness alone inside. Meanwhile the Xibalbans shared their thoughts:

"Let's just sacrifice them tomorrow. It can only turn out to be quick; they'll die quickly because of our playing equipment, our gaming things," the Xibalbans are saying among themselves.

This ball of theirs is just a spherical knife. White Dagger is the name of the ball, the ball of Xibalba. Their ball is just ground down to make it smooth; the ball of Xibalba is just surfaced with crushed bone to make it firm.

**A**ND ONE AND SEVEN HUNAHPU WENT INSIDE DARK HOUSE.

And then their torch was brought, only one torch, already lit, sent by One and Seven Death, along with a cigar for each of them, also already lit, sent by the lords. When these were brought to One and Seven Hunahpu they were cowering, here in the dark. When the bearer of their torch and cigars arrived, the torch was bright as it entered; their torch and both of their cigars were burning. The bearer spoke:

"They must be sure to return them in the morning—not finished,

A CIGAR: A lowland Maya god producing a shower of sparks with a cigar. From the Dresden Codex.



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

but just as they look now. They must return them intact,' the lords say to you," they were told, and they were defeated. They finished the torch and they finished the cigars that had been brought to them.

And Xibalba is packed with tests, heaps and piles of tests.

This is the first one: the Dark House, with darkness alone inside.

And the second is named Rattling House, heavy with cold inside, whistling with drafts, clattering with hail. A deep chill comes inside here.

And the third is named Jaguar House, with jaguars alone inside, jostling one another, crowding together, with gnashing teeth. They're scratching around; these jaguars are shut inside the house.

Bat House is the name of the fourth test, with bats alone inside the house, squeaking, shrieking, darting through the house. The bats are shut inside; they can't get out.

And the fifth is named Razor House, with blades alone inside. The blades are moving back and forth, ripping, slashing through the house.

These are the first tests of Xibalba, but One and Seven Hunahpu never entered into them, except for the one named earlier, the specified test house.

And when One and Seven Hunahpu went back before One and Seven Death, they were asked:

"Where are my cigars? What of my torch? They were brought to you last night!"

"We finished them, your lordship."

"Very well. This very day, your day is finished, you will die, you will disappear, and we shall break you off. Here you will hide your faces: you are to be sacrificed!" said One and Seven Death.

And then they were sacrificed and buried. They were buried at the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice, as it is called. The head of One Hunahpu was cut off; only his body was buried with his younger brother.

"Put his head in the fork of the tree that stands by the road," said One and Seven Death.

And when his head was put in the fork of the tree, the tree bore fruit. It would not have had any fruit, had not the head of One Hunahpu been put in the fork of the tree.

This is the calabash, as we call it today, or "the skull of One Hunahpu," as it is said.

And then One and Seven Death were amazed at the fruit of the tree. The fruit grows out everywhere, and it isn't clear where the head of One Hunahpu is; now it looks just the way the calabashes look. All the Xibalbans see this, when they come to look.

The state of the tree loomed large in their thoughts, because it came

about at the same time the head of One Hunahpu was put in the fork. The Xibalbans said among themselves:

"No one is to pick the fruit, nor is anyone to go beneath the tree," they said. They restricted themselves; all of Xibalba held back.

It isn't clear which is the head of One Hunahpu; now it's exactly the same as the fruit of the tree. Calabash came to be its name, and much was said about it. A maiden heard about it, and here we shall tell of her arrival.

**A**ND HERE IS THE ACCOUNT OF A MAIDEN, the daughter of a lord named Blood Gatherer.

And this is when a maiden heard of it, the daughter of a lord. Blood Gatherer is the name of her father, and Blood Moon is the name of the maiden.

And when he heard the account of the fruit of the tree, her father retold it. And she was amazed at the account:

"I'm not acquainted with that tree they talk about. 'Its fruit is truly sweet!' they say, I hear," she said.

Next, she went all alone and arrived where the tree stood. It stood at the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice:

"What? Well! What's the fruit of this tree? Shouldn't this tree bear something sweet? They shouldn't die, they shouldn't be wasted. Should I pick one?" said the maiden.

And then the bone spoke; it was here in the fork of the tree:

**BLOOD MOON IS THE NAME OF THE MAIDEN:** *The lowland Maya moon goddess sits on a platform that represents the sky, and receives an offering. Her lunar identity is revealed in part by the crescent-shaped object she wears tucked under her arm and curving up behind her back to touch her shoulder. From the Dresden Codex.*



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

"Why do you want a mere bone, a round thing in the branches of a tree?" said the head of One Hunahpu when it spoke to the maiden. "You don't want it," she was told.

"I do want it," said the maiden.

"Very well. Stretch out your right hand here, so I can see it," said the bone.

"Yes," said the maiden. She stretched out her right hand, up there in front of the bone.

And then the bone spit out its saliva, which landed squarely in the hand of the maiden.

And then she looked in her hand, she inspected it right away, but the bone's saliva wasn't in her hand.

"It is just a sign I have given you, my saliva, my spittle. This, my head, has nothing on it—just bone, nothing of meat. It's just the same with the head of a great lord: it's just the flesh that makes his face look good. And when he dies, people get frightened by his bones. After that, his son is like his saliva, his spittle, in his being, whether it be the son of a lord or the son of a craftsman, an orator. The father does not disappear, but goes on being fulfilled. Neither dimmed nor destroyed is the face of a lord, a warrior, craftsman, orator. Rather, he will leave his daughters and sons. So it is that I have done likewise through you. Now go up there on the face of the earth; you will not die. Keep the word. So be it," said the head of One and Seven Hunahpu—they were of one mind when they did it.

This was the word Hurricane, Newborn Thunderbolt, Sudden Thunderbolt had given them. In the same way, by the time the maiden returned to her home, she had been given many instructions. Right away something was generated in her belly, from the saliva alone, and this was the generation of Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

And when the maiden got home and six months had passed, she was found out by her father. Blood Gatherer is the name of her father.

**A**ND AFTER THE MAIDEN WAS NOTICED BY HER FATHER, when he saw that she was now with child, all the lords then shared their thoughts—One and Seven Death, along with Blood Gatherer:

"This daughter of mine is with child, lords. It's just a bastard," Blood Gatherer said when he joined the lords.

"Very well. Get her to open her mouth. If she doesn't tell, then sacrifice her. Go far away and sacrifice her."

TAKE HER AWAY FOR SACRIFICE: *The merchant lord of the underworld (the lowland Maya equivalent of Blood Gatherer) sends away the moon goddess. Sitting on his hat is his owl messenger. From the Dresden Codex.*



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

"Very well, your lordships," he replied. After that, he questioned his daughter:

"Who is responsible for the child in your belly, my daughter?" he said.

"There is no child, my father, sir; there is no man whose face I've known," she replied.

"Very well. It really is a bastard you carry! Take her away for sacrifice, you Military Keepers of the Mat. Bring back her heart in a bowl, so the lords can take it in their hands this very day," the owls were told, the four of them.

Then they left, carrying the bowl. When they left they took the maiden by the hand, bringing along the White Dagger, the instrument of sacrifice.

"It would not turn out well if you sacrificed me, messengers, because it is not a bastard that's in my belly. What's in my belly generated all by itself when I went to marvel at the head of One Hunahpu, which is there at the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice. So please stop: don't do your sacrifice, messengers," said the maiden. Then they talked:

"What are we going to use in place of her heart? We were told by her father:

'Bring back her heart. The lords will take it in their hands, they will satisfy themselves, they will make themselves familiar with its composition. Hurry, bring it back in a bowl, put her heart in the bowl.' Isn't that what we've been told? What shall we deliver in the bowl? What we want above all is that you should not die," said the messengers.

"Very well. My heart must not be theirs, nor will your homes be here. Nor will you simply force people to die, but hereafter, what will be truly yours will be the true bearers of bastards. And hereafter, as for One and

Seven Death, only blood, only nodules of sap, will be theirs. So be it that these things are presented before them, and not that hearts are burned before them. So be it: use the fruit of a tree," said the maiden. And it was red tree sap she went out to gather in the bowl.

After it congealed, the substitute for her heart became round. When the sap of the croton tree was tapped, tree sap like blood, it became the substitute for her blood. When she rolled the blood around inside there, the sap of the croton tree, it formed a surface like blood, glistening red now, round inside the bowl. When the tree was cut open by the maiden, the so-called cochineal croton, the sap is what she called blood, and so there is talk of "nodules of blood."

"So you have been blessed with the face of the earth. It shall be yours," she told the owls.

"Very well, maiden. We'll show you the way up there. You just walk on ahead; we have yet to deliver this apparent duplicate of your heart before the lords," said the messengers.

And when they came before the lords, they were all watching closely:

"Hasn't it turned out well?" said One Death.

"It has turned out well, your lordships, and this is her heart. It's in the bowl."

"Very well. So I'll look," said One Death, and when he lifted it up with his fingers, its surface was soaked with gore, its surface glistened red with blood.

"Good. Stir up the fire, put it over the fire," said One Death.

After that they dried it over the fire, and the Xibalbans savored the aroma. They all ended up standing here, they leaned over it intently. They found the smoke of the blood to be truly sweet!

THE OWLS WENT TO SHOW THE MAIDEN THE WAY OUT: *Flying above the moon goddess (and thus appearing above the earth ahead of her) is the owl messenger of the merchant god of the underworld. From the Dresden Codex.*



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

And while they stayed at their cooking, the owls went to show the maiden the way out. They sent her up through a hole onto the earth, and then the guides returned below.

In this way the lords of Xibalba were defeated by a maiden; all of them were blinded.

And here, where the mother of One Monkey and One Artisan lived, was where the woman named Blood Moon arrived.

**A**ND WHEN BLOOD MOON CAME TO THE MOTHER OF ONE MONKEY AND ONE ARTISAN, her children were still in her belly, but it wasn't very long before the birth of Hunahpu and Xbalanque, as they are called.

And when the woman came to the grandmother, the woman said to the grandmother:

"I've come, my lady. I'm your daughter-in-law and I'm your child, my lady," she said when she came here to the grandmother.

"Where do you come from? As for my little babies, didn't they die in Xibalba? And these two remain as their sign and their word: One Monkey and One Artisan are their names. So if you've come to see my children, get out of here!" the maiden was told by the grandmother.

"Even so, I really am your daughter-in-law. I am already his, I belong to One Hunahpu. What I carry is his. One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu are alive, they are not dead. They have merely made a way for the light to show itself, my mother-in-law, as you will see when you look at the faces of what I carry," the grandmother was told.

And One Monkey and One Artisan have been keeping their grandmother entertained: all they do is play and sing, all they work at is writing and carving, every day, and this cheers the heart of their grandmother.

And then the grandmother said:

"I don't want you, no thanks, my daughter-in-law. It's just a bastard in your belly, you trickster! These children of mine who are named by you are dead," said the grandmother.

"Truly, what I say to you is so!"

"Very well, my daughter-in-law, I hear you. So get going, get their food so they can eat. Go pick a big netful of ripe corn ears, then come back—since you are already my daughter-in-law, as I understand it," the maiden was told.

"Very well," she replied.

After that, she went to the garden; One Monkey and One Artisan had a garden. The maiden followed the path they had cleared and arrived



ALL THEY WORK AT IS WRITING: Two monkey scribes sit on either side of a thick screen-fold book, discussing a page they have opened. The scribe on the left holds a writing instrument in his hand. From a Late Classic Maya vase.

DRAWING BY STEPHEN D. HOUSTON

there in the garden, but there was only one clump, there was no other plant, no second or third. That one clump had borne its ears. So then the maiden's heart stopped:

"It looks like I'm a sinner, a debtor! Where will I get the netful of food she asked for?" she said. And then the guardians of food were called upon by her:

"Come on out, rise up now, come on out, stand up now:  
Thunder Woman, Yellow Woman,  
Cacao Woman and Cornmeal Woman,  
thou guardian of the food of One Monkey, One Artisan,"

said the maiden.

And then she took hold of the silk, the bunch of silk at the top of the ear. She pulled it straight out, she didn't pick the ear, and the ear reproduced itself to make food for the net. It filled the big net.

And then the maiden came back, but animals carried her net. When she got back she went to put the pack frame in the corner of the house, so it would look to the grandmother as if she had arrived with a load.

And then, when the grandmother saw the food, a big netful:

"Where did that food of yours come from? You've leveled the place! I'm going to see if you've brought back our whole garden!" said the grandmother.

And then she went off, she went to look at the garden, but the one clump was still there, and the place where the net had been put at the foot of it was still obvious.

And the grandmother came back in a hurry, and she got back home, and she said to the maiden:

"The sign is still there. You really are my daughter-in-law! I'll have to keep watching what you do. These grandchildren of mine are already showing genius," the maiden was told.

Now this is where we shall speak of the birth of Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

**A**ND THIS IS THEIR BIRTH; WE SHALL TELL OF IT HERE.

Then it came to the day of their birth, and the maiden named Blood Moon gave birth. The grandmother was not present when they were born; they were born suddenly. Two of them were born, named Hunahpu and Xbalanque. They were born in the mountains, and then they came into the house. Since they weren't sleeping:

"Throw them out of here! They're really loudmouths!" said the grandmother.

After that, when they put them on an anthill, they slept soundly there. And when they removed them from there, they put them in brambles next.

And this is what One Monkey and One Artisan wanted: that they should die on the anthill and die in the brambles. One Monkey and One Artisan wanted this because they were rowdy and flushed with jealousy. They didn't allow their younger brothers in the house at first, as if they didn't even know them, but even so they flourished in the mountains.

And One Monkey and One Artisan were great flautists and singers, and as they grew up they went through great suffering and pain. It had cost them suffering to become great knowers. Through it all they became flautists, singers, and writers, carvers. They did everything well. They simply knew it when they were born, they simply had genius. And they were the successors of their fathers who had gone to Xibalba, their dead fathers.

Since One Monkey and One Artisan were great knowers, in their hearts they already realized everything when their younger brothers

came into being, but they didn't reveal their insight because of their jealousy. The anger in their hearts came down on their own heads; no great harm was done. They were decoyed by Hunahpu and Xbalanque, who merely went out shooting every day. These two got no love from the grandmother, or from One Monkey and One Artisan. They weren't given their meals; the meals had been prepared and One Monkey and One Artisan had already eaten them before they got there.

But Hunahpu and Xbalanque aren't turning red with anger; rather, they just let it go, even though they know their proper place, which they see as clear as day. So they bring birds when they arrive each day, and One Monkey and One Artisan eat them. Nothing whatsoever is given to Hunahpu and Xbalanque, either one of them. All One Monkey and One Artisan do is play and sing.

And then Hunahpu and Xbalanque arrived again, but now they came in here without bringing their birds, so the grandmother turned red:

"What's your reason for not bringing birds?" Hunahpu and Xbalanque were asked.

"There are some, our dear grandmother, but our birds just got hung up in a tree," they said, "and there's no way to get up the tree after them, our dear grandmother, and so we'd like our elder brothers to please go with us, to please go get the birds down," they said.

"Very well. We'll go with you at dawn," the elder brothers replied.

Now they had won, and they gathered their thoughts, the two of them, about the fall of One Monkey and One Artisan:

"We'll just turn their very being around with our words. So be it, since they have caused us great suffering. They wished that we might die and disappear—we, their younger brothers. Just as they wished us to be slaves here, so we shall defeat them there. We shall simply make a sign of it," they said to each other.

And then they went there beneath a tree, the kind named yellow tree, together with the elder brothers. When they got there they started shooting. There were countless birds up in the tree, chittering, and the elder brothers were amazed when they saw the birds. And not one of these birds fell down beneath the tree:

"Those birds of ours don't fall down; just go throw them down," they told their elder brothers.

"Very well," they replied.

And then they climbed up the tree, and the tree began to grow, its trunk got thicker.

After that, they wanted to get down, but now One Monkey and One



Artisan couldn't make it down from the tree. So they said, from up in the tree:

"How can we grab hold? You, our younger brothers, take pity on us! Now this tree looks frightening to us, dear younger brothers," they said from up in the tree. Then Hunahpu and Xbalanque told them:

"Undo your pants, tie them around your hips, with the long end trailing like a tail behind you, and then you'll be better able to move," they were told by their younger brothers.

"All right," they said.

And then they left the ends of their loincloths trailing, and all at once these became tails. Now they looked like mere monkeys.

After that they went along in the trees of the mountains, small and great. They went through the forests, now howling, now keeping quiet in the branches of trees.

Such was the defeat of One Monkey and One Artisan by Hunahpu and Xbalanque. They did it by means of their genius alone.

And when they got home they said, when they came to their grandmother and mother:

"Our dear grandmother, something has happened to our elder brothers. They've become simply shameless, they're like animals now," they said.

"If you've done something to your elder brothers, you've knocked me down and stood me on my head. Please don't do anything to your elder brothers, my dear grandchildren," the grandmother said to Hunahpu and Xbalanque. And they told their grandmother:

"Don't be sad, our dear grandmother. You will see the faces of our elder brothers again. They'll come, but this will be a test for you, our dear grandmother. Will you please not laugh while we test their destiny?" they said.

And then they began playing. They played "Hunahpu Monkey."

**A**ND THEN THEY SANG, THEY PLAYED, THEY DRUMMED. When they took up their flutes and drums, their grandmother sat down with them, then they played, they sounded out the tune, the song that got its name then. "Hunahpu Monkey" is the name of the tune.

And then One Monkey and One Artisan came back, dancing when they arrived.

And then, when the grandmother looked, it was their ugly faces the grandmother saw. Then she laughed, the grandmother could not hold

DANCING WHEN THEY  
ARRIVED: A monkey scribe  
dances with a mirror in his  
right hand. From a Late  
Classic Maya vase.



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

back her laughter, so they just left right away, out of her sight again, they went up and away in the forest.

"Why are you doing that, our dear grandmother? We'll only try four times; only three times are left. We'll call them with the flute, with song. Please hold back your laughter. We'll try again," said Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

Next they played again, then they came back, dancing again, they arrived again, in the middle of the patio of the house. As before, what they did was delightful; as before, they tempted their grandmother to laugh. Their grandmother laughed at them soon enough. The monkeys looked truly ridiculous, with the skinny little things below their bellies and their tails wiggling in front of their breasts. When they came back the grandmother had to laugh at them, and they went back into the mountains.

"Please, why are you doing that, our dear grandmother? Even so, we'll try it a third time now," said Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

Again they played, again they came dancing, but their grandmother held back her laughter. Then they climbed up here, cutting right across the building, with thin red lips, with faces blank, puckering their lips, wiping their mouths and faces, suddenly scratching themselves. And when the grandmother saw them again, the grandmother burst out laughing again, and again they went out of sight because of the grandmother's laughter.

SUDDENLY SCRATCHING  
THEMSELVES: *This spider  
monkey has his genitals  
showing, or what the Popol  
Vuh calls "the skinny little  
things below their bellies."*  
*From a Late Classic Maya  
vase.*



DRAWING BY THE AUTHOR

"Even so, our dear grandmother, we'll get their attention."

So for the fourth time they called on the flute, but they didn't come back again. The fourth time they went straight into the forest. So they told their grandmother:

"Well, we've tried, our dear grandmother. They came at first, and we've tried calling them again. So don't be sad. We're here—we, your grandchildren. Just love our mother, dear grandmother. Our elder brothers will be remembered. So be it: they have lived here and they have been named; they are to be called One Monkey and One Artisan," said Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

So they were prayed to by the flautists and singers among the ancient people, and the writers and carvers prayed to them. In ancient times they turned into animals, they became monkeys, because they just magnified themselves, they abused their younger brothers. Just as they wished them to be slaves, so they themselves were brought low. One Monkey and One Artisan were lost then, they became animals, and this is now their place forever.

Even so, they were flautists and singers; they did great things while they lived with their grandmother and mother.

AND NOW THEY BEGAN TO ACT OUT THEIR SELF-REVELATION before their grandmother and mother. First they made a garden:

"We'll just do some gardening, our dear grandmother and mother," they said. "Don't worry. We're here, we're your grandchildren, we're the successors of our elder brothers," said Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

And then they took up their axe, their mattock, their hoe; each of them went off with a blowgun on his shoulder. They left the house having instructed their grandmother to give them their food:

"At midday bring our food, dear grandmother," they said.

"Very well, my dear grandchildren," said their grandmother.

After that, they went to their gardening. They simply stuck their mattock in the ground, and the mattock simply cultivated the ground.

And it wasn't only the mattock that cultivated, but also the axe. In the same way, they stuck it in the trunk of a tree; in the same way, it cut into the tree by itself, felling, scattering, felling all the trees and bushes, now leveling, mowing down the trees.

Just the one axe did it, and the mattock, breaking up thick masses, countless stalks and brambles. Just one mattock was doing it, breaking up countless things, just clearing off whole mountains, small and great.

And then they gave instructions to that creature named the mourning dove. They sat up on a big stump, and Hunahpu and Xbalanque said:

"Just watch for our grandmother, bringing our food. Cry out right away when she comes, and then we'll grab the mattock and axe."

"Very well," said the mourning dove.

This is because all they're doing is shooting; they're not really doing any gardening.

And as soon as the dove cries out they come running, one of them grabbing the mattock and the other grabbing the hoe, and they're tying up their hair.

One of them deliberately rubs dirt on his hands; he dirties his face as well, so he's just like a real gardener.

And as for the other one, he deliberately dumps wood chips on his head, so he's like a real woodcutter.

Once their grandmother has seen them they eat, but they aren't really doing their gardening; she brings their food for nothing. And when they get home:

"We're really ready for bed, our dear grandmother," they say when

they arrive. Deliberately they massage, they stretch their legs, their arms in front of their grandmother.

And when they went on the second day and arrived at the garden, it had all grown up high again. Every tree and bush, every stalk and bramble had put itself back together again when they arrived.

"Who's been picking us clean?" they said.

And these are the ones who are doing it, all the animals, small and great: puma, jaguar, deer, rabbit, fox, coyote, peccary, coati, small birds, great birds. They are the ones who did it; they did it in just one night.

After that, they started the garden all over again. Just as before, the ground worked itself, along with the woodcutting.

And then they shared their thoughts, there on the cleared and broken ground:

"We'll simply have to keep watch over our garden. Then, whatever may be happening here, we'll find out about it," they said when they shared their thoughts. And when they arrived at the house:

"How could we get picked clean, our dear grandmother? Our garden was tall thickets and groves all over again when we got there a while ago, our dear grandmother," they said to their grandmother and mother. "So we'll go keep watch, because what's happening to us is no good," they said.

After that, they wound everything up, and then they went back to the clearing.

And there they took cover, and when they were well hidden there, all the animals gathered together, each one sat on its haunches, all the animals, small and great.

And this was the middle of the night when they came. They all spoke when they came. This is what they said:

"Arise, conjoin, you trees!  
Arise, conjoin, you bushes!"

they said. Then they made a great stir beneath the trees and bushes, then they came nearer, and then they showed their faces.

The first of these were the puma and jaguar. The boys tried to grab them, but they did not give themselves up. When the deer and rabbit came near they only got them by the tail, which just broke off: the deer left its tail in their hands. When they grabbed the tail of the deer, along with the tail of the rabbit, the tails were shortened. But the fox, coyote, and peccary, coati did not give themselves up. All the animals went by in front of Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

SO NOW THERE WAS FIRE IN THEIR HEARTS, because they didn't catch them. And one more came, the last one now, jumping as he came, then they cut him off. In their net they caught the rat.

And then they grabbed him and squeezed him behind the head. They tried to choke him; they burned his tail over a fire. Ever since the rat's tail got caught, there's been no hair on his tail, and his eyes have been the way they are since the boys tried to choke him, Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

"I will not die by your hand! Gardening is not your job, but there is something that is," said the rat.

"Where is what is ours? Go ahead and name it," the boys told the rat.

"Will you let me go then? My word is in my belly, and after I name it for you, you'll give me my morsel of food," said the rat.

"We'll give you your food, so name it," he was told.

"Very well. It's something that belonged to your fathers, named One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu, who died in Xibalba. What remains is their gaming equipment. They left it up under the roof of the house: their kilts, their wrist guards, their rubber ball. But your grandmother doesn't take these down in front of you, because this is how your fathers died."

"You know the truth, don't you!" the boys told the rat.

There was great joy in their hearts when they got word of the rubber ball. When the rat had named it they gave the rat his food, and this is his food: corn kernels, squash seeds, chili, beans, pataxte, cacao. These are his.

"If anything of yours is stored or gets wasted, then gnaw away," the rat was told by Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

"Very well, boys. But what will your grandmother say if she sees me?" he said.

"Don't be fainthearted. We're here. We know what our grandmother needs to be told. We'll set you up under the corner of the roof right away. When that's taken care of you'll go straight to where the things were left, and we'll look up there under the roof, but it's our stew we'll be looking at," they told the rat when they gave him his instructions.

Hunahpu and Xbalanque made their plans overnight and arrived right at noon, and it wasn't obvious that they had a rat with them when they arrived. One of them went right inside the house when he reached it, while the other went to the corner of the house, quickly setting up the rat. And then they asked their grandmother for their meal:

"Just grind something for our stew, we want chili sauce, our dear grandmother," they said.

After that, she ground chili for their stew. A bowl of broth was set out in front of them, but they were just fooling their grandmother and mother. They had emptied the water jar:

"We're really parched! Bring us a drink," they told their grandmother.

"Yes," she said, then she went, and they kept on eating. They weren't really hungry; they just put on false appearances.

And then they saw the rat reflected in their chili sauce: here was the rat loosening the ball that had been left in the peak of the roof. When they saw him in the chili sauce they sent a mosquito, that creature the mosquito, similar to a gnat. He went to the water, then he punctured the side of the grandmother's jar. The water just gushed out from the side of her jar. She tried, but she could not stop up the side of her jar.

"What has our grandmother done? We're choking for lack of water, our parched throats will do us in," they told their mother, then they sent her there.

After that, the rat cut the ball loose. It dropped from beneath the roof, along with the yokes, wrist guards, kilts. These were taken away then; they went to hide them on the road, the road to the ball court.

After that, they went to join their grandmother at the water, and their grandmother and mother were unable to stop up the side of the jar, either one of them.

After that, the boys arrived, each with his blowgun. When they arrived at the water:

"What have you done? We got weary at heart, so we came," they said.

"Look at the side of my jar! It cannot be stopped," said their grandmother, and they quickly stopped it up.

And they came back together, the two of them ahead of their grandmother.

In this way, the matter of the rubber ball was arranged.

**H**APPY NOW, THEY WENT TO PLAY BALL AT THE COURT. So they played ball at a distance, all by themselves. They swept out the court of their fathers.

And then it came into the hearing of the lords of Xibalba:

"Who's begun a game again up there, over our heads? Don't they have any shame, stomping around this way? Didn't One and Seven Hunahpu

die trying to magnify themselves in front of us? So, you must deliver another summons," they said as before, One and Seven Death, all the lords.

"They are hereby summoned," they told their messengers. "You are to say, on reaching them:

"They must come," say the lords, "We would play ball with them here. In seven days we'll have a game," say the lords, 'you will say when you arrive,' the messengers were told.

And then they came along a wide roadway, the road to the house of the boys, which actually ended at their house, so that the messengers came directly to their grandmother. As for the boys, they were away playing ball when the messengers of Xibalba got there.

"Truly, they are to come," say the lords," said the messengers of Xibalba. So then and there the day was specified by the messengers of Xibalba:

"In seven days our game will take place," Xmucaane was told there.

"Very well. They'll go when the day comes, messengers," said the grandmother, and the messengers left. They went back.

So now the grandmother's heart was broken:

"How can I send for my grandchildren? Isn't it really Xibalba, just as it was when the messengers came long ago, when their fathers went to die?" said the grandmother, sobbing, at home by herself.

After that a louse came down where it could be seen, and then she picked it up and put it in her hand, and the louse moved around with fits and starts.

"My grandchild, perhaps you might like to take my message, to go where my grandchildren are, at the ball court," the louse was told when he went as a message bearer:

"A messenger has come to your grandmother,' you will say. 'You are to come:

'In seven days they are to come,' say the messengers of Xibalba," says your grandmother,' you will say," the louse was told.

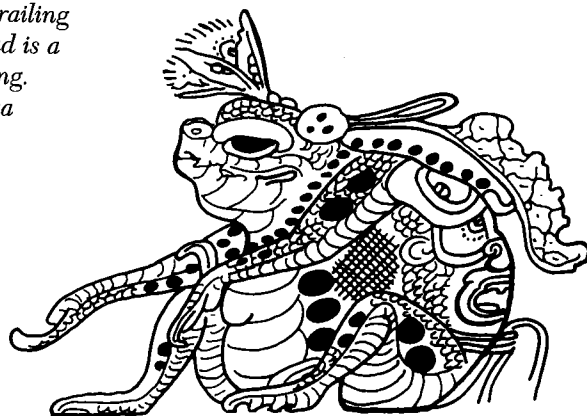
Then he went off, and he went in fits and starts, and sitting in the road was a boy named Tamazul, the toad.

"Where are you going?" said the toad to the louse.

"My word is contained in my belly. I'm going to the two boys," said the louse to Tamazul.

"Very well. But I notice you're not very fast," the louse was told by the toad. "Wouldn't you like me to swallow you? You'll see, I'll run bent over this way, we'll arrive in a hurry."

TAMAZUL, THE TOAD: *Trailing down the back of this toad is a piece of skin he is shedding. From a Late Classic Maya vase.*



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

"Very well," said the louse to the toad.

After that, when he had been united with the toad, the toad hopped. He went along now, but he didn't run.

After that, the toad met a big snake named Zaquicaz:

"Where are you going, Tamazul boy?" the toad was asked next by Zaquicaz.

"I'm a messenger. My word is in my belly," the toad next said to the snake.

"But I notice you're not fast. Listen to me, I'll get there in a hurry," said the snake to the toad.

"Get going," he was told, so then the toad was next swallowed by Zaquicaz. When snakes get their food today they swallow toads.

So the snake was running as he went, then the snake was met from overhead by a laughing falcon, a large bird. The snake was swallowed up by the falcon, and then he arrived above the court. When hawks get their food, they eat snakes in the mountains.

And when the falcon arrived he alighted on the rim of the ball court. Hunahpu and Xbalanque were happy then, they were playing ball when the falcon arrived.

So then the falcon cried out:

"Wak-ko! Wak-ko!"

said the falcon as he cried.

"Who's crying out there? Come on! Our blowguns!" they said. And they shot the falcon, landing their blowgun shot right in his eye. Wob-

bling, he fell down and they went right there to grab him, then they asked him:

"What are you after?" they said to the falcon.

"My word is contained in my belly. But heal my eye first, then I'll name it," said the falcon.

"Very well," they said.

Next they took a bit of rubber off the surface of the ball, then they put it on the falcon's eye. "Blood of sacrifice" was their name for it. As soon as he was treated by them, the falcon's vision became good again.

"So name it," they said to the falcon, and then he vomited a big snake.

"Speak up," they said next to the snake.

"Yes," he said next, then he vomited the toad.

"What's your errand? Tell it," the toad was told next.

"My word is contained in my belly," the toad said next, and then he tried to throw up, but there was no vomit, he just sort of drooled. He was trying, but there was no vomit.

After that, he had to be kicked by the boys.

"You trickster!" he was told, then they kicked him in the rear, and they crushed the bones of his rear end with their feet. When he tried again, he just sort of spit.

And then they pried the toad's mouth open, it was opened by the boys. They searched his mouth, and the louse had simply stuck in the toad's teeth, it was right there in his mouth. He hadn't swallowed it, but had only seemed to swallow.

And such was the defeat of the toad. It's not clear what kind of food they gave him, and because he didn't run he became mere meat for snakes.

"Tell it," the louse was told next, so then he named his word:

"Boys, your grandmother says:

'Summon them. A message came for them:

"From Xibalba comes the messenger of One and Seven Death:

THEY PUT IT ON THE FALCON'S EYE:  
*The laughing falcon, alone among the hawks and falcons of Mesoamerica, has black feathers around the eye.*



DRAWING BY THE AUTHOR

"In seven days they are to come here. We'll play ball. Their gaming equipment must come along: rubber ball, yokes, arm guards, kilts. This will make for some excitement here," say the lords,' is the word that came from them," ' says your grandmother. So your grandmother says you must come. Truly your grandmother cries, she calls out to you to come."

"Isn't it the truth!" the boys said in their thoughts. When they heard it they left at once and got to their grandmother, but they went there only to give their grandmother instructions:

"We're on our way, dear grandmother. We're just giving you instructions. So here is the sign of our word. We'll leave it with you. Each of us will plant an ear of green corn. We'll plant them in the center of our house. When the corn dries up, this will be a sign of our death:

'Perhaps they died,' you'll say, when it dries up. And when the sprouting comes:

'Perhaps they live,' you'll say, our dear grandmother and mother. From now on, this is the sign of our word. We're leaving it with you," they said, then they left.

Hunahpu planted one and Xbalanque planted another. They were planted right there in the house: neither in the mountains nor where the earth is damp, but where the earth is dry, in the middle of the inside of their house. They left them planted there, then went off, each with his own blowgun.

THEY WENT DOWN TO XIBALBA, quickly going down the face of a cliff, and they crossed through the change of canyons. They passed right through the birds—the ones called throng birds—and then they crossed Pus River and Blood River, intended as traps by Xibalba. They did not step in, but simply crossed over on their blowguns, and then they went on over to the Crossroads. But they knew about the roads of Xibalba: Black Road, White Road, Red Road, Green Road.

And there they summoned that creature named the mosquito. Having heard that he's a spy, they sent him ahead:

"Bite them one by one. First bite the first one seated there, then bite every last one of them, and it will be yours alone to suck the blood of people in the roads," the mosquito was told.

"Very well," replied the mosquito, then he took Black Road and stopped at the two manikins, or woodcarvings, that were seated first. They were all dressed up, and he bit the first of them. It didn't speak, so he bit again. When he bit the one seated second, again it didn't speak,

THAT CREATURE NAMED THE MOSQUITO: *In this drawing from a Late Classic Maya vase, the mosquito wears its weapon on the front of its headdress and dribbles blood from its anus.*



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

and then he bit the third one, the one seated third actually being One Death.

"Yeow!" each one said as he was bitten.

"What?" each one replied.

"Ouch!" said One Death.

"What is it, One Death?"

"Something's bitten me."

"It's—ouch! There's something that's bitten me," the one seated fourth said next.

"What is it, Seven Death?"

"Something's bitten me." The one seated fifth spoke next:

"Ow! Ow!" he said.

"What, Scab Stripper?" Seven Death said to him.

"Something's bitten me," he said next. The one seated sixth was bitten:

"Ouch!"

"What is it, Blood Gatherer?" Scab Stripper said to him.

"Something's bitten me," he said next. Then the one seated seventh was bitten:

"Ouch!" he said next.

"What is it, Demon of Pus?" Blood Gatherer said to him.

"Something's bitten me," he said next. The one seated eighth was bitten next:

"Ouch!" he said next.

"What is it, Demon of Jaundice?" Demon of Pus said to him next.

"Something's bitten me," he said next. Then the one seated ninth was bitten next:

"Ouch!" he said.

"What is it, Bone Scepter?" Demon of Jaundice said to him.

"Something's bitten me," he said next. Then the one seated tenth in order was bitten next:

"Ouch!"

"What is it, Skull Scepter?" said Bone Scepter.

"Something's bitten me," he said next. Then the one seated eleventh was bitten next:

"Ouch!" he said next.

"What is it, Wing?" Skull Scepter said to him next.

"Something's bitten me," he said next. Then the one seated twelfth was bitten next:

"Ouch!" he said next.

"What, Packstrap?" he was asked next.

"Something's bitten me," he said next. Then the one seated thirteenth was bitten next:

"Ouch!"

"What is it, Bloody Teeth?" Packstrap said to him.

"Something's bitten me," he said next. Then the one seated fourteenth was bitten next:

"Ouch! Something's bitten me," he said next.

"Bloody Claws?" Bloody Teeth said to him next.

And such was the naming of their names, they named them all among themselves. They showed their faces and named their names, each one named by the one ranking above him, and naming in turn the name of the one seated next to him. There wasn't a single name they missed, naming every last one of their names when they were bitten by the hair that Hunahpu had plucked from his own shin. It wasn't really a mosquito that bit them. It went to hear all their names for Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

After that Hunahpu and Xbalanque went on, and then they came to where the Xibalbans were:

"Bid the lords good day," said someone who was seated there. It was a deceiver who spoke.

"These aren't lords! These are manikins, woodcarvings!" they said as they came up.

And after that, they bid them good morning:

"Morning, One Death.	Morning, Seven Death.
Morning, Scab Stripper.	Morning, Blood Gatherer.
Morning, Demon of Pus.	Morning, Demon of Jaundice.
Morning, Bone Scepter.	Morning, Skull Scepter.
Morning, Wing.	Morning, Packstrap.
Morning, Bloody Teeth.	Morning, Bloody Claws,"

they said when they arrived, and all of their identities were accounted for. They named every one of their names; there wasn't a single name they missed. When this was required of them, no name was omitted by them.

"Sit here," they were told. They were wanted on the bench, but they didn't want it:

"This bench isn't for us! It's just a stone slab for cooking," said Hunahpu and Xbalanque. They were not defeated.

"Very well. Just get in the house," they were told.

And after that, they entered Dark House. They were not defeated there. This was the first test they entered in Xibalba, and as far as the Xibalbans were concerned they were as good as defeated.

## FIRST THEY ENTERED DARK HOUSE.

And after that, the messenger of One Death brought their torch, burning when it arrived, along with one cigar apiece.

"'Here is their torch,' says the lord. 'They must return the torch in the morning, along with the cigars. They must return them intact,' say the lords," the messenger said when he arrived.

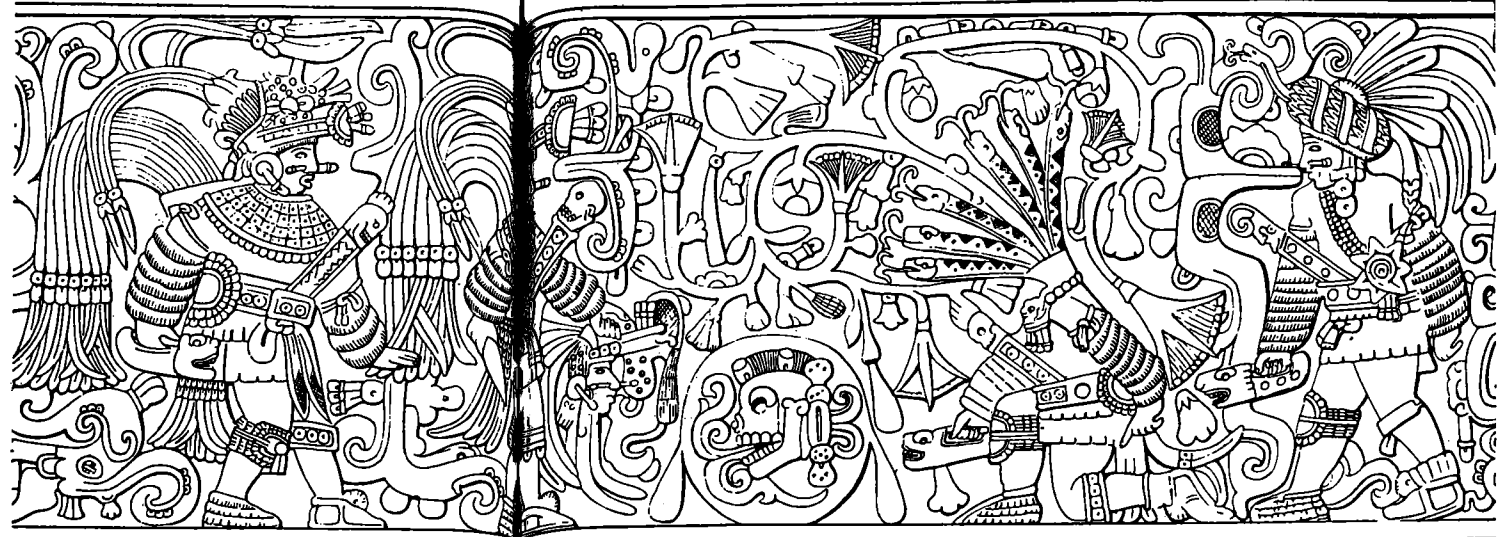
"Very well," they said, but they didn't burn the torch—instead, something that looked like fire was substituted. This was the tail of the macaw, which looked like a torch to the sentries. And as for the cigars, they just put fireflies at the tips of those cigars, which they kept lit all night.

"We've defeated them," said the sentries, but the torch was not consumed—it just looked that way. And as for the cigars, there wasn't anything burning there—it just looked that way. When these things were taken back to the lords:

"What's happening? Where did they come from? Who begot them and bore them? Our hearts are really hurting, because what they're doing to us is no good. They're different in looks and different in their very being," they said among themselves. And when they had summoned all the lords:

"Let's play ball, boys," the boys were told. And then they were asked by One and Seven Death:

"IT'S JUST A SKULL": In this game the ball (just right of center) is marked with a skull in profile. From the mouths of the two players at left and the one at extreme right comes speech (resembling curling smoke), probably in the form of taunts like the ones hurled back and forth in the Popol Vuh. The first player to the left of the ball holds the severed head of the first player to the right, whose neck sprouts serpents (representing spurts of blood) and a squash vine (recalling an episode in which a squash serves as Hunahpu's head). From a relief panel in the great ball court at Chichén Itzá.



DRAWING FROM ALFRED M. TOZZER, CHICHEN ITZA AND ITS CENOTE OF SACRIFICE: PHOTO BY HILLEL BURGER © 1984 BY THE PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE

"Where might you have come from? Please name it," Xibalba said to them.

"Well, wherever did we come from? We don't know," was all they said. They didn't name it.

"Very well then, we'll just go play ball, boys," Xibalba told them.

"Good," they said.

"Well, this is the one we should put in play, here's our rubber ball," said the Xibalbans.

"No thanks. This is the one to put in, here's ours," said the boys.

"No it's not. This is the one we should put in," the Xibalbans said again.

"Very well," said the boys.

"After all, it's just a decorated one," said the Xibalbans.

"Oh no it's not. It's just a skull, we say in return," said the boys.

"No it's not," said the Xibalbans.

"Very well," said Hunahpu. When it was sent off by Xibalba, the ball was stopped by Hunahpu's yoke.

And then, while Xibalba watched, the White Dagger came out from inside the ball. It went clattering, twisting all over the floor of the court.

"What's that!" said Hunahpu and Xbalanque. "Death is the only thing you want for us! Wasn't it *you* who sent a summons to us, and wasn't it *your* messenger who went? Truly, take pity on us, or else we'll just leave," the boys told them.

And this is what had been ordained for the boys: that they should have died right away, right there, defeated by that knife. But it wasn't like that. Instead, Xibalba was again defeated by the boys.

"Well, don't go, boys. We can still play ball, but we'll put yours into play," the boys were told.

"Very well," they said, and this was the time for their rubber ball, so the ball was dropped in.

And after that, they specified the prize:

"What should our prize be?" asked the Xibalbans.

"It's yours for the asking," was all the boys said.

"We'll just win four bowls of flowers," said the Xibalbans.

"Very well. What kinds of flowers?" the boys asked Xibalba.

"One bowl of red petals, one bowl of white petals, one bowl of yellow petals, and one bowl of whole ones," said the Xibalbans.

"Very well," said the boys, and then their ball was dropped in. The boys were their equals in strength and made many plays, since they only





THEIR BALL WAS DROPPED IN: Hunahpu (left) and a member of the Xibalba team (right) jointly hold a ball up with their arm guards just before putting it into play; the latter wears a trophy head on his back. From a relief carved on a stone ball-court marker at Copán.

DRAWING BY BARBARA FASH

had very good thoughts. Then the boys gave themselves up in defeat, and the Xibalbans were glad when they were defeated:

"We've done well. We've beaten them on the first try," said the Xibalbans. "Where will they go to get the flowers?" they said in their hearts.

"Truly, before the night is over, you must hand over our flowers and our prize," the boys, Hunahpu and Xbalanque, were told by Xibalba.

"Very well. So we're also playing ball at night," they said when they accepted their charge.

**A**ND AFTER THAT, THE BOYS NEXT ENTERED RAZOR HOUSE, the second test of Xibalba.

And this is when it was ordained that they be cut clear through with

knives. It was intended to be quick, intended that they should die, but they did not die. They spoke to the knives then, they instructed them:

"This is yours: the flesh of all the animals," they told the knives, and they no longer moved—rather, each and every knife put down its point.

And this is how they stayed there overnight, in Razor House. Now they summoned all the ants:

"Cutting ants, conquering ants, come now,  
all of you fetch all of them for us:  
flowers in bloom, prizes for lords."

"Very well," they replied. Then all the ants went to get the flowers, the plantings of One and Seven Death, who had already given instructions to the guardians of the flowers of Xibalba:

"Would you please watch our flowers? Don't let them get stolen. We've defeated these boys, so won't they come looking for the prize they owe us? Don't sleep tonight."

"Very well," they replied, but the guardians of the plants never knew a thing. Their only inclination was to stretch their mouths wide open, going from one perch to another in the trees and plants, repeating the same song:

"Whip-poor-will! Whip-poor-will!"

one of them says as he cries.

"Poor-willow! Poor-willow!"

says the other as he cries, the one named poorwill.

The two of them are the guards of the garden, the garden of One and Seven Death, but they don't notice the ants stealing what's under their guard, swarming, carrying away loads of flowers, coming to cut down the flowers in the trees, gathering these together with the flowers beneath the trees, while the guards just stretch their mouths wide open, not noticing the nibbling at their own tails, the nibbling at their own wings. The severed flowers rain down into the gathering and bunching here below, so that four bowls of flowers are easily filled, an acrobatic performance that lasts till dawn.

After that the messengers, the pages, arrive:

"They are to come," says the lord: "They must bring our prizes here right away," the boys were told.

"Very well," they said. Having loaded up the flowers, four bowls of them, they left and came before the lord, or lords, who received the flowers with pained looks.

With this, the Xibalbans were defeated. The boys had sent mere ants; in just one night the ants had taken the flowers and put them in the bowls.

With this, all the Xibalbans looked sick, they paled at the sight of the flowers.

After that, they summoned the flower guards:

"How did you allow our flowers to get stolen? These are *our* flowers! Here! Look!" the guards were told.

"We took no notice, your lordship, though our tails are the worse for it," they said.

And then their mouths were split wide, their payment for the theft of what was under their guard.

Such was the defeat of One and Seven Death by Hunahpu and Xbalanque, on account of which the whippoorwills got gaping mouths. Their mouths gaped to this day.

Now after that, when the ball was dropped in, they just played to a tie. When they finished the game they made an arrangement with each other:

"At dawn again," said Xibalba.

"Very well," said the boys, then they were finished.

**A**ND NOW THEY ENTERED COLD HOUSE. There are countless drafts, thick-falling hail inside the house, the home of cold. They diminished the cold right away by shutting it out. The cold dissipated because of the boys. They did not die, but were alive when it dawned.

So, although Xibalba had wanted them to die there, they did not, but were alive when it dawned. They came out when the pages arrived and the guards left.

"Why haven't they died?" said the rulers of Xibalba. Again they were amazed at the feats of the boys, Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

**S**O NEXT THEY ENTERED JAGUAR HOUSE, the jaguar-packed home of jaguars:

"Don't eat *us*. There *is* something that should be yours," the jaguars were told.

With that, they scattered bones before the animals.

After that, the jaguars were wrestling around there, over the bones.

"So they've made good work of them, they've eaten their very hearts. Now that the boys have given themselves up, they've already been transformed into skeletons," said the sentries, all of them finding it sweet. But they hadn't died; they were well. They came out of Jaguar House.

"What sort of people are they? Where did they come from?" said all the Xibalbans.

**S**O NEXT THEY ENTERED THE MIDST OF THE FIRE, a house of fire with only fire alone inside. They weren't burned by it, just toasted, just simmered, so they were well when it dawned. Although it had been ordained that they be quickly killed in there, overcome, they weren't, and instead it was the Xibalbans who lost heart over this.

**N**OW THEY WERE PUT INSIDE BAT HOUSE, with bats alone inside the house, a house of snatch-bats, monstrous beasts, their snouts like knives, the instruments of death. To come before these is to be finished off at once.

When they were inside they just slept in their blowgun; they were not bitten by the members of the household. But this is where they gave one of themselves up because of a snatch-bat that came down, he came along just as one of them showed himself. They did it because it was actually what they were asking for, what they had in mind.

And all night the bats are making noise:

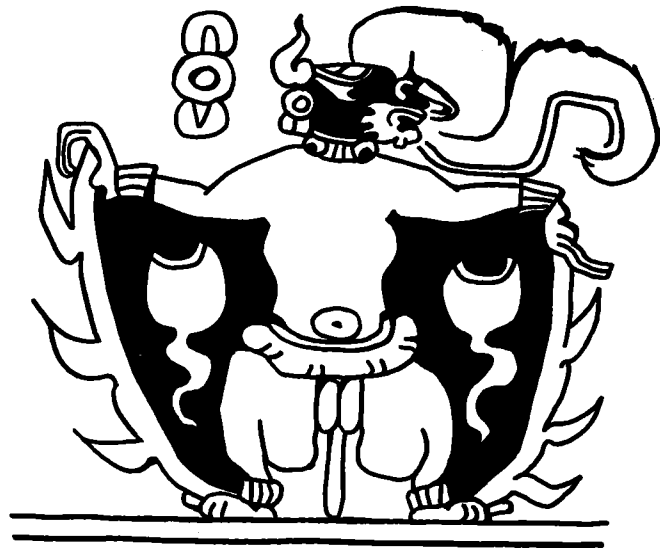
"Eek-eek! Eek-eek!"

they say, and they say it all night.

Then it let up a little. The bats were no longer moving around. So there, one of the boys crawled to the end of the blowgun, since Xbalanque said:

"Hunahpu? Can you see how long it is till dawn?"

"Well, perhaps I should look to see how long it is," he replied. So he kept trying to look out the muzzle of the blowgun, he tried to see the dawn.



SNATCH-BATS, MONSTROUS BEASTS: *The design on the bat's wings represents plucked-out eyes; the scroll-like forms issuing from his mouth are his shrieks. From a Late Classic Maya vase in the Chamá style, found in the same region as the Great Hollow where Hunahpu and Xbalanque descended into Xibalba.*

DRAWING BY THE AUTHOR

And then his head was taken off by a snatch-bat, leaving Hunahpu's body still stuffed inside.

"What's going on? Hasn't it dawned?" said Xbalanque. No longer is there any movement from Hunahpu. "What's this? Hunahpu hasn't left, has he? What have you done?" He no longer moves; now there is only heavy breathing.

After that, Xbalanque despaired:

"Alas! We've given it all up!" he said. And elsewhere, the head meanwhile went rolling onto the court, in accordance with the word of One and Seven Death, and all the Xibalbans were happy over the head of Hunahpu.

After that, Xbalanque summoned all the animals: coati, peccary, all the animals, small and great. It was at night, still nighttime when he asked them for their food:

"Whatever your foods are, each one of you: that's what I summoned you for, to bring your food here," Xbalanque told them.

"Very well," they replied, then they went to get what's theirs, then indeed they all came back.

HIS HEAD WAS TAKEN OFF: *Hunahpu stands headless with his arms bound. From the Dresden Codex.*



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

There's the one who only brought his rotten wood.

There's the one who only brought leaves.

There's the one who only brought stones.

There's the one who only brought earth, on through the varied foods of the animals, small and great, until the very last one remained: the coati. He brought a squash, bumping it along with his snout as he came.

And this became a simulated head for Hunahpu. His eyes were carved right away, then brains came from the thinker, from the sky. This was the Heart of Sky, Hurricane, who came down, came on down into Bat House. The face wasn't finished any too quickly; it came out well. His strength was just the same, he looked handsome, he spoke just the same.

And this is when it was trying to dawn, reddening along the horizon:

"Now make the streaks, man," the possum was told.

"Yes," said the old man. When he made the streaks he made it dark again; the old man made four streaks.

XBALANQUE SUMMONED ALL THE ANIMALS: *Here he brings a hummingbird to him. Around his mouth and on his back and thigh are patches of jaguar skin. From the Dresden Codex.*



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

THE POSSUM: *Bringing in a new year that begins on the day named E or Eb, a possum uses a backpack to carry the patron deity assigned to such years. There are four kinds of year in all, corresponding to the four streaks made by the possum who comes to the aid of Xbalanque. Drawing from the Dresden Codex.*



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

"Possum is making streaks," people say today, ever since he made the early dawn red and blue, establishing its very being.

"Isn't it good?" Hunahpu was asked.

"Good indeed," he replied. His head was as if it had every bone; it had become like his real head.

After that, they had a talk, they made arrangements with each other:

"How about not playing ball yourself? You should just make lots of threats, while I should be the one to take all the action," Xbalanque told him. After that, he gave instructions to a rabbit:

"Your place is there above the court, on top. Stay there among the ball bags," the rabbit was told by Xbalanque, "until the ball comes to you, then take off while I get to work," the rabbit was told. He got his instructions while it was still dark.

After that, when it dawned, both of them were just as well as ever.

And when the ball was dropped in again, it was the head of Hunahpu that rolled over the court:

"We've won! You're done!  
Give up! You lost!"

they were told. But even so Hunahpu was shouting:

"Punt the head as a ball!" he told them.

"Well, we're not going to do them any more harm with threats," and with this the lords of Xibalba sent off the ball and Xbalanque received it, the ball was stopped by his yoke, then he hit it hard and it took off, the

IT WAS THE HEAD OF HUNAHPU: *A member of the Xibalba team goes down on one knee and returns the ball with his thigh, protected by a leather kilt. The ball bears the name of Hunahpu. From a relief carved on an Early Classic Maya ball-court marker from La Esperanza, Chiapas.*



DRAWING BY THE AUTHOR

ball passed straight out of the court, bouncing just once, just twice, and stopping among the ball bags. Then the rabbit took off hopping, then they went off in pursuit, then all the Xibalbans went off, shouting, shrieking, they went after the rabbit, off went the whole of Xibalba.

After that, the boys got Hunahpu's head back. Then Xbalanque planted the squash; this is when he went to set the squash above the court.

So the head of Hunahpu was really a head again, and the two of them were happy again. And the others, those Xibalbans, were still going on in search of the ball.

After that, having recovered the ball from among the bags, the boys cried out to them:

"Come back! Here's the ball! We've found it!" they said, so they stopped. When the Xibalbans got back:

"Have we been seeing things?" they said. Then they began their ball game again, and they made equal plays on both sides again.

After that, the squash was punted by Xbalanque. The squash was wearing out; it fell on the court, bringing to light its light-colored seeds, as plain as day right in front of them.

"How did you get ahold of that? Where did it come from?" said Xibalba.

With this, the masters of Xibalba were defeated by Hunahpu and Xbalanque. There was great danger there, but they did not die from all the things that were done to them.

**A**ND HERE IT IS: THE EPITAPH, THE DEATH OF HUNAHPU AND XBALANQUE.

Here it is: now we shall name their epitaph, their death. They did whatever they were instructed to do, going through all the dangers, the troubles that were made for them, but they did not die from the tests of Xibalba, nor were they defeated by all the voracious animals that inhabit Xibalba.

After that, they summoned two midmost seers, similar to readers. Here are their names: Xulu, Pacam, both knowers.

"Perhaps there will be questions from the lords of Xibalba about our death. They are thinking about how to overcome us because we haven't died, nor have we been defeated. We've exhausted all their tests. Not even the animals got us. So this is the sign, here in our hearts: their instrument for our death will be a stone oven. All the Xibalbans have gathered together. Isn't our death inevitable? So this is your plan, here we shall name it: if you come to be questioned by them about our death, once we've been burned, what will you say, Xulu, and you, Pacam? If they ask you:

'Wouldn't it be good if we dumped their bones in the canyon?'

'Perhaps it wouldn't be good, since they would only come back to life again,' you will say.

'Perhaps this would be good: we'll just hang them up in a tree,' they'll say to you next.

'Certainly that's no good, since you would see their faces,' you will say, and then they'll speak to you for the third time:

'Well, here's the only good thing: we'll just dump their bones in the river.' If that's what they ask you next:

'This is a good death for them, and it would also be good to grind their bones on a stone, just as hard corn is refined into flour, and refine each of them separately, and then:

'Spill them into the river,  
sprinkle them on the water's way,  
among the mountains, small and great,'

you will say, and then you will have carried out the instructions we've named for you," said little Hunahpu and Xbalanque. When they gave these instructions they already knew they would die.

**T**HIS IS THE MAKING OF THE OVEN, the great stone oven. The Xibalbans made it like the places where the sweet drink is cooked, they opened it to a great width.

After that, messengers came to get the boys, the messengers of One and Seven Death:

"They must come. We'll go with the boys, to see the treat we've cooked up for them,' say the lords, you boys," they were told.

"Very well," they replied. They went running and arrived at the mouth of the oven.

And there they tried to force them into a game:

"Here, let's jump over our drink four times, clear across, one of us after the other, boys," they were told by One Death.

"You'll never put that one over on us. Don't we know what our death is, you lords? Watch!" they said, then they faced each other. They grabbed each other by the hands and went head first into the oven.

And there they died, together, and now all the Xibalbans were happy, raising their shouts, raising their cheers:

"We've really beaten them! They didn't give up easily," they said.

After that they summoned Xulu and Pacam, who kept their word: the bones went just where the boys had wanted them. Once the Xibalbans

WALKING ON STILTS: A figure  
from the Madrid Codex.



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

had done the divination, the bones were ground and spilled in the river, but they didn't go far—they just sank to the bottom of the water. They became handsome boys; they looked just the same as before when they reappeared.

**A**ND ON THE FIFTH DAY THEY REAPPEARED. They were seen in the water by the people. The two of them looked like catfish when their faces were seen by Xibalba. And having germinated in the waters, they appeared the day after that as two vagabonds, with rags before and rags behind, and rags all over too. They seemed unrefined when they were examined by Xibalba; they acted differently now.

It was only the Dance of the Poorwill, the Dance of the Weasel, only Armadillos they danced.

Only Swallowing Swords, only Walking on Stilts now they danced.

They performed many miracles now. They would set fire to a house, as if they were really burning it, and suddenly bring it back again. Now Xibalba was full of admiration.

Next they would sacrifice themselves, one of them dying for the other, stretched out as if in death. First they would kill themselves, but then they would suddenly look alive again. The Xibalbans could only admire what they did. Everything they did now was already the groundwork for their defeat of Xibalba.

And after that, news of their dances came to the ears of the lords, One and Seven Death. When they heard it they said:

"Who are these two vagabonds? Are they really such a delight? And is their dancing really that pretty? They do everything!" they said. An account of them had reached the lords. It sounded delightful, so then they entreated their messengers to notify them that they must come:

" "If only they'd come make a show for us, we'd wonder at them and marvel at them," say the lords,' you will say," the messengers were told. So they came to the dancers, then spoke the words of the lords to them.

"But we don't want to, because we're really ashamed. Just plain no. Wouldn't we be afraid to go inside there, into a lordly house? Because we'd really look bad. Wouldn't we just be wide-eyed? Take pity on us! Wouldn't we look like mere dancers to them? What would we say to our fellow vagabonds? There are others who also want us to dance today, to liven things up with us, so we can't do likewise for the lords, and likewise is not what we want, messengers," said Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

Even so, they were prevailed upon: through troubles, through torments, they went on their tortuous way. They didn't want to walk fast. Many times they had to be forced; the messengers went ahead of them as guides but had to keep coming back. And so they went to the lord.

**A**ND THEY CAME TO THE LORDS. Feigning great humility, they bowed their heads all the way to the ground when they arrived. They brought themselves low, doubled over, flattened out, down to the rags, to the tatters. They really looked like vagabonds when they arrived.

So then they were asked what their mountain and tribe were, and they were also asked about their mother and father:

"Where do you come from?" they were asked.

"We've never known, lord. We don't know the identity of our mother



THEY DANCED THE ARMADILLO: This dancer wears a scaly armadillo mask, plays a flute, and shakes a rattle. From a Late Classic Maya vase in the Chamá style, found in the same region as the Great Hollow where Hunahpu and Xbalanque descended into the Xibalba.

DRAWING BY THE AUTHOR

THEN THEY TOOK HOLD OF A HUMAN SACRIFICE: *The aged merchant god of the underworld sits on a dais in his palace, with his owl messenger perched on his hat. The women around the platform are all of noble rank; one of them turns to watch the performance to the left, in which two masked dancers (probably Hunahpu and Xbalanque in disguise) carry out a human sacrifice. The left-hand dancer is applying an axe to the back of the neck of the victim. From a Late Classic Maya vase in the Princeton University Art Museum.*



DRAWING REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF MICHAEL D. COE AND THE GROLIER CLUB

and father. We must've been small when they died," was all they said. They didn't give any names.

"Very well. Please entertain us, then. What do you want us to give you in payment?" they were asked.

"Well, we don't want anything. To tell the truth, we're afraid," they told the lord.

"Don't be afraid. Don't be ashamed. Just dance this way: first you'll dance to sacrifice yourselves, you'll set fire to my house after that, you'll act out all the things you know. We want to be entertained. This is our heart's desire, the reason you had to be sent for, dear vagabonds. We'll give you payment," they were told.

So then they began their songs and dances, and then all the Xibalbans arrived, the spectators crowded the floor, and they danced everything: they danced the Weasel, they danced the Poorwill, they danced the Armadillo. Then the lord said to them:

"Sacrifice my dog, then bring him back to life again," they were told.

"Yes," they said.

When they sacrificed the dog  
he then came back to life.  
And that dog was really happy  
when he came back to life.  
Back and forth he wagged his tail  
when he came back to life.

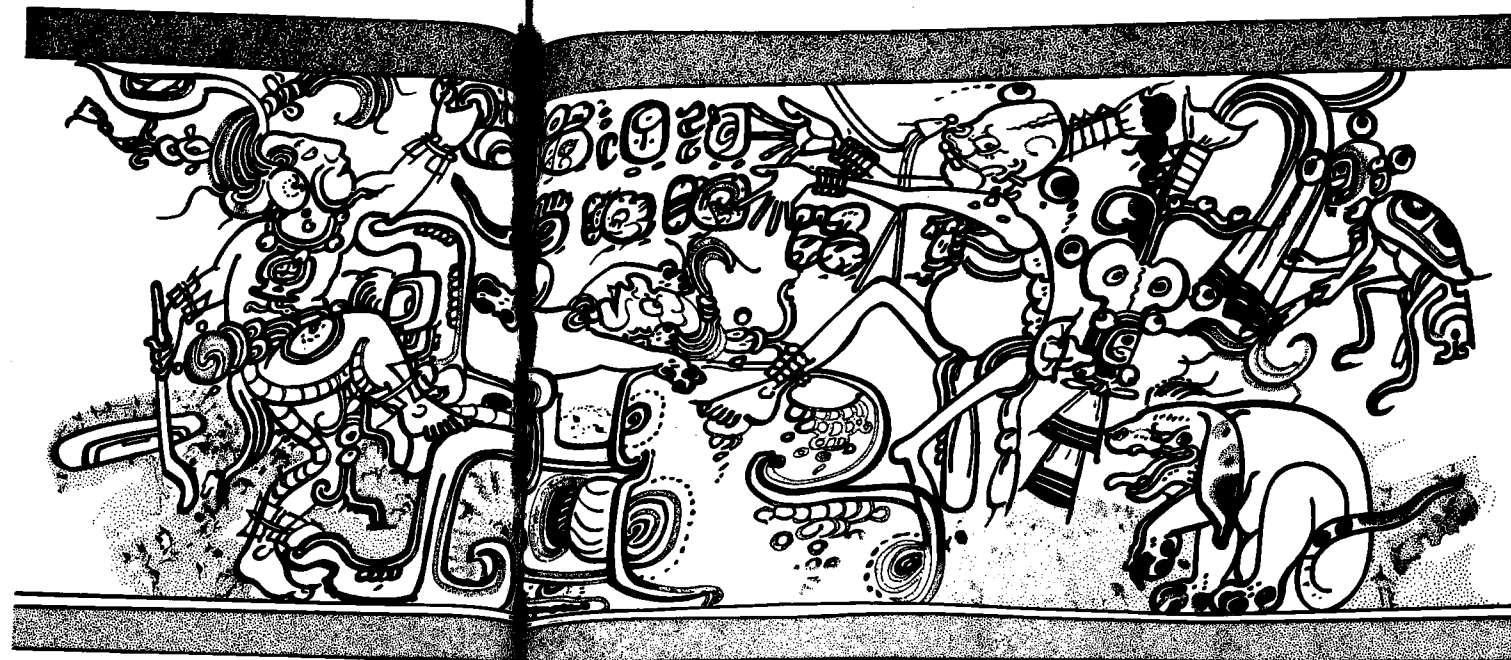
And the lord said to them:

"Well, you have yet to set my home on fire," they were told next, so then they set fire to the home of the lord. The house was packed with all the lords, but they were not burned. They quickly fixed it back again, lest the house of One Death be consumed all at once, and all the lords were amazed, and they went on dancing this way. They were overjoyed.

And then they were asked by the lord:

"You have yet to kill a person! Make a sacrifice without death!" they were told.

SACRIFICE YET AGAIN, EVEN DO IT TO YOURSELVES!: At left is Hunahpu disguised as a Thunderbolt god, about to swing a lightning-striking axe; the catfish barbel on his cheek recalls the episode in which he and his brother appeared as catfish. Playfully waiting to have his head cut off is a prostrate Xbalanque, no longer limited to wearing a few patches of jaguar skin but rather appearing as a parody of himself. Next (from left to right) are a skeletal Xibalban who dances with delight, a dog who wags his tail (having survived his own decapitation), and a firefly bearing a torch (from the Dark House episode). From a Late Classic Maya vase in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



DRAWING REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF MICHAEL D. COE AND THE GROLIER CLUB

"Very well," they said.  
And then they took hold of a human sacrifice.  
And they held up a human heart on high.  
And they showed its roundness to the lords.  
And now One and Seven Death admired it, and now that person was brought right back to life. His heart was overjoyed when he came back to life, and the lords were amazed:  
"Sacrifice yet again, even do it to yourselves! Let's see it! At heart, that's the dance we really want from you," the lords said now.  
"Very well, lord," they replied, and then they sacrificed themselves.

**A**ND THIS IS THE SACRIFICE OF LITTLE HUNAHPU BY XBALANQUE. One by one his legs, his arms were spread wide. His head came off, rolled far away outside. His heart, dug out, was smothered in a leaf, and all the Xibalbans went crazy at the sight.

So now, only one of them was dancing there: Xbalanque.  
"Get up!" he said, and Hunahpu came back to life. The two of them were overjoyed at this—and likewise the lords rejoiced, as if they were doing it themselves. One and Seven Death were as glad at heart as if they themselves were actually doing the dance.

And then the hearts of the lords were filled with longing, with yearning for the dance of little Hunahpu and Xbalanque, so then came these words from One and Seven Death:

"Do it to us! Sacrifice us!" they said. "Sacrifice both of us!" said One and Seven Death to little Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

"Very well. You ought to come back to life. What is death to you? And aren't we making you happy, along with the vassals of your domain?" they told the lords.

And this one was the first to be sacrificed: the lord at the very top, the one whose name is One Death, the ruler of Xibalba.



And with One Death dead, the next to be taken was Seven Death. They did not come back to life.

And then the Xibalbans were getting up to leave, those who had seen the lords die. They underwent heart sacrifice there, and the heart sacrifice was performed on the two lords only for the purpose of destroying them.

As soon as they had killed the one lord without bringing him back to life, the other lord had been meek and tearful before the dancers. He didn't consent, he didn't accept it:

"Take pity on me!" he said when he realized. All their vassals took the road to the great canyon, in one single mass they filled up the deep abyss. So they piled up there and gathered together, countless ants, tumbling down into the canyon, as if they were being herded there. And when they arrived, they all bent low in surrender, they arrived meek and tearful.

Such was the defeat of the rulers of Xibalba. The boys accomplished it only through wonders, only through self-transformation.

**A**ND THEN THEY NAMED THEIR NAMES, they gave themselves names before all of Xibalba:

"Listen: we shall name our names, and we shall also name the names of our fathers for you. Here we are: we are little Hunahpu and Xbalanque by name. And these are our fathers, the ones you killed: One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu by name. And we are here to clear the road of the torments and troubles of our fathers. And so we have suffered all the troubles you've caused us. And so we are putting an end to all of you. We're going to kill you. No one can save you now," they were told. And then all the Xibalbans got down on the ground and cried out:

"Take pity on us, Hunahpu and Xbalanque! It is true that we wronged your fathers, the ones you name. Those two are buried at the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice," they replied.

"Very well. Now this is our word, we shall name it for you. All of you listen, you Xibalbans: because of this, your day and your descendants will not be great. Moreover, the gifts you receive will no longer be great, but reduced to scabrous nodules of sap. There will be no cleanly blotted blood for you, just griddles, just gourds, just brittle things broken to pieces. Further, you will only feed on creatures of the meadows and clearings. None of those who are born in the light, begotten in the light will be yours. Only the worthless will yield

themselves up before you. These will be the guilty, the violent, the wretched, the afflicted. Wherever the blame is clear, that is where you will come in, rather than just making sudden attacks on people in general. And you will hear petitions over headed-up sap," all the Xibalbans were told.

Such was the beginning of their disappearance and the denial of their worship.

Their ancient day was not a great one,  
these ancient people only wanted conflict,  
their ancient names are not really divine,  
but fearful is the ancient evil of their faces.

They are makers of enemies, users of owls,  
they are inciters to wrongs and violence,  
they are masters of hidden intentions as well,  
they are black and white,  
masters of stupidity, masters of perplexity,

as it is said. By putting on appearances they cause dismay.

Such was the loss of their greatness and brilliance. Their domain did not return to greatness. This was accomplished by little Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

**A**ND THIS IS THEIR GRANDMOTHER, CRYING AND CALLING OUT IN FRONT OF THE EARS OF GREEN CORN they left planted. Corn plants grew, then dried up.

And this was when they were burned in the oven; then the corn plants grew again.

And this was when their grandmother burned something, she burned copal before the ears of green corn as a memorial to them. There was happiness in their grandmother's heart the second time the corn plants sprouted. Then the ears were deified by their grandmother, and she gave them names: Middle of the House, Middle of the Harvest, Living Ears of Green Corn, Bed of Earth became their names.

And she named the ears Middle of the House, Middle of the Harvest, because they had planted them right in the middle of the inside of their home.

And she further named them Bed of Earth, Living Ears of Green Corn, since the ears had been placed up above an earthen floor.

And she also named them Living Ears of Green Corn, because the corn plants had grown again. So they were named by Xmucane. They had been left behind, planted by Hunahpu and Xbalanque, simply as a way for their grandmother to remember them.

And the first to die, a long time before, had been their fathers, One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu. And they saw the face of their father again, there in Xibalba. Their father spoke to them again when they had defeated Xibalba.



THEIR FATHER IS PUT BACK TOGETHER BY THEM: Hunahpu (left) and Xbalanque (right) resurrect their father. He takes the form of a maize god in lowland Maya art, here emerging (or sprouting) from a cleft in the back of a turtle (the earth). From a Late Classic Maya bowl.

DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

AND HERE THEIR FATHER IS PUT BACK TOGETHER BY THEM. They put Seven Hunahpu back together; they went to the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice to put him together. He had wanted his face to become just as it was, but when he was asked to name everything, and once he had found the name of the mouth, the nose, the eyes of his face, there was very little else to be said. Although his mouth could not name the names of each of his former parts, he had at least spoken again.

And so it remained that they were respectful of their father's heart, even though they left him at the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice:

"You will be prayed to here," his sons told him, and his heart was comforted. "You will be the first resort, and you will be the first to have your day kept by those who will be born in the light, begotten in the light. Your name will not be lost. So be it," they told their father when they comforted his heart.

"We merely cleared the road of your death, your loss, the pain, the suffering that were inflicted upon you."

And such was the instruction they gave when all the Xibalbans had been finally defeated. And then the two boys ascended this way, here into the middle of the light, and they ascended straight on into the sky, and the sun belongs to one and the moon to the other. When it became light within the sky, on the face of the earth, they were there in the sky.

THE MOON TO THE OTHER:  
The lowland Maya Jaguar  
Moon Lord, enclosed by a  
lunar crescent. From an Early  
Classic conch shell trumpet.



DRAWING BY LINDA SCHELE

And then the Four Hundred Boys climbed up, the ones who were killed by Zipacna.

And so they came to accompany the two of them, they became the sky's own stars.

# PART FOUR



AND HERE IS THE BEGINNING OF THE CONCEPTION OF HUMANS, and of the search for the ingredients of the human body. So they spoke, the Bearer, Begetter, the Makers, Modelers named Sovereign Plumed Serpent:

"The dawn has approached, preparations have been made, and morning has come for the provider, nurturer, born in the light, begotten in the light. Morning has come for humankind, for the people of the face of the earth," they said. It all came together as they went on thinking in the darkness, in the night, as they searched and they sifted, they thought and they wondered.

And here their thoughts came out in clear light. They sought and discovered what was needed for human flesh. It was only a short while before the sun, moon, and stars were to appear above the Makers and Modelers. Split Place, Bitter Water Place is the name: the yellow corn, white corn came from there.

And these are the names of the animals who brought the food: fox, coyote, parrot, crow. There were four animals who brought the news of the ears of yellow corn and white corn. They were coming from over there at Split Place, they showed the way to the split.

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THE YELLOW CORN AND  
WHITE CORN WERE GROUND:

*This woman is rubbing a  
hand stone ("mano") over a  
grinding stone ("metate") that  
has stone feet. From a Late  
Classic Maya bowl.*



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DRAWING BY THE AUTHOR

And this was when they found the staple foods.

And these were the ingredients for the flesh of the human work, the human design, and the water was for the blood. It became human blood, and corn was also used by the Bearer, Begetter.

And so they were happy over the provisions of the good mountain, filled with sweet things, thick with yellow corn, white corn, and thick with pataxte and cacao, countless zapotes, anonas, jocotes, nances, matasanos, sweets—the rich foods filling up the citadel named Split Place, Bitter Water Place. All the edible fruits were there: small staples, great staples, small plants, great plants. The way was shown by the animals.

And then the yellow corn and white corn were ground, and Xmucane did the grinding nine times. Food was used, along with the water she rinsed her hands with, for the creation of grease; it became human fat when it was worked by the Bearer, Begetter, Sovereign Plumed Serpent, as they are called.

After that, they put it into words:

the making, the modeling of our first mother-father,  
with yellow corn, white corn alone for the flesh,  
food alone for the human legs and arms,  
for our first fathers, the four human works.

It was staples alone that made up their flesh.

**T**HESE ARE THE NAMES OF THE FIRST PEOPLE WHO WERE MADE AND MODELED.

This is the first person: Jaguar Quitze.

And now the second: Jaguar Night.

And now the third: Not Right Now.

And the fourth: Dark Jaguar.

And these are the names of our first mother-fathers. They were simply made and modeled, it is said; they had no mother and no father. We have named the men by themselves. No woman gave birth to them, nor were they begotten by the builder, sculptor, Bearer, Begetter. By sacrifice alone, by genius alone they were made, they were modeled by the Maker, Modeler, Bearer, Begetter, Sovereign Plumed Serpent. And when they came to fruition, they came out human:

They talked and they made words.

They looked and they listened.

They walked, they worked.

They were good people, handsome, with looks of the male kind. Thoughts came into existence and they gazed; their vision came all at once. Perfectly they saw, perfectly they knew everything under the sky, whenever they looked. The moment they turned around and looked around in the sky, on the earth, everything was seen without any obstruction. They didn't have to walk around before they could see what was under the sky; they just stayed where they were.

As they looked, their knowledge became intense. Their sight passed through trees, through rocks, through lakes, through seas, through mountains, through plains. Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar were truly gifted people.

And then they were asked by the builder and mason:

"What do you know about your being? Don't you look, don't you listen? Isn't your speech good, and your walk? So you must look, to see out under the sky. Don't you see the mountain-plain clearly? So try it," they were told.

And then they saw everything under the sky perfectly. After that, they thanked the Maker, Modeler:

"Truly now,  
double thanks, triple thanks  
that we've been formed, we've been given  
our mouths, our faces,  
we speak, we listen,  
we wonder, we move,  
our knowledge is good, we've understood  
what is far and near,  
and we've seen what is great and small  
under the sky, on the earth.  
Thanks to you we've been formed,  
we've come to be made and modeled,  
our grandmother, our grandfather,"

they said when they gave thanks for having been made and modeled. They understood everything perfectly, they sighted the four sides, the four corners in the sky, on the earth, and this didn't sound good to the builder and sculptor:

"What our works and designs have said is no good:

'We have understood everything, great and small,' they say." And so the Bearer, Begetter took back their knowledge:

"What should we do with them now? Their vision should at least reach nearby, they should see at least a small part of the face of the earth, but what they're saying isn't good. Aren't they merely 'works' and 'designs' in their very names? Yet they'll become as great as gods, unless they procreate, proliferate at the sowing, the dawning, unless they increase."

"Let it be this way: now we'll take them apart just a little, that's what we need. What we've found out isn't good. Their deeds would become equal to ours, just because their knowledge reaches so far. They see everything," so said

the Heart of Sky, Hurricane,  
Newborn Thunderbolt, Sudden Thunderbolt,  
Sovereign Plumed Serpent,  
Bearer, Begetter,  
Xpiyacoc, Xmucane,  
Maker, Modeler,

as they are called. And when they changed the nature of their works, their designs, it was enough that the eyes be marred by the Heart of Sky. They were blinded as the face of a mirror is breathed upon. Their vision flickered. Now it was only from close up that they could see what was there with any clarity.

And such was the loss of the means of understanding, along with the means of knowing everything, by the four humans. The root was implanted.

And such was the making, modeling of our first grandfather, our father, by the Heart of Sky, Heart of Earth.

**A**ND THEN THEIR WIVES AND WOMEN CAME INTO BEING. Again, the same gods thought of it. It was as if they were asleep when they received them, truly beautiful women were there with Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. With their women there they really came alive. Right away they were happy at heart again, because of their wives.

Red Sea Turtle is the name of the wife of Jaguar Quitze.

Prawn House is the name of the wife of Jaguar Night.

Water Hummingbird is the name of the wife of Not Right Now.

Macaw House is the name of the wife of Dark Jaguar.

So these are the names of their wives, who became ladies of rank, giving birth to the people of the tribes, small and great.

**A**ND THIS IS OUR ROOT, WE WHO ARE THE QUICHÉ PEOPLE. And there came to be a crowd of penitents and sacrificers. It wasn't only four who came into being then, but there were four mothers for us, the Quiché people. There were different names for each of the peoples when they multiplied, there in the east. Their names became numerous: Sovereign Oloman, Cohah, Quenech Ahau, as the names of the people who were there in the east are spoken. They multiplied, and it is known that the Tams and Ilocs began then. They came from the same place, there in the east.

Jaguar Quitze was the grandfather and father of the nine great houses of the Cauecs.

Jaguar Night was the grandfather and father of the nine great houses of the Greathouses.

Not Right Now was the grandfather and father of the four great houses of the Lord Quichés.

There were three separate lineages. The names of the grandfathers and fathers are not forgotten. These multiplied and flowered there in the east, but the Tams and Ilocs also came forth, along with thirteen allied tribes, thirteen principalities, including:

The Rabinals, Cakchiquels, those of Bird House.

And the White Cornmeals.

And also the Lamacs, Serpents, Sweatbath House, Talk House, those of Star House.

And those of Quiba House, those of Yokes House, Acul people, Jaguar House, Guardians of the Spoils, Jaguar Ropes.

It is sufficient that we speak only of the largest tribes from among the allied tribes; we have only noted the largest. Many more came out afterward, each one a division of that citadel. We haven't written their names, but they multiplied there, from out of the east. There came to be many peoples in the blackness; they began to abound even before the birth of the sun and the light. When they began to abound they were all there together; they stood and walked in crowds, there in the east.

There was nothing they could offer for sustenance, but even so they lifted their faces to the sky. They didn't know where they were going. They did this for a long time, when they were there in the grasslands:

black people, white people, people of many faces, people of many languages, uncertain, there at the edge of the sky.

And there were mountain people. They didn't show their faces, they had no homes. They just traveled the mountains, small and great. "It's as if they were crazy," they used to say. They derided the mountain people, it was said. There they watched for the sunrise, and for all the mountain people there was just one language. They did not yet pray to the tree-stone.

These are the words with which they remembered the Maker, Modeler, Heart of Sky, Heart of Earth. It was said that these were enough to keep them mindful of what was in shadow and what was dawning. All they did was ask; they had reverent words. They were reverent, they were givers of praise, givers of respect, lifting their faces to the sky when they made requests for their daughters and sons:

"Wait!  
 thou Maker, thou Modeler,  
 look at us, listen to us,  
 don't let us fall, don't leave us aside,  
 thou god in the sky, on the earth,  
 Heart of Sky, Heart of Earth,  
 give us our sign, our word,  
 as long as there is day, as long as there is light.  
 When it comes to the sowing, the dawning,  
 will it be a greening road, a greening path?  
 Give us a steady light, a level place,  
 a good light, a good place,  
 a good life and beginning.  
 Give us all of this, thou Hurricane,  
 Newborn Thunderbolt, Sudden Thunderbolt,  
 Newborn Nanahuac, Sudden Nanahuac,  
 Falcon, Hunahpu,  
 Sovereign Plumed Serpent,  
 Bearer, Begetter,  
 Xpiyacoc, Xmucane,  
 Grandmother of Day, Grandmother of Light,  
 when it comes to the sowing, the dawning,"

they said when they made their fasts and prayers, just watching intently for the dawn. There, too, they looked toward the east, watching closely for the sun carrier, the great star at the birth of the sun, of the heat for

THEY DID NOT YET PRAY TO THE TREE-STONE: A wooden stele commemorating a new year. The cluster of branches and leaves at the top is the glyph for *te'* or "tree," while the glyph at the foot of the stele is for *tun* or "stone." The snake (*kan*) near the top is a pun on "sky" (*kan*); the inscription on the strip of paper hanging from the stele is represented only by footprints that signify the passage of time, following the reading order of a column of glyphs. From the Dresden Codex.



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

what is under the sky, on the earth, the guide for the human work, the human design.

They spoke, those who are Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar:

"We're still waiting for the dawning," they said, these great knowers, great thinkers, penitents, praisers, as they are called. And there was no tree-stone in the keeping of our first mother-fathers, and they were weary at heart there, waiting for the sun. Already there were many of them, all the tribes, including the Mexican people, all penitents and sacrificers.

"Let's just go. We'll look and see whether there is something to keep as our sign. We'll find out what we should burn in front of it. The way we are right now, we have nothing to keep as our own," said Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. They got word of a citadel. They went there.

AND THIS IS THE NAME OF THE MOUNTAIN WHERE THEY WENT, Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, Dark Jaguar, and the Tams and Ilocs: Tulan Zuyua, Seven Caves, Seven Canyons is the name of the citadel. Those who were to receive the gods arrived there.

And they arrived there at Tulan, all of them, countless people arrived, walking in crowds, and their gods were given out in order, the first being those of Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. They were happy:

"We have found what we were looking for," they said. And this one was the first to come out:

Tohil is the name of the god loaded in the backpack borne by Jaguar Quitze. And the others came out in turn:

Auilix is the name of the god that Jaguar Night carried.

Hacautitz, in turn, is the name of the god received by Not Right Now.

Middle of the Plain is the name of the god received by Dark Jaguar.

And there were still other Quiché people, since the Tams also received theirs, but it was the same Tohil for the Tams, that's the name received by the grandfather and father of the Tam lords, as they are known today.

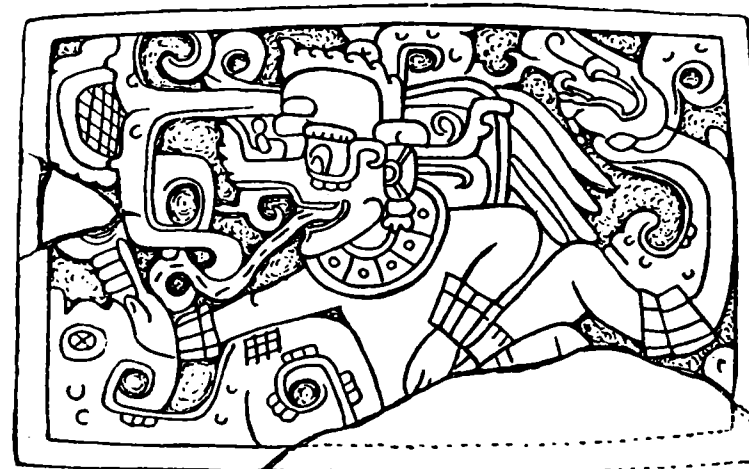
And third were the Ilocs: again, Tohil is the name of the god received by the grandfather and father of those lords, the same ones known today.

And such was the naming of the three Quichés. They have never let go of one another because the god has just one name: Tohil for the Quiché proper, and Tohil for the Tams and Ilocs. There is just one name for their god, and so the Quiché threesome has not come apart, those three. Tohil, Auilix, and Hacautitz are truly great in their very being.

And then all the tribes came in: Rabinals, Cakchiquels, those of Bird House, along with the Mexican people, as the names are today. And the languages of the tribes changed there; their languages became differentiated. They could no longer understand one another clearly when they came away from Tulan.

And there they broke apart. There were those who went eastward and many who came here, but they were all alike in dressing with hides. There were no clothes of the better kinds. They were in patches, they were adorned with mere animal hides. They were poor. They had nothing of their own. But they were people of genius in their very being when they came away from Tulan Zuyua, Seven Caves, Seven Canyons, so says the ancient text.

THEY WALKED IN CROWDS WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT TULAN, AND THERE WAS NO FIRE. Only those with Tohil had it: this was the tribe whose god was first to generate fire. How it was generated is not clear. Their fire was already burning when Jaguar Quitze and Jaguar Night first saw it:



TOHIL . . . WAS FIRST TO GENERATE FIRE: *Here he sits amid swirls of smoke and fire (or clouds and lightning), some of which originate from his own forehead and tongue. One of his legs, turned to the right, can be seen turning into a snake (lightning) below his knee. From an incised potsherd found at Rotten Cane (Uatlán), now in the Peabody Museum, Harvard University.*

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"Alas! Fire has not yet become ours. We'll die from the cold," they said. And then Tohil spoke:

"Do not grieve. You will have your own even when the fire you're talking about has been lost," Tohil told them.

"Aren't you a true god!  
Our sustenance and our support!  
Our god!"

they said when they gave thanks for what Tohil had said.

"Very well, in truth,  
I am your god: so be it.  
I am your lord: so be it,"

the penitents and sacrificers were told by Tohil.

And this was the warming of the tribes. They were pleased by their fire.

After that a great downpour began, which cut short the fire of the



tribes. And hail fell thickly on all the tribes, and their fires were put out by the hail. Their fires didn't start up again. So then Jaguar Quitze and Jaguar Night asked for their fire again:

"Tohil, we'll be finished off by the cold," they told Tohil.

"Well, do not grieve," said Tohil. Then he started a fire. He pivoted inside his sandal.

After that, Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar were pleased.

After they had been warmed, the fires of the other tribes were still out. Now they were being finished off by the cold, so they came back to ask for their fire from Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. They could bear the cold and hail no longer. By now they were chattering and shivering. There was no life left in them. Their legs and arms kept shaking. Their hands were stiff when they arrived.

"Perhaps we wouldn't make ourselves ashamed in front of you if we asked to remove a little something from your fire?" they said when they arrived, but they got no response. And then the tribes cursed in their thoughts. Already their language had become different from that of Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar.

"Alas! We left our language behind. How did we do it? We're lost! Where were we deceived? We had only one language when we came to Tulan, and we had only one place of emergence and origin. We haven't done well," said all the tribes beneath the trees and bushes.

And then a person showed himself before Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar, and he spoke as a messenger of Xibalba:

"Truly, since you have your god, your nurturer, and he is the representation, the commemoration of your Maker and your Modeler, don't give the tribes their fire until they give something to Tohil. You don't want them to give anything to *you*. You must ask for what belongs to Tohil; to *him* must come what they give in order to get fire," said the Xibalban. He had wings like the wings of a bat.

"I am a messenger of those who made you and modeled you," said the Xibalban. So now they were happy; now they thought all the more of Tohil, Aulix, and Hacautz. When the Xibalban had spoken he made himself vanish right in front of them, without delay.

And so again the tribes arrived, again done in by the cold. Thick were the white hail, the blackening storm, and the white crystals. The cold was incalculable. They were simply overwhelmed. Because of the cold all the tribes were going along doubled over, groping along when they arrived in the presence of Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and

Dark Jaguar. There was great pain in their hearts; they had covetous mouths and covetous faces.

And now they were coming as thieves before Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar:

"Wouldn't you take pity on us if we asked to remove a little something from your fire? Wasn't it found and wasn't it revealed that we had just one home and just one mountain when you were made, when you were modeled? So please take pity on us," they said.

"And what would you give us for taking pity on you?" they were asked.

"Well, we'd give you metal," said the tribes.

"We don't want metal," said Jaguar Quitze and Jaguar Night.

"Whatever might you want, if we may ask?" the tribes said then.

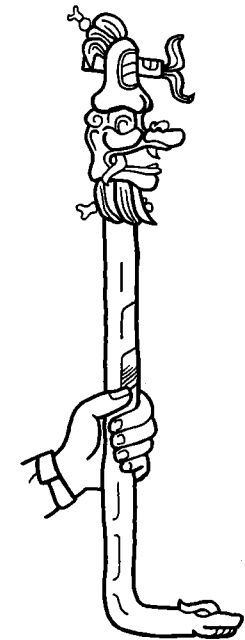
"Very well. First we must ask Tohil, and then we'll tell you," they were told next. And then they asked Tohil:

"What should the tribes give you, Tohil? They've come to ask for your fire," said Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar.

"Very well. You will tell them:

" 'Don't they want to be suckled on their sides and under their arms?

THEY'VE COME TO ASK FOR YOUR FIRE: *This is a scepter held by a ruler, one of the forms taken by K'awil, the lowland Maya counterpart of Tohil, or Hurricane. On his forehead he wears an obsidian mirror with a burning torch emerging from it. His body and his one normal leg are omitted here, leaving only the leg that becomes a serpent (or lightning). This is a reconstruction from several Late Classic stucco reliefs at Palenque.*



DRAWING BY THE AUTHOR

Isn't it their heart's desire to embrace me? I, who am Tohil? But if there is no desire, then I'll not give them their fire," says Tohil. "When the time comes, not right now, they'll be suckled on their sides, under their arms," he says to you, 'you will say,' they were told, Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar, and then they spoke the word of Tohil.

"Very well. Let him suckle. And very well, we shall embrace him," said the tribes, when they answered and agreed to the word of Tohil. They made no delay but said "very well" right away, and then they received their fire.

After that they got warm, but there was one group that simply stole the fire, there in the smoke. This was the Bat House. Snake Tooth is the name of the god of the Cakchiquels, but it looks like a bat. They went right past in the smoke then, they sneaked past when they came to get fire. Those fiery Cakchiquels didn't ask for their fire. They didn't give themselves up in defeat, but all the other tribes were defeated when they gave themselves up to being suckled on their sides, under their arms.

And this is what Tohil meant by being "suckled": that all the tribes be cut open before him, and that their hearts be removed "through their sides, under their arms." This deed had not yet been attempted when Tohil saw into the middle of it, nor had Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar received fiery splendor and majesty.

WHEN THEY CAME AWAY FROM TULAN ZUYUA, they weren't eating. They observed a continuous fast. It was enough that they watch intently for the dawning, that they watch closely for the rising of the sun, taking turns at watching for the great star named sun carrier. This one came first before the sun when the sun was born, the newly risen sun carrier.

And there, always, they were facing the east, when they were there in the place named Tulan Zuyua. Their gods came from there. It wasn't really here that they received their fiery splendor and their dominion, but rather there that the tribes, great and small, were subjugated and humiliated. When they were cut open before Tohil, all the peoples gave their blood, their gore, their sides, their underarms. Fiery splendor came to them all at once at Tulan, along with great knowledge, and they achieved this in the darkness, in the night.

And now they came away, they tore themselves away from there. Now they left the east:

"Our home is not here. Let's go on until we see where we belong,"

said Tohil. He actually spoke to them, to Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar.

"It remains for you to give thanks, since you have yet to take care of bleeding your ears, yet to take stitches in your elbows. You must worship. This is your way of giving thanks before your god."

"Very well," they replied, then they bled their ears. They cried in their song about coming from Tulan. They cried in their hearts when they came away, when they made their departure from Tulan:

"Alas!

We won't be here when we see the dawn,  
when the sun is born,  
when the face of the earth is lit,"

they said.

AND THEN THEY CAME AWAY, JUST CAMPING ON THE ROAD. People were just camping there, each tribe slept and then got up again. And they were always watching for the star, the sign of the day. They kept this sign of the dawn in their hearts when they came away from the east. In unity they passed beyond the place named Great Hollow today.

And then they arrived on top of a mountain there. All the Quiché people got together there, along with the other tribes, and all of them held council there. The name the mountain has today is from when they took counsel together; Place of Advice is the name of the mountain. They got together and identified themselves there:

"Here am I: I am a Quiché person, and you there, you are Tams, this will be your name," the Tams were told. And then the Ilocs were told:

"You are the Ilocs, this will be your name. The three Quichés must not be lost. We are united in our word," they said when they fixed their names.

And then the Cakchiquels were named; their name became Cakchiquels. So, too, with the Rabinals; this became their name. It hasn't been lost today.

And then there are those of Bird House, as they are named today.

These are the names they named for one another. When they held council there, they were still waiting for the dawning, watching for the appearance of the rising star, the one that came before the sun when it was born.

"When we came away from Tulan, we broke ourselves apart," they told each other.

This is what kept weighing on their hearts, the great pain they went through: there was nothing to eat, nothing to feed on. They were just smelling the tips of their staffs as if they were thinking of eating them, but they weren't eating at all as they came.

And it isn't clear how they crossed over the sea. They crossed over as if there were no sea. They just crossed over on some stones, stones piled up in the sand. And they gave it a name: Stone Courses, Sand Banks was their name for the place where they crossed through the midst of the sea. Where the waters were divided, they crossed over.

And this is what weighed on their hearts when they took counsel: that they had nothing to eat. They had one beverage to drink, just one atole, which they brought up on the mountain named Place of Advice. And they also brought Tohil, Auilix, and Hacauitz.

Observing a great fast was Jaguar Quitze, with his wife; Red Sea Turtle is his wife's name.

Likewise doing it was Jaguar Night, with his wife, named Prawn House.

And Not Right Now was also there at the great fast, with his wife, named Water Hummingbird, along with Dark Jaguar, whose wife's name is Macaw House.

So these were the ones who fasted, there in the blackness, in the early dawn. Their sadness was great when they were there on the mountain named Place of Advice today. And their gods spoke there.

**A**ND THEN TOHIL, ALONG WITH AUILIX AND HACAUITZ, SPOKE TO THEM, to Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar:

"Let's just go, let's just get up, let's not stay here. Please give us places to hide. It's nearly dawn. Wouldn't you look pitiful if we became plunder for warriors? Construct places where we can remain yours, you penitents and sacrificers, and give one place to each of us," they said when they spoke.

"Very well. Let's get out and search the forests," they all replied.

After that they packed each one of the gods on their backs.

And then Auilix went into the canyon named Concealment Canyon, as they called it, into the great canyon in the forest. Auilix's Place is the name today. He was left there, placed in the canyon by Jaguar Night, coming first in the sequence of placements.

And then Hacauitz was placed at the top of a great pyramid. Hacauitz is the name of the mountain today, and it became their citadel. So the god Hacauitz remained there, and Not Right Now stayed with his god. This was the second god to be hidden by them. Hacauitz didn't stay in the forest. It was on a bare mountain that Hacauitz was hidden.

And then came Jaguar Quitze. He arrived in the great forest there. Tohil was put into hiding by Jaguar Quitze; the mountain is called Tohil's Place today. Then they gave Concealment Canyon an epithet: Tohil Medicine. Masses of serpents and masses of jaguars, rattlesnakes, fer-de-lances were there in the forest where he was hidden by the penitents and sacrificers.

So they were there in unity: Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. In unity they waited for the dawn, there on top of the mountain named Hacauitz.

Also, a short distance away, was the god of the Tams, together with the Ilocs. Tam Tribe is the name of the place where the god of the Tams was, there at the dawn. Net Weave Tribe is the name of the place where dawn came for the Ilocs. The god of the Ilocs was just a short distance away.

Also there were all the Rabinals, Cakchiquels, those of Bird House, all the tribes, small and great. In unity they stopped there, and in unity they had their dawning there. In unity they waited there for the rising of the great star named sun carrier.

"It will rise before the sun when the dawn comes," they said, and they were in unity there: Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. There was no sleep, no rest for them. They cried their hearts and their guts out, there at the dawning and clearing, and so they looked terrible. Great sorrow, great anguish came over them; they were marked by their pain. They just stayed that way.

"Coming here hasn't been sweet for us. Alas! If we could only see the birth of the sun! What have we done? We all had one identity, one mountain, but we sent ourselves into exile," they said when they talked among themselves. They talked about sorrow, about anguish, about crying and wailing, since their hearts had not yet been set to rest by the dawn.

And these are the ones who did feel settled there: the gods who were in the canyons, in the forests, just out in the bromeliads, in the hanging mosses, not yet-set on pedestals. At first, Tohil, Auilix, and Hacauitz actually spoke. The greatness of their day and the greatness of their breath of spirit set them above all the other tribal gods. Their genius was manifold and their ways were manifold, their strategies. They were chilling, they were frightening in their very being and in the hearts of the tribes, whose thoughts were calmed by Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not

Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. Their hearts did not yet harbor ill will toward the gods who had been taken up and carried away when they all came from Tulan Zuyua, there in the east, and who were now in the forest.

These were the dawning places: Tohil's Place, Auilix's Place, and Hacauitz, as they are called today. And this is where our grandfathers, our fathers had their sowing, their dawning.

This is what we shall explain next: the dawning and showing of the sun, moon, and stars.

**A**ND HERE IS THE DAWNING AND SHOWING OF THE SUN, MOON, AND STARS. And Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar were overjoyed when they saw the sun carrier. It came up first. It looked brilliant when it came up, since it was ahead of the sun.

After that they unwrapped their copal incense, which came from the east, and there was triumph in their hearts when they unwrapped it. They gave their heartfelt thanks with three kinds at once:

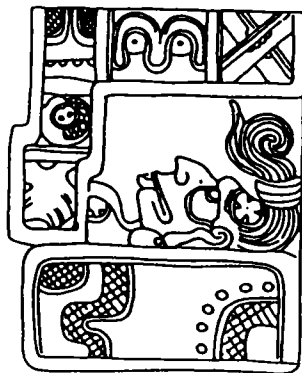
Mixtam Copal is the name of the copal brought by Jaguar Quitze.

Cauiztan Copal, next, is the name of the copal brought by Jaguar Night.

Godly Copal, as the next one is called, was brought by Not Right Now.

The three of them had their copal, and this is what they burned as they incensed the direction of the rising sun. They were crying sweetly as they shook their burning copal, the precious copal.

IT WAS AHEAD OF THE SUN: *The band across the top is sky, with the glyph for Venus in the middle. Below Venus, lying on the earth, is the profile of the sun god. From a Late Classic Maya relief on a bench at Copán.*



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

After that they cried because they had yet to see and yet to witness the birth of the sun.

And then, when the sun came up, the animals, small and great, were happy. They all came up from the rivers and canyons; they waited on all the mountain peaks. Together they looked toward the place where the sun came out.

So then the puma and jaguar cried out, but the first to cry out was a bird, the parrot by name. All the animals were truly happy. The eagle, the white vulture, small birds, great birds spread their wings, and the penitents and sacrificers knelt down. They were overjoyed, together with the penitents and sacrificers of the Tams, the Ilocs.

And the Rabinals, Cakchiquels, those of Bird House.

And the Sweatbath House, Talk House, Quiba House, those of Yokes House.

And the Mexican Sovereigns—however many tribes there may be today. There were countless peoples, but there was just one dawn for all tribes.

And then the face of the earth was dried out by the sun. The sun was like a person when he revealed himself. His face was hot, so he dried out the face of the earth. Before the sun came up it was soggy, and the face of the earth was muddy before the sun came up. And when the sun had risen just a short distance he was like a person, and his heat was unbearable. Since he revealed himself only when he was born, it is only his reflection that now remains. As they put it in the ancient text,

"The visible sun is not the real one."

And then, all at once, Tohil, Auilix, and Hacauitz were turned to stone, along with the icons of the puma, jaguar, rattlesnake, fer-de-lance, which the White Sparkstriker took with him into the trees. Everywhere, all of them became stone when the sun, moon, and stars appeared. Perhaps we would have no relief from the voracious animals today—the puma, jaguar, rattlesnake, fer-de-lance—and perhaps it wouldn't even be our day today, if the original animals hadn't been turned to stone by the sun when he came up.

There was great happiness in the hearts of Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. They were overjoyed when it dawned. The people on the mountain of Hacauitz were not yet numerous; just a few were there. Their dawning was there and they burned copal there, incensing the direction of the rising sun. They came from there: it is their own mountain, their own plain. Those named Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar came from there, and they began their increase on that mountain.

And that became their citadel, since they were there when the sun, moon, and stars appeared, when it dawned and cleared on the face of the earth, over everything under the sky.

**A**ND THERE BEGAN THEIR SONG NAMED "CAMACU." They sang out the lament of their very hearts and guts. In their song they stated:

"Alas!  
We were lost at Tulan!  
We shattered ourselves!  
We left our elder brothers behind!  
Our younger brothers!  
Where did they see the sun?  
Where must they be staying,  
now that the dawn has come?"

They were speaking of the penitents and sacrificers who were the Mexican people.

"Even though Tohil is his name, he is the same as the god of the Mexican people, who is named Yolcuat and Quitzalcuat. When we divided, there at Tulan, at Zuyua, they left with us, and they shared our identity when we came away," they said among themselves when they remembered their faraway brothers, elder and younger, the Mexican people whose dawn was there in the place named Mexico today.

And again, some of the people stayed there in the east; Sovereign Oloman is their name.

"We left them behind," they said. It was a great weight on their hearts, up there on Hacautitz. The Tams and Ilocs did likewise, except that they were in the forest. Tam Tribe is the name of the place where it dawned for the penitents and sacrificers of the Tams, with their god, the same Tohil. There was just one name for the god of all three divisions of the Quiché people.

And again, the name of the god of the Rabinals was the same. His name was only slightly changed; "One Toh" is the way the name of the god of the Rabinals is spoken. They say it that way, but it is meant to be in agreement with the Quichés and with their language.

And the language has differentiated in the case of the Cakchiquels, since their god had a different name when they came away from Tulan Zuyua. Snake Tooth is the name of the god of the Bat House, and they

speak a different language today. Along with their god, the lineages took their names; they are called Keeper of the Bat Mat and Keeper of the Dance Mat. Like their god, their language was differentiated on account of a stone, when they came from Tulan in the darkness. All the tribes were sown and came to light in unity, and each division was allocated a name for its god.

And now we shall tell about their stay and their sojourn there on the mountain. The four were there together, the ones named Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. Their hearts cried out to Tohil, Auilix, and Hacautitz, who were now amid the bromeliads and hanging mosses.

**A**ND HERE THEY BURN THEIR COPAL, and here also is the origin of the masking of Tohil.

And when they went before Tohil and Auilix, they went to visit them and keep their day. Now they gave thanks before them for the dawning, and now they bowed low before their stones, there in the forest. Now it was only a manifestation of his genius that spoke when the penitents and sacrificers came before Tohil, and what they brought and burned was not great. All they burned before their gods was resin, just bits of pitchy bark, along with marigolds.

And when Tohil spoke now it was only his genius. When the gods taught procedures to the penitents and sacrificers, they said this when they spoke:

"This very place has become our mountain, our plain. Now that we are yours, our day and our birth have become great, because all the peoples are yours, all the tribes. And since we are still your companions, even in your citadel, we shall give you procedures:

"Do not reveal us to the tribes when they burn with envy over us. They are truly numerous now, so don't you let us be hunted down, but rather give the creatures of the grasses and grains to us, such as the female deer and female birds. Please come give us a little of their blood, take pity on us. And set the pelts of the deer aside, save them. These are for disguises, for deception. They will become deerskin bundles, and they will also serve as our surrogates before the tribes. When you are asked:

"Where is Tohil?" then you will show them the deerskin bundle, yet you won't be giving yourselves away. And there is still more for you to do. You will become great in your very being. Defeat all the tribes. They

must bring blood and lymph before us, they must come to embrace us. They belong to us already," said Tohil, Auilix, and Hacauitz. They had a youthful appearance when they saw them, when they came to burn offerings before them.

So then began the hunting of the young of all the birds and deer; they were taken in the hunt by the penitents and sacrificers.

And when they got hold of the birds and fawns, they would then go to anoint the mouth of the stone of Tohil or Auilix with the blood of the deer or bird. And the bloody drink was drunk by the gods. The stone would speak at once when the penitents and sacrificers arrived, when they went to make their burnt offerings.

They did the very same thing before the deerskin bundles: they burned resin, and they also burned marigolds and stevia. There was a deerskin bundle for each of the gods, which was displayed there on the mountain.

They didn't occupy their houses during the day, but just walked in the mountains. And this was their food: just the larva of the yellow jacket, the larva of the wasp, and the larva of the bee, which they hunted. As yet there wasn't anything good to eat or good to drink. Also, it wasn't obvious how to get to their houses, nor was it obvious where their wives stayed.

And the tribes were already densely packed, settling down one by one, with each division of a tribe gathering itself together. Now they were crowding the roads; already their roadways were obvious.

As for Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar, it wasn't obvious where they were. When they saw the people of the tribes passing by on the roads, that was when they would get up on the mountain peaks, just crying out with the cry of the coyote and the cry of the fox. And they would make the cries of the puma and jaguar, whenever they saw the tribes out walking in numbers. The tribes were saying:

"It's just a coyote crying out," and "Just a fox."

"Just a puma. Just a jaguar."

In the minds of all the tribes, it was as if humans weren't involved. They did it just as a way of decoying the tribes; that was what their hearts desired. They did it so that the tribes wouldn't get really frightened just yet; that was what they intended when they cried out with the cry of the puma and the cry of the jaguar. And then, when they saw just one or two people out walking, they intended to overwhelm them.

Each day, when they came back to their houses and wives, they brought just the same things—yellow jacket larvae, wasp larvae, and bee larvae—and gave them to their wives, each day. And when they went before Tohil, Auilix, and Hacauitz, they thought to themselves:

"They are Tohil, Auilix, and Hacauitz, yet we only give them the blood

of deer and birds, we only take stitches in our ears and our elbows when we ask for our strength and our manhood from Tohil, Auilix, and Hacauitz. Who will take care of the death of the tribes? Should we just kill them one by one?" they said among themselves.

And when they went before Tohil, Auilix, and Hacauitz, they took stitches in their ears and their elbows in front of the gods. They spilled their blood, they poured gourdfuls into the mouths of the stones. But these weren't really stones: each one became like a boy when they arrived, happy once again over the blood.

And then came a further sign as to what the penitents and sacrificers should do:

"You must win a great many victories. Your right to do this came from over there at Tulan, when you brought us here," they were told. Then the matter of the suckling was set forth, at the place called Stagger, and the blood that would result from it, the rainstorm of blood, also became a gift for Tohil, along with Auilix and Hacauitz.

Now here begins the abduction of the people of the tribes by Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar.

**A**ND THEN COMES THE KILLING OF THE TRIBES. This is how they died: when there was just one person out walking, or just two were out walking, it wasn't obvious when they took them away.

After that they went to cut them open before Tohil and Auilix.

After that, when they had offered the blood, the skull would be placed in the road. They would roll it onto the road. So the tribes were talking:

"A jaguar has been eating," was all that was said, because their tracks were like a jaguar's tracks when they did their deed. They did not reveal themselves. Many people were abducted.

It was actually a long time before the tribes came to their senses:

"If it's Tohil and Auilix who are after us, we have only to search for the penitents and sacrificers. We'll follow their tracks to wherever their houses are," said all those of the tribes, when they shared their thoughts among themselves.

After that, they began following the tracks of the penitents and sacrificers, but they weren't clear. They only saw the tracks of the deer, the tracks of the jaguar. The tracks weren't clear, nothing was clear. Where they began the tracks were merely those of animals. It was as if the tracks were there for the sole purpose of leading them astray. The way was not clear:

It would get cloudy.  
It would get dark and rainy.  
It would get muddy, too.  
It would get misty and drizzly.

That was all the tribes could see in front of them, and their search would simply make them weary at heart. Then they would give up.

Because Tohil, Aulix, and Hacautitz were great in their very being, they did this for a long time, there on the mountain. They did their killing on the frontiers of the tribes when the abductions began; they singled them out and cut them down. They would seize the people of the tribes in the roads, cutting them open before Tohil, Aulix, and Hacautitz.

And the boys hid there on the mountain. Tohil, Aulix, and Hacautitz had the appearance of three boys when they went out walking; these were simply the spirit familiars of the stones. There was a river. They would bathe there on the bank, just as a way of revealing themselves, and this gave the place its name. The name of the river came to be Tohil's Bath, and the tribes saw them there many times. They would vanish the moment they were seen by the tribes.

Then the news spread as to the whereabouts of Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar, and this is when the tribes realized how they were being killed.

**F**IRST THE TRIBES TRIED TO PLAN THE DEFEAT OF TOHIL, AULIX, AND HACAUTITZ. All the penitents and sacrificers of the tribes spoke to the others. They roused and summoned one another, all of them. Not even one or two divisions were left out. All of them converged and presented themselves, then they shared their thoughts. And they said, as they questioned one another:

"What would assure the defeat of the Cauecs, the Quiché people? Our vassals have met their ends because of them. Isn't it clear that our people have been lost because of them? What if they finish us off with these abductions?"

"Let it be this way: if the fiery splendor of Tohil, Aulix, and Hacautitz is so great, then let this Tohil become our god! Let him be captured! Don't let them defeat us completely! Don't we constitute a multitude of people? And as for the Cauecs, there aren't as many of them," they said, when all of them had assembled. Some among the tribes also said this when they spoke:

"Who could be bathing every day at the riverbank? If it's Tohil, Aulix, and Hacautitz, then we can defeat them ahead of time. Let the defeat of the penitents and sacrificers begin right there!" some of them said, and then they spoke further:

"How shall we defeat them?" And then they said:

"Let this be our means for defeating them: since they present the appearance of adolescent boys at the river, let two maidens go there. Let them be choice maidens who radiate preciousness, so that when they go they'll be desirable," they said.

"Very well. So we'll just search for two perfect maidens," the others replied. And then they searched among their daughters for those who were truly radiant maidens. Then they gave the maidens instructions:

"You must go, our dear daughters. Go wash clothes at the river, and if you should see three boys, undress yourselves in front of them. And if their hearts should desire you, you will titillate them. When they say to you:

'We're coming after you,' then you are to say:

'Yes.' And then you will be asked:

'Where do you come from? Whose daughters are you?' When they say that, you are to answer them:

'We are the daughters of lords, so let a sign be forthcoming from you.' Then they should give you something. If they like your faces you must really give yourselves up to them. And if you do not give yourselves up, then we shall kill you. We'll feel satisfied when you bring back a sign, since we'll think of it as proof that they came after you," said the lords, instructing the two maidens.

Here are their names: Lust Woman is the name of the one maiden, and Wailing Woman is the name of the other.

**A**ND THEY SENT THE TWO OF THEM, NAMED LUST WOMAN AND WAILING WOMAN, over to the place where Tohil, Aulix, and Hacautitz bathed. All the tribes knew about this.

And then they went off. They were dressed up, looking truly beautiful, when they went to the place where Tohil bathed. They were carrying what looked like their wash when they went off. Now the lords were pleased over having sent their two daughters there.

And when they arrived at the river, they began to wash. They undressed themselves, both of them. They were on the rocks, on their hands and knees, when Tohil, Aulix, and Hacautitz came along. They got



to the bank of the river and just barely glanced at the two maidens washing there, and the maidens got a sudden scare when Tohil and the others arrived. They did not go lusting after the two maidens. Then came the questioning:

"Where do you come from?" the two maidens were asked. "What do you intend by coming here, to the bank of our river?" they were also asked.

"We were sent here by the lords, so we came. The lords told us:

'Go see the faces of Tohil and the others, and speak to them,' the lords told us, 'and also, there must come a sign as to whether you really saw their faces. Go!' is what we were told," said the two maidens, explaining their errand.

But this is what the tribes had intended: that the maidens should be violated by the spirit familiars of Tohil and the others. Then Tohil, Aulix, and Hacautz spoke, answering the two maidens named Lust Woman and Wailing Woman:

"Good. Let a sign of our word go with you. But you must wait for it, then give it directly to the lords," they were told.

And then Tohil and the others plotted with the penitents and sacrificers. Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, and Not Right Now were told:

"You must inscribe three cloaks, inscribe the signs of your being. They're for the tribes; they'll go back with the maidens who are washing. Give them to the maidens," Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, and Not Right Now were told.

After that, they inscribed all three of them. Jaguar Quitze wrote first: the jaguar became his image, he inscribed it on the face of his cloak.

Then there was Jaguar Night: the eagle was now his image, he inscribed it on the face of his cloak.

The next to write was Not Right Now: swarms of yellow jackets, swarms of wasps were his images, his figures; he inscribed them on the face of his cloak. Then their figures were complete, all three of them; they had done the threefold inscription.

After that, when Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, and Not Right Now went to give the cloaks to those who were named Lust Woman and Wailing Woman, they spoke to them:

"Here is the proof of your word. When you come before the lords you will say:

'Tohil really spoke to us, and here is the sign we've brought back,' you'll tell them, and give them the cloaks to try on," the maidens were told when they were given their instructions.

So then they went back, taking the inscribed cloaks.

And when they arrived, the lords were happy the moment they spotted what they had asked for, hanging from the arms of the maidens.

"Didn't you see the face of Tohil?" they were asked.

"See it we did," said Lust Woman and Wailing Woman.

"Very good. You've brought back some sort of sign. Isn't that so?" said the lords, since there seemed to be signs of their sin—or so thought the lords. So then they were shown the inscribed cloaks by the maidens: one with a jaguar, one with an eagle, and one with yellow jackets and wasps figured on the inside, on a smooth surface.

And they loved the way the cloaks looked. They costumed themselves. The one with the jaguar figured on it didn't do anything; it was the first to be tried on by a lord.

And when another lord costumed himself with the second inscribed cloak, with the eagle figured on it, he just felt good inside it. He turned around in front of them, unfurling it in front of all of them.

And then came the third inscribed cloak to be tried on by a lord, he costumed himself with the one that had yellow jackets and wasps inside it.

And then he started getting stung by the yellow jackets and wasps. He couldn't endure it, he couldn't stand the stings of the insects. That lord yelled his mouth off over the insects, mere written images, the figures of Not Right Now. It was the third inscription that defeated them.

And then the maidens named Lust Woman and Wailing Woman were reprimanded by the lords:

"How did you get these things you brought back? Where did you go to get them, you tricksters!" the maidens were told when they were reprimanded.

Again, all the tribes were defeated because of Tohil. This is what they had intended: that Tohil would be tempted to go after the maidens. It then became the profession of Lust Woman and Wailing Woman to bark shins; the tribes continued to think of them as temptresses.

So the defeat of Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, and Not Right Now was not brought about, since they were people of genius.

And then all the tribes plotted again:

"How are we going to beat them? They are truly great in their very being," they said when they shared their thoughts.

"Even so, we'll invade them and kill them. Let's fit ourselves out with weapons and shields. Aren't we a multitude? There won't even be one or two of them left," they said when they shared their thoughts. All the tribes fitted themselves out. There were masses of killers, once the killers of all the tribes had joined together.



And as for Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar, they were there on the mountain. Hacautiz is the name of the mountain where they were, and those spirit boys of theirs were hidden there on the mountain. They were not a numerous people then; their numbers were not equal to the numbers of the tribes. There were just a few of them on the mountain, their fortress, so when it was said that the tribes had planned death for them, all of them gathered together. They held a council; they all sent for one another.

**A**ND HERE IS THE JOINING TOGETHER OF ALL THE TRIBES, all decked out now with weapons and shields. Their metal ornaments were countless, they looked beautiful, all the lords, the men. In truth, they were just making talk, all of them. In truth, they would become our captives.

"Since there is a Tohil, and since he is a god, let's celebrate his day—or let's make him our prize!" they said among themselves. But Tohil already knew about it, and Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, and Not Right Now also knew about it. They had heard about it while it was being plotted, since they were neither asleep nor at rest.

So then all the lance-bearing warriors of the tribes were armed.

After that, all the warriors got up during the night, in order to enter

THEY WOULD BECOME OUR CAPTIVES: *This warrior has bound his prisoner's arms behind his back and stripped him of nearly all his paraphernalia. From the Dresden Codex.*



DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

our very midst. They set off, but they never arrived. They just fell asleep on the way, all those warriors.

And then they were defeated again by Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, and Not Right Now, since every last one of them fell asleep in the road. Now they couldn't feel a thing. A multitude slept, all of them, and that's when things got started. Their eyebrows were plucked out, along with their beards.

And then the metal was undone from their cloaks, along with their headdresses.

And their necklaces came off too, and then the necks of their staffs. Their metal was taken just to cause them a loss of face, and the plucking was done just to signify the greatness of the Quiché.

After that, they woke up. Right away they reached for their headdresses, along with the necks of their staffs. There was no metal on their cloaks and headdresses.

"How could it have been taken from us? Who could have plucked us? Where did they come from? Our metal has been stolen!" said all the warriors.

"Perhaps it's those tricksters who've been abducting people! But it's not over with. Let's not get frightened by them. Let's enter their very citadel! That's the only way we'll ever see our metal and make it ours again!" said all the tribes, but even so, they were just making talk, all of them.

The hearts of the penitents and sacrificers were content, there on the mountain, but even so, Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar were making great plans.

**A**ND THEN JAGUAR QUITZE, JAGUAR NIGHT, NOT RIGHT NOW, AND DARK JAGUAR HAD A PLAN. They made a fence at the edge of their citadel. They just made a palisade of planks and stakes around their citadel.

Next they made manikins; it was as if they had made people. Next they lined them up on the parapet. They were even equipped with weapons and shields. Headdresses were included, with metal on top, and cloaks were included. But they were mere manikins, mere woodcarvings. They used the metal that belonged to the tribes, which they had gone to get in the road. This is what they used to decorate the manikins. They surrounded the citadel.

And then they asked Tohil about their plan:

"What if we die, and what if we're defeated?" They spoke straight from their hearts before Tohil.

"Do not grieve. I am here. And here is what you will use on them. Do not be afraid," Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar were told, and then the matter of the yellow jackets and wasps was set out.

And when they had gone to get these insects and come back with them, they put them inside four large gourds, which were placed all around the citadel. The yellow jackets and wasps were shut inside the gourds. These were their weapons against the tribes.

And they were spied upon and watched from hiding; their citadel was studied by the messengers of the tribes.

"There aren't many of them," they said, but when they came to look it was only the manikins, the woodcarvings, that were moving, with weapons and shields in their hands. They looked like real people, they looked like real killers when the tribes saw them.

And all the tribes were happy when they saw there weren't many of them. The tribes themselves were in crowds; there were countless people, warriors and killers, the assassins of Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, and Not Right Now, who were there on the mountain called Hacautz. This is where they were when they were invaded. Here we shall tell about it.

**A**ND THESE ARE THE ONES WHO WERE THERE: JAGUAR QUITZE, JAGUAR NIGHT, NOT RIGHT NOW, AND DARK JAGUAR. They were in unity on the mountain with their wives and children.

And then all the warriors came, the killers, and it was nothing less than eight hundred score, or even thirty times eight hundred people who surrounded the citadel. They were bellowing, bristling with weapons and shields, rending their mouths with howling and growling, bellowing, yelling, whistling through their hands when they came up below the citadel. But the penitents and sacrificers had no fear; they just enjoyed the spectacle from the parapet of the stockade. They were lined up with their wives and children. Their hearts were content, since the tribes were merely making talk.

And then they climbed up the mountainside, and now they were just a little short of the edge of the citadel.

And then the gourds were opened up—there were four of them around the citadel—and the yellow jackets and wasps were like a cloud of smoke when they poured out of each of the gourds. And the warriors

were done in, with the insects landing on their eyes and landing on their noses, on their mouths, their legs, their arms. The insects went after them wherever they were, they overtook them wherever they were. There were yellow jackets and wasps everywhere, landing to sting their eyes. They had to watch out for whole swarms of them, there were insects going after every single person. They were dazed by the yellow jackets and wasps. No longer able to hold on to their weapons and shields, they were doubling over and falling to the ground, stumbling. They fell down the mountainside.

And now they couldn't feel a thing when they were hit with arrows and cut with axes. Now Jaguar Quitze and Jaguar Night could even use sticks; even their wives became killers.

Now some of them turned away, then all the tribes just took off running. The first to be overtaken were finished off, killed, and it wasn't just a few people who died. For those who didn't die the chase was carried into their very midst when the insects caught up with them. There were no manly deeds for them to do, since they no longer carried weapons and shields.

Then all the tribes were conquered. Now the tribes humbled themselves before Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, and Not Right Now:

"Take pity on us! Don't kill us!" they said.

"Very well. Although you were destined to join the dead, you will be payers of tribute for as long as there are days and as long as there is light," they were told.

Such was the defeat of all the tribes by our first mother-fathers. It was done there on the mountain named Hacautz today. This is where they first began. They grew, they multiplied, they had daughters, they had sons on Hacautz. They were happy, once they had beaten all the tribes, who were defeated there on the mountain.

In this way they accomplished the defeat of the tribes, all the tribes.

After that, their hearts were content. They informed their sons that their death was approaching. They very much intended to be taken by death.

**N**OW THIS IS WHERE WE SHALL TELL ABOUT THE DEATH OF JAGUAR QUITZE, JAGUAR NIGHT, NOT RIGHT NOW, AND DARK JAGUAR, as they are named. Since they knew about their death and disappearance, they left instructions with their sons. They weren't sickly yet, they weren't gasping for breath when they left their word with their sons.

These are the names of their sons:

Jaguar Quitze begot these two: Noble Two was the name of the first-born and Noble Raiment was the name of the second of the sons of Jaguar Quitze, the grandfather and father of the Cauecs.

And again, Jaguar Night begot two. These are their names: Noble Acul was the name of his first son, and the other was called Noble Acutec, the second son of Jaguar Night, of the Greathouses.

And Not Right Now begot just one son, named Noble Lord.

These three had sons, but Dark Jaguar had no son. They were all true penitents and sacrificers, and these are the names of their sons, with whom they left instructions. They were united, the four of them together. They sang of the pain in their hearts, they cried their hearts out in their singing. "Camacu" is the name of the song they sang.

And then they advised their sons:

"Our dear sons: we are leaving. We are going back. We have enlightened words, enlightened advice to leave with you—and with you who have come from faraway mountains, our dear wives," they told their wives. They advised each one of them:

"We are going back to our own tribal place. Again it is the time of our Lord Deer, as is reflected in the sky. We have only to make our return. Our work has been done, our day has been completed. Since you know this, neither forget us nor put us aside. You have yet to see your own home and mountain, the place of your beginning.

"Let it be this way: you must go. Go see the place where we came from," were the words they spoke when they gave their advice.

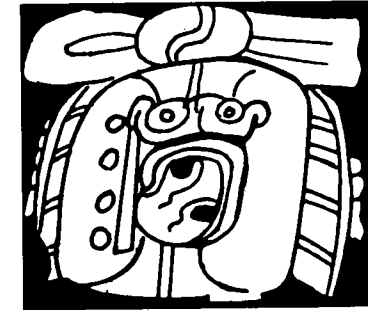
And then Jaguar Quitze left a sign of his being:

"This is for making requests of me. I shall leave it with you. Here is your fiery splendor. I have completed my instructions, my counsel," he said when he left the sign of his being, the Bundle of Flames, as it is called. It wasn't clear just what it was; it was wound about with coverings. It was never unwrapped. Its sewing wasn't clear because no one looked on while it was being wrapped.

In this way they left instructions, and then they disappeared from there on the mountain of Hacautiz. Their wives and children never saw them again. The nature of their disappearance was not clear. But whatever the case with their disappearance, their instructions were clear, and the bundle became precious to those who remained. It was a memorial to their fathers. Immediately they burned offerings before this memorial to their fathers.

When the lords began their generation of the people, the Cauecs took

IT WAS WOUND ABOUT WITH COVERINGS: *The rounded shape and large knot on top are characteristic of lowland Maya sacred bundles. From a Late Classic vase.*



DRAWING REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF MICHAEL D. COE AND THE GROLIER CLUB

their start from Jaguar Quitze, the grandfather and father; his sons, named Noble Two and Noble Raiment, were not lost.

Such was the death of all four of our first grandfathers and fathers. When they disappeared their sons remained there on the mountain of Hacautiz; their sons stayed there for a while. As for all the tribes, it was now their day to be broken and downtrodden. They no longer had any splendor to them, though they were still numerous.

All those on Hacautiz gathered on each day that was for the remembrance of their fathers. For them, the day of the bundle was a great one. They could not unwrap it; for them it stayed bundled—the Bundle of Flames, as they called it. It was given this epithet, this name when it was left in their keeping by their fathers, who made it just as a sign of their being.

Such was the disappearance and loss of Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar, the first people to come from beside the sea, from the east. They came here in ancient times. When they died they were already old. They had a reputation for penitence and sacrifice.

# PART FIVE



AND THEN THEY REMEMBERED WHAT HAD BEEN SAID ABOUT THE EAST. This is when they remembered the instructions of their fathers. The ancient things received from their fathers were not lost. The tribes gave them their wives, becoming their fathers-in-law as they took wives. And there were three of them who said, as they were about to go away:

"We are going to the east, where our fathers came from," they said, then they followed their road. The three of them were representative sons:

Noble Two was the name of the son of Jaguar Quitze who represented all the Cauecs.

Noble Acutec was the name of the son of Jaguar Night who served as the sole representative of the Greathouses.

Noble Lord was the name of the only son of Not Right Now, representing the Lord Quichés.

So these are the names of those who went there beside the sea. There were only three who went, but they had skill and knowledge. Their being was not quite that of mere humans. They advised all their brothers, elder and younger, who were left behind. They were glad to go:

"We're not dying. We're coming back," they said when they went, yet it was these same three who passed over the sea.

And then they arrived in the east; they went there to receive lordship. Next comes the name of the lord with dominion over those of the east, where they arrived.

AND THEN THEY CAME BEFORE THE LORD NAMED NACXIT, the great lord and sole judge over a populous domain.

And he was the one who gave out the signs of lordship, all the emblems; the signs of the Keeper of the Mat and the Keeper of the Reception House Mat were set forth.

And when the signs of the splendor and lordship of the Keeper of the Mat and Keeper of the Reception House Mat were set forth, Nacxit gave a complete set of the emblems of lordship. Here are their names:

Canopy, throne.

Bone flute, bird whistle.

Sparkling powder, yellow ocher.

Puma's paw, jaguar's paw.

Head and hoof of deer.  
Leather armband, snail-shell rattle.  
Tobacco gourd, food bowl.  
Parrot feathers, egret feathers.

So they came away bringing all of these. Then, from beside the sea, they brought back the writing of Tulan, the writing of Zuyua. They spoke of their investiture in their signs, in their words.

Also, after they had reached their citadel, named Hacautitz, all the Tams and Ilocs gathered there. All the tribes gathered themselves together; they were happy. When Noble Two, Noble Acutec, and Noble Lord came back, they resumed their lordship over the tribes. The Rabinals, the Cakchiquels, and those of Bird House were happy. Only the signs of the greatness of lordship were revealed before them. Now the lords became great in their very being; when they had displayed their lordship previously, it was incomplete.

This was when they were at Hacautitz. The only ones with them were all those who had originally come from the east. And they spent a long time there on that mountain. Now they were all numerous.

And the wives of Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, and Not Right Now died there. Then they came away, they left their mountain place behind. They sought another mountain where they could settle. They settled countless mountains, giving them epithets and names. Our first mothers and our first fathers multiplied and gained strength at those places, according to what the people of ancient times said when they told about the abandonment of their first citadel, named Hacautitz.

AND THEN THEY CAME TO A PLACE WHERE THEY FOUNDED A CITADEL NAMED THORNY PLACE. They spent a long time there in that one citadel. They had daughters and sons while they were there. There were actually four mountains, but there came to be a single name for the whole town. Their daughters and sons got married. They just gave them away. They accepted mere favors and gifts as sufficient payment for their daughters. They did only what was good.

Then they examined each division of the citadel. Here are the names of the divisions of Thorny Place: Dry Place, Bark House, Boundary Marker, and Stronghold are the names of the mountains where they stayed.

And this is when they looked out over the mountains of their citadel. They were seeking a further mountain, since all the divisions had become more numerous. But those who had brought lordship from the east had

died by now; they had become old in the process of going from one citadel to another. But their faces did not die; they passed them on.

They went through a great deal of pain and affliction; it was a long time before the grandfathers and fathers found their citadel. Here is the name of the citadel where they arrived.

AND BEARDED PLACE IS THE NAME OF THE MOUNTAIN OF THEIR CITADEL. They stayed there and they settled down there.

And they tested their fiery splendor there. They ground their gypsum, their plaster, in the fourth generation of lords. It was said that Noble Roofree ruled when Nine Deer was the Lord Minister, and then the lords named Noble Sweatbath and Iztayul reigned as Keeper of the Mat and Keeper of the Reception House Mat. They reigned there at Bearded Place. It was through their works that it became an excellent citadel.

The number of great houses only reached three, there at Bearded Place. There were not yet a score and four great houses, but only three of them:

Just one Cauec great house.

And just one great house for the Greathouses.

And finally, just one for the Lord Quichés.

But the three were housed in just two buildings, one in each of the two divisions of the citadel.

This is the way it was when they were at Bearded Place:

They were of just one mind: there was no evil for them, nor were there difficulties.

Their reign was all in calm: there were no quarrels for them, and no disturbances.

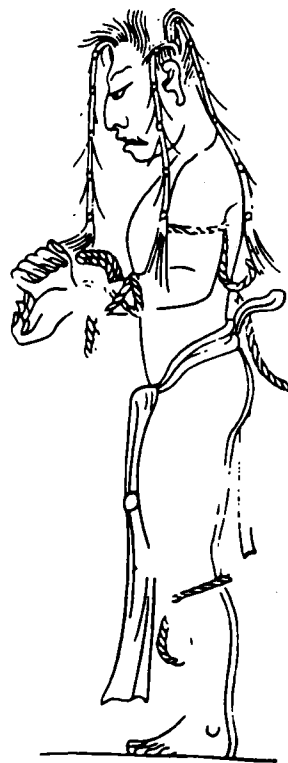
Their hearts were filled with a steady light: there was nothing of stupidity and nothing of envy in what they did.

Their splendor was modest: they caused no amazement, nor had they grown great.

And then they tested themselves. They excelled in the Shield Dance, there at Bearded Place. They did it as a sign of their sovereignty. It was a sign of their fiery splendor and a sign of their greatness.

When it was seen by the Ilocs, the Ilocs began to foment war. It was their desire that the Lord Noble Sweatbath be murdered, and that the other lord be allied with them. It was the Lord Iztayul they wanted to persuade; the Ilocs wanted him as their disciple in committing murder. But their jealous plotting behind the back of the Lord Noble Sweatbath

THEY WERE CAPTURED AND  
THEY WERE MADE PRISONERS: A  
*Late Classic Maya drawing from  
Tikal, depicting a captive warrior  
from Calakmul.*



DRAWING REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM

failed to work out. They just wanted it over with, but the lord wasn't killed by the Ilocs on the first try.

Such were the roots of disturbances, of tumult and war. First they invaded the citadel, the killers were on the move. What they wanted was to obliterate the very identity of the Quichés. Only then, they thought, could they alone have sovereignty, and it was for this alone that they came to kill. They were captured and they were made prisoners. Not many of them ever got their freedom again.

And then began the cutting of flesh. They cut the Ilocs open before the gods. This was in payment for their wrongs against Lord Noble Sweatbath. And many others went into bondage; they were made into slaves and serfs. They had simply given themselves up in defeat by fomenting war against the lord and against the canyon and the citadel. What their hearts had desired was the destruction and disintegration of the very identity of the Quiché lord, but it did not come to pass.

In this way it came about that people were cut open before the gods. The shields of war were made then; it was the very beginning of the fortification of the citadel at Bearded Place. The root of fiery splendor was implanted there, and because of it the reign of the Quiché lords was truly great. They were lords of singular genius. There was nothing to humble them; nothing happened to make fools of them or to ruin the greatness of their reign, which took root there at Bearded Place.

The penance done for the gods increased there, striking terror again, and all the tribes were terrified, small tribes and great tribes. They witnessed the arrival of people captured in war, who were cut open and killed for the splendor and majesty of Lord Noble Sweatbath and Lord Iztayul, along with the Greathouses and the Lord Quichés. There were only three branches of kin there at the citadel named Bearded Place.

And it was also there that they began feasting and drinking over the blossoming of their daughters. This was the way the ones they named the "Three Great Houses" stayed together. They drank their drinks there and ate their corn there, the payment for their sisters, payment for their daughters. There was only happiness in their hearts when they did it. They ate, they feasted inside their palaces.

"This is just our way of being thankful and grateful that we have good news and good tidings. It is the sign of our agreements about the daughters and sons born to our women," they said.

Epithets were bestowed there, and the lineages, the allied tribes, the principalities gave themselves names there.

"We are intermarried: we Cauacs, we Greathouses, and we Lord Quichés," said those of the three lineages and the three great houses. They spent a long time there at Bearded Place, and then they sought again and saw another citadel. They left Bearded Place behind.

AND THEN THEY GOT UP AND CAME TO THE CITADEL OF ROTTEN CANE, as the name is spoken by the Quichés. The Lords Noble Sweatbath and Plumed Serpent came along, together with all the other lords. There had been five changes and five generations of people since the origin of light, the origin of continuity, the origin of life and of humankind.

And they built many houses there.

And they also built houses for the gods, putting these in the center of the highest part of the citadel. They came and they stayed.

After that their domain grew larger; they were more numerous and

more crowded. Again they planned their great houses, which had to be regrouped and sorted out because of their growing quarrels. They were jealous of one another over the prices of their sisters and daughters, which were no longer a matter of mere food and drink.

So this was the origin of their separation, when they quarreled among themselves, disturbing the bones and skulls of the dead. Then they broke apart into nine lineages, putting an end to quarrels over sisters and daughters. When the planning of the lordships was done, the result was a score and four great houses.

It was a long time ago when they all came up onto their citadel, building a score and four palaces there in the citadel of Rotten Cane. That was the citadel blessed by the lord bishop after it had been abandoned.

They achieved glory there. Their marvelous seats and cushions were arranged; the varieties of splendor were sorted out for each one of the lords of the nine lineages. One by one they took their places:

The nine lords of the Cauecs.

The nine lords of the Greathouses.

The four lords of the Lord Quichés.

The two lords of the Zauquics.

They became numerous. Those who were in the following of a given lord were also numerous, but the lord came first, at the head of his vassals. There were masses, masses of lineages for each of the lords. We shall name the titles of the lords one by one, for each of the great houses.

**A**ND HERE ARE THE TITLES OF THE LORDS WHO LED THE CAUECS, beginning with the first in rank:

Keeper of the Mat.

Keeper of the Reception House Mat.

Keeper of Tohil.

Keeper of the Plumed Serpent.

Master of Ceremonies for the Cauecs.

Councilor of the Stores.

Quehnay Emissary.

Councilor in the Ball Court.

Mother of the Reception House.

So these are the lords who led the Cauecs, nine lords with their palaces ranged around, one for each of them. And now to show their faces . . .

**A**ND NOW THESE ARE THE LORDS WHO LED THE GREATHOUSES, beginning with the first lord:

Lord Minister.

Lord Herald.

Minister of the Reception House.

Chief of the Reception House.

Mother of the Reception House.

Master of Ceremonies for the Greathouses.

Lord Auilix.

Yacolatam, meaning the "corner of the mat" or the zaclatol.

Chief Yeoltux Emissary.

So there were nine lords who led the Greathouses.

**A**ND NOW THESE ARE THE LORD QUICHÉS. Here are the titles of the lords:

Herald.

Lord Emissary.

Lord Master of Ceremonies for the Lord Quichés.

Lord Hacauitz.

Four lords led the Lord Quichés, with their palaces ranged around.

**A**ND THERE WERE ALSO TWO LINEAGES OF ZAQUIC LORDS:

Lord Corntassel House.

Minister for the Zauquics.

There was just one palace for these two lords.

Such was the arrangement of the score and four lords, and there came to be a score and four great houses as well.

**T**HEN SPLENDOR AND MAJESTY GREW AMONG THE QUICHÉ. The greatness and weight of the Quiché reached its full splendor and majesty with the surfacing and plastering of the canyon and citadel. The tribes came, whether small or great and whatever the titles of their lords,



adding to the greatness of the Quiché. As splendor and majesty grew, so grew the houses of gods and the houses of lords.

But the lords could not have accomplished it, they could not have done the work of building their houses or the houses of the gods, were it not for the fact that their vassals had become numerous. They neither had to lure them nor did they kidnap them or take them away by force, because each one of them rightfully belonged to the lords. And the elder and younger brothers of the lords also became populous.

Each lord led a crowded life, crowded with petitions. The lords were truly valued and had truly great respect. The birthdays of the lords were made great and held high by their vassals. Those who lived in the canyons and those who lived in the citadels multiplied then. Even so they would not have been numerous, had not all the tribes arrived to give themselves up.

And when war befell their canyons and citadels, it was by means of their genius that the Lord Plumed Serpent and the Lord Noble Sweatbath blazed with power. Plumed Serpent became a true lord of genius:

On one occasion he would climb up to the sky; on another he would go down the road to Xibalba.

On another occasion he would be serpentine, becoming an actual serpent.

On yet another occasion he would make himself aquiline, and on another feline; he would become like an actual eagle or a jaguar in his appearance.

On another occasion it would be a pool of blood; he would become nothing but a pool of blood.

Truly his being was that of a lord of genius. All the other lords were fearful before him. The news spread; all the tribal lords heard about the existence of this lord of genius.

And this was the beginning and growth of the Quiché, when the Lord Plumed Serpent made the signs of greatness. His face was not forgotten by his grandsons and sons. He didn't do these things just so there would be one single lord, a being of genius, but they had the effect of humbling all the tribes when he did them. It was just his way of revealing himself, but because of it he became the sole head of the tribes.

This lord of genius named Plumed Serpent was in the fourth generation of lords; he was both Keeper of the Mat and Keeper of the Reception House Mat.

And so he left signs and sayings for the next generation. They achieved splendor and majesty, and they, too, begot sons, making the sons still

HE WOULD MAKE HIMSELF . . .

FELINE: A dancing shaman transforms himself into a jaguar. From a Late Classic Maya vase from Altar de Sacrificios.



DRAWING BY KARL TAUBE

more populous. Tepepul and Iztayul were begotten; they merely served out their reign, becoming the fifth generation of lords. They begot another generation of lords.

**A**ND HERE ARE THE NAMES OF THE SIXTH GENERATION OF LORDS. There were two great lords; they were fiery. Quicab was the name of one lord; Cauizimah was the name of the other.

And Quicab and Cauizimah did a great deal in their turn. They added to the greatness of the Quiché because they truly had genius. They crushed and they shattered the canyons and citadels of the tribes, small and great—the ones that had citadels among them in ancient times, nearby:

There was a mountain place of the Cakchiquels, called Nettles Heights today.

And also a mountain place of the Rabinals, Place of Spilt Water.

And a mountain of the Caoques, Plaster House.

And then a citadel of the White Earths, Hot Springs Heights.  
Under Ten, Front of the Monument, and Willow Tree.

They all hated Quicab. They made war, but in fact they were brought down, they were shattered, these canyons, these citadels of the Rabinals, Cakchiquels, White Earths. All the tribes went down on their faces or flat on their backs. The warriors of Quicab kept up the killing for a long time, until there were only one or two groups, from among all the enemies, who hadn't brought tribute. Their citadels fell and they brought tribute to Quicab and Cauizimah. Their lineages came to be bled, shot full of arrows at the stake. Their day came to nothing, their heritage came to nothing.

Projectiles alone were the means for breaking the citadels. All at once the earth itself would crack open; it was as if a lightning bolt had shattered the stones. In fear, the members of one tribe after another went before the gum tree, carrying in their hands the signs of the citadels, with the result that a mountain of stones is there today. Only a few of these aren't cut stones; the rest look as though they had been split with an axe. The result is there on the plain named Petatayub; it is obvious to this day. Everyone who passes by can see it as a sign of the manhood of Quicab. He could not be killed, nor could he be conquered. He was truly a man, and all the tribes brought tribute.

And then all the lords made plans; they moved to cordon off the canyons and citadels, the fallen citadels of all the tribes.

**A**FTER THAT CAME THE SENTRIES, to watch for the makers of war. Now lookout lineages were established to occupy the conquered mountains:

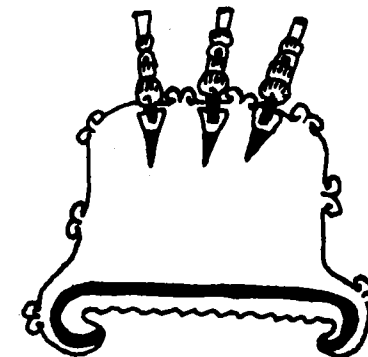
"Otherwise the tribes would return to inhabit their citadels," all the lords said when they had all shared their thoughts. Then the assignments were given out:

"Let them be like a palisade to us, and like doubles for our own lineages, and like a stockade, a fortress to us. Let them now become our anger, our manliness," said all the lords. The assignments were given to each of the lineages that were to provide opposition to the makers of war.

And then they were notified, and then they went to their posts, occupying the mountain places of the tribes:

"Go, because these are now our mountains. Do not be afraid. The moment there are makers of war again, coming back among you as your

PROJECTILES ALONE WERE THE  
MEANS FOR BREAKING THE  
CITADELS: In Mixtec books,  
conquest is signified by darts  
thrust into a place name, which in  
this example consists of the sign  
for a mountain. From the Codex  
Nuttall.



DRAWING BY THE AUTHOR

murderers, send for us to come and kill them," Quicab and the Minister and the Herald told them, notifying all of them.

Then they went off, those who are called the Point of the Arrow, Angle of the Bowstring. Their grandfathers and fathers split up then; they were on each of the mountains. They went just as guards of the mountains, and as arrowhead and bowstring guards, and as guards against the makers of war as well. None of them had been there at the dawning nor did any of them have his own god; they just blocked the way to the citadel. They all went out:

The keepers of Nettles Heights, keepers of Mirror Side, White River, Deer Dance Plaza, Plank Place, Eighteen.

Also, the keepers of Earthquake, Meteor, Hunahpu Place.

And the keepers of Spilt Water, keepers of Among the Rocks, keepers of Plaster House, keepers of Ziya House, keepers of Hot Springs, keepers of Under Ten, of the plains, of the mountains.

The war sentries, the guardians of the land, went out, they went on behalf of Quicab and Cauizimah, Keeper of the Mat and Keeper of the Reception House Mat, and on behalf of the Minister and the Herald. There were four lords who posted messengers and sentries against the makers of war:

Quicab and Cauizimah are the names of the two lords who led the Cauecs.

Woven is the name of the lord who led the Greathouses.

And Armadillo Dung is the name of the lord who led the Lord Quichés.

So these are the names of the lords who posted messengers and couriers. Their own vassals went to the mountains, to each one of the moun-

tains, and as soon as they had gone, spoils kept coming back, and prisoners of war kept coming back to Quicab and Cauizimah, to the Minister and the Herald. The Points of the Arrows and Angles of the Bowstrings made war. They took spoils and prisoners again. There came to be heroes again, among those who were sentries. They were given seats and honored; they were generously remembered by the lords when they came to turn over all their spoils and their prisoners.

After that, when the Lords Keeper of the Mat, Keeper of the Reception House Mat, Minister, and Herald had shared their thoughts, their decision came out:

"When it comes to the ennobling of the lookout lineages, we'll induct only those who are first in rank. I am Keeper of the Mat."

"And I am Keeper of the Reception House Mat."

"The nobility of Keeper of the Mat, which is mine—and that which is yours, Lord Minister—should enter into this. Ministers will be ennobled." And all the lords spoke as they gathered their thoughts. The Tams and Ilocs did just the same; the three divisions of the Quiché were in concord when they carried out the investiture. They titled those of the first rank among their vassals.

In this way the decision was reached. But they weren't inducted at Quiché. The mountain where the first-ranking vassals were inducted has a name; all of them were summoned, from each of the mountains where they were, and they gathered in just one place. Under the Twine, Under the Cord is the name of the mountain where they were inducted, where they entered into nobility. It was done at the boundary of Mirror Side.

And here are their titles, their honors, and their marks: a score of Ministers and a score of Keepers of the Mat were created by the Keeper of the Mat and the Keeper of the Reception House Mat, and by the Minister and the Herald.

All of these entered the nobility: Ministers, Keepers of the Mat, eleven Masters of Ceremonies, Minister for the Lords, Minister for the Zaquics, Military Minister, Military Keeper of the Mat, Military Walls, and Military Corners are the titles that came in when the soldiers were titled and named to their seats, their cushions.

These were the first-ranking vassals, watchers and listeners for the Quiché people, Points of the Arrows, Angles of the Bowstrings, a palisade, an enclosure, a wall, a fortress around Quiché.

And the Tams and Ilocs did the same thing; they inducted and titled the first-ranking vassals for each mountain.

So this was the origin of the noble Ministers and Keepers of the Mat that exist for each of the mountains today. The sequence was such that

they came out later than the Keeper of the Mat proper and the Keeper of the Reception House Mat, and later than the Minister and the Herald.

AND NOW WE SHALL NAME THE NAMES OF THE HOUSES OF THE GODS, although the houses have the same names as the gods:

Great Monument of Tohil is the name of the building that housed Tohil of the Cauecs.

Auilix, next, is the name of the building that housed Auilix of the Greathouses.

Hacautiz is the name, then, of the building that housed the god of the Lord Quichés.

Cornassel, whose house of sacrifice can still be seen, is the name of another great monument.

These were the locations of the stones whose days were kept by the Quiché lords. Their days were also kept by all the tribes. When the tribes burned offerings, they came before Tohil first.

After that, they greeted the Keeper of the Mat and Keeper of the Reception House Mat next, then they handed over their quetzal feathers and their tribute to the lords, these same lords.

And so they nurtured and provided for the Keeper of the Mat and Keeper of the Reception House Mat, who had been victorious over their citadels.



THEY CAME BEFORE TOHIL FIRST: Seated in his temple (shown in cross section behind him), K'awil (the lowland Maya counterpart of Tohil) receives offerings in bowls and (at extreme left) a censer full of flaming copal. From the Dresden Codex.

DRAWING BY CARLOS A. VILLACORTA

They were great lords, they were people of genius. Plumed Serpent and Noble Sweatbath were lords of genius, and Quicab and Cauizimah were lords of genius. They knew whether war would occur; everything they saw was clear to them. Whether there would be death, or whether there would be famine, or whether quarrels would occur, they knew it for certain, since there was a place to see it, there was a book. Council Book was their name for it.

But it wasn't only in this way that they were lords. They were great in their own being and observed great fasts. As a way of cherishing their buildings and cherishing their lordship, they fasted for long periods, they did penance before their gods.

And here is their way of fasting:

For nine score days they would fast, and for nine they would do penance and burn offerings.

Thirteen score was another of their fasts, and for thirteen they would do penance and burn offerings before Tohil and their other gods. They would only eat zapotes, matasanos, jocotes; there was nothing made of corn for their meals.

Even if they did penance for seventeen score, then for seventeen they fasted, they did not eat. They achieved truly great abstinence.

This was a sign that they had the being of true lords. And there weren't any women with them when they slept; they kept themselves apart when they fasted. They just stayed in the houses of the gods, each day. All they did was keep the days, burn offerings, and do penance. They were there whether it was dark or dawn; they just cried their hearts and their guts out when they asked for light and life for their vassals and their domain. They lifted their faces to the sky, and here is their prayer before their gods, when they made their requests.

**A**ND THIS IS THE CRY OF THEIR HEARTS, here it is:

"Wait! On this blessed day,  
thou Hurricane, thou Heart of the Sky-Earth,  
thou giver of ripeness and freshness,  
and thou giver of daughters and sons,  
spread thy stain, spill thy drops  
of green and yellow;  
give life and beginning  
to those I bear and beget,

that they might multiply and grow,  
nurturing and providing for thee,  
calling to thee along the roads and paths,  
on rivers, in canyons,  
beneath the trees and bushes;  
give them their daughters and sons.

"May there be no blame, obstacle, want, or misery;  
let no deceiver come behind or before them,  
may they neither be snared nor wounded,  
nor seduced, nor burned,  
nor diverted below the road nor above it;  
may they neither fall over backward nor stumble;  
keep them on the Green Road, the Green Path.

"May there be no blame or barrier for them  
through any secrets or sorcery of thine;  
may thy nurturers and providers be good  
before thy mouth and thy face,  
thou, Heart of Sky; thou, Heart of Earth;  
thou, Bundle of Flames;  
and thou, Tohil, Auilix, Hacauitz,  
under the sky, on the earth,  
the four sides, the four corners;  
may there be only light, only continuity within,  
before thy mouth and thy face, thou god."

So it was with the lords when they fasted during nine score, thirteen score, or seventeen score days; their days of fasting were many. They cried their hearts out over their vassals and over all their wives and children. Each and every lord did service, as a way of cherishing the light of life and of cherishing lordship.

Such were the lordships of the Keeper of the Mat, Keeper of the Reception House Mat, Minister, and Herald. They went into fasting two by two, taking turns at carrying the tribes and all the Quiché people on their shoulders.

At its root the word came from just one place, and the root of nurturing and providing was the same as the root of the word. The Tams and Ilocs did likewise, along with the Rabinals, Cakchiquels, those of Bird House, Sweatbath House, Talk House. They came away in unity, having heard, there at Quiché, what all of them should do.

It wasn't merely that they became lords; it wasn't just that they received occasional gifts from nurturers and providers who merely made food and drink for them. Nor did they wantonly falsify or steal their lordship, their splendor, their majesty. And it wasn't merely that they crushed the canyons and citadels of the tribes, whether small or great, but that the tribes paid a great price:

There came turquoise, there came metal.

And there came drops of jade and other gems that measured the width of four fingers or a full fist across.

And there came green, yellow, and red feather work, the tribute of all the tribes. It came to the lords of genius Plumed Serpent and Noble Sweatbath, and to Quicab and Cauizimah as well, to the Keeper of the Mat, Keeper of the Reception House Mat, Minister, and Herald.

What they did was no small feat, and the tribes they conquered were not few in number. The tribute of Quiché came from many tribal divisions.

And the lords had undergone pain and withstood it; their rise to splendor had not been sudden. Actually it was Plumed Serpent who was the root of the greatness of the lordship.

Such was the beginning of the rise and growth of Quiché.

And now we shall list the generations of lords, and we shall also name the names of all these lords.

**A**ND HERE ARE THE GENERATIONS, THE SEQUENCES OF LORDSHIPS, so that all of them will be clear.

Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar were our first grandfathers, our first fathers when the sun appeared, when the moon and stars appeared.

And here are the generations, the sequences, of lordships. We shall begin from here, at their very root. The lords will come up two by two, as each generation of lords enters and succeeds the previous grandfathers and lords of the citadel, going on through each and every one of the lords.

And here shall appear the faces of each one of the lords.

**A**ND HERE SHALL APPEAR THE FACES, ONE BY ONE, OF EACH OF THE QUICHÉ LORDS . . .

Jaguar Quitze, origin of the Cauecs.

Noble Raiment, in the second generation after Jaguar Quitze.

Jaguar Noble Rooftree, who began the office of Keeper of the Mat, was in the third generation.

Noble Sweatbath and Iztayul, in the fourth generation.

Plumed Serpent and Noble Sweatbath, at the root of the lords of genius, were in the fifth generation.

Tepepul and Iztayul next, sixth in the sequence.

Quicab and Cauizimah, in the seventh change of lordship, were the culmination of genius.

Tepepul and Xtayub, in the eighth generation.

Black Butterfly and Tepepul, in the ninth generation.

Eight Cord, with Quicab, in the tenth generation of lords.

Seven Thought and Cauatepech next, eleventh in the sequence of lords.

Three Deer and Nine Dog, in the twelfth generation of lords. And they were ruling when Tonatiuh arrived. They were tortured by the Castilian people.

Black Butterfly and Tepepul were tributary to the Castilian people. They had already been begotten as the thirteenth generation of lords.

Don Juan de Rojas and Don Juan Cortés, in the fourteenth generation of lords. They are the sons of Black Butterfly and Tepepul.

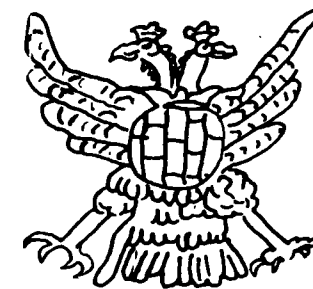
So these are the generations, the sequences of lordships for the Keeper of the Mat and Keeper of the Reception House Mat, the lords who have led the Cauecs of Quiché. Next we shall name the lineages.

And here are the great houses of each one of the lords in the following of the Keeper of the Mat and Keeper of the Reception House Mat. These are the names of the nine lineages of the Cauecs, nine great houses. Here are the titles of the rulers of each one of the great houses:

Lord Keeper of the Mat, with one great house. Granary is the name of the palace.

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WHEN TONATIUH ARRIVED: A Quiché sketch of the coat of arms of the Hapsburgs, rulers of Austria and Spain when Pedro de Alvarado (Tonatiuh) invaded the Quiché kingdom. From the sixteenth-century *Título de los Señores de Coyoy*.



Lord Keeper of the Reception House Mat. Bird House is the name of his palace.

Master of Ceremonies for the Cauecs, with one great house.

Lord Keeper of Tohil, with one great house.

Lord Keeper of the Plumed Serpent, with one great house.

Councilor of the Stores, with one great house.

Quehnay Emissary, with one great house.

Councilor in the Ball Court, Xcuxeba, with one great house.

Sovereign Mexican, with one great house.

So these are the nine lineages of the Cauecs. Many vassals are counted in the following of these nine great houses.

**A**ND HERE ARE THOSE OF THE GREATHOUSES, with nine more great houses. First we shall name the genealogy of the lordship. It began, from just one root, at the origin of the root of the day and the light:

Jaguar Night, first grandfather and father.

Noble Acul and Noble Acutec, in the second generation.

Noble Chahuh and Noble Inscription House, in the third generation.

Nine Deer next, in the fourth generation.

Noble Sweatbath, in the fifth generation of lords.

And Monkey House next, in the sixth generation.

And Iztayul, in the seventh generation of lords.

Noble Sweatbath then, eighth in the sequence of lordships.

Nine Deer, ninth in the sequence.

Woven, as the next one was called, in the tenth generation.

Lord Noble Sweatbath, in the eleventh generation.

Don Cristóbal, as he was called, became lord in the presence of the Castilian people.

Don Pedro de Robles is Lord Minister today.

And these are all the lords who come in the following of the Lord Minister. Now we shall give the title of the ruler of each one of the great houses:

Lord Minister, the first-ranking lord at the head of the Greathouses, with one great house.

Lord Herald, with one great house.

Lord Minister of the Reception House, with one great house.

Chief of the Reception House, with one great house.

Mother of the Reception House, with one great house.

Master of Ceremonies for the Greathouses, with one great house.

Lord Aulix, with one great house.

Yacolatam, with one great house.

So these are the great houses at the head of the Greathouses; these are the names of the nine lineages of the Greathouses, as they are called. There are many branch lineages in the following of each one of these lords; we have named only the first-ranking titles.

**A**ND NOW THESE ARE FOR THE LORD QUICHÉS. Here are their grandfathers and fathers:

Not Right Now, the first person.

Noble Lord is the name of the lord of the second generation.

Red Banner.

Noble Short One.

Noble Doctor.

Seven Cane.

Noble Mortal.

Noble Caller.

Person of Bam.

So these are the lords at the head of the Lord Quichés; these are their generations and sequences.

And here are the lords within the palaces, with just four great houses:

Herald for the Lords is the title of the first lord, with one great house.

Emissary for the Lords, the second lord, with one great house.

Master of Ceremonies for the Lords, the third lord, with one great house.

And Hacauitz, the fourth lord, with one great house.

And so these are the four great houses at the head of the Lord Quichés.

**A**ND THERE ARE THREE MASTERS OF CEREMONIES IN ALL. They are like fathers to all the Quiché lords. They come together in unity, these three Masters of Ceremonies. They are givers of birth, they are Mothers of the Word, they are Fathers of the Word, great in being few, these three Masters of Ceremonies:

Master of Ceremonies for the Cauecs, first.

And Master of Ceremonies for the Greathouses, second.

Lord Master of Ceremonies for the Lord Quichés, third of the Masters of Ceremonies.

And so there are three Masters of Ceremonies, one representing each of these lineages.

**T**HIS IS ENOUGH ABOUT THE BEING OF QUICHÉ, given that there is no longer a place to see it. There is the original book and ancient writing owned by the lords, now lost, but even so, everything has been completed here concerning Quiché, which is now named Santa Cruz.

