

SERVANT: I go, my lord.

(Exit Palace Servant stage left)

TECAYE: Double the usual amount, because among our guests will be Xayacamach! Ah, the face and heart of that Xayacamach: great poet, life of the party, drinks too much xocolatl! *(extends hands and arms to indicate girth)* But, like the full moon, he seems to hold sway over many, including the prince, my son. My son, Cuauhtencoxtli, pesters me to close the calmecac. Eagerly he swoops down upon every chance to tell me that poets and scribes and musicians and dancers and painters and sculptors should be few, and that what few there are should go learn their arts elsewhere, in Tenochtitlan, or Texcoco. He sees the world around him as if through a smoky mirror, he sees not that here in Huexotzinco we have cultivated formidable talent, especially in flower and song.

Plenty of chocolate for Xayacamach. He'll probably bring his own! Let him drink all the chocolate he wants, he will still help me defend the aim of those who write the red, who write the black, who sing and dance with drum and flute.

(Enter Cuauhtencoxtli stage right, running)

CUAUHTEN: I find you, father. Why do you sit here alone? Do you not wish to remember that the new eagle and jaguar warriors are to be celebrated tomorrow eve?

TECAYE: I hear you, my son, and I have heard you speak it so loud and so often that even had I the wits of a lizard, I would remember it. Do I not know that you are to

become an eagle warrior? But tell me this: do you remember who is coming to visit this very afternoon?

CUAUHTEN: It's... *(thinking)* ... it is your clutch of composers, the lovers of flower and song. It will please me to see and hear Xayacamach.

TECAYE: Indeed. Will it please you to see and hear Xayacamach say that in order to celebrate the new eagle and jaguar warriors tomorrow eve, we need to hear an appropriate flower song composed?

CUAUHTEN: Certainly. Xayacamach himself can compose it, he would do us the honor...

TECAYE: Son, just as we have new warriors, we also have new flower song composers, and they deserve the moment to be celebrated as well.

CUAUHTEN: This appears plain and just, but can they not use a flower, a song, from their repertoire of red and black?

TECAYE: So they will do, as is the custom, but there will also be new with the old. I have already heard the new flower song in the calmecac, and I am much pleased. I anticipate my...what did you call it?...clutch of composers will stay a day or two to participate in the celebration.

CUAUHTEN: This is good and true, father.

TECAYE: Your old nemesis from the sporting contests will be here, too. What is his name... the prince of Cholula?

CUAUHTEN: *(dejectedly)* Monencauhtzin.