

‡ Tetecan ‡

AN AZTEC TRAGEDY

A GROVE PLAY BY HOWARD MUCKLE

MUSIC BY HUGH BROWN



BOHEMIAN CLUB

1950

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§ FOREWORD §

The youth Tetecan was an enigma, as indeed any man must appear who seeks to guide his fellow beings up from lethargy toward idealism. In common with all primitive peoples, the Aztecs worshipped many gods. We today are less primitive, yet we also revere an incongruous pantheon whose shrines flourish everywhere. Here in Bohemia the most revered shrine is that dedicated to Friendship. May its votaries increase!

Tetecan mounted with confidence the steep steps of the sacrificial pyramid, seeking an unknown and nameless deity. Each of us in his destined hour, in hope or extremity, mounts the steps of idealism. In all times and places, fervid youths have climbed in search of idealism, driven upward by sight of the seething plain of life across which the light of brotherhood appears at times to burn fitfully. Too many of them have climbed in vain.

May we in Bohemia, so richly blessed within our fellowship, join Tetecan as he climbs alone in his age-old quest. Let us welcome him

Foreword} and all intrepid youth who follow in his train, that our shrine of brotherhood here in Bohemia may grow in significance and beauty.



Tedious hours of work, long sessions of conference and rehearsal, all leavened by the spirit of Friendship; these have contributed to the magnificent exertion which has invested the manuscript of *Tetecan* with color and life. To each one of those tireless Bohemians who has enthusiastically discharged his large or small assignment on the production staff, this play is dedicated by the grateful author.

H. M.

TETECAN ▼ AN AZTEC TRAGEDY

THE PLAYERS

FOSTER FATHER OF TETECAN	Arthur F. Edwards
TETECAN	Stanley Noonan
MONTEZUMA	William L. Ferdon
HIGH PRIEST	H. George Saunders
FIRST PRIEST	Charles P. Dutton
SECOND PRIEST	Howard G. Vesper
THIRD PRIEST	Charles Harmon Ginn
XILONEN	Joseph J. Tissier
A MAN	Vincent J. Mullins
A WOMAN	R. Mitchell Boyd
AN OLD MAN	William A. O'Brien
AN OLD CRONE	Robert M. Jones
ANOTHER WOMAN	DeWitt Alexander
ANOTHER MAN	Otis R. Marston
Altar Priests, Citizens, Imperial Guards, Litter Bearers, Low Priests, Nobles, Peasants, Soldiers.	

THE SCENES

CHORUS OF PEASANTS

A mountain meadow sacred to Texcatliopa.

Time: Early evening in the Fall season, A.D. 1513.

PROLOGUE

A wild mountain trail leading down from a mountain pass toward Mexico City.

Early evening in Spring, 1514.

ACT ONE

A street opening upon the market place in Mexico City.

Early afternoon of the following day.

ACT TWO

A portion of the imperial gardens at the summer palace of Montezuma, at Chapultepec.

Late afternoon of the same day as Act One.

ACT THREE

The same as Act Two.

Seventeen months later—early evening.

EPILOGUE

The square before the pyramid of Texcatliopa.

High noon—eighteen days later than Act Three.

‡ CHORUS OF PEASANTS ‡

[An open meadow terminating on all sides in a forest of tall pines. It is night in the early Fall, 1513. At rise, the stage is empty. There presently converge upon the meadow from all sides, small groups of peasants, weary from toil. They carry hoes and flambeaux. They greet one another silently, then arrange themselves in a semi-circle about a large rock upon which their leader kindles a fire. At a signal, an old man throws incense upon it, and as a cloud of smoke arises they begin to chant.]

Now unto thee, O great Texcatliopa
We raise our voice in supplication;
Bend down thy ear in mercy graciously,
Give heed unto the prayers we raise to thee.
Now barren lie our fields with harvest gathered;
And well filled stand our bins with squash and corn.
Yet as we sing, our bellies tight with food,
Would seek to dull with lazy sloth, our minds,
Making us forgetful of thy bounty.

But thee we now beseech, O mighty god,
That thou wilt forthwith heed our humble prayer.
We pray thee: send us soon thy beauteous son,
That we may praise thee as we worship him,
And whisper into his receptive ear,
Our supplication for a goodly harvest,
When once again our fields are ripe with corn;
We pray thee send us soon thy son.

Fill with zeal the hearts of all thy priests
That they may find him now, thy blessed son.
Then in his lusty youth may he embrace
Each maid who shall, in her full time,
Bring forth the child of his creative might,
That lush our fields may be with ample corn.
Then may we rest, to praise thy holy name,
O Texcatliopa,
Hear our prayer.

{Chorus

[At the conclusion of the chant, the leader extinguishes the fire, the singers quickly exit in the same manner in which they entered. The stage returns to darkness.]

PROLOGUE

[A wild mountain trail descends sharply from a narrow pass broadening onto a shelf-like ledge commanding a magnificent view of the broad valley in whose cup lies Mexico City. It is early evening in Spring, 1514. A chill breeze, descending from the heights, faintly rustles the sparse vegetation. Nocturnal insects fill the air with soft sounds. The foster father of Tetecan, followed by the youth, slowly descends the path and wearily pauses upon the rocky ledge overhung by a large rock.]

FOSTER FATHER

Here, beneath the shelter of this stone,
Would seem a likely place to take our sleep.

[Both men stand motionless looking off toward the vast plain below, arrested even in their weariness by the beauty of the valley which is bathed in bright moonlight. As they stand, the handsome, classic features of the youth are brought into strong relief as he looks with delight and wonder upon the scene below him. The foster father, a simple peasant-warrior, stands a little back, watching with growing interest the expression upon Tetecan's face as he drinks in the beauty of the scene.]

TETECAN

Canst see, Father?
There, far off in the valley, lies the city;
Set like a jewel in yonder silvery plain.
Never have I beheld a sight so lovely!

FOSTER FATHER

It seems indeed a place of wondrous beauty.
And I am strangely moved at sight of it.

[He pauses to muse upon the sight.]

Prologue} Since thou hast never seen a great city,
Thou may'st not understand my troubled thoughts.
It saddens me. I seem to feel its might
Even from afar; as though a mighty stone
Were pressing down upon me!

{ TETECAN

Father!
How strangely dost thou speak!
Methinks that now thou speakest even as I!
Far too long
Hast thou been living in our narrow valley,
Whither ne'er came such splendor of pure beauty.

[He pauses, moved afresh by the beauty of the scene.]

Never shall I feast again upon sight so lovely!
Ah! Montezuma! Thou must indeed be god,
That thou couldst build thy mighty citadel
Within the wonderment of such beauty!

{ FOSTER FATHER

Thou think'st overmuch of beauty, son.
Thy eyes are young:
Of men and worldly ways they have seen too little.

[He turns and muses upon the city below.]

I pray the gods
That yonder city may smile
Forever on thee, as upon this night
When lights are gleaming from her temples.

She ran not eagerly to meet me,
But stood

Prologue

With face averted, weeping in my hut's door;
A great chieftain, passing through our valley,
Clad in humble raiment, using a false name
To hide a royal rank, had cruelly made her do his will.
She was with child. Thou art that child.

TETECAN

Father! Tell me of this foul monster
That I may seek him out and kill him!

[The anguish leaves his face as he suddenly embraces his father.]

Thou art not my father!
Oh! Why has thou told me this?
I had rather die than hold thee not as father!

[Tetecan embraces his foster father. The foster father has averted his face.]

FOSTER FATHER

It matters only
That thou lovest me still,
But of him who begat thee

TETECAN

What of him?
Canst thou not even hint of his name or station?

Prologue}

{ FOSTER FATHER

Nay. Neither name nor rank. But yet,
The gods have not forsaken us. Dost recall
A small stone fashioned like a beetle
Worn in thy mother's bosom, hid from sight?

{ TETECAN

Aye. Once, long ago I saw it pendant there,
And asked her the meaning of it, but forthwith,
She hid it from my sight, and said
With tears I could not comprehend,
"Tis evil, and the cause of all my woe."

[The foster father takes from his tunic the amulet which hangs about his neck upon a thread of deer skin. He hangs it without comment about Tetecan's neck. Both men regard the amulet in silence as the elder man unloosens Tetecan's tunic and thrusts the stone in next to the bare flesh.]

{ FOSTER FATHER

Wear it always. Henceforth it is thine.
It is thy mother's wish that thou shouldst wear it
Till thou hast found the wicked one who wronged her.
By its aid
Ye may yet bring to death that evil man.

{ TETECAN

Fear not that it shall ever leave me, father.
Here shall it press, and keep alive the fury
That hatred sets seething within my heart.

But we must be gone before the sunrise, father. { Prologue
While vengeance waits, I can no longer tarry.

{ FOSTER FATHER

Have patience, patience,
It may well be thou shalt never find him.
Come now and rest. Here underneath this rock
We may sleep well until the morrow dawns.

[The father moves into the shade of the rock and stoops to smooth the scattered leaves. Tetecan stands looking off across the valley.]

{ TETECAN

There is no sleep within these eyes, my father.
My heart is now too full of pain and longing.
Sleep thou. My thoughts shall keep the vigil with me.

[Tetecan moves slowly to the edge of the path and stands lost in thought. The expression upon his face, at first tense and sad, at length becomes transfigured by the beauty of the scene below. His figure becomes taut, as there passes across his face an expression of wonder and of expectancy, quite as though for the first time, life had torn away a mask which had veiled her meaning.]

{ CURTAIN }

ACT ONE

[A street opening upon the market place in Mexico City, noon of the following day. The street is filled with excited crowds of citizens. Others, having taken places of vantage upon walls and roof tops, turn their gaze with eager interest toward the right. Tetecan and Foster Father are seen moving cautiously upon the fringe of the crowd. There is a sudden murmur of interest; a litter, carried upon the shoulders of four warriors, moves across the scene, bearing a girl of about seventeen years of age. She is magnificently attired. The litter is slowed as it makes difficult headway through the people, who stare with respectful curiosity at the occupant. The meaning of the scene is not understood by the two wanderers. The foster father addresses a nearby man standing beside his wife who clutches the hand of her small child.]

FOSTER FATHER

Who may this maiden be
Riding thus richly attired?

MAN [with surprise]

Ye must be a fool, indeed! Know ye not
She is chosen as the goddess Xilonen
And will serve the god Texcatliopa.
There rises daily among all the priests
Loud argument which comes to no end,
As they seek to name the god himself.

FOSTER FATHER

Aye; the selection of a youthful neophyte
To incarnate the great god Texcatliopa.

Act One

MAN

'Tis so. Each year a youth famed for beauty
Is selected for the honor.

TETECAN

Yet I cannot see how one so young
Can rise o'er night to such great station.

MAN

In the months that he spends with the priests
He is taught all holy things.
Thus it is for seventeen months. Then,
In the last twenty days he is cloistered
With four goddesses in the great temple.

[He pauses as a silly, lewd expression crosses his face.]

Oh! That I were once more young!
But I have piety enough to tell thee this:
The youth to fill the new god's place
Is not yet found. 'Tis said that Montezuma
Will himself appoint some comely youth
Should the priests not soon come unto accord.

TETECAN

But why stand these many people here
In holiday mood, gay, and expectant?

MAN

To see the Emperor pass, thou stupid one.

Today he goes this way with great procession
To the holy hill of Chapultepec.

{Act One

{ WOMAN

If thou wilt stand beside us here
Thou shalt see him when he passes.

[The foster father and Tetecan take places beside the woman. There sounds a fanfare of trumpets; a company of Montezuma's house guards, in brilliantly colored garments march past. They carry copper-pointed lances plumed with feathers. The crowd grows silent and expectant. Groups of nobles follow in costumes of brilliant feather-work, gaudy cotton robes trimmed with ornaments of gold. There is heard off stage the imperious cry of the imperial guards, who chant the following command as the procession advances.]

{ CHANT OF GUARDS PRECEDING MONTEZUMA

Make way — Make way!
Make way for the great Montezuma.
Bow down — Bow down,
For the god now passes before you.
Give heed — Give heed,
Let all now be humble before him.
Sing praise — Sing praise,
The Emperor rides now before you.

[The procession slows, as the mass of people sing their greeting.]

{ CHORUS OF CITIZENS

All hail thee, mighty king and god,
We greet thee, Montezuma,

Act One

We come now to this busy place
From home and field and lowly task
To raise our voices now in joy,
To sing great praises unto thee,
To shout thy glory to the skies.

[There appears now the imperial litter bearing Montezuma. At this moment, a small child, delighted by the spectacle, breaks from] its mother's grasp and runs joyfully out before the litter. The mother, fearing that the child will be taken and sacrificed, covers her face with her hands. Neither parent makes a move to recover it. Tetecan springs from the crowd, and with a few strides, reaches the child which has stumbled and lies crying at the feet of Montezuma. Tetecan speaks a word of comfort to the child before he rises from his knees to look directly into the face of Montezuma whose litter has been halted by the child. A deathlike hush falls upon the crowd of dazed spectators. The litter of Montezuma is of gold, inlaid with precious stones. Over it is suspended a canopy of brilliant feather-work. Montezuma, a regal man, sits within the litter and looks out with ill-concealed astonishment at the audacious youth who remains standing before him. One of the officers raises a spear to strike him down, but Montezuma restrains him with a gesture. Tetecan, realizing before whom he is standing, sinks to his knees before the king. There follows a moment of silence during which Montezuma looks intently at the youth. He gives a sign for the litter to be brought down. The customary length of cotton cloth is spread upon the ground, so that the imperial feet may not become contaminated. The golden sandal of Montezuma appears from beneath his feathered robe as he steps down from the litter and stands before the astonished youth.]

† MONTEZUMA

Arise, and stand before me.

[Tetecan, dismayed, rises and stands directly in front of the king, looking calmly into his face. They seem of equal stature.]

Thy name?

{ TETECAN

Oh king, I am called Tetecan.

{ MONTEZUMA [musingly]

A curious name, not current hereabout.

[He looks sharply at Tetecan for a moment.]

Dost know what it signifies?

{ TETECAN

Nay, Almighty One.

{ MONTEZUMA

It means: Thou art an enigma.

Whence come you?

{ TETECAN

From the distant East, Holy One.

[Montezuma regards him with fresh interest.]

{ MONTEZUMA

Why came ye

This great distance unto my capitol?

{ TETECAN

I seek my father, oh king.

{ MONTEZUMA

Dost know his name, or where he lives?

Act One}

{ TETECAN

Nay. But I bear upon my heart an eye
Which shall reveal his presence unto me.

[Montezuma stands looking at Tetecan in a musing silence as if he were weighing conflicting thoughts. A hush has fallen upon the spectators, many of whom have never before been so close to the Imperial Presence, nor had so much as heard his voice. At length, without again looking at Tetecan, Montezuma re-enters his litter and makes a sign for one of his officers to approach.]

{ MONTEZUMA

Seize this youth and bring him before me
This day in my garden at Chapultepec.

[The officers seize the astonished youth as the imperial litter is carried away. Tetecan, without opportunity to speak with his foster father, is forced to fall in with the line of guards which terminate the procession. The foster father stares aghast throughout the seizure, and in despair would attempt to follow the train of men, but is beaten off by the soldiers. He stands bewildered as the people gather quickly about him.]

{ FOSTER FATHER

He is my son! Where have they taken him?

{ MAN

Didst hear? To Montezuma's summer palace.

{ FOSTER FATHER

Aye. I heard. But for what reason?

{ MAN

Who may say! Perchance he hath done mischief
To the holy person of the Emperor.

‡ FOSTER FATHER [in growing despair]

‡ Act One

Nay. Nay. He is but a simple country youth
Come with me but this hour into the city.
He hath done no wrong, I swear it.

‡ WOMAN

Thy son is comely. Perchance Montezuma
Will honor thy house by naming him
The new god Texcatliopa.

[The crowd bursts into guffaws and gathers a little closer.]

‡ AN OLD MAN

Mark ye, friends. We have lately seen a god!

‡ AN OLD CRONE

And here stands his saintly father.
Mark how fine and pious is his mien!

[The crowd laughs more boisterously than ever.]

‡ FIRST WOMAN [to the old crone]

Hast thou no pity, old she-devil?
See, the good man is greatly affrighted.

‡ ANOTHER MAN

By the gods! The wench talks of pity!
Pity! Who has time for it nowadays?

[The throng gathers closer. Having gained an audience, the man kneels in mock humility before the foster father, as the crowd shrieks with laughter.]

Act One } Oh your holiness! (How does one address a god?)
Now that thy stupid son is really a god,
Wilt thou intercede for all my sins?

[He grimaces and grovels, wiping away mock tears of repentance.]

I call to mind, how but yesternight,
I dallied overlong near the causeway
With a very pretty little —

[The foster father breaks his speech with simple dignity.]

† FOSTER FATHER

Have done with thy low mockery!

[The people become interested in his grief. Some cease laughing, while others continue to enjoy the situation. The foster father seems in a daze. He looks about helplessly into the strange faces, and he suddenly gains command of himself.]

Nay. He cannot be chosen as a god.
We be poor country folk.
My son has neither wealth nor rank
To be thus honored. 'Tis past belief.
Where may I seek him?

† WOMAN [with pity in her voice]

Wouldst attempt the impossible?
Who of us, in this wide street,
May gain admittance unto Montezuma.
Be patient, tidings may reach thee.

ACT TWO

[A portion of the imperial garden at Chapultepec. It is early afternoon of the same day. A wide expanse of lawn terminates at the rear in a low wall which rises abruptly from the lake shore far below. Beyond the wall, and at great distance across the lake is seen the splendor of the city. At right, a fringe of shrubbery gives onto a virgin forest of pines. At left may be seen the end of a large summer pavilion. Voices are heard. There enter from behind the pavilion several priests led by the High Priest. All are in elaborate priestly regalia. In their midst, walking as if dazed, Tetecan, in his simple country-dress, makes a striking contrast to the magnificence of the priests. As the group reaches the entrance to the pavilion, the High Priest makes a sign.]

‡ HIGH PRIEST

Here did Montezuma bid us meet him.

‡ TETECAN [to a lesser priest]

Why am I thus made captive?
No one have I offended

‡ SECOND PRIEST

That we may not answer thee
'Till Montezuma hath spoken.
Abide ye here, nor leave this spot.
We go within to wait upon the king.

‡ TETECAN

Ye go to the emperor!
No harm, even in my thought

Act Two} Have I done his august person.
Surely thou hast made a grievous mistake
Thus to detain me here.

{ THIRD PRIEST

It were better manners to hold thy tongue.
Already hast thou spoken in one breath
Treason and blasphemy, when thou dost credit
Thy king and high priest with fallibility.

{ HIGH PRIEST [with contempt]

It is decreed,
I may not soil my holy office
By holding speech with such as he.
Order him to silence his impudent tongue.

{ FIRST PRIEST

Dost hear, bold youth?
The High Priest commands thee to silence.
Await us here, nor leave on pain of death.

[The priests go into the pavilion. Tetecan stands irresolute, the prey to anxious thoughts. He looks meanwhile with youthful curiosity upon the spacious garden. In spite of his unrest, he is fascinated by the beauty of the scene. He walks to the wall and looks across the lake, then returns and moves to the corner of the pavilion, advancing around its side where he seats himself upon a long stone bench.]

{ TETECAN

I sit,
As one who wakes from troubled dreaming,
Whose thoughts form in wild, unreasoned panic!

Why am I here, and thus detained
Amid this crushing beauty and magnificence?

{Act Two

[He pauses, as a terrifying realization of his loneliness comes to him.]

Alone in yonder city now mourns my father
And I am cast down here amazed
In custody of these august strangers
And yet, it seems that power and beauty,
Such as hereabout I see everywhere resplendent
Cannot exist through chance alone, but must serve
Some higher purpose unknown to men,
And held in reverence by all the gods!

[He suddenly stands, and with youthful energy walks to the wall and looks off in ecstatic mood toward the distant city. His face becomes illumined as he feasts upon the beauty of the scene. He turns and walks slowly back to the bench as his face lights with inner joy. He seats himself unsteadily upon the bench and with difficulty speaks his thoughts. He sings.]

How strangely am I moved! A curious
Warm ecstasy fills my being. And now
A soft dear world seems suddenly to rise
And rush with welcome, heavy pain,
Through all my eager senses! 'Tis fearful!
'Tis as though the entire world,
Singing as with one great voice
Did call and beckon to my eager questioning.
There now seems to encompass all my gaze
Hung like a cobweb, dew sprinkled at dawn,
The beauty of all the world
Spun in mystic loveliness,

Act Two} So strangely near, so tenderly beautiful!
Oh! that I might understand this sudden joy
In which my senses all but fail!

[He covers his face with his hands as he seeks to understand the strong emotion which rises within him at sight of the beauty about him. While he is seated thus, the prey of strong elemental emotions, he retreats within his own thoughts and seems unaware of the sounds of gay and distant music. The music grows louder and there is borne upon it the sound of youthful laughter. Without warning, a group of young women clad in diaphanous white cotton robes, and carrying garlands of flowers, run joyfully into the garden. In their midst is Xilonen whose more elaborate costume indicates that she is a person of consequence. As the girls begin an animated conversation, a group of young men run into the garden and begin a ritualistic dance. Xilonen waves them an enthusiastic encouragement. As their dance progresses the girls watch, and also begin to dance in imitation of the dance pattern taken by the men. At length the girls begin to laugh at their own efforts and gather about Xilonen who makes light of their effort. At length Xilonen stops the dance. Laughing, all the girls gather about her.]

{ FIRST GIRL

But give us time, Xilonen!

{ XILONEN

Thou wilt need years of it, methinks.

{ SECOND GIRL [with mock stagger]

Oh! My head doth whirl!

{ THIRD GIRL

And mine!

{ XILONEN

How might thy head whirl

If thou wert chosen, even as I am!

{Act Two

{ FOURTH GIRL

'T would be the death of her, I vow.

[They all laugh.]

{ FIRST GIRL [to Xilonen]

Hast yet heard the new god's name?

{ XILONEN

Nay, silly one. Thou knowest,
He is not yet chosen.

His name I shall not be told
'Till I dance for him next year.

{ SECOND GIRL

Alas! How hard to wait an unknown love!

[They all laugh at Xilonen's expense.]

{ XILONEN [with sudden seriousness]

What does it matter?
Will he not be the Chosen One:
The most comely youth in all Mexico?

{ FOURTH GIRL

Who may not care at all for thy dancing!

{ XILONEN [with increased seriousness]

Ah! But he will!

As for me,

Act Two} I mean to dance before the god
As no mortal maid has danced before.
Come. Let us again resume our practice
Move thou 'round me in a circle.
Dance as thou wilt. Perchance I may see
A figure that I may wish to copy.

[The girls become serious once more, and group themselves in a circle about Xilonen, dancing in a slow stately manner. Their movements suggest a ritualistic dance with symbolic gestures. They soon exhaust the possibilities of such stylized figures and each begins to improvise. The dance tempo increases until it becomes quite rapid. The girls yield to its fervid suggestibility. Xilonen, gaining a different mood from each girl's dancing, improvises with greater freedom. Suddenly, as if inspired, she moves out from the circle, and with increasing abandon, begins to fashion a wild, lascivious dance. The girls observe her with delighted amazement, and continue to dance, withdrawing into a smaller circle where they move in a pattern as though her dance had become an impassioned obligato to the dance of the others. As the dance continues, the pattern taken by Xilonen is that of an ever widening circle. As the dance progresses, Tetecan is astonished and fascinated, and is drawn irresistibly to it. He moves slowly along the edge of the bench to watch. At length, lost in wonder, he stands and steps forth from his concealment, as the rapidly whirling figure of Xilonen approaches the spot where he is standing. The girls in the center see Tetecan and stop their dancing, amazed. However, the enraptured Xilonen, lost in the emotion of the dance, continues to whirl madly in an ever widening circle until, heated and dizzy by her dancing, she is hurled by her own velocity into his arms. Xilonen, almost swooning with dizziness, seems for a moment unaware of the strange arms supporting her. With cries of alarm, the other girls flee from the scene. Tetecan looks down with wonder upon the fair face and palpitating form of the girl in his arms and crushes her to him. Xilonen struggles to break away, but he holds her tightly, looking into her face as one who, for the first time, fully understands the function of sight. At length he releases her and stands looking wildly down into her face. Xilonen, too, is deeply moved by what has taken place and stands looking into his face, seemingly unaware of his poor clothing.]

XILONEN
Who art thou?

Act Two

TETECAN
Tetecan.

XILONEN
That is but a name.

[She notices for the first time his country clothing, and a look of hatred passes over her face as she realizes that no less than a slave has taken advantage of her helplessness.]

What dost thou in the king's garden?

TETECAN
Thou wouldst know why I am here?
I tell thee truthfully, I know not.

XILONEN
Stupid slave! Know ye who I am?
'Tis no matter Get thee gone!

TETECAN
That I may not do.

XILONEN
Dost hear my command, fool.
Oh! This insult! Get thee hence.

TETECAN
Nay. Here will I abide and, without insult,

Act Two } Look upon thee, since ne'er have my eyes
Beheld one so beautiful as thou art!

{ XILONEN [moved by his bravery]

Thou art arrogant But thou shalt see!
Tomorrow shalt thou die for this insult.

{ TETECAN

Then shall I have lived long enough
When I held thee in my arms just now.

[Xilonen is furious but flattered. She looks afresh into his honest, handsome face, and appraises his straight figure. Propriety demands that she flee from his presence, but a stronger urge bids her remain. She looks intently into his face.]

{ XILONEN

Thou art brave . . .
Little dost thou know what price
Thou shalt pay for this rashness.

{ TETECAN [moved to boldness]

There can be no price too great!

[He suddenly takes the astonished girl once more in his arms and holds her tightly to him as he seeks to understand the powerful emotions that surge through his being. Xilonen, too, is dismayed by the realization that some power stronger than her will bids her cleave to him. She lifts a face filled with awe and terror to his, and the stiffness leaves her body as she yields to his embrace. In a moment, Tetcán lifts her from the ground and tenderly carries her to the bench. He places her upon it and she sinks wearily upon it, lifting to his face an expression wavering between tears and gladness. Tetcán, too moved for speech, stands looking down upon her. Xilonen speaks almost to herself.]

‡ XILONEN

‡ Act Two

No man hath done so
To me before No man
Hath so much as touched me.

[She looks into his face for a moment, and then flinging herself upon Tetcacan, she buries her face upon his breast and sobs. He holds her gently, chastely.]

‡ TETECAN [Solo]

Thou art like unto a white dove
Which, frightened in sudden storm,
Flies safely to her haven.
Thou art like a gentle flower
Which in modesty hides her face
From the burning noon-day sun.
[He looks down upon her with a growing tenderness.]
Thou art like a summer cloud
Which, pure and white at dawn,
Melts in ecstasy before the summer sun.
Like the gentle star of evening
Which dims and fades before the risen moon.
Like the great white god
Which withholds the beauty of his face
Yet fills men's hearts with rapture!

[He pauses, filled with sudden rapture, searching for words to express the ecstasy which transforms his entire being.]

Ah! Loved one,
How may I tell thee what fills my heart?

Act Two } Before thy beauty my tongue is stilled!
My arms would crush thee with longing!

[In sudden rapture, he releases her and falls to his knees before her as one might humble himself before a deity. Deeply moved, the enraptured girl passes her delicate hands over his face. A deep and sudden ecstasy fills her being. Xilonen raises her face and speaks her thoughts as though she were addressing a god.]

{ XILONEN

That one so bravely beautiful as thou
Shouldst kneel before me! Thy words of love
Pierce my heart with sudden, joyful pain.
Never have I heard such words as thine.
What is it that speaks thus between us?
Ah! Tetecan. Thou, too, art beautiful!
My heart is choked with rapture.
These arms are strong: let their might
Crush now this sudden longing.
I care not what may befall beyond this hour!

[Xilonen bends to tenderly embrace him, clinging to him with increasing intensity as she struggles to understand the sudden emotion which fills her. As the lovers stand thus motionless, voices are heard within the pavilion. Xilonen is the first to recover her self-control. She looks about in terror, and springing from Tetecan, runs rapidly around the end of the pavilion. At the same moment, the High Priest appears and stands aside as Montezuma steps down into the garden. The High Priest follows, and at a greater distance the lesser priests enter and stand at some distance from the king. Tetecan, meanwhile, overcome by the strong emotions and the strange events of the day, has sunk upon the bench and remains seated as the king stops before him. An exclamation of surprise and awe bursts from the priests.]

‡ SECOND PRIEST [to Tetecan]

‡ Act Two

Arise, fool, and salute thy emperor.

[Tetecan looks up amazed at the brilliant array of the persons before him. He rises, and still somewhat bewildered, makes the salutation prescribed by custom. The emperor surveys the youth in silence. At length, he makes a sign to one of his suite who brings forward a regal chair upon which the monarch seats himself.]

‡ MONTEZUMA [to the High Priest]

Inquire of him what thou wilt.

[A look of astonishment crosses the faces of the priests.]

‡ HIGH PRIEST [to Tetecan]

My king commands that I question thee
Of thy fitness to serve Texcatliopa.
How old art thou?

‡ TETECAN

Twenty summers have passed since my birth.

‡ HIGH PRIEST

And thy father? What of him?

‡ TETECAN

I know not who he is.

[The priests exchange furtive glances.]

‡ HIGH PRIEST

Thy mother?

‡ TETECAN

She is dead.

Act Two}

{ HIGH PRIEST

Then it were idle to ask
If thou art of noble birth.

{ TETECAN

I am but a humble country youth.

{ HIGH PRIEST [at a loss for words]

Wouldst thou serve Texcatliopa?

{ TETECAN

Do we not all serve Texcatliopa?

{ HIGH PRIEST [turning to the emperor]

Thou see'st, O Montezuma, how simple is his mind.
How may this dullard serve our high purpose?

{ MONTEZUMA

Is there naught of similarity
'Tween piety and dullness?
Thou may'st prate learnedly of religion :
But to kings only, is it given
To understand the thoughts of men.
Yon comely youth knows not the rites
Which we intone to propitiate the gods;
Yet, since his mind is innocent of dogma,
His simple heart may the better
Hear the still voice of Texcatliopa.

[The king motions to Tetecan to approach him. The priests, smarting under the king's sarcasm, exchange glances. The king speaks directly to Tetecan.]

{ Act Two

Fear not to look upon me, thy emperor.

[He suddenly becomes serious and looks intently at Tetecan.]

If thou wert chosen as the god
Wouldst serve him with all thy heart?

{ TETECAN

How may a young man say in what manner
He might deport himself, were he a god?
Should he become a god, then must he be
Godlike in all his life and thoughts!

But ill does it become me

A poor country youth, to discourse thus
Before these holy men,
The youngest of whom may teach me!

[The face of Montezuma lights with satisfaction.]

{ MONTEZUMA

Nay, son! Thou shalt teach them!
Thou hast pure wisdom, such as springs
But from a young breast. Do not fear
The erudition of these many priests;
They are already overstuffed with dogma
Which was ever a heavy dish!

[The priests wince as the emperor so far forgets his imperial dignity as to criticize them before a simple serf. However, the king has not spoken idly. Sensing the growing discomfiture of the priests, he suddenly rises and addresses them.]

Act Two} My mind is at peace.
Here before thee, behold Texcatliopa.

[Without further ceremony, the king advances to Tetecan, and placing his hands upon his head, raises his eyes to the sky.]

Give heed, all ye gods!
I, thy imperial cousin, Montezuma,
Consecrate the new god.
Mighty Texcatliopa, behold thy son!

[At the conclusion of the invocation, Montezuma falls to his knees before Tetecan. After a moment's silence the priests begin to chant the ritual of investiture. Montezuma continues to kneel in deep humility before Tetecan who stands with hands tightly clasped, his face lifted and lighted in stern beauty. The priests chant:]

† HIGH PRIEST

Look thou down, O Texcatliopa:
Now we name thy son to thee.

† PRIESTS [in unison]

Look upon our choice with favor;
Fill his heart with love for thee.

† HIGH PRIEST

See, we kneel to pray before him;
Hear our prayers through his young heart.

† PRIESTS [in unison]

Fill his youthful heart with wisdom
That he may know our love for thee.

‡ HIGH PRIEST

‡ Act Two

Blind his eyes with thy great beauty
That his heart may grow in love.

‡ PRIESTS [in unison]

Fill his heart with our deep yearning;
That he may know our love for thee.

‡ HIGH PRIEST

Fill his heart with such compassion;
That it may hold the sins of all.

‡ PRIESTS [in unison]

Make him strong of heart to carry
All our grief at last to thee.

[At the conclusion of the chant, Montezuma rises and embraces Tetecan who, stunned by the events of the day, stands looking with almost unseeing eyes upon the king. He struggles for mastery of his thoughts, and gradually the expression upon his face indicates that a full and deep realization of the investiture has come to him. The chant, which has died away with the oft repeated name of "Texcatliopa," now is definitely stilled. The king makes a sign to one of the priests who brings forward the special robes worn by the god. The High Priest takes the robes and advances to Tetecan. He kneels before him and addresses him in tones of awe and reverence.]

‡ HIGH PRIEST

I take the dust from thy feet, O Texcatliopa!

[He kisses the feet of the youth and, still upon his knees, addresses the lesser priests.]

Behold the incarnation of Texcatliopa!

Let no man, on point of death

Set aside this holy investiture.

[The High Priest then bows before the god before addressing him.]

Act Two} It is decreed that with this sacred garb
Shalt thou be clothed to signify thy godhead.
Once thou art vested in these holy robes,
Thy person becomes consecrate. Henceforth,
Unless thou consent, let no mortal dare to touch thee,
And now thou wilt suffer me in reverence
To divest thee of thy mortal garments,
To assume the vesture which marks thee god.

[Tetecan stands motionless as the High Priest with deference gently removes his rough clothing, leaving him clad only in a loin cloth. The king watches the ceremony from his throne and starts as he notices the amulet upon the breast of Tetecan. Just before the priestly robe is slipped over the head of Tetecan, the king quickly advances to examine the stone secretly. An expression of amazement passes over his face, but he quickly regains his composure. And now the elaborate robe is fastened upon the youth. Next a helmet trimmed with green feathers tipped with gold is set upon his head. An elaborate fan is placed in his hand. Golden sandals are adjusted to his feet. All present, including Montezuma, kneel before the god in deep silence. The king at length rises and resumes his place upon his regal chair. All eyes turn toward him.]

MONTEZUMA

The audience is at an end.
The god would speak with me alone.

[The royal suite begins to leave the garden. The priests, feeling that they are being dismissed too soon, display some reluctance, but have no choice, and follow the others. The king and the god are left alone. Montezuma, with easy grace, rises and approaches the youth as an equal. He takes him by his hand and leads him to the throne upon which he seats the god, taking for himself a slightly lower seat. The youth is silent as Montezuma leans forward and looks with earnestness into the face of Texcatliopa. The king appears to be musing, as he looks with a display of affection and a poorly hidden cunning into the face of the youth. He finally mutters, almost to himself:]

Thou! Thou art the god Texcatliopa!

Act Two

[The curious behavior of the king at length distracts the youth from his preoccupation. He looks intently at the monarch and seems to realize for the first time his position of equality with that of the king. He looks with kindness upon the king and speaks without restraint.]

TEXCATLIOPA

Aye! I am the god.
What wouldst thou?

[The king does not answer at once, but regards the youth curiously as if trying to decide if the youth were playing a part, or were deeply convinced that he had become a god. At length, realizing that he does not have to deal with an uncouth stripling, but with an intelligent youth who sincerely believes himself a god, the king suddenly rises and stands before him.]

MONTEZUMA

Listen and bear with an old man's fancy!
When first I saw thee stand as mortal youth
I knew thee to be comely. Later,
When I talked with thee as mortal youth
I knew thee to be wise. But only now,
When thou didst stand naked before me
I knew thee as divine.
But as thou didst stand
I saw, pendent from thy neck
A green stone fashioned like a beetle.
How didst thou come to possess it?

[Tetecan starts, but quickly regains his composure.]

Act Two}

† TEXCATLIOPA

The amulet served Tetecan, who is dead.

[Montezuma hides his exasperation.]

Since I am become the god,
The stone concerns me no longer.

† MONTEZUMA

Nay,
Since as mortal thou didst value the stone,
Now, from thy mortal memory,
Tell me how first ye came to own it.

† TEXCATLIOPA

As god I have done with mortal things.
But since thou hast implored me,
Thou shalt know of the stone.

[He opens his robe and takes out the amulet, placing it in the king's hand. Montezuma recoils from the touch, but at length he examines the stone with eager interest.]

This may I tell thee of the accursed stone;
Know then, that Tetecan's mother, while a maid,
Stole it from the person of her seducer;
A great chieftain, who worked his will upon her
While her bridegroom, away at war, served thee.

[Montezuma, in evident dismay, sinks upon the stool.]

I give unto thee the accursed stone
Since it may no longer serve Tetecan.
If perchance thou dost know it

As one of thy chieftains' insignia,
I command thee: Seek him out to kill him.

¶ Act Two

[Montezuma, in great distress, seeks to hide his agitation. He half believes himself, for the first time, in the presence of a powerful god. Texcatliopa's command completely unnerves him for the moment. However, he continues with cool cunning.]

¶ MONTEZUMA

As a god, thou art above petty vengeance!

¶ TEXCATLIOPA

As a god, I may the better
Bring vengeance upon a wicked man.

¶ MONTEZUMA [forcing a smile]

Surely the great god Texcatliopa
Concerns himself no longer with a whim of passion
Now twenty summers past!

¶ TEXCATLIOPA

The god Texcatliopa were not here today,
Were it not for that fateful night.

¶ MONTEZUMA

But mayhap thy father
Hath risen unto honor in my realm.
Perchance he hath long ago repented.
Thou art young! Thou knowest how hotly
Runs the blood of youth in the season of spring.
Thy mortal memory will serve thee to agree with me.

Act Two}

{ TEXCATLIOPA

My people of the mountains, thou shouldst know,
Have sterner codes than thy womanish city dwellers:
Hotly ran my blood as a mortal, yet no maiden
Have I brought unto disgrace. There is within me
Naught but hatred for the monster who begot me.

{ MONTEZUMA

Thou wouldst then, still punish thy father?

{ TEXCATLIOPA

Tetecan is no more. But now as god,
Must I bring vengeance upon his father.
I speak unto thee as Texcatliopa!
No father have I!

[He pauses, the light of exaltation slowly passes from his face as, with a rush of boyish love, he remembers that his foster father is wandering alone in the city. Montezuma is quick to read his thoughts.]

{ MONTEZUMA

Aye. It were sad, though a god, to be fatherless!
Enough! Why stand we here
Speaking thus formally to one another.
Hear me!
Thou think'st me a great king.
But I am also a god who knows all things!
And thou! Thou art but a simple country boy.
Thou think'st thyself a god! I can but laugh!

Have I not raised thee from the dust of my streets
To make thee seem divine? ¶ Act Two

[Texcatliopa is astonished at such blasphemy, and makes an involuntary movement toward the king as if he would strike him. The king, however, retains his dignity, and Texcatliopa is for the moment restrained. He looks with consternation into the face of the king.]

Let us understand each other.
I am wise and know all things. Each year
A silly youth like thee goes yelping to his death
Like a mongrel cur to the drowning . . .
Yet, he thinks in his vain, stupid mind
That he carries out with his worthless life
The sins of all mankind! Be not deceived!
The masses of the people will revere thee,
But persons in high station, yea, even the High Priest
Laugh at thee for the fool that thou art!

[A look of fury crosses the face of Texcatliopa and he raises his heavy fan to strike the king. Montezuma realizes that he has perhaps been indiscreet, and decides to move with more cunning.]

Have patience!
Canst guess what I would say to thee?

¶ TEXCATLIOPA

What further blasphemy canst utter!
My patience is sorely tried by thy prating.
Get ye gone, and leave me in peace.

Act Two

[Montezuma recoils in anger and awe from the brave retort. His face reveals that he is uncertain if he is in the presence of a sincere youth who believes himself a god, or if fate has suddenly interposed to work a miracle of divine trickery, so that he is standing in the presence of a powerful god. He realizes that in either case, he has no alternative but to pursue the course he has started.]

MONTEZUMA

Hold thy tongue, god or not,
I would smite thee for thy insolence.

[The king's manner softens and he speaks with increasing force.]

Come! Let us have done with artifice.
As one man unto another let us speak.

[He gathers his strength and confronts the youth without fear.]

This shalt thou know . . . I, the great Montezuma
Am thy father! Now art thou shaken!
Where is now thy silly vanity? A god!
Rather, my bastard son! How seems it, holy one,
Thus to spring in one hour from beggar,
To god, to bastard prince? Aye! Hide thy face!
As god, thou wouldst even be kind to me,
As god, thou wouldst love me as brother!
Thou shouldst be stoned for thy impudence!

[Texcatliopa stands as if stunned during the king's speech. He seats himself unsteadily upon the throne and covers his face with his hands. Montezuma stands silently watching. When he feels that the youth is sufficiently humbled, he crosses to him and embraces him with a show of affection.]

But forgive me, my son. I have been cruel.

[Texcatliopa repulses his father and springs to his feet as he fights for mastery of his emotions.]

‡ TEXCATLIOPA

‡ Act Two

Nay. Speak no more to me.

[He turns his back upon the king, but in a moment of sudden strength he turns to find the king watching him with a poorly concealed look of victory upon his face.]

But what doth it avail ye, or me
That I know thee as my father?
As son thou canst not acknowledge me.
Thy throne passes at thy death to thy nephew.

[Sudden anger and contempt show in his face as he realizes that the king is playing a game with him. Yet, the tragic hopelessness of his position is forced upon him. He advances and looks searchingly into the king's face. The king recoils from the close scrutiny. Texcatliopa seems to read that which he sought, for his gaze moves from the king's face, and he raises his eyes.]

Why should I fear this wretched man?
It must be! It is! I am Texcatliopa!

[Montezuma is terrified at his son's strength. He decides to humble himself.]

‡ MONTEZUMA

Ah! My son! That thou shouldst spurn me!
Many children have I by many women;
Thou alone dost seem like him
Whom I should proudly own as son!
Thou knowest the prophecy, which with certainty
Foretells ere long the return of Quetzacoatl.
Of late, in troubled dreams I have seen the god
Returning 'mid great splendor to resume my throne.
Sunlight sparkles from his raiment of metal!

Act Two}

His face, my son, is like thine own.

[He speaks with mysterious portent, choosing his words with care.]

And dreams tell me this:

I am bidden to find and bring unto sacrifice

Him who shall bear the god the greatest likeness.

It is even revealed to me,

That one day, in passage through my streets

Him would I find clad in simple dress,

Standing as thou didst stand, unafraid before me!

Now dost thou know the manner of thy choosing.

‡ **TEXCATLIOPA** [with sarcasm]

Thou art adept at construing dreams, methinks!

‡ **MONTEZUMA**

Nay! Hear and judge of my perplexity!

Thou canst well believe, once thou wert chosen,

I felt naught but satisfaction in the deed.

And yet, an ancient prophecy

Ordains that once a youth of royal blood

Be brought to death upon the stone of sacrifice,

Dire tragedy shall befall the royal house.

Ah! What mischief have I brought to pass!

Thou alone canst save thy king!

[His agitation gives way to terror.]

'Tis thy duty

To claim me as thy father! Thee will I reward!

Riches and provinces will I give thee!

Perchance I may relieve thee from the godhood
And seat thee at the last upon my throne!

{Act Two

[In terror and anxiety, the king forsakes all appearance of regal dignity, crosses to his son and humbly attempts to embrace him. Texcatliopa shakes him off with increasing disgust.]

{TEXCATLIOPA

Thou dost fashion dreams to suit thee well!
Thou shouldst be soothsayer, not king!

{MONTEZUMA

Nay! Thou dost not understand me.
In thee my own youth doth live again!
Thee have I raised from the dust.
Thou shalt have riches,
Thou shalt save thy father's life.
My son, I bow before thee.

[The king sinks in abject misery before his son and attempts to kiss the edge of his robe. The god looks down upon the fawning monarch. There is neither hatred nor pity in his gaze, but wonderment and a cool detachment. He pulls his robe from the king's clutching hands and regards the man at his feet for a moment before he speaks.]

{TEXCATLIOPA

The immortal gods are wise!
From thy weakness I gain but greater strength.
From thy cunning I gain but clearer vision.

Act Two

[The king, in dismay, believes himself lost and fears that he is being judged by a powerful god. He crawls upon his knees to the feet of his son, imploring his pity. Texcatliopa's face becomes transfigured as if he understands and may justly appraise all human weakness. He looks down almost with pity upon the terror-stricken man at his feet.]

There rises in my heart at sight of thee
Not hate, but rather, pity: Compassion
Such as immortal gods may feel for mortals.
This anguish thou hast brought upon thyself.
Solve it as best ye may.
Thy pain concerns me not . . . Thy throne
And him, who at thy death shall tenant it,
Were recorded in the sight of the gods
But as migration of countless waterfowl.
That alone which concerns the gods
Is the manner of their veneration.
Texcatliopa, the god, has spoken!

[Texcatliopa raises his eyes and looks past the king toward the distant lake, seemingly unaware of his presence. The king slowly rises, and in abject misery, slowly moves into the pavilion. For a moment, the god continues to look out across the water. Then he slowly turns. His face seems expressionless as he slowly moves to the stone bench, upon which he had first seated himself when he entered the garden. He slowly seats himself upon the bench and as he relaxes, an expression of utter weariness seems to cross his face. He slowly passes his hand across the smooth surface of the bench. Suddenly, without reserve, he throws himself prone upon the bench.]

‡ CURTAIN ‡

ACT THREE

[The same as Act Two. Seventeen months later; early evening. As the scene progresses, twilight comes down, and at the close of the scene, the full moon has begun to light the garden. At rise of curtain, the city is seen across the lake bathed in the rich glow of the setting sun. As the scene progresses, the city becomes increasingly indistinct, and at dusk, beacon lights gleam from the summits of the many pyramids. At rise, the stage is deserted. There is presently heard the sound of many masculine voices speaking with animation, and Texcatliopa enters from behind the pavilion. He is followed at a respectful distance by the High Priest and lesser priests. Texcatliopa crosses to a low throne and seats himself. The throne, which suggests a couch, is covered with spotted skins. The High Priest makes a sign to the lesser priests who bow. The High Priest then seats himself informally at the feet of the god and waits for him to speak.]

TEXCATLIOPA

Eventide, now moving gently forth
Doth clothe this place in quiet loveliness;
Whose raiment, now soft with silvery sheen,
Would wither and die in noon's bright ray.

[He pauses, lost in contemplation of the garden, then with an effort returns to the business at hand.]

It seems seventeen years, and not as many moons
Since here I was chosen as Texcatliopa.

[Texcatliopa rises and walks to the wall where he stands lost in thought, looking toward the distant city. The High Priest, hoping that he is scanning the water for sight of the canoe bearing the four goddesses, approaches him and lays a hand affectionately upon his shoulder.]

HIGH PRIEST

Thou art impatient! The maids will soon arrive.

Act Three}

[Texcatliopa makes a gesture of annoyance and moves away from the wall. Hiding his annoyance, the High Priest continues with soft voice.]

For one month shall they serve thee here.
Then shalt thou join thy father, Texcatliopa.

‡ **TEXCATLIOPA** [musingly]

To join him! Would that it were tonight.

[The High Priest is amazed at his reply. He is about to make a joke of the youth's indifference, when a lesser priest enters, bowing before Texcatliopa, who has returned to the throne.]

‡ **LESSER PRIEST** [to High Priest]

The canoes are at the landing, worshipful one.
Is the god ready to receive the goddesses?

‡ **HIGH PRIEST** [aside to priest]

Nay. He seems not himself. Await a sign from me.

[As the lesser priest is about to withdraw, there is heard a commotion in the shrubbery at right, and an armed palace guard enters leading captive Tetecan's foster father, ragged and disheveled. The guard pauses at a sign from the High Priest. The foster father looks with amazement at his son, who, equally surprised, would have run to embrace him. The elder man stops short at sight of a band of angry priests who, attracted by the noise, have hurriedly entered. All turn toward the god, awaiting his next move. At length, the foster father, unable longer to suppress his joy, breaks from the guard and rushes toward his son with outstretched arms.]

‡ **FOSTER FATHER**

My son! At last, at last!

[The nearest priest, horrified at the profanation of the god, rushes between them and fells the foster father with his staff.]

¶ FIRST PRIEST [to Foster Father]

¶ Act Three

What means this sacrilege? Thou a beggar
Wouldst profane the holy person of Texcatliopa!

¶ SECOND PRIEST [to High Priest]

Mark ye! He spoke to him. I myself heard it!

¶ THIRD PRIEST

Aye. Such blasphemy is punishable with death.

¶ SECOND PRIEST

Didst hear him say, "Son, I have found thee?"

¶ FIRST PRIEST

He is mad! He would harm the god!

¶ HIGH PRIEST [to the guard]

Seize him and give him to the captain.

[He turns to Texcatliopa.]

We pray thy pardon. Yon uncouth man
Shall pay with his life for this insolence.

[The guard, assisted by the lesser priests, is struggling with the foster father who seeks to make himself heard.]

¶ TEXCATLIOPA

Unloose thy hold. I would speak to this man.

[The priests and guard, in consternation, free the elder man.]

Get ye hence. All of ye!

Act Three}

[The priests glance at the High Priest who, after a struggle with his own dignity, at length gives the sign of dismissal. All including the High Priest, bow before Texcatliopa and depart.]

Father!

† FOSTER FATHER

My son!

What means this great reverence unto thee?

[Texcatliopa, in his great love for his foster father, is still aware of the teaching which tells him that he is divine, and pauses, the prey of conflicting thoughts. He seats himself upon the throne and motions for his father to sit beside him. The foster father seats himself, looking with amazement into the face of the youth.]

Thou! A god!

† TEXCATLIOPA

I am become the great Texcatliopa.

[The foster father, obeying an ancient religious superstition, springs to his feet in alarm.]

Nay, father, sit. I would speak with thee.

[He looks into the elder man's face with deep feeling.]

How may I tell thee. 'Tis like a dream!

On that day, when, before thy sight,

I was led away in great procession,

They brought me soon before Montezuma

Who straightway named me Texcatliopa.

Then, was I stripped of my humble clothing

And 'vested with these holy robes.

Yet, as I stood naked before the king

He saw the green stone which thou gav'st me:

It he recognized as his own.

{Act Three

[With increasing agitation he rises and stands before his foster father who looks at him in deep amazement.]

He, the great Montezuma, is my father!
Later, the king spoke with me privately
And with show of insincere affection
Would have owned me as his son.

{ FOSTER FATHER

And thou?

{ TEXCATLIOPA

I forbade it.

{ FOSTER FATHER

Thou! Thou gav'st orders unto Montezuma!

{ TEXCATLIOPA

Am I not the god? He is but a weakling
Who would use me for his own gain.
He would even give his throne to me
If I would prove traitor to the people!

[The foster father is stunned by what he has heard and questions in his simple mind if such things can be. His mental conflict passes into the mind of the youth, for as Texcatliopa studies the elder man's face, he sees written upon it the shadow of his own perplexity. A common bond as of old seems suddenly to unite them. Texcatliopa impulsively seats himself upon the throne beside his father, who puts a strong arm about his shoulder. They sit thus, in silence for a moment.]

Act Three} Verily as thou see'st, I am the god.

[An expression of tragic sorrow crosses his face.]

And yet, my father,
Strange dreams rob me of sleep;
I deem myself the god, and then,
Visions of bloodshed, and of life,
Sweep through my affrighted fancy
And I wake bathed in chilly sweat,
Calling upon thy name!
Alone in the heavy darkness
I know myself no mighty god,
But a frightened, lonely boy
Crying unto his father!
Fain would I still have time
To live, and to think of living.
And yet there comes oft to my memory
A vision of fair maiden loveliness,
Which one day passed before my eyes
And with great longing filled my heart.
As crushed within these eager arms
Her soul looked up into my eyes
Which thenceforth were blinded for all else!

[Texcatliopa pauses as he makes this confession, as if dismayed at the intensity with which he feels the situation.]

Oh father! Think me not weak!
Since last I saw thee
I have grown from feeble youth

Unto godhood. And even now
Four virgins come to serve me here,
To dance in moonlight before me
As dance mortals but before the gods.

[He seems unaware of the elder man's presence, and speaks his thoughts in a hushed, almost reverent mood.]

I seek the answer in my soul,
I cry it aloud to all that breathes,
Yet only silence answers me.

There seems to sing from every tree,
From the humble weed which impedes my step,
The still, potent voice of all earth's loveliness.

[He springs up, transfigured by a sudden overwhelming awareness of the omnipresence of an unseen god. He speaks clearly, as one inspired.]

Oh that I might name this great being
Whose face fills my soul with blinding light!
In whose sight these many gods of Mexico
Are no more holy than the clay which gives them shape.
Somewhere behind these masks of our clumsy fashioning
Waits and calls with tender love
Some being, yea, a mighty god!

[He stands immovable. The foster father, amazed and strangely moved, sinks to his knees before his son, embracing him. The god does not speak, but stands as one transfigured. His arm at length falls almost in a gesture of benediction as the priests enter. All pause with amazement as they see the strange man kneeling to embrace the god. No word is spoken. The foster father first regains his poise and springs to his feet. The priests group themselves near the rear wall and bow as the High Priest enters leading the four goddesses. They are clad in long diaphanous white robes. They carry garlands of flowers, and as they bow, it is seen that they are heavily veiled.

Act Three

Without seeming to look at Texcatliopa, they kneel, touching their foreheads to the ground. The High Priest advances to the foster father speaking in anger.]

† HIGH PRIEST

What! Art thou still here, beggar!

[to Texcatliopa]

Dost perceive the virgins kneeling before thee?

[Texcatliopa stands motionless as all await his reply. At length he speaks with softness.]

† TEXCATLIOPA

Texcatliopa will receive the goddesses.

Into thy care,

I give the person of this man.

Let no harm befall him.

[He makes a sign with his hand to the foster father who follows two of the priests into the pavilion. The High Priest seats himself upon a low seat, and the lesser priests move to the wall at the end of the garden where the goddesses are kneeling. Four of their number raise the goddesses, and the eight persons dance a slow ritualistic dance. At its conclusion, the goddesses again kneel and all of the priests leave the garden. Texcatliopa looks at the kneeling goddesses and seemingly without interest makes a sign, at which they rise, and begin circling in an intricate pattern. They speak in unison:]

† CHANT OF GODDESSES

Who are we who come to serve thee?

Who are we who dance before thee?

[they indicate the first girl]

Xociquetzal, goddess of flowers!

See! Is she not lovely?

[they indicate the second girl]

Xilonen, goddess of magic!
See! Is she not fair?

[they indicate the third girl]

Xatlational, goddess of water!
See! Is she not graceful?

[they indicate the fourth girl]

Uixtowoathl, goddess of salt!
See! Is she not beautiful?

[The music begins. The dancers dance in circular pattern, improvising in solo fashion, each attempting to surpass the other. The moonlight falls brightly upon them as they loosen a portion of their draped skirts, permitting long veils of filmy white cotton to follow their every motion. In spite of his unrest and exultation of mind, the youth is fascinated by the dance. The tempo increases and the dancers give themselves to their task with increasing abandon. The circle widens, approaching ever closer to the bench upon which Texcatliopa has seated himself. The dance becomes lascivious, and the youth rises to stand amazed before the sight. As the pattern of the dance brings each girl ever closer to the god, she stops for a moment before him, then whirls rapidly past in an ever widening circle. When at length the first girl passes quite close to the god, she pauses to lift her veil which she casts aside as the following dancer is swept before the god where each, in turn, unveils. Xilonen is the last of the four to so unveil herself. As Texcatliopa sees her face for the first time with distinctness, each recognizes the other, and they stand as stunned, staring into each other's face, speechless with amazement. Texcatliopa first recovers his self-control and gives the sign for the dance to cease.]

† TEXCATLIOPA

Her have I chosen.
Depart ye, till I call!

[The other goddesses hide their chagrin and depart. Texcatliopa stands irresolutely before Xilonen. He makes an involuntary movement as if to embrace her, but restrains the impulse. Xilonen looks at him, her face filled with terror and dismay.]

Act Three}

{ XILONEN

Thou! Tetecan, art the god!

[She falls to her knees before him. Texcatliopa gently raises her and stands looking down into her face.]

That I should find thee thus, a god!

[She looks up into his face piteously.]

Speak unto me, my beloved one!

Why art thou here as Texcatliopa?

[Texcatliopa places an arm about her and leads her gently to the throne upon which they seat themselves. Xilonen turns to him a tragic face. Texcatliopa cannot at once speak, but averts his face to hide his emotion. At length he turns, speaking tenderly as to a child.]

{ TEXCATLIOPA

Listen unto me, beloved.

Scarce hadst thou left me in this garden,
When came Montezuma to name me as the god.
Dazed from sight of thee, I stood as in a dream
Hearing the words uttered which made me thus.
Taken thence, I found myself at nightfall
Lodged in splendor within the mighty temple.
[His face softens as he recollects his mood on that occasion.]
Yet no sleep came to my fevered mind,
Only thoughts of thee, and thy loveliness.

{ XILONEN

I have wished that death might claim me
Since life without thee were but death!
In vain did I ask for the youth Tetecan,
But concerning thee I heard no word.

[She pauses to look up eagerly into his face, then her frightened gaze extends to the vast moonlit garden. A look of great tenderness moves across the face of the youth as he looks down into her lovely childish face.]

{Act Three

{ TEXCATLIOPA

[He springs to his feet in great agitation.]

Why are we punished thus, my loved one?
What cruel fate hath pursued us,
That thou art here beside me
Yet art thou so far away!

[Xilonen watches him with an expression of growing concern and tenderness.]

{ XILONEN

Let us flee from this garden,
Never again to see this accursed place!

[She looks about the garden in terror.]

How may we stay here, with these others?

{ TEXCATLIOPA

[To himself, as if his thoughts were far away.]

'Tis too horrible to think upon!
They must not know what lies between us.

{ XILONEN

But have they not ears and eyes?
Are they not compelled to share thy bed?

{ TEXCATLIOPA

I had not so far thought of them.
But of the millions who believe me god.

Act Three}

{ XILONEN

But what of these other maids?

{ TEXCATLIOPA

I must think only of those
Who believe in me as god.
I shall order them but to dance before me.

{ XILONEN

The priests will think thee mad.

{ TEXCATLIOPA

Perchance I well may be. Nay, dear one,
Our love must come unto no issue.
Alone as god I will bear my grief,
As shall befit a god.

[He turns to look at Xilonen and reads the questioning in her eyes. Quickly he crosses and leads her gently to the throne upon which he seats himself beside her. Neither speaks for a moment. At length he speaks as if his thoughts were other than his own.]

Thou hast said that thou dost love me!
It were better that thou didst understand.
Thou know'st not all that is amiss:
Montezuma would claim me as his son.
The king, fearful lest at my death,
Evil shall befall his person,
Hath implored me to renounce the godhood.

[Xilonen looks at him in consternation as he continues with greater intensity.]

Sleepless nights have fashioned thus my thoughts: ¶ Act Three
That even as I might wish to serve my father, the king,
To ease his lot by doing as he bids,
Yet thou see'st, a higher duty claims my life;
Texcatliopa millions think me,
Texcatliopa must I die.

[He pauses musingly.]

When at last I mount the steep pyramid,
Could I but know what awaits me out beyond.
'Tis said I meet the god, Texcatliopa.

[His face suddenly darkens with anger, and he springs to his feet.]

What folly hath been taught me!
How may I meet with love, this cruel god
Who yearly takes in bloody sacrifice
Thousands of my fellow beings?

[His face suddenly lights with a strong conviction. Xilonen is unable to follow his thoughts and watches him in rapt wonderment.]

Aye. Somewhere, in joy and beauty
I shall serve and praise a greater god,
Whose gift is love to all who seek him.
Him shall I seek, him shall I find!

[He turns to see Xilonen looking at him with frightened intensity. He takes her hands and looks down into her face.]

Canst thou not understand, beloved?
I go to find peace for thee and for me!

[Xilonen throws herself upon his breast, and they sit quietly, lost in the wonder of the strange vision. He speaks soothingly.]

For myself, I take no further thought.

Act Three} My mind is at peace. And now I but await
The day which sends me on my quest.
But what wilt thou do, my loved one?
How wilt thou pass these many days?

XILONEN

Thou shalt not see me past this night.
I shall feign sickness, and keep
Within my chamber. When, in the evening
The three maids dance before thee,
Wilt thou then think of me?

[Texcatliopa rises and holds out his arms to her. She runs to his embrace, and they stand thus, struggling to find words to speak their farewells.]

And when the moon in her radiant fullness
Illumines into silver the whiteness of their robes,
Then shall she, looking brightly down,
Find and see the anguish in my eyes.
And up into her glory shall I gaze
Yet see her not for all my tears.

TEXCATLIOPA [Solo]

As night, long spent o'er yonder lake,
Swoons deeply hush'd 'neath paling moon,
And, impatient for return of day,
Sighs restlessly in troubled sleep,
So shall my weary soul to thee,
Soar joyfully in night long dreaming;

And reaching thee, nor seek to wake again.

Act Three

[Texcatliopa sinks to his knees before her. As he embraces her knees, his elaborate head dress falls unheeded to the ground. He raises to her a face lighted with a calm beauty, yet Xilonen seems afraid to look upon it. She passes her delicate hands over his hair and raising her eyes to the stars, speaks.]

XILONEN and TEXCATLIOPA [Duet]

As sigh two silver stars 'cross countless voids,
Who, loving, would unite in changeless bliss,
Yet mutely ride the frigid spaces, alone,
Doomed to die asunder;
So, distant as two stars, shall we eternally
Sing love into each other's frozen heart
And dying, breathe the other's name!

[While they have sung their farewell, Texcatliopa has freed her from his embrace and has sunk upon the ground. When he no longer hears her voice, he reaches mutely to touch her, but she has moved away. Finding but empty space, he throws himself prone upon the ground, burying his face in his arms. As he lies thus, a sob escapes from him. But meanwhile Xilonen, walking as one dazed, has moved slowly toward the pavilion. However, when she hears his sob, she glances back, and then perceiving his torment of soul, she utters a loud cry of anguish and runs blindly into the pavilion. The cry rouses Texcatliopa, who rises to his knees. His face is white and expressionless. He looks at the ground where he sees his helmet and fan. Mechanically he stoops to pick up the fan and regards it with sudden curiosity as he turns it over in his hands. He passes his hand wistfully along the feathered edge of the fan and speaks with sudden tenderness.]

TEXCATLIOPA

So radiates into this nether world
Of darkness and of doubt,

Act Three }

The tender love of Him I seek.

[He clings the fan quickly to his breast as if it had suddenly become a symbol of his mission. He springs to his feet in strong ecstasy.]

In what manner may I name thee?

In what voice may I call thee?

Where e'er thou art,

I cry unto thee, Almighty God!

{ CURTAIN }

❧ EPILOGUE ❧

[A large plaza before the pyramid of Texcatliopa. At rear of stage, the wide steps of the pyramid lead directly up from the plaza. (On a conventional theater stage, the steps would stop 10 feet up in a parapet extending around the pyramid, along which the actors could move out of sight, but in an outdoor setting, the entire pyramid can be shown, with its flat top supporting the sacrificial stone.) At left side, two regal chairs, one for Montezuma, the other for Texcatliopa.

At the right side, four stools for the goddesses. At rise: A group of citizens in holiday dress, carrying garlands of flowers, move excitedly about stage. There is animated conversation. Presently is heard a loud babble of voices as large numbers of people converge from all sides, arranging themselves into a hollow square before the pyramid. One has the impression that the same mass of excited people extends completely around the pyramid.

Martial music sounds and a band of musicians enters playing upon flutes. They are followed by a group of priests leading the four goddesses who are conducted with much pomp to the four stools. There next enter a group of priests acting as honor guard for the High Priest. The guard disperses and finds standing places behind the goddesses, while the High Priest moves to a place near the king's throne.

There is heard off stage the music used for the chant of the king's guard as used in Act I, but this time the soldiers do not sing, but stride onto the stage making way for the litter of Montezuma which follows behind them. The guards form a fan-like formation in front of the populace as the litter of the king comes to a halt and the king descends.

All present bow as he advances to seat himself upon the throne.

All eyes now turn to watch the entrance of Texcatliopa who is borne upon a litter as resplendent as that of the king. He is preceded by dancing priests. The god descends, and without looking at the king, seats himself upon the throne reserved for him. All, including Montezuma, bow deeply before him. The god crosses to the king, raises him to his feet, then returns to his own chair. The king stands to speak, as all eyes turn to watch him. He appears weary, distraught, and as he speaks, his voice seems lacking in its former regal strength.]

Epilogue }

{ MONTEZUMA

My people of Mexico!
Thy lord and emperor speaks.

[There falls a deathlike silence as the king pauses and seems to search for words.]

There comes down from our fathers,
A tradition lost in countless years:
Which holds that, on this holy day,
All serfs, slaves, chieftains, priests,
Meet here in common benediction
At the feet of Texcatliopa!

And yet,

My imperial heart is sorely troubled:
There comes darkly unto me, a god,
Dreams, even as unto mortals.
Dreams of divine portent, prophecy.

Enough!

It is my will that this youth
Be not sacrificed this day!

[A hush falls upon the people, who are unable to comprehend the king's meaning. They exchange perplexed glances, and then they gradually give voice to their resentment and anger. Cries of dismay arise. There is a movement among the priests, and the High Priest boldly advances to Montezuma.]

{ HIGH PRIEST

Most High One! Methinks thou must be ill!
It is decreed by holy custom:
Texcatliopa must this day be sacrificed!

† MONTEZUMA [harshly]

† Epilogue

I have spoken!

HIGH PRIEST

Strange are thy words, oh king!

[He leans forward with hateful emphasis.]

Wouldst turn the gods 'gainst thy realm?

Wouldst thou incite to mighty anger

These, thy faithful subjects?

[Montezuma glances with poorly concealed apprehension into the sullen faces of his subjects.]

Here have they come this holy day

Bearing garlands unto the god.

[The king seems torn between fear for himself and fear of his subjects. He makes a gesture of impatience.]

† MONTEZUMA

I grow weary of thy pious tongue.

[Montezuma turns to speak directly to the people.]

This shalt thou hear, and no more,

Then shalt thou signify thy wish:

Know then:

It has been given me in dreams

That if this youth is sacrificed,

Grievous ill shall befall Mexico!

Mark ye well, and remember my words:

It hath been revealed to me

He shall not live to feel the knife!

Epilogue}

[The king pauses to watch the effect of his words. Then, gaining courage, he speaks with less formality.]

Surely, thou wilt all recall,
How, at the moment of the sacrifice,
The victim doth cry aloud in agony
As the knife cleaves his breast?
Today shalt thou hear no cry!
The knife shall cleave but senseless flesh,
And the heart when plucked forth
Shall be seen to have no life!
An unknown, alien god shall claim him
Ere our holy knife descends.
Wilt offer a dead youth to Texcatliopa?

[The king pauses. Confused mutters and cries arise and swell through the multitude. The High Priest, sensing that the king has gained his objective, hurries to Texcatliopa and leads him to the lowest step of the flight of stairs, and boldly holds the god's arm aloft shouting as he does so.]

† HIGH PRIEST

Here stands Texcatliopa, thy redeemer!
See! He lives, even as you and I!
Be not deceived by idle prophesies.
Methinks the king is mad!
People of Mexico!
Speak! What is thy will?

[Cries of assent rise from the people. Hungry for blood, they fall under the spell of the priest's superstition. They shout in frenzy and turn away from the king, shouting to the priests.]

‡ THE PEOPLE

‡ Epilogue

The god shall die! Give us his blood!

[The mass of frenzied people falls upon its knees and continues to shout in wild ecstasy. Texcatliopa makes a sign for silence.]

‡ TEXCATLIOPA

Think not upon what the king hath said.

[He pauses to look down upon them with great tenderness.]

More, I cannot say.

I dare not trust my youthful tongue

To voice the love which fills my soul

I speak unto thee thus:

The face of Him whom all men seek

Hath been revealed unto my eyes.

I haste to bow before His feet

I go to serve ye as I may.

[At the conclusion of the speech, the enraptured people fall in blind worship before the god, calling with increasing intensity upon his name. The High Priest makes a hurried sign, and the four goddesses move away from the throne and begin to dance the ritualistic dance. Texcatliopa stands quietly upon the lowest step. His gaze follows the form of Xilonen who dances without looking at him. Four young priests join the goddesses and the entire populace begins a chant as the dancing continues with increasing intensity.]

‡ CHANT [sung by all]

Garlands of flowers we bring unto thee

Texcatliopa, Texcatliopa! [sung by priests]

Look thou down upon thy new incarnation

Texcatliopa, Texcatliopa! [sung as above]

Epilogue} Temper the winds to bring plenteous rain
Bless with maize our wide fruitful valley
Give us all good things in their season
Lead us in victory 'gainst our proud foe
Bring to our altars captives for sacrifice
Accept thy new son with our utmost devotion
Smile thou upon us as he climbs thy high altar
Texcatliopa, Texcatliopa, Hail!

[The chant has begun on a low note and has increased in intensity with each line. At its conclusion, the singers and dancers have reached a point of frenzy. At the last line, many of the people continue to cry and to moan, a few kneel, and others grovel upon the ground. Texcatliopa raises one hand in the manner of a benediction and moves up one step of the pyramid. He turns and removes his head dress, rends it into bits and flings the fragments to the people. There is a lively fight for the souvenir. He then moves up another step and, turning, rends his fan and throws it. The excitement of the people increases as he ascends the next step and removes his elaborate robe and throws it away. He stands clad but in a loin cloth and golden sandals. He next moves up another step and removes one after another his golden sandals which he bends and throws into the mass of people.]

At this point the god is joined by four priests who follow him as he climbs to the top of the pyramid where he places himself upon his back upon the stone of sacrifice. Each priest seizes a hand or foot as the High Priest advances with raised knife. All raise their eyes to follow the ascent of the god, and in small groups, the people kneel, lifting anxious faces to the summit of the pyramid. Meanwhile, the king, in great agitation, descends from his throne and passes quietly through the mass of people. He mounts the lower steps and stands at their head, looking up to the summit of the pyramid. From far overhead the voice of the High Priest is suddenly heard crying with terrifying force.]

† HIGH PRIEST

The hour has come!

Look thou down, oh Texcatliopa!
Thy fair son joins thee.

¶ Epilogue

[There is heard the low impact as the knife cracks the ribs of the youth. This is followed by a momentary silence. The people exchange terrified glances. Horrified at the fulfillment of the king's prophecy, they raise agonized faces to Montezuma, calling upon his name. The king stands looking down upon them from the steps, and gives the sign for silence.]

¶ MONTEZUMA

Ha! Ye heard no outcry!
The youth was already dead
When laid upon the stone!
Now shall the gods avenge thy stupidity!
Thou wast warned by Montezuma.
Now, do ye cringe like cowards
And raise to me thy supplications.
Thee I cannot help. I am but king.
Dance and cry unto the gods
Perchance they will heed thy wails.
Know then, the prophecy will be fulfilled:
Scarce shall pass a half score years
When we shall be no more!
Laid waste will be our fair Mexico.
Do what ye will. Seize all
Who will submit to the sacrifice!
I now depart.

[The king quickly descends the steps, enters his litter and is carried away. The High Priest hurriedly descends the steps. He shouts and beckons wildly. His hands and clothing are spotted with blood.]

Epilogue } At sight of his garments, the terrified people start to call upon him for help. He makes a sign to the priests who begin a frenzied dance. They circle about, seizing anyone within reach, and guide them through the wild tumult to the base of the steps where they are passed up to the top of the pyramid. The High Priest with a loud cry of approval, rushes back to the summit, beckoning to the people to follow him. Many start involuntarily to climb the steps, shouting and dancing as they ascend. Presently, agonized screams of the victims float down from the height and mingle with the frenzied cries of the hysterical people below. Many take up the dance of the priests and shout and moan as the dance becomes lascivious and uncontrolled. The curtain falls as the entire populace has begun to grovel upon the ground clutching at one another and screaming the name of Texcatliopa.]

{ CURTAIN }

¶ NOTES ON THE MUSIC ¶

It can be said, and without facetiousness, that any resemblance between the music of this Grove Play and the authentic Aztec music of the time of the story is purely accidental. In defense of myself, I can blame nobody but Cortez, whose invading hordes chose to wipe out any documentary evidence of the music of the period. There is some knowledge of a kind of a lute which was played frequently, but even had it been included as an atmospheric part of the score, I doubt that it would have carried beyond the first row.

As a result, the music of "Tetecan" is designed to create a *mood* rather than a *style*. Thanks to the author's beautifully conceived music notes, in which he has carefully patterned his own conception of where and in what manner music should be used, it was a challenge and a distinct pleasure to compose the musical setting for such a magnificent story.

Structurally, the music is simple, and in all cases we've attempted to aim at atmosphere without sacrificing melody. You will not hear the conventional overture, but a short prelude designed to establish, as the author suggests, a "mood of tension and of impending tragedy." An abrupt change to a pastoral quietness sets the mood for the mountain meadow sacred to Texcatliopa, leads directly into the opening of the play, the appearance of the peasants, and the chanted prayer to the god:

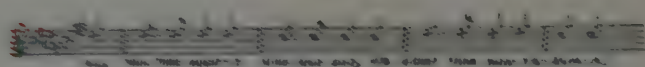


Early in Act I, Montezuma's entrance is heralded with a triumphant fanfare, and, as the procession appears, the Imperial Guards instruct the populace with:



Music Notes

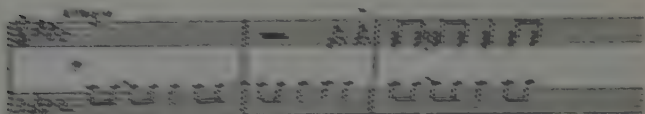
Act II is the complete opposite: the chorus of citizens sing their greeting:



A short passage in Act II suggests the quiet of the garden, and acts as an introduction to Tecum's long soliloquy, partially spoken over an agitated background, partially sung as recitative, and building to full, yet uncertain, exuberance on:



The piece follows its introduction slow and serious, but soon catches the rhythmic pattern followed throughout:



We offer no explanation for the musical structure of this ballet, it being an attempt to "neutralize" what might sound too American, too Latin, or too Continental. Perhaps it's a combination of all three. At any rate it was a faithful attempt to follow the summarized choreography designed by the author.

After his first brief and overpowering moments with Xilonen, Tecum expresses his wonderment at her beauty:



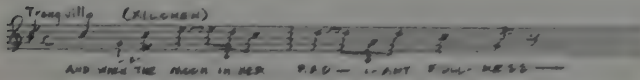
The invention of Tecum as the god Texacualopa, sung by the High Priest and Priest, is done in a religious mood, though not without a suggestion of the Pagan chant:



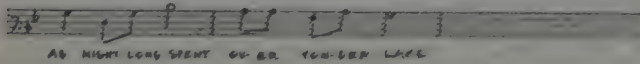
Act III is introduced with a short prelude *Andante* and again we quote the author: "to give a foretaste of the morose gods, some . . . and the spiritual resolve of the youth to pursue his goddess to its tragic end" and suggesting part of the melodic line later to be used in the duet:



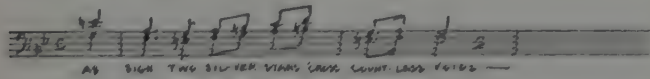
A recap of the ballet in Act II, this time short and with a varied interpretation, serves to carry the goddesses through their working before Texcatliopa. The ensuing long dialogue between Texcatliopa and Xilonen is climaxed with:



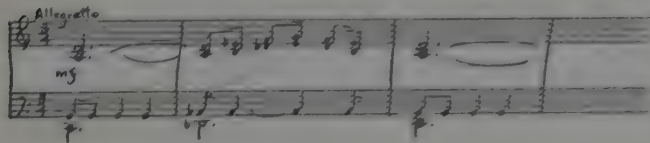
and then Texcatliopa:

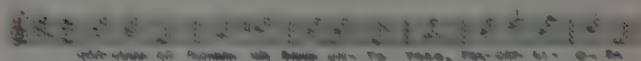


followed by a duet:



Solemn, brief, and at times agitated music leads quickly into the Epilogue, and the musical climax of the play is reached with the dance of the Goddesses and Priests as Texcatliopa begins his long ascent to the top of the sacrificial altar:





The tension builds as the god ascends, ending with a discordant chord as he reaches the sky — and his destiny.

As Ninigi-no-mikoto leaves the scene, and the terrified people begin their frantic preparation of the offering that has betokened them, the music shifts to its final phase — and the pagan Note of the bullet uses its climax under the song of Teruoka when he first recognized his beloved.

Obviously, the greatest gratification on the part of a Grove Play composer lies not in the performance of his music but in the tremendous experiential effect that makes the entire structure of the music a great event. In *Schubert's Prince*, my enthusiastic thanks go to those friends, my eyes and highest joys — to Ed Murphy in his magnificent handling of spectacle, words, and music . . . to Jim Lewis whose advice and suggestions on many an occasion helped straighten out those rough edges, only to enhance further our musical package with his wonderful expertise . . . to those boys in *Timewalk*, with their Scandinavian enthusiasm . . . to my cohorts in *Verano*, God love 'em — to the cast, the special effects, the production staff. It's been a great privilege to be one of you.

HUGH BROWN

PRODUCTION STAFF

This, the forty-fifth Grove Play of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco, presented by members of the Club in Bohemian Grove, Sonoma County, California, on Saturday night, July 29, 1950, is produced under the direction of Edward P. Murphy.

The members of the Production Committee, in charge of the presentation of the play, are as follows:

CHAIRMAN, JINKS COMMITTEE: Kenneth Ferguson.

CHAIRMAN, PRODUCTION COMMITTEE: Marshal Hale, Jr.

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Eric Ord.

ASSISTANTS TO THE DIRECTOR: J. Fenton McKenna, John H. Sembower, Donald Torney.

DIRECTOR OF DIALOGUE: Philip A. Coxon.

PERSONNEL MANAGER: E. Morris Cox, assisted by Robert M. Bacon.

SCENERY: Jay S. Green.

SET CONSTRUCTION: Gus R. Schneider.

SCENIC PAINTING: Norman K. Blanchard, Mark O. Hutchison, Donald S. Macky, Edward J. Maher, Albert H. Mundhenk, Harry D. Reeks, Winfield P. Rue, Guy F. Street, Jr., Leo G. West, William H. Wilke.

STAGE MANAGER: Merle L. McGinnis, assisted by Newell Armsby, C. Coolidge Kreis, Roger B. McKenzie, Clyde C. Sherwood, Edgar Waite.

STAGE CREW: George W. Abber, F. B. Butler, W. Byron Bryant, O. Dewey Donnell, Cassius E. Gates, Randolph Hale, M. E. Harlan, Harold C. Hendee, Duncan Low, William M. Maxfield, Stephen J. McKee, E. C. Morck, William D. Pabst, Mark B. Peck, George A. Smith, Dexter J. Tight, P. J. Walker, Jr.

PROPERTIES: Herbert D. Crall, assisted by Frederick C. Bost, Frank James Campbell, W. Donaldson Edwards, Russell Field, William K. MacNulty, O. J. Salisbury.

LIGHTING: William H. V. Brooke, assisted by Marsden S. Blois.

Production Staff

Jr., Harry Mhoon Fair, James M. Hamill, Volney E. Howard, Jr., Albert P. Rowe, Jr., Waldron E. Wilson.

ILLUMINATION: Roland L. Oliver, assisted by James Arthur Cahill, Emanuel Fritz.

COSTUME DESIGN: Albert J. Camille, assisted by Waldemar Johansen.

WARDROBE: William C. Wise, assisted by Douglas W. Dodge, C. M. Dolan, William T. Doyle, Edmond E. Fout, Samuel M. Haslett, Jr., Harold C. Moore, R. H. Scanlon, Clement J. Smith, Rufus G. Thayer, William E. Vaughan, Raymond R. Wright.

MAKE-UP: Edmund H. Brassel, assisted by Nathaniel H. Callard, Frederick C. Cordes, William G. Donald, Gerald T. Eaton, Evan J. Foulds, Frank Hinman, Jr., Walter W. Holt, William F. Kiessig, George W. Pierce, John B. Schaupp, Karl L. Schaupp, Francis A. Sooy, Rolla B. Watt.

DANCE STEWARD: John P. McFarland.

ORGANIST: Charles Hart.

REHEARSAL ACCOMPANISTS: Austin E. Coggin, Herbert R. Inskip.

CHORUS STEWARD: Elmon G. Miller.

ORCHESTRA STEWARD: Tom F. Chapman.

SOUND: George Greaves, assisted by Alan N. Cormack, Armand Humburg.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Raymond M. Moulin.

BUDGET MANAGER: Duncan Millikin.

THE ORCHESTRA

The Bohemian Club Symphony Orchestra is conducted by H. Clinton Lewis, with James H. Todd serving as Concert-master. Those participating are:

William O. Atwater, A. C. Bach, F. J. Baird, Fred A. Baker, Ted Baker, William B. Barnes, Walter Beckh, Albert Bernasconi, Reginald H. Biggs, Donald D. Blackmarr, William H. Brink, Frank Ernest Bruheim, C. W. Carey, L. H. Chamberlain, George R. Chambers, Jr., Tom F. Chapman, Lee Chrisman, Lindsay A. Crawford, George Curlin, Madison Devlin, Owen C. Dickson, Dean S. Donaldson, Frederick M. Doward, Hubert A. Dunn, Thomas E. Eagan, Paul Elder, Jr., Scott Elder, Harold A. Ellis, Roberto F. Escamilla, Allyn M. Ferguson, Clarence D. Fornwald, Charles W. Friedrichs, Walter L. Gallatin, Ray G. Gibbons, John W. Gibson, Jr., Dan Gilson, Frank A. Hagarty, George A. Haydon, W. L. Higgins, Hamilton R. Howells, Donald V. Hutton, Oliver W. Johnson, Martin A. Kaufmann, Elwyn H. King, Reginald

Krieger, Ed Kruth, Jewell Lord, D. H. Madsen, James J. McCrohan, George C. McGinnis, Ward McRacken, Mark P. Mohr, William H. Ottey, Gordon Patten, Jr., Alfred E. Powell, Richard J. Reyna, Wallis R. Riese, Leslie J. Schivo, Rollin Silfies, T. Snell, Emil Stern, Edward H. Towler, H. B. Towler, Richard V. Warton, W. L. Waterhouse, C. Bolton White, Ed J. White, A. E. Wiebalk, George O. Wilson, William F. Zech, Jr.

LIBRARIANS: William H. Ewen, J. I. Lewis.

SECRETARY: George F. Keil.

THE CHORUS

The Bohemian Club Chorus is conducted by Eugene Fulton. The groups are composed of the following singers:

LOW PRIESTS: Earl B. Grosh, Captain; Richard Mercer Davis, Frederick F. Doyle, Everett D. Ivey, Willard L. Johnson, Max J. Meunier, Alfred Meyers, Jackson B. Perego, James W. Smith.

SOLDIERS: A. E. Bredemeier, Captain; Henry H. Bach, Harold R. Freemon, Edmond R. Haynes, James S. Martin, E. G. McKenna, Elmon G. Miller, Frank Mueller, Svend H. Nielsen, John B. O'Sullivan, Harold E. Saville, James St. Clair Sheean.

PEASANTS: [*First Tenors*] Carl A. Hague, Captain; Maurice Anger, Charles T. Docker, Edwin P. Gerth, Emmet F. Hagerty, Harold L. Hollingsworth, Ralph W. Lykins, William M. McNabb, Arthur T. Nolan, G. Gibson Paul, Neil H. Peterson, Wilson B. Taylor, Paul Waltí. [*Second Tenors*] Kenneth Ferguson, Captain; Austin Ellsworth Coggin, Chester Herold, Erwin V. Holton, C. Albert Kulmann, Lee Lykins, Edward H. MacKay, Kenneth D. McCloskey, Kenneth M. Morse, Evert B. Person. [*Baritones*] Ralph V. Vincent, Captain; Frank D. Andrews, Waldemar R. Augustine, Clarence E. Engvick, Wendell T. Fitzgerald, Eric Gerson, Thomas L. Graham, John K. Hagopian, Milton G. Harper, Harold Mueller, John S. Selfridge, George E. Steniger. [*Basses*] Algernon R. Angell, Captain; Robert P. Bullard, Melvin S. Donaldson, Harold S. Dover, Fred S. Herrington, L. W. F. Lewis, Howard W. Noleen, Eugene W. Roland, Henri A. Sheffoff, Ralph E. Wastell, Charles A. Whitton, Lloyd Wiseman, Sydney G. Worthington.

LIBRARIANS: Paul J. Mohr, William A. Mitchell.

THE DANCE GROUP

John P. McFarland, Captain; John R. Beckett, Bruce Beckley, Francis J. Conlan, Richard M. Davis, John A. Ditz, Paul S. Foster,

Production Staff}

Jr., Patrick Kelley, Robert D. Kelley, William O. Konkel, Edward V. Mills, Jr., William T. Riley, Philip M. Robertson, K. Hart Smith, George Stimmel, Jr.

THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS

The following non-singing participants take part in the play:

CITIZENS: Robert F. Mulvany, Captain; Ambrose H. Breininger, Louis M. Cole, Joseph J. Coney, Gayle V. Grubb, Patrick Hughes, Oliver Leroy McCaskill, John Nauman, Paul A. Pflueger, O. Lee Pringle.

NOBLES: Lawton W. Langdon, Captain; Harold H. Baxter, James B. DuPrau, Harry F. Gittings, Jr., Prentis C. Hale, Jr., Arthur H. Kent, Merl McHenry.

LITTERBEARERS: Edward D. Pike, Jr., Captain; Leland D. Adams, Jr., Frank M. Close, George A. Ditz, Jr., C. L. Duncan, Morse Etskine II, Spencer Grant, Jr., Thayer Hopkins, C. Russell Johnson, W. E. Major, Lawrence S. Murphy, George D. Murray, James Ownby, Jr., Donald L. Ross, Robert Bruce, Macon Smith, Charles A. Strong.

IMPERIAL GUARDS: Clifford V. Heimbucher, Captain; Jay T. Cooper, Irving S. Culver, William B. Hetfield, William R. Hewlett, Clayton C. McCauley, Charles Lee Tilden, Jr., Neill C. Wilson.

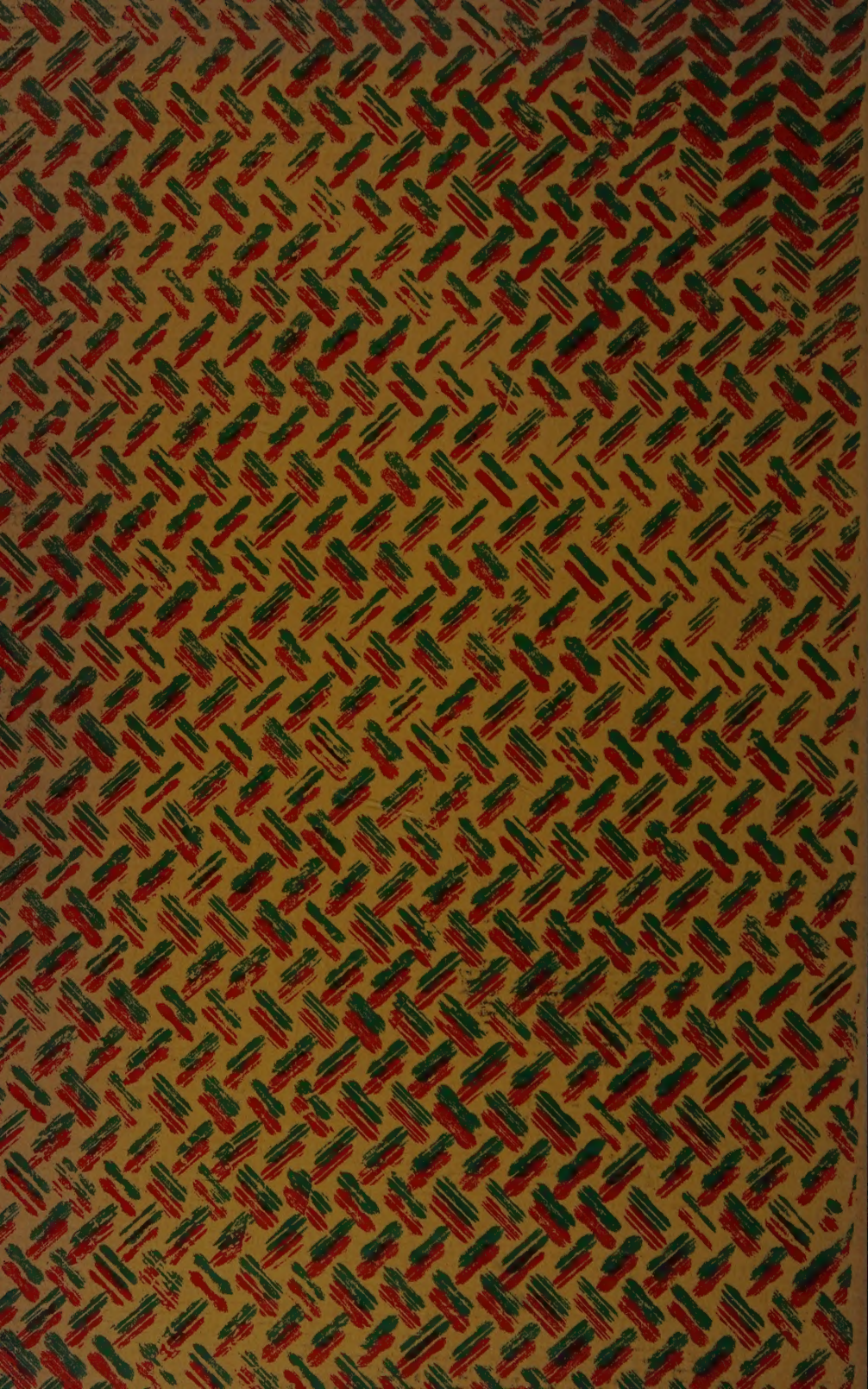
ALTAR PRIESTS: Hubert P. Buel, John Ritchie McKee, Joseph A. Moore, Jr., Sigvald Nielson.

IN RETROSPECT

GROVE PLAYS OF THE PAST

<i>Year</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Composer</i>
1902	THE MAN IN THE FOREST	Charles K. Field	Joseph D. Redding
1903	MONTEZUMA	Louis A. Robertson	H. J. Stewart
1904	THE HAMADRYADS	Will Irwin	W. J. McCoy
1905	THE QUEST OF THE GORGON	Newton Tharp	Theodor Vogt
1906	THE OWL AND CARE*	Charles K. Field	H. J. Stewart
1907	THE TRIUMPH OF BOHEMIA	George Sterling	E. F. Schneider
1908	THE SONS OF BALDUR	Herman Scheffauer	Arthur Weiss
1909	ST. PATRICK AT TARA	H. Morse Stephens	Wallace A. Sabin
1910	THE CAVE MAN	Charles K. Field	W. J. McCoy
1911	THE GREEN KNIGHT	Porter Garnett	Edward Stricklen
1912	THE ATONEMENT OF PAN	Joseph D. Redding	Henry Hadley
1913	THE FALL OF UG	Rufus Steele	Herman Perlet
1914	NEC-NATAMA	J. Wilson Shiels	Uda Waldrop
1915	APOLLO	Frank Pixley	E. F. Schneider
1916	GOLD	F. S. Myrtle	H. J. Stewart
1917	THE LAND OF HAPPINESS	Charles T. Crocker	Joseph D. Redding
1918	THE TWILIGHT OF THE KINGS	R. M. Hotaling	Wallace A. Sabin
1919	LIFE	Harry Leon Wilson	Domenico Brescia
1920	ILYA OF MUROM	Charles C. Dobie	Ulderico Marcelli
1921	JOHN OF NEPOMUK	Clay M. Greene	H. J. Stewart
1922	THE ROUT OF THE PHILISTINES	C. G. Norris	Nino Marcelli
1923	SEMPER VIRENS	Joseph D. Redding	Henry Hadley
1924	RAJVARA	Roy Neily	Wheeler Beckett
1925	WINGS	Joseph S. Thompson	George Edwards
1926	TRUTH	George Sterling	Domenico Brescia
1927	ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI	Irving Pichel	Charles Hart
1928	NANDA	Garnet Holme	E. F. Schneider
1929	A GEST OF ROBIN HOOD	C. G. Norris	R. C. Newell
1930	BIRDS OF RHIANNON	Waldemar Young	Edward C. Harris
1931	JOAN	W. B. Garthwaite	Charles L. Safford
1932	SORCERER'S DRUM	Daniel W. Evans	Charles Hart
1933	THE LEGEND OF HANI	Junius Cravens	Henry Hadley
1934	ST. PATRICK AT TARA	H. Morse Stephens	Wallace A. Sabin
1935	THE QUEST	Wilbur Hall	Roderick White
1936	IVANHOE	C. G. Norris	Harry I. Wiel
1937	LIFKRONAN	Kenneth G. Hook	Ulderico Marcelli
1938	THE PIPER	Dan Totheroh	Eugene Heyes
1939	THE GOLDEN FEATHER	Waldemar Young	Uda Waldrop
1940	SAUL	Benj. Allen Purrington	Charles Hart
1941	THE GOLDEN TALISMAN	Charles C. Dobie	Alec Templeton
1942	THE AMERICAN SCENE	Carlton E. Morse	Paul Carson
1943	—	—	—
1944	—	—	—
1945	—	—	—
1946	JOHNNY APPLESEED	Dan Totheroh	Wendell Otey
1947	THE YESTER-YEARS	Various	Various
1948	MATERNUS	Kenneth Ferguson	Wendell Otey
1949	THE COSMIC JEST	C. B. Kelland	Frank R. Denke

*"The Owl and Care" was not a Grove Play but an elaborated Cremation of Care ceremony given in place of "The Triumph of Bohemia," which was ready for production at the time of the 1906 earthquake and fire.



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