Of Cabbages and Kings

TALES FROM ZINACANTÁN

Robert M. Laughlin
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S. Dillon Ripley
Secretary
Smithsonian Institution
FRONTISPICE: Disguised Aztec merchants in Tzinacantlan (Florentine Codex)
Of Cabbages and Kings

TALES FROM ZINACANTÁN

Robert M. Laughlin
Laughlin, Robert M. Of Cabbages and Kings: Tales from Zinacantán. *Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology*, number 23, 427 pages, frontispiece, 11 figures, 8 maps, 1977.—This collection of 173 folktales, myths, legends, and personal reminiscences from Zinacantán, Chiapas, Mexico was recorded in Tzotzil, primarily in 1960, but also in 1963, 1968, and 1971. Zinacantec oral literature as represented here in the contributions of nine individuals, eight men and one woman, constitutes a small part of the community's awareness of past and present. The narrative style is no different from that of everyday speech. The form and content of the tales may vary considerably from one telling to the next. While a good number of tale motifs show unmistakable European provenience, others, apparently native to Middle America, are widely represented throughout southern Mexico and Guatemala, with a far smaller number restricted to the Chiapas highlands. The Tzotzil texts, with free English translations, are accompanied by linguistic, ethnographic, and folkloristic commentary.
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Acknowledgments

It seemed a logical decision. I wanted to publish the folktales of Zinacantán in English, true to the words of the storytellers. For this I needed a dictionary. For ten years the tales hosted a lexical creature that consumed my energies, delaying their publication and even gobbling up all the acknowledgments that should have been offered in equal measure in this book of tales.

Rather than pass around an empty bowl, I ask all those in Zinacantán, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Mexico City, and points north who know they have enlivened and quickened the journey of this book to return to The Great Tzotzil Dictionary of San Lorenzo Zinacantán for their just desserts.

There are, however, a few individuals whose labors and thoughts I was able to reserve for double duty and who deserve special mention. My scribbles were converted to typed pages by Susan Brown, Paula Jones Cardwell, Rosemary Macchiavelli De Rosa, Anne Mason Lewis, Frances Méndez, Jane Norman, and Jessie Standish Shaw. The Tzotzil texts, spattered with corrections, were typed on a “word processor” by Rosalie Fanale, Susan Linn, Diana Lynn, and Frances Méndez. Their persistence and good cheer seemed superhuman.

I am indebted to my wife, Miriam Wolfe Laughlin, to Sophia Lotowycz Stoller, and to Lucy Hemmendinger for alerting me to the many incomprehensible and inelegant passages that required rephrasing. Their solutions were adopted with great frequency.

A quick glance at the commentaries to the tales will reveal the importance of the contributions of three colleagues who generously provided me with copies of their own unpublished Tzotzil texts—Victoria Reifler Bricker, Gary Gossen, and Robert Wasserstrom.

The encouragement and thoughtful suggestions of friends, some of whom listened to readings of the tales or read sections of the manuscript, fortified my spirits and deepened my understanding—Thor Anderson, John Burstein, Munro Edmonson, John and Leslie Haviland, Eva Hunt, Walter “Chip” Morris, Francesco and Philippa Pellizzi, Timothy Rush, William Trousdale, Robert Wasserstrom, and Carter Wilson. W. S. Merwin proved that Tzotzil tales could be transformed into English poems.

Four faces of the storytellers and the setting are revealed through the knowing eye of photographer Frank Cancian.

The initial fieldwork, the birth of Of Cabbages and Kings, occurred under the skillful ministrations of Evon Z. Vogt, who, as director of the Harvard Chiapas Project, exposed many of these folktales, even in their rough translations, to a wide number of students. A few tales first reached the public in Vogt’s Zinacantán (1969). “Vogtie’s” support has been a bulwark never failing.

I am grateful to the National Institute of Mental Health for its aid under grant MH-02100, to the Phillips Fund of the American Philosophical Society, to Francesco Pellizzi, and to the Smithsonian Institution for financial assistance.

7A ti vo7ne 7oy la to 7ox jun bix-7akán sakil vinik, toj sonso, ko7ol xchi7uk 7uma7, mu la sna7 chk’opoj mu la sna7 chlo7ilaj, mu la sna7 k’op mu la sna7 rason, solel la yech. “K’usi van yes yabtel?” xiik la ti krixchanoetike.

Bweno, pero ta k’unk’un ta k’unk’un 7iyich’ la chanubtasel 7iyich’ la p’ijubtasel ha7 to la 7iyul 7o j-set’ xch’ulel.

Bweno, pero k’alal yulem xa 7ox la j-set’ xch’ulel ja7 to la 7ik’ocholaj ja7 to la 7ivil ech’el. Pero ta la sk’an stav tal j-likuk vun buya la xal ti kol iyalik ti yajpas-rasontak 7une—ti 7anima mol Manvel K’obyoxe, ti skumpare mol Xun Vaskise, ti mol Xun 7Akoive, ti Chep Xantise, ti skumpare Romin Teratole, ti Rey Komise, ti Romin Tan-chake, ti Lol Sarate xchi7uk ti me7tik Tonik Nibak 7une.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Pero ta la sjak' tal noxtok mi 7il mi pletu van xava?iik ti 7istzak ta vun 7istzak ta tz'ib ti j-p'el cha7-p'el k'u x7elan yo ye yo sti7 7uke, yu7un 7iyal la tal:

Mu xu7 jch'aytik,
Mu xu7 jtentik,
Stalel slikel 7onox,
Ma7uk to ta jtamтик ta jlikestik,
Likem 7onox ta jtotтик ta jme7iik,
K'u x7elan ta jk'opon jbatik,
Yik'taoj skomtzanoj,
Ti ba7i jtotтik jme7iike.
7Ak'ik xa pertonal,
Yo j-set' yo juteb.
Batz'i ja7 no me yech tze7ej lo7i lotik 7ech' 7o ch'ul-k'ak'al chak taje,
Yu7 nox bal xka7i jbatik bu 7oy to 7amigo noxtoke.

7A ti stz'etanoj xchikin chavubil chanav ta patpat naetik mu la xtun, yech'o ti mas la lek xa7i ti vinajuk 7osilajuk ti yes yabtele.
Ja7 no la yech xal tal taj yax-tz'ilan sat mol 7uk 7une.
Epigraph

"I see nobody on the road," said Alice.
"I only wish I had such eyes," the King remarked in a fretful tone. "To be able to see Nobody! And at that distance too! Why, it's as much as I can do to see real people, by this light!"

"It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards," the Queen remarked.

"Tut, tut, child!" said the Duchess. "Everything's got a moral if only you can find it."

"Take care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves."

LEWIS CARROLL

When you try to get hold ov a fairy tale in Indian, you hav two principal difficulties. One ov the two iz to get an Indian who can tel a fairy tale. Many Indians, in my experience, cant tel fairy tales. Some Indians hav never heard fairy tales: and thoze that hav, very ofen dont remember what they hav heard. They hav heard some tale, told by an old woman at the fire, perhaps, when they wer half asleep, or told by an old man at a feast, when they wer half drunk: and they remember scraps ov the tale, very likely, and know the tale again when they hear it; but when you ask them themselves to tel the tale, they ar very likely to be floord. That iz the first difficulty.

And then comes the other, and more vexatious one. When you do find a man who can tel a tale, you stil cant get the tale down on paper. You cant get down the actual Indian. You cant get down the mans words. You cant get a mans words down in English, without short hand: much less in Indian. Ov course you might remember some ov the mans expressions: and in the end no dout you could put something together that would be intelligible Indian: and might, in fact, be very good Indian:—but it would be your Indian. It might be az good az the real thing. It might be az good az Indians' Indian. But it could not profess to be anything but your Indian. You might az wel, I should supoze, rite the thing in English at once.

The Indian ov this little tale iz the real thing.

ROBERT BURKITT

The Hills and the Corn (1920)
Of Cabbages and Kings
TALES FROM ZINACÁNTÁN

Robert M. Laughlin

Introduction

BEAUTIFUL SOUP

One thing is certain—they don't need my observations nor my renderings. They are sufficient to themselves. Except that we have been taught for years to poke and pry, to discover or doctor philosophies, to tape our evidence and paper our conclusions, I would have been content, quite selfishly, to have let their voices resound in my ears and their burden be stored in my mind and in my heart, amen. But as I am dutybound to diffuse "new" knowledge I will try in a more generous spirit to alert my listeners to what I think they are about to hear and where they should imagine themselves hearing it.

"The time has come," the Walrus said,
"To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—
Of cabbages and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings."

"But wait a bit," the Oysters cried,
"Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat!" (Carroll, 1962:217)

For those who eagerly anticipate a scholarly feast, who expect to be served a glossy menu where each delicacy is presented in an assuringly predetermined order and assigned an elegantly mysterious name a la académie to titillate their appetites and puff their self-conceits, let me assure them that this is no banquet for a Board of Overseers. Instead, at their feet will be placed a bowl of peasant soup. With a stack of steaming tortillas, a heaping bowl of salt, and nothing more, they must be content to bend over and do honor to their hosts. So accustomed to being provided menus and silverware, it will be frustrating at first, but hopefully the freshness of the experience will add flavor to the humble fare.

"Well, what do you call this dish?"
"K'opetik, 'words.'"
"And that's all?"
"7Antivo k'op, vo7ne k'op, or kwento ta 7antivo, 'ancient words,' 'words about the past,' or 'ancient tale.'"
"And this dish?"
"7Ach' k'op or 7a7yej, 'recent words,' or 'hearsay.'"

The names give little hint of the flavor, and your genial host doesn't give a fig what he or you should decide at this moment to call it. The substance and the savor are the proof.

It has not been easy for students who, like myself, came to Zinacantan from their colleges expecting incongruously to be served a menu "in the field." Some insisted on being provided such a menu, and together with their native informants devised elaborate cartes specifying the ingredients of each course, but I remain convinced that my frustrations were in response to a real situation—Zinacantecs prefer a carte blanche.

It may be a consolation that the original meaning of the English word, "tale," is as free as Tzotzil traditional narrative, for it meant quite simply "talk." In English, too, there is a comfortable, relaxed quality to the notion of a story or tale, for the listener may be regaled with a myth, a legend, an historical, explanatory or fanciful account, a fable, a reminiscence, or even a piece of gossip.
A second expectation created in the centers of learning is that the "primitive" world could hardly survive without its foundation of origin myths, and if the student will only search diligently, turning over every stone, he will discover the explanations for everything, an answer for everything.

In the beginning who really knows how it was? No Zinacantec can flash a photographic memory of the origins or the outlines of the cosmos. Scraps of knowledge are passed on to the younger generation, but Zinacanteces are unconcerned about the gaps, the conflicts, the inconsistencies. They know that the world and mankind have both survived multiple creations and destructions, but they do not agree on the number or sequence of these events.

The world was once inhabited by jointless men and women unable to bend their knees in humility. There were others so keen-sighted they could discover the gods' treasures hidden in the mountains. There were still others named Adam and Eve who betrayed their trust and stole the apples of the Lord. And, too, there were the people who ate their babies, calling down upon themselves a rain of boiling water. Some were drowned, some became dwarfs banished to the underworld, some, for their rude replies, grew tails and turned into monkeys. There is felt little need to stratify these earliest inhabitants of the world chronologically except perhaps to note whether they lived before or after the flood.

At a later stage in the history of the world animals still talked and men travelled as thunderbolts. Spooks and jaguars were rampant. Saints emerged from their caves to request new homes.

While the immoral behavior or miraculous events of distant times are believed to continue today, in distant places the past is not always at the horizon. The familiar mountains and valleys were the sites of the early creations and destructions. As the waters flooded the valley of Zinacantán Center, Noah floated his boat "like a railroad car" (T55). Christ planted his corn there. The Spaniards rescued St. Sebastian from jaguars' jaws and Lacandón arrows in the forest nearby. No one knows when the next flood will engulf the town in punishment for disobedience. But every Zinacantec knows that in the valley of Zinacantán Center protrudes the Belly Button of the World. Just as familiar surroundings have an ancient past, so, too, mysterious characters of the past intrude into the present. Under cover of darkness spooks and saints still roam the earth.

Despite the Zinacanteces' lack of compulsion to recall an origin for every aspect of the present world, to an extraordinary degree their tales reveal the Zinacantec musing over his cosmic journey. Man has not developed from monkey, but the monkey (like the dwarf) is a fallen man, atoning for his primeval disrespect for divine authority (T7, T55, T70). Beasts of burden are the helpless victims of man, the animal who walks upright (T3). The dog, once man's companion, has lost both prestige and voice for presuming to confide his mistress' infidelity (T26, T86). Coyote and tiger are not so stupid as to accept human domination with resignation, but even they are no match for woman, who by her "wound" is man's apparent victim, but who by her clever audacity shows herself a fitting match for man (T3). To be sure, woman is "colder, worse"—unlike St. Lawrence, she has no beard (T114).

The early inhabitants of the world were few, but they were stronger, cleverer, healthier, and wealthier than the people of today (T1, T2, T17, T33, T34, T51, T56, T58, T64, T67, T74, T89, T91, T95, T102, T104, T110, T111, T113-T115, T131, T150, T151, T157, T158, T160, T169). Yet they were disobedient, evil—and so brought punishment on themselves (T55, T70, T96). Now "some have lice, and some are well-off" (T114). The gods made a bargain; now soul-loss takes one of every two (T51).

In tale after tale the Zinacantec wrestles with the problem of his fall from grace. "Where does the responsibility lie?" he asks. His answer is contradictory, as many-angled, as the historical facts warrant. "It is the Ladino [non-Indian], the wenching priest, who brought divine punishment upon our town. But, too, the negligence of the elders—or was it the shamans, or even the entire town which shares the guilt?" he asks (T76, T91, T114). His conclusion: "Only Our Lord [knows]. As for us, we don't know. We only know that we eat" (T86).

TIMELESS TALES, SACRED SCRAPS

If Zinacantec tales relate, no matter how sketchily, the beginnings of the world and subsequent misfortunes and threats to the social order, it might be assumed that these narratives would be a vital source for the ethnohistorian, just as Aztec legends under the scrutiny of Jiménez Moreno have solved archeological mysteries in the Valley of Mexico. Unfortunately their usefulness to the modern historian is seriously impaired by their philosophy. Their

1 In gathering these tales each was assigned a number (preceded by the letter T), conforming roughly to the order of collection. This system is retained herein because many of the tales have been cited since in print. The same method was used in my previous publication, Of Wonders Wild and New: Dreams from Zinacantán (1976). Dreams are distinguished from tales by the prefix D.
memory remembers forwards; a later event is described in terms of a former one. The legendary acts and actors often do not pass by one after the other, but rather they appear motionless on a revolving stage. Time and place lose their relevance. And so, identical scenes appear in wars with Guatemala, Tabasco, and Chiapa.

We are left with a handful of names that later have proved to be archaeological sites testifying to the extent of trade between Zinacantán and Ixtapa in the post-classic era. We are reminded constantly of the former wealth of the town, and the employment of its citizens in foreign wars. We see the Zinacantecs not so much as simple corn farmers, but rather as the proud merchants admired by Fray Antonio de Remesal in the sixteenth century. But these are meagre gleanings, a jigsaw puzzle with most of the pieces missing.

In Zinacantán, as among the Popoluca of Vera-cruz, "The historical past is a flat projection without depth or perspective" (Foster, 1945:189). As in neighboring Chenalhó, "The past is all on one plane, without levels or strata; and yet, different epochs are implied when reference is made to the presence or absence of certain things, and it is obvious that certain events preceded others" (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:309). The shallow image of Zinacantán's history is shown by an informant's acceptance of two centuries as a not unreasonable antiquity for the primeval deluge! Even so, there is rough agreement among the townspeople as to the relative age of important legendary events.

Lack of historical depth is the logical result of a philosophy of time where, "There is no firm line drawn between traditional narrative and today's reality. That which occurs today is proof of what happened in the past, and what happened in the past can be repeated at any moment" (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:310).

Dramatic proof for the validity of interpreting the Zinacantecs' view of history in this light was offered to me one evening by Romin Teratol when he was describing an historical event—the Mexican Revolution. With sparkling eyes, he told how a dancing pine was conjured up by the town fathers to lure the army of Obregón off the path. Romin's mother, who had witnessed the Revolution, was scandalized at his ignorance and assured him that the incident of the dancing pine dated from early times, but for Romin there was no incongruity—the Revolution had become a myth.

Just as the Zinacantecs' knowledge of his past is barely suggestive of the former grandeur of his town and betrays a total ignorance of the glories of the Mayan civilization, so, the student searches with growing frustration for a comprehensive Mayan cosmology. Although it is true that under the stimulus of a steady job as an anthropologist's Man Friday a Zinacantec can discuss religious belief at length, normally one hears either scraps of information with no story line, or else narratives of dramatic encounters with saints or spooks, demons or deities. While the personification of natural forces and the human characterization of supernatural beings gives an immediacy to religious belief, these narratives provide only isolated views of the religious system.

Ritual activity is almost constant in Zinacantán, but myths specifically establishing the precedent, the authority for these activities, are not common. Just as La Farge and Byers discovered among the Jacal-tec in the Cuchumatanes Mountains of northwestern Guatemala, the cord between myth and ritual is exceedingly slack. Explanations for the "whys" of a ritual are difficult to elicit, not primarily because of reticence, but rather because of ignorance of the inclination to give a standard explanation for all ritual. Only after many vain efforts did I finally discover one person who could relate a tale which gave partial elucidation of Zinacantan's chief dramatic ritual, the Fiesta of St. Sebastian. The origin of certain waterholes (but by no means all of the most important ones), the origin of two churches (but not that of the patron saint), the origin of the names of a few of the sacred caves—these, combined with stories of punishments meted out to individuals who failed in their ritual obligation, complete my list. It is not possible to know whether the many gaps in the traditional knowledge are signs of cultural decay, or whether for many centuries the simple explanation, "This is the way our fathers and mothers have done from the beginning" has been sufficiently satisfying. Certainly the contemporary Zinacantec is not disconcerted in the least by his inability to answer all our questions.

To say that the tales reveal the Zinacantec musing over his legendary journey, reminding himself of the supernatural dangers that persist even today, does not mean that he is staggering under the burden of the past, cowering from fear of the present. In fact, the past is borne very lightly, almost cavalierly. During most of his waking hours the ordinary man, caught up in the innumerable petty affairs of daily life, gives little thought to the supernatural world.

The symbolic sources of myths and dreams undoubtedly flow from a common reservoir into both projective media. The influence of mythology upon dream creation was revealed to me when Romin Teratol, after transcribing myth texts for me, had two dreams several nights later which correspond closely to elements in those very myths. Although
he himself made no connection between the two media, there was no question of their interrelation.

The reverse movement, dream influencing myth, is easy to demonstrate, for dreams are the source of much religious innovation. If, for instance, a man dreams repeatedly of an encounter with a venerable man who requests a shrine, the town authorities will be notified and, after consultation with the community, a cross will be erected. This event will, in turn, become part of history, commemorated in myth.

The very flatness of history permits an old man to reminisce about his life in the same manner that he would tell stories about the gods. Even gossip about the deviations of one's neighbors is a fitting subject for discourse, for "today's gossip may be tomorrow's true version of which all the others are but copies or distortions. Every version belongs to the myth" (Lévi-Strauss, 1963:218).

A raconteur never repeats a tale verbatim; fluidity of vocabulary is characteristic. Nevertheless, certain key events usually follow each other in regular order. Zinacantec narrators, like the Mixe and Popoluca, emphasize that they are merely repeating the ancient words handed down by their parents, grandparents, and, rarely, great-grandparents (Miller, 1956:189; Foster, 1945a:190). Innovations are frequent, but they are never acknowledged (unless, of course, the narrator is recounting personal experience). A tale speaks time-honored truths; conscious alterations are deemed lies.

I had hoped that there would be a way of defining tales linguistically. While a great many tales are introduced with the phrase 7A ti vo7ne, "Once . . .;" often this opening is omitted. A second diagnostic feature for all but reminiscences might be the use of the particle, la, a cue which signals that the action has been apprehended indirectly; but a raconteur like Xun Vaskis, who estimates highly his place in history, will not hesitate to drop this cue so as to give the impression that he has personally viewed events from time immemorial. The presence or absence of dialogue is also not significant. Just as neither the beginning nor the middle of a tale is distinctive, so the conclusion may be marked by a concise ye7ch laj 7o k'op, "so the word is ended," or by a mere trailing off of thought. In one case a narrative evolved from a lengthy account of the origin of a saint's home to a description of the annual fiesta dedicated to that saint, with not the slightest pause to signal a change. While many tales show a well-defined structure,
others that were also elicited by my request for 7antivo k'op seem to be rambling observations with no necessary beginning or end, or else statements too brief to seem to qualify as a story. For the sake of convenience, the word of the storyteller, that what he has spoken is "a tale," has been trustfully accepted. Clearly, the nature of Zinacantec tales implies that "no collection, however extensive, can claim to be complete" (Gossen, 1974:82).

WHERE, WHY, WHO, AND WHEN

After years of studying the Zinacantecs in their homes, in their fields, in bars, at court, and at market, listening to hour upon hour of conversation, gossip, joking banter, talk of prices and fiestas, sickness and success, the outsider, who feels that at least he has become a knowledgeable quasi-member of the community, is confronted with a mystery: only rarely has he been present at the spontaneous telling of a tale from the past. Furthermore, the ability to tell a tale well is not, unlike in neighboring Chenalhó, the basis for great admiration. There are, it is true, individuals whose narrative talents are recognized and appreciated, but the real source of their prestige lies elsewhere. Often when tales were told in the company of family members, the raconteur seemed to become a soliloquist, the features of his audience betraying only inexpressible detachment. Indeed, there sometimes seemed to be a conscious effort to cut him off or to deflect the monologue after an almost predictable period of time, as if it were improper for one individual to capitalize on the conversation.

A factor contributing to the scarcity of public narration is the staggering consumption of alcohol in every public situation. But perhaps an even more restrictive force is the avoidance of verbal display unless supported by ritual or political position. Storytellers have no such support.

My own interest in the talk of the past was viewed with tolerant amusement, though the expenditure it obviously entailed both in cash and in time seemed to Zinacantecs utterly mad!

Nevertheless, there is a degree of justification for this collection. First, an admittedly intuitive observation; under almost no other circumstances did I see such an open display of enjoyment as that which enlivened the facial and gestural expression of a storyteller in action. A telling indication of the importance of traditional narrative to the people of Zinacantán was the sudden mushrooming of rumors, more than a decade ago, reporting my publication in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, the state capital, of a book of tales. This had aroused anxiety, I was told, because folk-tales are considered a part of the town's treasure; their publication in a distant place was tantamount to a pillage of community treasure and ipso facto, of communal luck. Yet only once did a storyteller refuse my request for tales.

Certainly there are few Zinacantecs who, when asked, are unable to oblige with a personal version of one of the many well-known narratives of the past. Many isolated bits of information concerning worldview, etc., drawn from one individual would frequently be tied together in the narratives of another. On several occasions the raconteur would explicitly state that he had been told a certain tale "so he would not grow up to be lazy like the buzzard man," and so forth. Explanations for the severe winds and rains that had recently lashed the town actually duplicated tales previously recorded by me. The contribution of Lol Sarate, in his early teens, to this collection demonstrates that verbal skill in telling tales is learned at an early age.

Who, then, are the storytellers and when do they expound? As in Chenalhó, older men are considered the most gifted raconteurs. One informant (male) scoffed, "Do you think words would remain in women's heads?" My one female contributor disagreed, "Women know as well as men, but only the clever ones like me. The others 'hm' and 'ha,' in one ear and out the other." Narrators introducing a tale were just as likely to attribute it to their mother as their father. This suggests that the assertion of storytelling being primarily a man's prerogative is merely a reflection of native belief in the superiority of masculine endeavor.

As in Chamula, "the time is right [for telling a tale] when the information is relevant" (Gossen, 1974:81). Unlike in Tenejapa, they are not usually told on public occasions for entertainment (Stross, 1973:96), but they are told at wakes. They are told to children around the hearth of an evening. Among men they serve to while away the time after a hard day's work in the tropical lowlands or on the roads. They may be exchanged between a host and his guest for entertainment and the exchange of information. With so many opportunities for talletelling, the anthropologist can only shake his head and wonder where he was when the ancient words were repeated.

The language of Zinacantec tales is, as in Mixe folk literature, "an exact replica of that of everyday life" (Miller, 1956:243).

THE LANGUAGE IN NUMBERS

For those whose appreciation of literature is increased by encyclopedic computations, Tzotzil, the language of the 12,000 Zinacantecs, is spoken in
nouns and particles, are used with great frequency, fewer than 1,000 of the 30,000 entries in The Great Tzotzil Dictionary of San Lorenzo Zinacantén have supplanted earlier Tzotzil vocabulary, but few Zinacantecs write in their own language.

Although many Spanish words have been incorporated into Tzotzil there is no poverty of native expression. Many of the Spanish loans, particularly nouns and particles, are used with great frequency, and have supplanted earlier Tzotzil vocabulary, but fewer than 1,000 of the 30,000 entries in The Great Tzotzil Dictionary of San Lorenzo Zinacantén are derived from Spanish.

THE SPOKEN WORD

So different from English is the style of Tzotzil discourse that the translator who wishes to provide a convincing and faithful reenactment is forced to abandon his original intentions. Rather than mutilating the Tzotzil to fit colloquial English, I have chosen to create a hybrid language that aspires to preserve Tzotzil style with intelligibility in English. Hopefully the strangeness, the unnatural quality will, after a few pages, become muted by familiarity.

Tzotzil has much in common with its Guatemalan relative, Quiché. In both languages the sentence “leans forward . . . In something of the sense that German saves verbs for a final triumphant closure to a thought, Quiché saves nouns. There are markers to show that the noun is coming. Its number, for example, may be revealed early, and other attributes may be thrown in along the way, all contributing to the forward movement toward the person or object who would be in English the antecedent!” (Edmonson, 1971:xii). To compound the translator’s problems, subjects and objects may become as invisible as the Cheshire cat. Thus in the Tzotzil word smajik we know that the subject is he, she, or it, the root is hit, the object is he, she, or it. The precise identity of the beater and the beaten is understood (but not always by the perplexed translator). Furthermore, if the plural marker -ik is added to produce smajik, not only do we remain in the dark as to whom the subject and the object are, but we do not even know whether there are many aggressors and one victim, one aggressor with many victims, or many aggressors and many victims. Worse yet, once it is understood by the Tzotzil exactly who is in the plural they feel no compunction about dropping off the plural marker so that the translator discovers that a crowd has shrunk to one with no apparent explanation! To say of Tzotzil, as Munro Edmonson did of Quiché, that the language is “telegraphically terse” (Edmonson, loc. cit.) seems an understatement. In addition, smooth transitions are foreign to Zinacantec narrative style, where changes of scene are performed with bewildering abruptness—here, now, there, next—with no need felt for explanations.

I must share the same scholar’s opinion of this language when he remarks that it is, “by English standards, excessively fond of passive constructions.” (Edmonson, loc. cit.). This is still another device to keep the smile in view without revealing the cat.

To continue the translator’s crabbed commentary, both Quiché and Tzotzil dialogue are frequently introduced and concluded with the word, “said.” As Edmonson observes, this usage corresponds closely to the English “quote . . . unquote” (Edmonson, loc. cit.)—except for its unrelieved frequency. This same Tzotzil verb, xi for “said,” with he, she, or it understood to be the subject, can mean variously “said,” “demanded,” “exclaimed,” “asked,” “replied,” and so forth. I have taken the liberty at times to infer which English word best fits the situation rather than mindlessly repeating “said.”

As a warning to the English-speaking translator and readers who are tempted to compare favorably the logic of their own language to that of Tzotzil let me present the following: When two groups of people address each other we feel compelled in English to pluralize the subject of the verb—“they said.” The Tzotzil are more logical in their spareness, for it is obvious that not all are speaking at once, but rather one individual, representing his group, is addressing the others.

Dialogue is, as might be guessed by now, considered extremely important, to the extent that conversations are laced with “‘Ah!’ he said.” Simple quotations within quotations have been italicized to save the single quotation sign for quotes within quotes within quotes.

Equally characteristic of Tzotzil narrative is repetitiveness. Simple repetition of words or whole phrases for emphasis is used to a degree that may become ludicrous or crashingly boring in English. For the Tzotzil these repetitions are comforting words. They provide security in moments of stress. It is at these very moments that the speaker turns formal, and the reader discovers the principle of repetition elaborated in a variety of ways. The idea may be restated in different terms without adhering to the same syntax: Tzotz xa 7ip 7un, mu xa bu lek
with the substitution of one or two synonymous or analogous words: K’usi la ti jmule, tottik? K’usi la ti jkolo7e, tottik?, “What do they say is my crime, sir? What do they say is my evil, sir?” And, Ja7 larestiko taj yixime, ja7 larestiko taj xchenek’e, “That corn of his is your witness. Those beans of his are your witness” (“parallel repetition,” Gossen, 1974:77).

This use of “key words” to create semantic couples whose content is usually metaphorical is equally characteristic of Aztec, Otomi, Quiché, and Yucatec Maya poetry (Bricker, 1974:368), and of Tzotzil prayers, songs, and court speech. When they are spoken with any consistency I have scanned these couples as poetry, otherwise I have let the meaning and punctuation reveal the form.

Perhaps to allow the storyteller time to collect his thoughts his speech may be larded with k’u x7elan li7e, “like this,” yech chak taje, “like that,” yech chalike, “as we say,” and a variety of other words such as 7un and che7e that are best left untranslated.

As further protection for the speaker, his statements are accompanied by countless qualifiers: k’ajomnal, nox, solel, all meaning “just” or “only,” and nan, “probably,” kik, “I guess,” ka7tik, “maybe,” la, “they say,” yilel and ya7el, “it seems.” These, too, I have not translated in every instance.

But, if the speaker is guarded in his remarks, he is also exclamatory, terminating his statements with a7a, bi, ta j-moj, “certainly!”, “indeed!”, or “for sure!” These interjections may be combined with the qualifier to produce such a bewildering sentence as, “Maybe he died for sure!”

In attempting to recreate the “speech event” I have followed certain narrative conventions. The words, fora, “now,” va7i 7un, “you see,” bwéno, “well,” and a number of others seem to signal a change of subject corresponding to the start of a new paragraph. Rather than translating these expressions I have simply begun a new paragraph. Often the end of a paragraph is marked by an interjection such as Ji7i, “Yes!”, or Mm7i! “Hm!” I have also shifted paragraphs when the speaker changed. To simplify the matching of the Tzotzil text with the English translation I have made the English paragraphing conform to the Tzotzil even though this occasionally causes confusion.

I had thought that my translations were sensitive to the notion that oral narrative is dramatic poetry, or at least dramatic and poetic, but I find I was overly bound to literary conventions and did not represent as fully as I would have liked the pauses and quality of loudness of the storyteller’s voice (see Tedlock, 1972), but it is wishful thinking to suppose that the mellow tone of Tzotzil, with its tumbling riffs and breaks, its cooing, nasal uplifts, and staccato downbeats could resonate through these pages just as it came from the storytellers’ mouths.

Personal stylistic differences are the rule, but there is an essential unity of style—an economy of expression that leaves many details to be filled in by the audience. Consequently, I have been obliged to sacrifice style by inserting brief parenthetical remarks or identifications of the characters so that the stories may be readily followed with some understanding.

Title to the tales is my own invention. To facilitate comparison, tales with similar plot bear the same title.

Zinacantec plots fit into at least five recognizable categories: (1) events are presented in episodic series—this form appears to be Spanish in origin; (2) a problem is gradually introduced and wrestled with (possibly producing new problems) until the final climax is reached; (3) similar to (2), except that the initial problem is stated at the very outset; (4) like any of the above, but followed by an anticlimactic relaxation of tension; (5) similar to (2), (3), or (4), but flashbacks are inserted within the progressive temporal development (this does not include the common insertion of afterthoughts).

ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCE

I have maintained that there is no Platonic ideal for Zinacantec tales, that they are characterized by their flexibility, that their plots may change radically from one telling to the next. This poses a real problem in trying to answer the legitimate questions: “What are the outside influences on Zinacantec oral literature and where does that literature fit into Middle American oral traditions?” The standard folkloristic comparison of tale elements or motifs is one of the most tangible means of acquiring the necessary perspective. Local gossip and reminiscences, though considered by Zinacantecs to be “tales” are of little aid, but the narratives which appear to have preserved incidents of some antiquity may provide some clues if we are willing for the moment to believe the sea is boiling hot and dare to ask whether pigs have wings.

It is difficult to comment with any confidence on the origin of elements, because at times a whole tale may be a useful unit for comparison and at other times a single phrase; there are no satisfactory rules for achieving the delicate balance between meaningful generalization and meaningful uniqueness. Furthermore, the published collections of tales from Middle America are so few that they represent mere
It is tempting to conclude that motifs are tailored to fit the realities of Zinacantec life. Surely there must be a selection process whereby inappropriate foreign elements are rejected, and yet a surprising number seem to have been tolerated, thus giving comparative efforts a better chance of success.

Laying aside the problems of universal motifs, and before indulging in comfortable generalizations, two discoveries in the course of my research should serve as warning flags: A tale with undoubted European influence (T3) had one scene that was absent from any of the collections I had reviewed and, moreover, it seemed so typical of Zinacantec imagination that I concluded it must be a local innovation. But this product of Zinacantec genius, I learned entirely by chance, had been forecast almost literally by none other than François Rabelais in his Second Book of Pantagruel (Rabelais, 1951:199-200). Later in the course of a study, a legend that told how Christ punished a farmer's disrespect by turning his crop to stone (T52, T177) was found to be widely distributed throughout Middle America, yet absent in large collections of texts from Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. The logical conclusion would be that this was a special “Indian” adaptation of Biblical lore to fit Middle American ideas. Alas, Oskar Dänhardt uncovered a thirteenth-century Latin manuscript of this very tale (Dänhardt 1912, 2:95-107). He discovered that the legend was brought to Europe from the Near East by the crusaders!

What is the extent of Spanish influence upon Zinacantec narrative tradition? Boas concluded that “The Spanish American folklore as well as that of the American Negroes is derived largely from Spanish sources” (Boas, 1912:247). If one were to be overly scrupulous, European elements could indeed be found in nearly every tale. Magical adventures, picaresque heroes, Christian homilies, and animal tales are the stuff of Spanish oral literature that the Zinacantecs have had four and a quarter centuries to transform. Nobody presented with two collections of tales, one from Zinacantán, the other from Spain, could confuse the two. The ravishing princess, the true bride lost in enchanted sleep in the depths of a glass mountain, rescued by a lovesick and repentant suitor who, with the aid of a golden bird, vanquishes the giants guarding her door—this is not a Zinacantec tale. Only a vague echo reverberates through the oral literature of Zinacantán; orphans rewarded with magic tokens that are lost and retrieved by faithful animals (T11, T31, T165), Cinderella (T84), magic flights (T18, T53), the bear’s son (T164), and the Castle of Going and Not Returning (T172).

Several versions of the Spanish picaresque have been adopted nearly intact, but significantly the picaaro is an Indian, his hapless victim a Ladino (T6, T107, T109, T170, T171).

Some Zinacantec folk interpretations of biblical events or of the lives of the saints vary little from their European equivalents (T52, T54, T57); others show a profound assimilation with pre-Columbian beliefs (T8, T35, T53, T88, T103, T177). Traditional Spanish Catholic hostility to the Jews was adopted by the Zinacantecs who conceive of them only as the persecutors and, indeed, murderers of Christ. Zinacantecs’ fear of Negroes derives in part from Spanish political rather than religious motives. What could better suit the conquistadors’ desires to ensure that no alliance be made between fugitive Black slaves and the native Indian population than horrendous tales of Black cannibalism and supersexuality?

The animal tales, among them tarbaby and the duping of coyote or tiger by the little rabbit (T29, T21, T49, T50, T90, T166), contain very few elements not found either in Cuba, Puerto Rico, or Spain. The diversity and relative lack of stability of the linked episodes comprising the animal tales, which Foster found to be typical of Mexican versions (Foster, 1945b), pertains also to these tales. The Zinacantec tarbaby stories contain eight of the twelve episodes reported from Mexico (Foster, 1945b:230).

Most puzzling of all are the witch tales (T12, T47, T60, T73, T82, T175, T176). Though they form no part of Espinosa’s voluminous collection of Spanish tales (Espinosa, 1967), in Cuba and Puerto Rico there occur disturbingly similar descriptions of necrophagous women who, after removing their heads or skins, are done in by the application of a slippery or stinging salve (Hansen, 1957: tale types 748H, 749B; Mason, 1926, 5:304-308, 322-323, 346-350). If these tales originated in Europe they have undergone a change in Middle America with a new emphasis either upon (1) the efforts of a husband to be rid of his wife, or (2) concern with a confusion of sexual identity.

Spanish folklore, while not deficient in fantasy, is stamped with realism. The “Never Never Land” of the Grimms’ tales is not so prominent as the humorous, pessimistic anecdotes of everyday life. The hand of justice strikes Everyman in the dusty street. This realism is evident in Zinacantec tales where even the most fanciful events are described in down-to-earth...

3The image of Zinacantec courtship and marriage as reflected in the mytic mirror can be seen in Laughlin, 1963.
INTRODUCTION

terms, where the deities and demons speak the same familiar phrases of anyone's next door neighbor. Pessimistic humor is a commonly shared trait, but while the Spanish stories delight in the absurd scrapes and misperceptions of fools of a thousand varieties (particularly priests), the Zinacantec does not bear fools or priests lightly. Usually the foolish victim is an outsider: a tiger, a spook, or a Ladino. Here the vagaries of priests, their amorous adventures, are the subject not of humor, but outrage.

The depth of moral concern of Spanish oral literature is equalled in Zinacantec tales, but in Zinacantan it is expressed with somberness; righteousness vindictively triumphant, or injustice unhappily endured. It is doubtful whether realism, pessimistic humor, or moral concern can be transported intact from one shore of the ocean to the other. While particular elements, even phrases, may flourish unchanged with almost magical powers of survival, the tone of an oral literature as a whole is dependent upon cultural conditions. Though there is no way to ascertain if the oral traditions of Zinacantan were as somber before the Spanish Conquest, there are surely good historical grounds for Spanish-introduced pessimism in Zinacantan.

After perusing the substantial collections of folktales recorded by Wheeler and Robe in central Mexico, where Spanish influence is very evident, the Zinacantec oral traditions seem peculiarly autochthonous. An intuitive judgment of the number of tales with pronounced European qualities would not raise the estimate above 20% of the total collection. Clearly, though European influence is strong, it is far from predominant.

There appear to be few elements shared with the cultures of northern and central Mexico (Cora, Huichol, Tarascan, Aztec, etc.), but motifs that at first were assumed by me to be uniquely Mayan (some with an ascertainable time depth of over four centuries) can be found far to the north of Chiapas. Not only motifs, but even dialogues, despite their translation from a variety of unrelated languages, exhibit astonishing similarity. Suggested here is the early existence and current perpetuation of an extensive culture area that embraces not only Guatemala, Chiapas, and Yucatan, but also the southern half of Veracruz and the entire state of Oaxaca! (The correspondence in plot and dialogue between the Yaqui and Zinacantec buzzard-man myths may be the result of Yaqui repatriation in the nineteenth century.)

Prominent traits in the traditional narratives of this vast culture area are tales of long-haired devils, thunderbolt spirits who singly, or accompanied by whirlwind, hawk, or other aerial naguals, defend the town from enemy attack. Versions of horned serpent, tales of the flood and of multiple creations and destructions agree in many particulars. An interesting parallel occurs in native descriptions of the creation of the church of St. Sebastian in Zinacantan, of a Mixe pre-Columbian plaza, and of Chichen Itzá.

Common motifs demonstrably adapted to post-Conquest life are the arrival of a mysterious person (a saint) who begs the people to build him (or her) a home, and the loss of the church bell either by robbery or through carelessness of the town elders.

Zinacantec familiarity with motifs present far to the north and to the south are added evidence for extensive commercial activity in both directions in the past. Until recent times a colony of Zapotecs existed in Chiapa de Corzo at the foot of the highlands, and even today Zinacantec trade occasionally as far north as Juchitán, though they rarely journey south of Comitán.

In the Mayan area, a reading of the Guatemalan epics reveals surprisingly few correspondences with Zinacantec material. The theme of a god either transformed into an animal or slain while perched in a tree, gorging on fruit or honey; the use of bathing girls to tempt an enemy army to destruction; stiff-legged forebears; wasps and bees as tools of war; thunderbolt defenders; Blood Girl—these are meager gleanings. Their meagerness is matched by the lack of elegant verse in Zinacantec oral literature. There is no question that the ancient Guatemalan epics were polished by an aristocracy highly trained in poetic oration, while the Zinacantec tales are the rough products of merchants and hoers of the earth.

Contemporary Mayan folktales manifest in quantity of elements, though frequently not in exact replication, only a slightly closer relationship to Zinacantan than do non-Mayan tales. There is but one motif whose distribution appears to be limited to Guatemala and Chiapas, the origin of corn—brought to man by a raven which steals it from a cave. It seems that Zinacantan owes little more to its Mayan neighbors to the south and east than to its non-Mayan neighbors to the north and west.

Clues to the antiquity of folktales elements found uniquely in Chiapas are practically nonexistent. There are suggestive remarks by Bishop Nuñez de la Vega in the seventeenth century regarding Spooks, and the god, Votan, who may perhaps survive behind the mask of St. Sebastian (Ordoñez y Aguiar, 1907:14). There is a scene from one tale (T35) that may recall a nativistic religious revival in 1708 described by Francisco Ximénez (1931:262–264). There are accounts of the “War of the Castes” of 1868–71. But there seem to be no other historical
happenings prior to the twentieth century that can be identified with any security.

Contemporary Tzeltal folktales vary slightly from the Tzotzil versions. It seems reasonable to assume that most Zinacantec tales could be matched by an equivalent in any of the surrounding communities. Only Gossen's impressive collection of tales from Chamula is large enough to make deductions about the nature of oral tradition in the neighboring Tzotzil towns. Even here the differences may be more the result of Gossen's special interest in Mayan cosmology than differences between the two traditions. Apparently, the Chamulans have a far deeper concern for, and retention of origin myths. Unlike the Zinacantecs, they stress the discontinuity between the ancient past and the present. They assess the past in far more negative terms than their neighbors, the Zinacantecs. Almost never does a Zinacantec figure in a tale from Chamula, while in Zinacantec tales Chamulans are often the dupes or more especially the pathetic victims of the legendary events. There appears to be an extraordinary scarcity of European influence in Chamulan tales.

All these discrepancies are suggestive of differing historical conditions in the two communities. Perhaps the far wider dispersal of Chamulan hamlets, the large total population, and therefore lesser chance to participate in the ritual activities of the center, encouraged the elaboration of a philosophical system in which origin tales are accorded special prominence. Unlike the Zinacantecs, the Chamulans were never the lords of the highlands. Their past was dedicated primarily to the raising of corn, not to commercial activity. They were and still are, today, wage laborers for Zinacantecs. Their contact with Ladinos is far more tinged with servility than the Zinacantecs', who have relied for years on shrewd diplomacy to seal favorable business deals, land rentals in the lowlands, etc., with Ladinos. Zinacantecs may, then, as merchants rather than mere peons, have had greater access to Ladino taletelling.

With the advance of scholarship the number of motifs peculiar to the Chiapas highlands has dwindled dramatically. Spreading terror through all the Indian towns, the Spook seems to be unique to this region. The Charcoal Cruncher, that I had long heard to be endemic to Chiapas, has, under various disguises, been traced to British Honduras and El Salvador. Perhaps the one motif unique to Zinacantán is the saga of the boy who went from rags to riches, became the king of Zinacantán, and was escorted to Mexico City amidst great fanfare, never to return—a hapless betrayer, preserved by the betrayed (T11, T34, T64, T113, T165).

**MYSTERY**

There is not a single monument today to testify to the glory that was Zinacantán. Throughout the Early Classic (300-700 A.D.) and Late Classic (700-1000 A.D.) periods "the central Chiapas plateau remained an isolated and backward region not directly influenced by any of the major Mesoamerican centers" (Adams, 1961:348), except for the increased militarization of Late Classic times, that "appears not to have been an isolated or delayed phenomenon, but fully to have kept pace with wider trends" (Adams, 1961:347).

During the post-Classic period Zinacantán maintained impressive local control over the trade of precious feathers, salt, and amber. If indeed an Aztec garrison was stationed in Zinacantán from 1498-1521, as Herrera reports (Blom, 1959:26), it was apparently established after years of unsuccessful and costly efforts.

Intertribal hostility here, as in the Valley of Mexico, assured speedy Spanish conquest. In 1524 Zinacantán capitulated without a hint of resistance to a handful of Spaniards, doubtless believing that the town would profit by the defeat of their enemies, the Chiapanecs, and the Chamulans. Zinacantecs served the Spanish forces as porters and warriors in subsequent expeditions in the highlands and in the Lacandón jungle. Then, as now, the "Men of the Bat" astonished the Ladinos by their haughty mien. Shortly after the Conquest, Zinacantán still "had an infinite number of idols; they worshipped the sun and made sacrifices to it, and to the full rivers, to the trees of heavy foliage, and to the high hills they gave incense and gifts" (Ximénez, 1929:360). The first Dominican monastery in Chiapas, founded in Zinacantán by followers of Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas served as a refuge for the friars, and as a center of missionary activity from 1544-1546. Despite their attempts to make good Christians of the Zinacantecs, two years later the friars collected enough idols to supply a huge bonfire in the plaza.

In 1572 Zinacantán continued to be the Indian "capital" of the highlands. At this time a native government was instated by the Spaniards; its form was surely influenced by the pre-Conquest pattern whereby those of best lineage became lords, and their sons, priests.

For three centuries Zinacantecs endured a fate as bitter as that of any Indian segment of Mexico. The native towns of highland Chiapas were quickly apportioned out to individual Spaniards under a system known as the *encomienda*. Both tribute—products of
the land, or cloth—and labor were owed to the lord, though the natives still theoretically owned the land. So exorbitant were the tributes of cacao exacted from the Indian communities that not only Bishop Las Casas, but the chiefs of Zinacantan, too, sent pleas directly to King Philip II, who responded to their eloquence by lowering these tributes throughout Mexico and Central America.

After the abolition of the encomienda in 1720 the Indians saw their rights continually diminished, while their communal lands were gobbled up by the Ladinos. Reform laws were consistently ignored or twisted to the advantage of the wealthy.

Until the early nineteenth century Zinacanteces engaged in extensive trade, carrying cacao and coffee from Guatemala to Tabasco, and tobacco to the Pacific slopes. But tropical diseases and dispossession of goods by the Ladinos severely curtailed their traditional occupation. Economic exploitation by landowners, political officials, even priests, was the order of the day. (See Marina Arreola, 1961.)

When the misery of the Indian communities became insupportable the gods descended from the skies to aid the oppressed. In the first years of the eighteenth century, when an insatiably greedy bishop was demanding ever higher tithes, a hermit appeared in a hollow tree in Zinacantan and built a chapel for the Virgin. Another Virgin was discovered in a corn field in Santa Marta, a cross fell from “heaven” in Cancuc. Native leaders donned priestly robes, held Mass, and exhorted the worshippers to murder the oppressors. By the year 1712 the “Tzeltal Rebellion” had spread to thirty-two towns. Urgent pleas for military assistance were sent to the Captain General of Guatemala and the Major General of Tabasco. Meanwhile an army of 4000 rebels had assembled in Huistan, ready to march on San Cristóbal. In a surprise attack, the forces of San Cristóbal sent the Indians running, only to learn that three Spaniards had been killed in Zinacantan and that the town was prepared, together with the San Filerpos on one side of the valley and the Tzeltals on the other, to fall upon the Ladino capital. On August 27, 1712 this plan was aborted by the bravery of a single friar, who rode post haste to Zinacantan, where he addressed the multitude in these words:

My children, you know that this morning I arrived in Ciudad Real [San Cristóbal]. I found it in an uproar, the alarm being sounded because there were false rumors that you had risen in rebellion against God and against the King, and since I love you as my own children, I prevented them from coming to destroy you until I had come and seen what had happened. But the rumors and reports that were spread are false, for you, together with the Spaniards, were the ancient conquerors and you have always been loyal vassals of the King, Our Lord. (Ximénez, 1931, 3:293.)

Praising the townspeople for having imprisoned the Spaniards, the friar upbraided the captives and, to their immense relief, led them off “to jail” in San Cristóbal. Buoyed by the friar’s success, the Spanish officials returned to Zinacantan and hung four of the rebel leaders, though the principal leader, having departed to confer with the Tzeltals, escaped. Reinforcements soon arrived from Guatemala and Tabasco. The rebellion was brutally crushed. Its leaders were hung, their heads displayed on stakes before the church doors, their bodies quartered and exhibited at the entrances to the towns.

For over one hundred and fifty years the memory of this ruinous defeat kept the Indians quiet, but once again, in 1867, there were new stirrings. “Talking stones” dropped from heaven and were picked up by a Chamulan girl. A cult, including saints, priests, and native Masses soon developed. A meddling Spanish priest was slaughtered. On Good Friday, 1868, “so the Indians should have one of their own to worship, of the same soul and blood” (Pineda, 1888:76–77), a Chamulan boy was nailed to a cross. “We do not know (or will ignore) what the new jews did with the body and blood of the martyr of savagery, although it is not improbable that they drank the blood” (Pineda, ibid.). A year later, aided by a Ladino revolutionary, the Tzotzil Indians of Chamula and several other towns (but not Zinacantan) began their genocidal “War of the Castes.” Over a hundred Ladino ranchers were murdered, including wives and babies. An army of perhaps 5000 Indians poured down the mountain slopes into the outskirts of San Cristóbal. After nearly overcoming the defenders they mysteriously withdrew, leaving only a memory that even today chills the people of San Cristóbal.

The misery of hereditary debt, forced labor, and tribute was further aggravated at the close of the nineteenth century by the invention of the enganche, or “hook” system. A Ladino representative of the coffee fincas would set up a booth in the plaza. On a table, before him were stacked piles of gold. Lured by promises of wealth, the Indians would flock to the stall and speedily be signed up as contract laborers, but almost inevitably they would become prisoners of debt, constrained to spend many years in the unhealthy lowlands until one day the individual might escape and run back to the hills.

As late as 1910 the plight of the Chiapas peons was “probably the worst of all in the nation” (Cosío Villegas, 1956, 4:227). The land reform policy inaugurated by the Revolution in that year did not reach Zinacantan until the early 1940’s. Even then land records show that it benefitted the wealthier
Indian families of the community (Wasserstrom, pers. comm.).

From the fall of Porfirio Diaz in 1910 to the defeat of General Pineda in 1924 the Zinacantecs endured a period of armed encounters when neither their lives nor their possessions were secure.

Conditions have changed rather dramatically in the past twenty-five years. The Departamento de Asuntos Indigenas came to the aid of Indians in legal disputes that could not be settled at the township level. Since 1950 the Instituto Nacional Indigenista has built roads, schools, clinics, and stores in the Chiapas highlands. In 1972 the Programa de Desarrollo Socio-económico de los Altos de Chiapas was inaugurated to provide new legal, administrative, and economic resources for the Indian population.

The paternalistic attitude of Ladinos has been shaken by Indian competition. Though exploitation has not ended, and though it is too soon to expect Ladinos to exchange their condescending view of Indian culture for one of respect, the Indian communities are beginning to experience a new optimism.

In folklore the Ladino has been accorded a place consonant with his historic role. One aspect of the Earth Lord is modeled after the fabulously rich Ladino landowner who offers great treasures in exchange for contract labor. Otherwise the Ladino, almost without exception, is an evil character, whether layman or priest—"the spawn of an Indian woman and a white dog." Running through the folktales is an ever-recurring refrain: "Once the town had wealth, now it is penniless; if what had happened had not happened, we would be on top, the Ladino face up."

It is not surprising to find that in the oral literature of Zinacantan personal relations, whether between man and god, between stranger and Zinacantec, among fellow townsmen, or between family members, are shaded with distrust. In addition, few mythic antagonists are ever reformed; they are generally rejected and destroyed. A frequently unpredictable universe, whose evil manifestations are easier to batter down than to set right, may have been the creation not of Zinacantecs alone, but of Zinacantecs laboring under the domination of Ladinos. With renewed prosperity, a new ebullience may spill over into the folk traditions.

In 1958, when Zinacantecs first told me their tales, the hamlets of Zinacantan were separated by gleaming forests of oak and pine. Wisps of smoke rose from the tall, black pyramids of thatch nestled in the green corn fields. Men ran down muddy trails, urging on their convoy of mules, or strode jauntily along the highway, weaving a coil of palm fiber for a new hat. Their Mayan profiles slanted obliquely under straw platters spilling yards of pink and purple ribbons. Brief white shorts set off their brown muscular thighs as they paraded at the head of their flock of womenfolk. The women, bowed under bristling bundles of firewood, drew shawls across their faces as the cars raced past.

Now the forests ringing the hamlets are mostly knee-high stumps. Low tile roofs cover the adobe or brick rectangles. Trucks, few mules, carry corn. Store-bought sombreros and long pants far outnumber beribboned platters and white shorts. Most boys walk bareheaded. Those who can, wear watches on their wrists and carry radios in their plastic shoulderbags. Girls stare boldly and may even smile.

But the electricity is still dim, meals are still cooked on wood fires, dogs still bark and roosters still crow through the night, men still lead the way, mist swirls still past the ragged limestone cliffs, and the thunderbolt crashes, shaking the mountains to their foundations. The profile is still Mayan.3

### Taletelling

The hesitant teasing out of tales began in my front yard in Zinacantan. Here, Romin Teratol, speaking Tzotzil slowly and barely above a whisper, recited tale after tale to my clumsy pencil. After my skill had become more adequate I worked with Xun ?Akov and then approached one of the elder members of the community. Although eager to supply myths, Manvel K'obyox was incapable of repeating verbatim. His lamentable scantiness of tooth also frustrated my most conscientious efforts at transcription. It was then decided to shift from pencil to tape recorder and from Zinacantan to San Cristóbal where we would be free from neighbors’ intruding ears. After each session the recording was transcribed in rough approximation, to be polished subsequently with Romin Teratol’s help.

The storytellers’ toils were accompanied by idle chitchat, bowls of beans, and, when appropriate, bottles of cane liquor or beer, so that their stories would reflect, as they should, hours of leisurely companionship. I had hoped that tales might be elicited without payment of a fee, but Zinacantecs value their time highly. I did not want them to feel exploited.

The choice of narrator was limited by the trials of establishing close relations; no Zinacantec acquaintance would agree to serve as liaison to individuals who seemed to me particularly knowledgeable. Con-

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3 Readers familiar with Of Wonders Wild and New: Dreams From Zinacantan will recall this scenery (Laughlin, 1976:1).
sequently, the most insignificant and unpremeditated actions—the one-time sharing of a drink, the giving of a ride—proved to be the determinants of the final list of contributors. The raconteurs form a statistically unsatisfactory sample of the community: one woman, eight men, ranging in age from early teens to at least mid-eighties. Six of the storytellers are from Jtek-lum (Zinacantán Center), two from the hamlet of Paste7, and one from the hamlet of Nabn Chauk. It is regrettable that only one woman's words are represented. Nevertheless, the raconteurs, by their personalities, life experiences, and narrative style demonstrate the real diversity of the creators of an oral literature.

A number of tales (T132-136, T153) include gossip that, if published in Tzotzil, might prove embarrassing to the storyteller. These are presented here only in English.
Linguistic Notes

In order to make the Tzotzil texts more accessible to the Tzotzil themselves, and hopefully to stimulate Mexican government literacy programs in their own language, I have abandoned the esoteric letters used in *The Great Tzotzil Dictionary of San Lorenzo Zinacantán*: ?, c, è, h, and ş have been replaced by 7, tz, ch, j and x.

For those game to pronounce the Tzotzil words the vowels are a as in father, e as in gem or the a in fame, i as in safari, o as in cold or the au of caught, u as in the oo of woo. The 7 is a constriction of the throat that is used by Brooklyners pronouncing "bottle," and by Hawaiians referring to their native state. j is h, tz is ts, x is sh. Apostrophes following the consonants ch, k, p, t, and tz indicate glottalization that gives the consonant an explosive quality. Stress is on the final syllable unless marked with an acute accent.

"The transcription resolves all automatic morphophonemic rules within words and indicates all syntactic word boundaries by space" (Laughlin, 1975:24) (This statement, I am advised, will satisfy the linguistic experts, but can be ignored by the common man.)

The shape of the words, with four major exceptions, is identical to that found in *The Great Tzotzil Dictionary of San Lorenzo Zinacantán*. Three changes were made to facilitate the pronunciation of the Tzotzil as it is spoken: (1) In rapid speech when the continuative aspect particle ta precedes the continuative aspect marker x-, they often elide to produce the sound ch. In the dictionary what was represented as, for example, t škom, t šakom, t šikom, is given in these texts as chkom, chakom, chikom. (2) The continuative aspect particle, ta, when it precedes the 3rd-person subject marker for transitive verbs, s-, and the locative particle, ta, when it precedes the 3rd-person possessive marker, s-, may elide to produce the sound, ts. In the texts these appear as, for example, tsnöp, "he lies," and tznö, "at his house." (3) When the 3rd-person marker, s-, is affixed to a word beginning with ch or x, or even occasionally with a word having a medial x, the affix may assimilate to an x. In these texts, then, sch'en, "his cave," xxuk'om, "his elbow," xwaxakibal, "the eighth," may be written xch'en, xxuk'om, and xwaxakibal. A fourth innovation that in retrospect I believe unfortunate, was to precede the 2nd-person marker, a-, and the 3rd-person marker, i-, with a glottal stop. Though the glottal stop does occur when a word so prefixed is spoken in isolation, it is absent in narrative speech.

As in the dictionary I have doubled consonants in a way that will be confusing to native Tzotzil speakers, but which should help the foreign reader to work out the grammar. So, when the 1st-person marker, j-, is prefixed to sat, as jsat, "my face," and when it is prefixed to jol, as jiol, "my head," I have written out the prefix in both instances even though the aspiration is not lengthened in the second. Likewise, when the 3rd-person marker, s-, is prefixed to jol, as jsol, "his head," and when it is prefixed to sat, as ssat, "his face," there is no lengthening of the sibilant in the second. The same is true for the 1st-person plural suffix, -tik, that, when affixed to a word ending in t, does not lengthen the t sound, as in chkattik, "we count it."

Under most circumstances the dash is used in Tzotzil and English to indicate the lengthening of vowels for dramatic effect. Whenever possible I have indicated this in English by a dash following the vowel or vowels, as in "lo—ng ago," or "soo—n he left." Short interjections such as 7e, 7i, ji7, are often written as 7ee or 7eee, 7ii or 7iii, ji7 or ji7. Lengthening of the nasal in the interjection, m7, is indicated as mm7.

In Tzotzil I have abstained from the use of semicolons and have employed periods primarily to end statements preceding a quotation, to end quotations, and to end paragraphs.

Italics in both languages indicate a quote within a quote.
Romin Teratol

He was an enigma. Unlike his fellow puppeteers at the National Indian Institute this dignified bachelor, meticulously dressed in traditional Zinacantec clothing, seemed the epitome of the exotic. Almost sphinx-like he listened as I tried to learn from Chep Xantis the folklore of Zinacantán. Only occasionally he broke his silence to make brief comments in his native tongue. When the three of us went to a restaurant in San Cristóbal he sat separately, at a table all to himself. Then one afternoon as Chep was giving me a tortured recital of "The Three Suns" the mysterious Romin exploded into fluent Spanish, vehemently providing me with the "true" version.

Fifteen years and many tales later Romin is still an enigma.

Drawing from bits of gossip, personal observation, and Romin’s reminiscences, I will outline his path through life, not ignoring the "trivial" childhood events that loomed large in his memories.

Romin (pronounced Romeen) was conceived in 1933, reputedly in the woods, the son of a Zinacantec salt merchant and an ex-Chamulan woman. He was raised by his grandmother, mother, and maiden aunt.

His six years in the school system were initiated by the lopping off of his shoulder-length hair. As an
only child it was a struggle learning to play with his peers, but he won 160 marbles. Many school days were spent in the woods with a slingshot. For four years he served as an assistant to the ensign-bearers’ musicians during fiestas. In the afternoons when school let out he received crackers from a strange man. He learned it was his father.

Aged 12, Romin watched his corn crop fail. He volunteered for the coffee plantations down on the coast, but the recruiter did not let him go until his head was shaved. For two months he worked with seven fellow townsman on thirteen plantations. He saw his first movie. He shook with malaria, grew homesick, had his savings stolen on the train.

Returning home, Romin was appointed sacristan; a post he served for four years while he earned money doing roadwork on the side. Then he became a puppeteer and agent of the National Indian Institute.

At the age of 26, after one rejection and a lengthy courtship, Romin was married to a girl of high social standing within the community. Their first child, a daughter, died in infancy. The three sons and two daughters who followed have been more fortunate.

Shortly after his marriage Romin became the self-styled “interpreter of anthropology for Harvard University.” For many years he was the principal informant of the Harvard Chiapas Project, serving as typist, transcriber, and translator of hundreds of native texts. Together with Anselmo Peres he collaborated in the compilation of The Great Tzotzil Dictionary of San Lorenzo Zinacantán. This task took Romin to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 1963, and to Washington, D.C., in 1967. His eyes were assailed with new sights: the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, snow, blacks, subways, television, the assassination of a president, a football game, the march on the Pentagon.

Between these two journeys abroad Romin spent a year in office as Senior Steward of the Holy Sacrament. Just now he has completed his year as Ensign-bearer of St. Anthony.

Romin is a worried man. Once, though fearfully busy, he was provoked when the stewards visited their harpist before him and he remarked, “I’m like any whore who is anxious for the next one to come even though she’s still busy.” Romin worries about his debts, but he pays them. Romin worries about the cost of major enterprises, but he carries them out. He calculates and recalculates the expenditures; he always falls short. When he built his house he found to his chagrin that he needed more beams. He remembered how painful it was dragging logs from the mountaintops. One dark night he and his friend, Rey Komis, crept out behind the old courthouse where the lumber for a new courthouse was piled. They hoisted the heavy beams onto their shoulders and transported them to an empty hut for safekeeping. Romin told me he would have to remove the finish, but a week later he admitted sheepishly that his heart could not be at rest with those beams in his roof. He would just have to chop them up for firewood. Romin’s “friends” and “enemies” change roles with lightning speed, you never know who’s who. Yet in a pinch Romin is a loyal friend. Romin worries about his enemies, sure that everyone resents his new wealth and his American associations. He is fearful of being seen in public with anthropologists. Romin dreams that his anthropologist employer has left him to work in the belltower on a ledge too narrow to sit on, with the parting words, “And write only in Tzotzil.” He asks if he can be the godfather of his employer’s daughter. He always invites his American friends to the important rituals in his public and family life. With a sad smile sliding across his face, he drunkenly accuses them of abandoning him “as if he were an aging whore.” He is exuberantly boyish, running around his yard carrying his dog and exclaiming “My son! My son!”

Romin is deeply religious and conservative. He carried out his stewardship with such an attention to the fine details of ritual that his colleagues met to ask him to relax his high standards. During his stewardship he carried on an affair with an American artist, and, according to his wife and his enemies, was so befuddled that he could not respond effectively to the most minor demands of his office. He prays with the deepest conviction every night at bedtime. He prays with mock seriousness under the most absurd circumstances, collapsing all in laughter. He walks past the hundreds of mounds in the jungle at the fringe of Palenque and asks with wonder, “Where have all the souls gone?” When questioned about the date of the annual rain ceremony in Zinacantán he replies, “If it rains early, the ceremony is early, otherwise it is held late for then the rain is sure to come soon!”

He is an affectionate father, scrupulously filling his shoulder bag with fruit for his children whenever he goes to market. He even capitulated to his son’s pleas, put him in a net and carried him on his back for the two hour walk to market. And yet, when he hears his son crying in the house, he knocks on the door and shouts, “I will sell you to the Ladinos in San Cristóbal, I am the baby-eater.” He feeds his drunken compadre’s children for days on end without complaint. He taunts his compadre mercilessly for his irresponsibility.

Romin may now have cirrhosis, his month-long binges have turned him a brilliant yellow. I once saw
Romin and his father at the courthouse talking to the magistrate. He put a finger to his lips then muttered under his breath, “She’s gone again, Matal has left me.” In the most confidential tone of voice and with the glummiest face, eyelids drooping, corners of the mouth turned down he told me that now there was a new woman in the house, Loxa. He asked if I wanted to meet her. Again and again I laughed at his tall tale, but each time with a wounded expression he assured me it was true. His father joined in and added resignedly, “Too much cane liquor!” Not till I reached his home and saw Matal was his hoax revealed. One night Romin looked at his hand, “Isn’t it strange we must all be food for worms someday!”

When he moved from his father’s compound he consoled his weeping father with the sensible words, “Sons always move, we don’t accompany our parents to the grave.” Romin told me of the belief that if we eat chicken feet we will get caught in our mule’s lead ropes. I replied, “You have no worries, you have no mule!” He responded, munching on his chicken foot, “Oh yes I do, over there!” nodding at his wife, Matal. He loves his wife, shares the latest gossip, his dreams and many jokes with her, often at his own expense. He is not violent, he says. Because he was an only child he never had brothers teach him how to fight. His wife complained to him that she was richer when she was single. She could buy a sandal with the money from her flowers. That’s why, he says, he hit her with a sandal.

He never can make up his mind. He ponders every possible course of action, frets over everyone’s reaction to his pettiest affairs. Yet, in only one minute he decided to travel with me to far off New Mexico; and pioneered the first artesian well in Zinacantan. He is so diplomatic, so eloquent, so reasonable, so aware of cultural relativity, he would be a worthy representative to the United Nations—when sober. He is sullen, remorseful, melancholy, body and soul racked with aches and pains. He frowns with concentration seeking to penetrate and explain the religious concepts of Zinacantan. With a wink and a secret smile flitting across his face he gulls his friends. He tells the most obscene jokes and laughs contagiously. Cheerfully, with the greatest dedication, sensitivity, and care he transcribes, translates, and interprets. No one is his equal—when sober. He is no longer an informant, he is an anthropologist, drunk or sober. But who is he, really? “I am the son of god and the son of a devil!”

Romin’s tales have a wide variety of subjects, with particular emphasis upon problems of sex and marriage. His favorite stories relate the adventures of a young Indian man who journeys through the Ladino world, tricking his enemies or winning contests by displays of superhuman strength or superior courage (T6, T107, T109).

Romin recalls that his mother told him two of the tales in this collection (T10, T13), his father, five (T15, T110, T111, T126, T127) and his father-in-law, one (T9). When he was thirteen years old he worked in the cornfields of the Tulum family where he learned eight tales (T2, T8, T11, T17, T104—T106, T149). In his late teens in the cornfields of Petul Buro, the hero of Tale 139, he learned another four (T4, T12, T132, T139). When he was a young man he used to meet a friend on Sunday mornings at a stream where they went to wash their hair. From him he learned Tale 44 and Tale 45. But at the age of eighteen or nineteen during roadwork he heard the great majority of stories from Rey Komis (T1, T3, T5, T7, T16, T18, T20, T21, T43, T107, T125, T138), from Rey’s brother (T6, T109), or from Rey’s uncle or grandfather (T14). The sources of five tales (T19, T133—T136) are unknown to me. A number of the more scatological stories (T132—T137) were told in response to my question, “Are there any tales that would not be repeated in women’s company?”

Romin’s clarity and economy of expression as well as his straightforward temporal progression of the plot contrasts sharply with the obscurity and repetitiveness of other storytellers. Romin’s first narrative introduces Zinacantec literature with a phenomenal bang.

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When the Guatemalans Were Blown Sky-high

T1

Once the elders were stronger. They made trips to Guatemala with their mules. Then the Guatemalans took [them] into captivity.

7A ti vo7nee, ti moletike, mas tzotzik, ta xk’otik ta xanbal ta Vatimala xchi7uk ska7ik.
7Entônse ti Vatimalae, ta xchukvan, ta xtal j-p’ej
They would bring a jug of cane liquor to get them drunk.

When the people got us drunk they would castrate us.

They would fatten us up. When we were fat they would turn us into oil. Who knows what we would be turned into.

Every time, every time that our countrymen reached [Guatemala] they would always remain. They would always remain. They wouldn't return any more.

In olden times the elders were stronger. There was Thunderbolt. There was Butterfly. There was Hawk. There was Blowfly. There was Whirlwind.

Once the elders grew angry. They went. They left together. They went to look for a cave. When many of our countrymen had been lost, the elders grew angry.

They found a cave. "Go," Butterfly was told. "Go see what they are doing," said Thunderbolt. [Butterfly] went. Waving [his wings] he reached the center of the town.

"I'm back," he said [when he returned to the cave].

"What are they doing?" asked Thunderbolt.

"Well, their minds are at ease. They aren't doing anything," he said.

"Now you go, I guess." Hawk was told.

"Go pick out all the big fat hens and bring them back," Hawk was told.

"I'm going!" he said. He went to pick out, to catch, and bring back all the very best hens.

He kept on catching and bringing back the chickens. "We'll cook the meal here," said Thunderbolt.

"Fine," they said. All [the chickens] were killed. [Hawk] picked them all out and brought them back.

The Guatemalans got a bit upset.

The elders had a feast. They finished eating.

"Look, Blowfly," Blowfly was told, "You go now, go see, I guess, what they're doing," he was told.

"Fine!" he said. He went. A big pot of food was boiling. There were many cooks there while the food was being cooked.

Blowfly quickly left maggots on top of the broth.

The cook came. He stirred the broth. All that came to the top was maggots.

He told one of the generals.

"That's bad. Our enemies have come. There are enemies [here]," said the general. Ooh, they blew limeton pox ta xyakubtasanvan.

Bwéno, ti mi yakub yu7un ti krixhanoe, ta la slok' kattik.

Bwéno, ta laxisjup'esotik, mi lijup'otike, ta la xì7ochotik ta 7asete, mu jna7tik k'usi chi7ochotik 7o.

Bwéno, ju-jun bwelta ju-jun bwelta ta xk'ot ti jchi7iltaktike, syémpe ta xkom, mu xa sut tal.

Bwéno, 7a ti vo7nee, mas to 7ox tzotzik ti moletike, 7oy to 7ox la chauk, 7oy to 7ox la pepen, 7oy to 7ox la xik, 7oy to 7ox la yaxal vo, 7oy to 7ox la sutum 7ik'.

Bwéno, 7ikap sjol ti moletik vo7ne 7une, 7ibatik, 7istzob sbaik ech'el, 7ik'ot ssa7ik jun ch'en, ti k'al yu7un xa 7ep 7ich'ay ti jchi7iltaktik 7une, 7ikap sjol ti moletike.

Bwéno, 7istaik jun ch'en. "Batan!" x7utat li pepene. "Ba k'elo k'u tspasik!" xi ti chauke. 7ibat, xlichlon k'otel ta yutil jtek-lum.

Bwéno, "Lisut tal," xi.

"K'usi tspasik?" xi li chauke.

"Pwes, jun yo7onik, mu k'usi tspasik," xi.

Bwéno, "Batan xa kik vo7ot che7e," x7utat li xike. Bwéno, "Ba t'uo tal skotol butik lek muk'tik me7 kaxlanetike," x7utat li xike.

Bwéno, "Chibat che7e!" xi. 7ibat, 7a sztak tal, 7ist'uj tal skotol butik lekik ta j-mek li me7 kaxlanetike.

Bwéno, pas 7o segir, tzak 7o tal li kaxlanel. "Li7 ta jmelzantikótil k' ve7elile," xi li chauke.

Bwéno," xi. Laj skotol, 7ist'uj tal skotol.

Bwéno, 7ikap xa j-set' sjol li Vatimalae. Bwéno, 7ive7ik lek, laj ve7ikuk lek.

Bwéno, "K'el avil, yaxal vo," x7utat li yaxal veo. "Batan xa vo7ot, ba k'elo kik k'usi ta spasik," x7utat.

"Bwéno!" xi. 7ibat, lakal jun perol ve7elile, te 7ep jkusineroetik yolel xta7aj li ve7elile.

Bwéno, li yaxal veo, likel 7iyak' komel xuvit ta sba li kaltoe.

7Entónse, 7ital jkusinero, 7isnikes tal li kaltoe. 7Entónse, 7imuy tal pero naka xa xuvit.

Bwéno, 7iyalbe la ya7i jun totil soltero. Bwéno, "Chopol xa me 7un, tal xa me jkrontatik, 7oy xa me kronta," xi li totil solteroe. Jii, 7iyok'esin
their trumpets. They sounded the alarm. They shouted to each other.

Blowfly returned. “What are they doing?” asked Thunderbolt.

“Well, the meal was cooking. Their minds were at ease, but I left maggots in the meal. Quickly they sounded the alarm. They blew their trumpets,” said Blowfly.

“Ah, fine, we aren’t scared. Let’s go, I guess,” said Thunderbolt. They went. Two of the elders, Thunderbolt and Whirlwind, went in. They reached the center of the town.

“Have you come?” they were asked.

“We’ve come!” said our countrymen.

“Rest here!” our countrymen were told.

“That’s fine!” they said. They entered the prison.

“Have you come, friends?” asked the others who were imprisoned there.

“We’ve come!” said the two elders.

“Oh, it’s too late now, because we are going to die here. We are going to be castrated,” said the others.

“Oh, don’t be afraid! We’ll get out of here in a minute. This is what we came for. They’ve had their way persecuting us so much. Wait a bit!” said the two elders.

“All right,” said the others.

A jug of cane liquor was brought to each of them, to each of the elders. They drank. They drank lots, until they finished off fourteen or fifteen jugs of cane liquor apiece. But they didn’t even get drunk.

“That’s enough, that’s all. Let’s fall over now,” they said. They collapsed in a heap. The castrators came. They saw an open hole beneath where [the elders] had been sitting. When they drank [the cane liquor] it kept on going right into the ground.

“Well never mind, they’re drunk now. Let’s castrate them now,” said the soldiers.

They brought the pocketknife. [The elders] sensed in their dreams that their balls were about to be grabbed.

[Thunderbolt] let go a fart, but a mighty one. That was the end of the castrators. A mighty thunderbolt struck. The whole square, all the big buildings were ruined. Whirlwind came. Whirlwind picked up the people and tossed them and turned them up in the sky. That’s why the Guatemalans have said that the Zinacantecs are stronger. All those who had been imprisoned returned. Since then there have been no more wars with Guatemala.

The term moletik, translated as “elders,” refers here simply to the men of authority, the leaders of the town in a bygone age.

Pox, or cane liquor, is sometimes translated as “rum” though it more closely resembles vodka in taste and potency. Most cane liquor drunk by Zinacantecs is made by Chamulan bootleggers in their secret stills.

This legendary conflict between the Zinacantecs and the Guatemalans has no known historical counterpart, nor is there skornetaik, 7istij sbaik, 7iyapta sbaik.

Bwénó, 7isut tal yaxal vo. “K’usi tzpasik?” xi li chauke.

“Pwes, lakal to 7ox ve7elil, jun to 7ox yo7onik, pero 7ikak’ komel xuvit li ta ve7elile, pero likel 7istij sbaik, 7iyok’esin skornetaik,” xi li yaxal voe.

“7A bwénó, mu xixi7otik, bättik kik,” xi ti chauke. 7IBatik cha7-vo7 moletik, chauk 7i sutum 7ik’ 7I7ochik ech’el, k’otik ta yutil jtek-lum.

Bwénó, “Mi latalik?” x7utatik.

Bwénó, “Litalotikôtki!” xi li jchi7iltaktike.

Bwénó, “Li7 kuxo che7el!” x7utatik li jchi7iltaktike.

Bwénó, “Lek 7oy!” xiik. 7I7ochik ta chukel.

Bwénó, “Mi latal, jchi7iltakti?” xi ti yantik te chukajtike.

“Litalotikôtki!” xi ti cha7-vo7 moletik.

“7A mu xa yorauk, yu7un xa li7 chilajotike, ta me xlok’e kattik,” xi ti yane.

“7A mu xaxi7, li7 ta j-nilal chilok’otike, ja7 tal jpastikitok, xkom ta manya, lek chi7ilbajinitok, malao j-nililkuk!” xi ti cha7-vo7 moletik.

Bwénó,” xi ti yan 7une.

Bwénó, 7ital j-p’ej limeton posx ju-jun, ju-jun ti moletik, 7iyuch’ik, 7iyuch’ik ta j-mek, 7asta ke 7ilaj chan-lajun 7o vo7-lajun 7imeton trago ju-jun, pero mi ja7uk xyakubik. “Yil xa yil, te xa no 7ox k’alal, lomikotik xa,” xiik 7un. 7I7omik, te butk’tijik, 7ital li jlok’-7ate, 7isk’el ch’ojol xyal jun ch’en ti yo7 buy chotajtike, k’alal chuch’tike k’ex jelavel k’al yut balamil chbat.

Bwénó, yiyil, 7iyakub xa, jlok’betik ya xat,” xiik ti solteroetike.

Bwénó, 7ital navaxax, ya7yoj ta xch’ulel ta xa 7ox sztakbat li sbek’ yate.

Bwénó, 7islok’es j-moj stzis, pero tzotz, te no 7ox 7inel ti jlok’-7ate, 7ilok’ jun chauk, pero tzotz, 7ilaj skotol parke, skotol muk’tik naetik, 7ital sutum 7ik’, 7isam mulyel, 7isvalk’un 7issup’tin ta vinajel ti krixchanoetike, li sutum 7ik’e, yech’o yalojik li Vatimalae mas tzotzik li Tzinakantaetike, 7isut tal skotol ti k’u yepal te chukul to 7oxe, k’al tana mu xa buch’u pletu xchi7uk li Vatimala 7une.
The modesty of archeological remains in the Chiapas highlands and the rarity of fine trade pottery and sculpture suggests that this area was a cultural backwater avoided in preference to the less arduous coastal route between Mexico and Guatemala (Adams, 1961:341). Even so, in a sixteenth-century document the chroniclers' comments on Copanaguastla, a colonial town not far from the Guatemalan border, claimed that Macuilisuchitepec (?) and Quetzaltenango were subject to Zacantancan and at the outer limits of Zacatec land (Navarrete, 1966:103).

There is no historical record of Guatemalans castrating their prisoners, but the early ethnographer Antonio de Ciudad Real speaks of the Lacandóns' "manner of fattening their captives for sacrifice in wooden cages" (Roys, 1932:126). A similar theme is renewed annually at the Fiesta of St. Sebastian when the Spooks capture unsuspecting Chamulans as they watch the dramatic festivities and threaten to castrate them and devour them. When the Pan American highway was built in the 1940s it was widely believed that the engineers seized Indian laborers, who were rendered to fuel the bulldozers and graders.

From Oaxaca to Guatemala come beliefs in the magical powers of the town elders, who could transform themselves into natural elements to protect their people. Among the western Chinantecs, "each village has one or more rayos, men capable of hurling thunderbolts against enemy communities or knowing the defensive techniques to keep their community from such destruction by an outside rayo" (Weitlaner and Cline, 1969:549). There is a tale of highland Chinantecs battling their lowland companions with thunderbolts, clouds, and hail (Cruz, 1946:284). The Zapotecos tell of bringing tobacco home to Yalalag from the Chinantec area, defending themselves with wind, clouds, and lightning and concluding, "Ever since the Chinanteces have been afraid of our people." Indeed this story contains the now familiar questioning of companions: "Do you know anything?" (de la Fuente, 1949:350-351). The Mixe describe Thunderbolt as "the father of the towns—he it is who watches over the towns," defending them from enemy thunderbolts, tigers, serpents, and whirlwinds (Miller, 1956:18-22). A stone idol representing Thunderbolt, Rain, and Wind is worshipped in the Mixe town of Tamazulapan (Carrasco, 1966:311). From the Mixes of Coatlan comes a story of three shamans, who were imprisoned for witchcraft but were later released on condition that they resettle in the neighboring town of San Juan. Shortly thereafter Wind blew in the church door and carried off a stone idol, "the father of the towns," an event which was to be brought about by the assistance of the old gods of the country, which, though nominally discarded by the Indians, are always recurrent in times of necessity, as the Romish superstition is by those in Europe professing a purer creed." (Dunlop, 1847:192-193).

This description, Victoria Bricker informs me, was apparently cribbed by Dunlop from Alejandro Marure's Efemérides, written in 1844.

In Chiapas, the Lacandones, when they describe the battle of Lake Lacandón fought in 1596, relate how the Spaniards "changed from real people to superhuman beasts who used thunder and fire against the ancestors" (Duby and Blom, 1969:296).

The Jaltecs of Guatemala tell of a sea battle in which they employed their thunderbolts, again prefacing the conflict with a familiar question and answer episode (La Farge and Byers, 1931:122-124). But the most interesting reports from Guatemala occur in the historical sources. The Title of the Lords of Totonicapán, which traces the wanderings of the Quiché, recalls how their ancestors "being well instructed, used their incantations to make clouds, thunder, lightning, earthquakes" (Recinos and Goetz, 1953:174). And when beset by still another enemy force, "with their science ordered that two new thunders, hailstorms and lightning be formed, which they unloosed over the enemy, who, hearing such a terrible noise from our side, fled in fear" (Recinos and Goetz, 1953:182).

Upon the arrival of the fearsome conqueror of Guatemala, Pedro de Alvarado, the Cakchiquel relate how the conquistador demanded ever more gold until a native priest, telling their chiefs, "I am lightning. I will destroy the Spaniards," convinced them to abandon their capital city. The recorder of the annals of the Cakchiquels, referring to the priest as "a devil," bewails the credulity of the chiefs who never receive the magical defense that was promised and so lose forever their sovereignty (Villacorta, 1934:265-67). Three centuries later and with a keen perception of Indian realities, the great Zapata spurred on the myth of his invincibility by naming his dashing white stallion, "El Relámpago" (Lightning).

The encounter between Alvarado's army and the Quiché forces is also reported. Tecum Umam, the Quiché chief, flew like an eagle at Alvarado, who was protected, the chronicler relates, by a fair maiden and hosts of footless birds that blinded the Quiché soldiers. A second chief, Nehab, became a thunderbolt, but three times he was blinded by a white dove. Then Tecum reentered the fray. He flew at Alvarado, and beheaded the conquistador's steed, but was impaled on Alvarado's lance. So ended the Quiché resistance (Recinos, 1957:86-88).

If this seems but a fanciful reconstruction of historical events, let me present an account of a rebellion in San Juan Ostuncalco near Quetzaltenango, where in 1837, some three hundred years after the conquest and less than a decade before American armies invaded Mexico, the unfortunate citizens made an unsuccessful attack on the magistrate and his dragoons.

The Indians left behind them an idol and a jar filled with stones collected from the bed of a neighboring river. It appears that they had been made to believe that the jar, if broken at the moment of the attack, would throw lightning upon the enemy, and by enchantment, a number of venomous snakes would rush out from a neighboring wood and bite the soldiers,—an event which was to be brought about by the assistance of the old gods of the country, which, though nominally discarded by the Indians, are always recurrent in times of necessity, as the Romish superstition is by those in Europe professing a purer creed." (Dunlop, 1847:192-193).

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After scrupulously searching all the historical and mythic sources of Middle America I have been able to discover only a Chorti horned serpent that rivals the Zacatecans' flatulent power (Fought, 1972:84-84). See also T115, T150, T159, and their notes.
Long ago the people of Guatemala used to be very evil. Since long ago the people here from Zinacantan Center reached there. They went to trade. They went to Tabasco to bring tobacco. They arrived, they arrived to trade. They went to sell it in Guatemala.

The people in Guatemala seized them and stuck them in jail. All the traders were put in jail. They were given some cane liquor to drink. A jug of cane liquor was set down quickly inside the jail.

When they took all the cane liquor they could drink, they collapsed there. They fell over there inside the jail.

When they collapsed from drunkenness, their balls were cut off. Their balls were cut off. They didn't feel their balls coming off. They were turned into eunuchs, they were turned into oil.

That's how all the people disappeared there. A tremendous number disappeared. They were fattened up there. They were all shut up in jail.

Four elders discussed it together, since they saw that all the people disappeared, that they just vanished in Guatemala.

They thought it over [to see] if they could do anything—if each one of them had something in his heart, it seems.

"Why would it be? How can it be, it seems, that they all die there, that all perish, that all our countrymen disappear in Guatemala? Why? But you, don't you know something? Can't we defend each other? Can't we go see why they all die there?" the four elders said to each other.

"Well, me, I know a little," said one.
"But what do you know?" said [the other].
"Me, I'm Whirlwind," he said.
"Ah!" said the other.
"As for you, don't you know anything?" he said.
"Me, I know a little. Me, I'm Thunderbolt of course!" said [the other].
"Well, you, what do you know?" he asked the next one.
"Me, I'm Hawk. I can be a little hawk," said the other.
"Well, it can be done with that," they said.
"As for you?" he asked.
"Me, I can be Blowfly," said the other.
"Ah, hell, with that, it's fine now! It's fine with four of us. It's fine for playing with them—for our countrymen there. We have nothing to worry about! Let's go! Let's go see, I guess, what's been done to them, what they're in the midst of doing to them, what they're doing to them—if they're eating them, or what in the world they're doing to our countrymen that they keep disappearing," they said.

They went. But it was a serious affair now, because lots of people had been lost. They went to look. The four elders went off together. When they were far off they looked for a good spot. There was a big cave. The big cave took the place of their house. They assembled there. They ate there. They fixed there what they ate—there under the cliff.

First they sent off a butterfly. "Go take a look, I guess, Butterfly! See, I guess, what they're doing, what they're in the midst of doing, what they are planning. See, I guess, if our countrymen are there—what they have done to them, or if they don't have them anymore," said Thunderbolt and Whirlwind.

"Well, okay, I'm going, then!" said Butterfly. He went. Butterfly flapped by the barracks door.

He looked. He looked through the jail door. All our countrymen were packed in there. They were shut up there in the jail.

He just looked at them. He looked at what the soldiers were doing.

He came back. "I've come back," he told that Thunderbolt when he arrived.

"Ah!" he said. "That's all, then. Come on, let's get ready! What did you see them doing?" asked Thunderbolt.

"They're not doing anything. The soldiers are just scattered about there. They're just scattered about, enjoying themselves. Our countrymen are there, indeed! They're packed inside the jail," he said.

"Ah!" he said. "Nothing's happening? There's no war?" said Thunderbolt.

"No," said [Butterfly].

"Ah, fine, all right, then. Now you go, Hawk! We'll eat well before we leave. Go pick out all the biggest hens and biggest roosters. We'll eat well before we leave. Bring them. We'll fix the meal," said Thunderbolt and Whirlwind.

"Okay," said Hawk. He left. He went to each house to pick out the biggest roosters and biggest hens. He carried them back. He arrived to leave them at the cave. That Thunderbolt, that Whirlwind, and that Butterfly prepared them there.

They ate we—ll and they left happily. But [the Guatemalans] hadn't gotten very upset yet, of

"7A, karájó taje lek xa, lek ta chan-vo7otik lek ta tajintael taj jchi7iltaktik taje mu k'usi xal ko7ontik bætik ba j'k'eltik kik k'usi tzpasbat k'usi yolel tay cha7lebil, k'usi chcha7leik mi tztî7ik k'usi ta j-mek ta xcha7leik ti jchi7iltaktik te laj ch'ayuk ta j-mek 7une," xiik la 7un.

Bwéno, 7ibatik la 7un pero ta yepal xa k'op 7un yu7n xa 7ep ta j-mek ch'ayem ti krixchanoetik 7une, bat la sk'elik 7un stzob la sbaik ech'el ti chan-vo7 moletik 7une, nom to 7ox la 7un ssa7ik la lek jun slugarik 7un, 7o la jun muk'ta ch'en, 7a ti muk'ta ch'en 7une ja7 la sk'el xol naik 7un te stzob sbaik 7un, tey chve7ik tey tzmeltzant k'u slajesik tey ta yolot ti ch'en 7une.

Bwéno, priméro 7istakik la ech'el 7a li j-kot pepen. "Ba k'elo kik, pepen, k'elo kik k'usi ta spasik, k'usi yolel ta spasik k'usi tznoxipanik, k'elo kik mi tey ti jchi7iltaktike k'usi xcha7leojik 7o mi ch'abal xa yu7unik," xi la ech'el ti chauke ti sutum 7ik'e.

"Bwéno, yechuk chibat 7un che7e!" xi la ti pepen 7un. Bat la 7un, xlichlo---n la jelavel ti pepen ta ta ti7 kwartel 7une.

Bwéno, sk'el la 7un sk'el la ti7 nail chukele tey la tzi---nil skotol ti jchi7iltaktik 7une tey la makbikil ta chukel 7un.

Bwéno, ja7 nox yech 7isk'el 7un sk'el ti k'u tzpasik ti solteroetike.

Bwéno, 7isut tal 7un. "Lisut me tal 7un," xut la yulel taj chauk 7une.

"7Aa!" xi la. "Bwéno mu k'usi che7e la7 jchap jbatik lek, k'usi tzpasik avil 7un?" xi la ti chauk 7une.

"Mu k'usi tzpasik yech te Jamal li solteroetike yech te lamal tzkux yo7onik, te li jchi7iltaktik a7a tey tzinil ta yut nail chukel," xi la ti chauk 7une.

"7Aal" xi. "Mi mu k'usi 7oy mi mu k'usi pletu?" xi la ti chauk 7une.

"Ch'abal," xi la 7un.

"7A bwéno, teyuk che7e, 7óra lavie chabat vo7ote 7une, xik, 7a li ve7ikotik ech'el lek, ba tu'xo tal skotol li bu muk'tik me7 kaxlane li bu muk'tik keleme ve7ikotik ech'el lek 7un xtal avak' 7un ta jmelztanikotik i ve7elil 7une," xi la ti chauke ti sutum 7ik' 7une.

"Bwéno," xi la ti xik 7une. Bat la 7un, 7i la ba st'u7j tal ju-jun na ta j-mek ti butik 7oy muk'tik ti keleme ti me7 kaxlan 7une, ta la xean tal ta j-mek ta la xul yak' taj ta ch'en 7une, ja7 te chtzmelztanik ve7elil taj chauke taj sutum 7ik' 7une taj pepen 7une.

Bwéno, le---k 7ive7ik 7un 7i kontento 7ibatik 7un, pero 7esté mu to 7o bu mas tzotz sjolik 7un bi muk'
course—not very much. They hadn't figured out very well yet that they had enemies or something—just that Hawk had stolen from them.

After [the elders] had eaten well, Blowfly went. He was sent, too. "Well, go on then, I guess, you, Blowfly. Go see, I guess, what they're doing, what they're planning. Go see what all the soldiers are doing," Blowfly was told.

"Okay, I'm going, then," said Blowfly. He went to look. He arrived, buzzing, at the barracks door. He arrived. He passed by to look at those prisoners. The food was being coo—ked.

When those cooks were stirring that broth, that Blowfly laid his [eggs]. He laid [his eggs] in those cauldrons where those meals were cooking. They stirred that food, that broth in the cauldrons. Then all those maggots came up.

Then they saw all the maggots rising up. They didn't eat now. They were mad. All the soldiers assembed. They blew their bugles. They shouted to each other—if some of the soldiers were taking a walk. They assembled. "The enemy has come now!" they said.

Ooh, they all gathered together. They didn't eat now, since they saw that the meal was all maggots. After that, [Blowfly] came back. He arrived at the cave, it seems—that Blowfly. He arrived to tell Thunderbolt. He arrived to tell Whirlwind.

"Well, what's it like? What are they doing?" asked [Thunderbolt].

"Well, the soldiers were happily scattered in the open. Their food was cooking. The cooks were looking at the meal. But I laid [eggs] in the food. They didn't eat now, since they saw that the meal was all maggots.

After that, [Blowfly] came back. He arrived at the cave, it seems—that Blowfly. He arrived to tell Thunderbolt. He arrived to tell Whirlwind.

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After that, [Blowfly] came back. He arrived at the cave, it seems—that Blowfly. He arrived to tell Thunderbolt. He arrived to tell Whirlwind.
taken along with them a little something to go and sell so they would look like traders. “Well, [I want to] speak to our friends whom I see shut up here,” they said.

“Okay, talk to them!” they said.

“Well, what’s the matter, friends? What happened to you?” they asked when they arrived.

“Nothing happened to us. We’re shut up here, because we’re going to be killed, because we’re going to be turned into oil. They shut us up here. Our balls have been cut off. But as for you, you’ll die here, too, because it’s too late, now. We’ll be together now, because now we’ll be together, because we’ll die here, since every one of our countrymen who comes dies here. They are all castrated when they die,” said the others who were packed in the jail.

“No, probably not, don’t worry, we’ll get out. We’ll get out of here in a little while. We’ll go. We’ll knock the jail down. Don’t worry!” said Thunderbolt and Whirlwind.

“But are you telling the truth?” said the prisoners.

“We’re telling the truth,” they said.

“But what can you do? But we haven’t been able to win, ourselves. But who knows if you can!” said the prisoners.

“No, don’t worry, because the jail has to be opened today. You’ll see what kind of game will be played today,” said Thunderbolt and Whirlwind.

“Okay,” they said.

“Don’t worry! Just watch the spectacle. Just don’t be scared,” they said. “Okay,” said our other countrymen.

“Well, as for you, you’re going to jail!” that Thunderbolt and that Whirlwind were told. “Okay, we can go in. Are we guilty of anything?” they said.

“You aren’t guilty of anything, but take a rest, join your friends anyway!” said the soldiers.

“Well, okay. Then. We can do it, but first [we want] to sell our things,” they said. They sold them. And for as long as they could they chatted like that, [but] they only had permission to chat with those others packed in the jail.

After that, they were put in jail, stuck in jail.

As for Thunderbolt, a jug of strong cane liquor was set down for him. But he drank and drank until he had drunk up that jug of cane liquor. Another jug came. He finished it. Another one. He finished it. “Well, but why doesn’t he get drunk?” they said. “But he must know something [special],” they said.

k’usi chba xchonik 7une 7i yo7 ti jchonolajel 7o yilel 7une. “Bwéno, ta jk’opon jchibi7il li7e ti li7 makajtik chkile,” x’i la 7un.

“Bwéno, k’opono!” x’i la 7un.

7Este, “Bwéno, k’u xi 7un, jchibi7iltaktik, k’usi chapasik 7un?” xut la k’otel 7un.

“Mu k’usi ta jpas li7 bajalotikotike yu7n xa chilajotikotik ta milel xu7n chi7ochotikotik ta 7aste, li7 smakojotikotik tok’bil xa sbek’ kattikotik pero li vo7oxuku yu7n xa li7 chalajik 7uke xu7n xa mu yoraux le7e li7 xa ta jchibi7in jbatikte yu7n xa li7 chilajotikotik k’u ti skotol ti buch’u chlaj taluk jchibi7iltaktikte yu7n li7 chlaj lajukte naka lok’bil yat ta xla7,” x’i la taj yan te tzinil ta nail chukel 7une.

“Mo7oj nan mo7oj, mu k’u xal 7avo7on ta xilok’otik, li7 ta j-likelel chilok’otike chibattitk, ta jvok’otik komel tana li nail chukel mu k’u xal 7avo7onik,” x’i la ti chauke ti sutum 7ik’e.

“Pero mi ye7 a7aval?” x’i la 7un.

“Yech xkal,” x’i.

“Pero k’usi xana7ik pero ti muk’ bu jpastikotik kanal ya7el li vo7otikotik 7une pero na7tik 7onox tanat!” x’i la.

“Mo7oj mu k’u xal 7avo7onik yu7n ta persa ta xjame tana li nail chukel xak’el k’u x7elan tana li tajimol che7e,” x’i la ti chauke ti sutum 7ik’ 7une.

“Bwéno,” x’i la.

“Mu k’u xal 7avo7onik k’elik nox 7elav ja7 nox ti mu me xaxi7ik 7une,” x’i la 7un.

“Bwéno,” x’i la 7un ti yantik jchibi7iltaktik 7une.

“Bwéno, vo7ote cha7och ta chukel!” xutatik la taj chauk 7une taj sutum 7ik’ 7une.

“Bwéno, stak’ x7och mi 7u k’usi jnul?” x’i la 7un.

“Mo k’usi 7amul pero kuxo yu7n ja7 ye7 chichi7no lachi7iltake!” x’i la ti solteroetik 7une.

“Bwéno, teyuk che7e stak’ pero ta jchon ba7yuk i k’usuk ku7une,” x’i la 7un. 7Ichonolaj 7un, 7u k’u sjalil 7ilo7ilajik taje ja7 nox permiso lo7halajik xichi7uk taj yantik te tzinil ta chukel 7une.

Bwéno, laj 7une ja7 7o7och ta chukel 7un tik’atik ta chukel 7un.

Bwéno, 7a ti chauk 7une vuchanbat la taj j-p’e7 limeton k’ixin trago, pero yu7n la yu---ch’ ta bu nox k’alal ta j-me---k 7asta ke laj la yu7un taj j-p’e7 limeton poxe, tal la 7otro j-p’e7 laj la, 7otro j-p’e7 yu7un 7ilaj la. “Bwéno, pero k’u yu7un ti mu xya7kut?” x’iik la 7un. “Pero le7e yu7 nox te k’u snaj7,” x’iik la 7un.
They gave him another one. “But how come he never gets drunk?”

That Thunderbolt thought to himself—“But that’s all. It looks as if I’ll collapse,” he said.

After he drank like that, then he toppled over. He just toppled over there where he was sitting in the jail.

Those soldiers came to look at him, since he had already toppled over. There was a hole dug way down where he had been sitting. When he drank the cane liquor [it went] into the ground. It kept being replaced and then running through. He drank and [it went] into the ground. It was pouring through. He pissed down [into the hole]. “Well, look here, then, look what kind of trick this Indian was pulling! It isn’t as if it stayed in his belly—it went into the ground. Look how the floor has been dug down into!” said those soldiers. “Well, but no, it makes no difference now, because he has gotten drunk now, because he has collapsed, because we’ve won now, of course! Because this one will stay for good, because we’ll cut off his balls now,” they said. It looked as if he hadn’t heard since he had collapsed on the ground.

Then they went to bring a pocketknife. When those balls of his were grabbed, then he felt it very well. Both of those balls of his were grabbed. That pocketknife was put against them. Those soldiers were squatting there. When he was lying on his side and had his balls grabbed, then he farted. That ass of his suddenly let a fart, but they landed sitting far off! Those castrators were finished. That Thunderbolt was suddenly cracking. Then those farts of his came out. He sma—shed that whole jail. Then Whirlwind came. He smashed the whole barracks. Whirlwind picked up all the guns. The [soldiers] landed far off, face up. He sma—shed, he scattered all the houses.

Then they simply all collapsed. All the soldiers were finished.

Then our countrymen were left free.

Now nothing happened to our countrymen. They came out. They came back together.

That’s how the affair ended. Guatemala gave up, because long ago they used to be so evil that they turned us into oil. They fattened us. They used to castrate [us] long ago.

Now, today, they don’t do anything to us. They don’t do anything anymore to a person who arrives there, because long ago so many of our countrymen were lost, long ago. That’s why they decided to do what they did, since there used to be mighty elders long ago. That’s how they defended us long ago. That’s why some say to this day that Zinacantan is

**Bwéno, yak’beik la 7otro j-p’ej. “Pero k’u cha7al ti yu7n mu xyakub ta j-meke?”**

**Bwéno, 7isnop xa ta sjol taj chau 7une -- “Pero te nox k’alal chilom yilel,” xi la 7un.**

**Bwéno, laj yuch’ taj x7elan 7une ja7 7o la butk’ij 7un, te nox 7ibutk’ij taj bu chotol ta nail chukel 7une.**

**Bwéno, tal sk’elel yu7n taj solterootik 7une ti butk’ij xa 7une, yu7n la xch’ojoj yalel taj ch’en yo7 bu chotol 7une, k’alal chuch’ i poxe k’al yut balamil, toj k’ex jelavel, chuch’ 7i k’al yut balamil xch’olet jelavel ta ta sk’abta yalel. “Bwéno, k’el avi che7e k’e x7elan smanya li jum 7intyo li7e mu mu7nuk te chkom chch’ut yu7n k’alal lum chbat k’e x7elan xch’ojoj li balamile!” xiik la taj solterootik 7une.**

**Bwéno, pero mo7oj mu k’usi 7a lavie yu7n xa yakub yu7n xa lom yu7n xa chkuch ku7untik li7 a7a yu7n xa xi7 chkom 7o li7 a7a yu7n xa ta jlok’betik sbek’ yat,” xiik la 7un. Mu xa bu ya7yoj yilel kómo lomem xa ta lum 7une.**
so terribly strong—because [Zinacantecs] can be Thunderbolts, and there are Whirlwinds. There is still a tale like that about olden times. They still know it to this day, but those were elders of long ago. They all arrived [there] to trade and they were lost there long ago. That’s the way it was. Those countrymen of ours returned like that, but it looked as if they already had started to swell since they had been locked up in jail. But nothing could be done since they were already castrated. That’s the way it was.

After more than a decade since I first painfully recorded with pencil and paper Romin’s account of the war with Guatemala I asked him to retell the epic while a reel of tape unobtrusively spun around catching his words. The increased complexity of this new version is a tribute both to technology and to Romin’s sophistication. The youthful exuberance of the first telling, when the Zinacantecs set the world aright, however, is clouded now—the victory came too late for those who had undergone the knife. See also TI, T115, T159, and their notes.

When Christ Was Crucified

[When] the world was made long ago, the holy father walked. He ran. [When] he was chased by the devils, he ran, he walked. He made the trees, corn, everything there is on earth. Long ago he walked. He ran, but the devils were right behind him. They saw that there were trees already. There were peach trees. There were white sapotes, everything. “Hurry up, you bastards, he’s here now, he’s near now. He’s planted everything here already.” Ooh, Our Lord was tired out. He went around the world.

Well, [Our Lord] hid under some banana trees. “That’s him, he’s near now,” said the devils. The magpie-jay was there. He was a human once. “Is it Our Lord you’re looking for? He’s here,” said [the magpie-jay]. “Seize him! He’s here now,” he said.

“Good, we’ll seize him,” said the devils.

Well, they captured Our Lord. They made him carry a cross.

Our Lord got tired. He bent low to the ground. They killed him. They hung him on a cross. He bled.

Well, he cried. He was left hanging. “Let’s go eat! He’s dead now,” said the devils. A rooster landed on the arm of the cross.

“Tell me if they are coming. I’ll climb [back] up the cross right away. First I’m going to work some more,” the rooster was told. “You call out!” [Our Lord] told the rooster.

“All right,” he said. “Cock-a-doodle-doo!” Quickly Our Lord climbed back up the cross.

“Where are they? Where are they coming from?” he asked.

“Nowhere, they aren’t coming,” said [the rooster].
“What are you good for?” said the Lord. “This is what you’re good for!” he said as he quickly pulled the rooster’s neck. [The rooster] died. A rufous-collared sparrow appeared. “You sing out, because I’m going to work a little while,” said Our Lord.

“All right,” said [the sparrow]. [The Lord] came down from the cross. He looked for a pebble. He threw it up into the sky. Eh, it was a blue pebble. The sparrow called out. Quickly [Our Lord] climbed up the cross. The sky had been made. All the devils arrived.

“He’s still hanging here,” they said.

Well, the sky was made by him. “We killed him. Let’s bury him,” said the devils. He died. He was buried. “We’ll come look three days from now,” said the devils.

Well, as for the Lord—“They thought I died, but I’ll revive in three days,” he said. Living, he rose to heaven. He left a substitute here on earth. “The rooster is no good,” he said. “The sparrow is better,” he said. So, living, he rose to heaven. He arrived at the right hand of the judge.

According to Romin the world as we know it today was made in three stages: first, the rocks and the ground, second, the ocean, the trees, and the animals, and third, the sky.

The person who revealed Christ’s hiding place was transformed into a magpie-jay, an extremely noisy bird. Because the rufous-collared sparrow was bluest by Our Lord it must not be killed. Unlike roosters it sings at regular hours. Roosters and hens, however, have been condemned to be the traditional sacrificial offering at curing ceremonies, house dedications, agricultural rites, etc. The chicken is spoken of as the “substitute” of Christ, and so are these birds employed in sacrifices.

The prominent role taken by birds in this folk account of the crucifixion is shared in several other Middle American versions. In a tale from Mitla the Jews place a rooster on Christ’s grave and instruct it to crow when the earth shakes, but Christ tells it to wait until it sees him seven leagues up in the sky. Then it crows, “Christ is born!” (Parsons, 1936:354-355). A Yucatec account describes how one kind of wild bird hides Christ’s presence while another reveals it to the Jews (M. Redfield, 1937:12-13). In Chimaltenango the rooster became the bird of sacrifice because it disclosed Christ’s whereabouts to the Jews (M. Redfield, 1937:12-13). In Chimaltenango the rooster became the bird of sacrifice because it disclosed Christ’s whereabouts to the Jews (M. Redfield, 1937:12-13). In Chimaltenango the rooster became the bird of sacrifice because it disclosed Christ’s whereabouts to the Jews (M. Redfield, 1937:12-13). In Chimaltenango the rooster became the bird of sacrifice because it disclosed Christ’s whereabouts to the Jews (M. Redfield, 1937:12-13). In Chimaltenango the rooster became the bird of sacrifice because it disclosed Christ’s whereabouts to the Jews (M. Redfield, 1937:12-13). In Chimaltenango the rooster became the bird of sacrifice because it disclosed Christ’s whereabouts to the Jews (M. Redfield, 1937:12-13). In Chimaltenango the rooster became the bird of sacrifice because it disclosed Christ’s whereabouts to the Jews (M. Redfield, 1937:12-13).

The miraculous creation of the sky appears in a different context in a tale from the Tzeltal town of Chanal. Two men bet each other that they can accomplish the feat. One tosses up a stone that only touches the clouds, while the other wins by tossing up a piece of metal that sails out of sight (Montes Sánchez, c. 1959, 1:16-17). It is entirely possible that my translation of xixib ton as a “blue pebble” is incorrect. Xixib ton is a polished pebble such as can be found in riverbeds. Xixal can mean gray, green, or blue. Although I know of no local jade it is likely that the same term would be applied to it, so, in fact, Christ may have created the sky by tossing a piece of jade in the air. Curiously, stones figure in three of Romin’s dreams (D5, D20, D21). In D20 he was digging up some beautiful round stones when his wife warned him of a snake by his foot. In D25 he discovers a xixal xixib ton embedded in his leg, but when he pulls it out he finds that it was his legbone! In D21 a religious official presents him with a treasure—long greenish or bluish stones.

When Christ rises to sit at the right hand of the judge, the “judge” is San Salvador who is seated in the center of the sky. Romin describes him as being the older brother of the sun (of Christ), whom he sends around the world to record and report back to him the sins of man. See also T177.

Footnote: 4 This and all following references to Gossen’s unpublished texts employ the numbers assigned by him to his field material.
A Visit to the Underworld

There was a man whose wife died. The man cried and cried. He went to the graveyard. He went to weep. A man appeared. "What are you crying about?" he asked.

"I'm crying over my wife, because my wife is dead," he said.

"Ah, do you want to see your wife?" he asked.

"I want to see her," he said.

"Close your eyes, then," said the man. He closed his eyes. He arrived there in the otherworld. "Ah, here is your wife," said [the man].

"What have you come looking for?" asked the woman.

"It's because I miss you so," he said.

"Ah, but you aren't supposed to come yet," said his wife.

A lord appeared. "What have you come looking for?" he asked.

"I came because I miss my wife," he answered.

"Ah, but you can't see her. Look, she is sitting here."

"Are you here, wife?" he asked.

"I'm here," she said.

"Well, I'll give you a pair of sandals, new sandals. When your sandals are worn out you can return," he was told [by the lord].

"All right," said the man.

"Go catch the mule and bring it," he was told. "Where is the mule?" asked the man. The man left. He went to look for the mule. It wasn't there. He looked hard for it, but it wasn't there. He came back.

"It's not there, my lord," he said.

"It's there. How could it not be there? Ask the women washing clothes," he said. "But who knows if they know," he said.

"They know," he said. "If they don't know which horse it is, tell them it's the priest's mule," he said. The man went again. When he arrived he asked the women who were washing.

"Have you seen a horse anywhere?"

"What's the horse look like?" they asked.

"It's a white mule, the priest's mule, they say," answered the man.

"Oh, that's me!" said [one of] the women.

"Oh, how about it, shall we go?" he asked the woman. "We are supposed to go haul firewood," he said.

"Oh, let's go!" she said. "It's the rotten bones you should look for, not real firewood," said the woman.

Bwéño, 7o la jun vinik 7icham la yajnil, batz'i ch7ok' la ta j-mek ti vinike, chk'ot la ta mukanal, chk'ot la 7ok'uk, 7itai la jun vinik. "K'usi chavok'ita?" xi.

"Chk'ok'ita kajnil, porke yu7un chamem kajnil," xi la.

"7Aa mi chak'an chak'el lavajnile?" xi la.

"Ta jk'an ta jk'el," xi la.

"Mutz' o lasate che7ef!" xi la ti vinike. 7Ismutz' la ssat te la ta k'otebal, 7ik'ot. "7A li7 lavajnile," xi la.

"K'usi tal 7asa?" xi la ti 7antze.

"Batz'yi yu7un chajnaj?" xi la.

"7Aa pero mu to bu trate chatal," xi la ti yajnil.

Bwéño, 7itai jun 7ajvalil. "K'usi tal 7asa?" xi la.

"Lital yu7un ta jna7 ti kajnil," xi la.

"7Aa pero mu xu7 xak'el," xi la. "K'el avil li7 chotole," xi la.

"Mi li7ote, 7antz?" xi.

"Li7one," xi la.

"Bwéño chakak'be j-lik 7axonob 7ach' xonobil 7a ti mi laj laxonobe, ja7 to chasut," x7utat la.

"Bwéño," xi la ti vinike.

"Ba tzako tal ka?" x7utat la.

"Bu li ka7e?" xi ti vinike.

"Te ta ti7 7uk'um," xi la. 7Ibat la ti vinike, ba la ssa7 ka7, ch'abal la ka7 7issa7 la ta j-mek, pero ch'abal la, 7isut tal.

"Ch'abal 7un, kajval," xi la.

"Te k'u cha7al mu teuk, jak'bo li j7uk'umajele!" xi.

"Pero jna7tik mi sna7," xi la.

"Sna7," xi la. "7A ti mi mu sna7 k'usi ka7e le7e xavalbe smula pale," xi la. 7Ibat la 7otro jun bwelta, ti vinike, 7ik'ot la sjak'be, ti j7uk'umajel 7antze.

"Mi muk' bu xavil ka7?" xi la.

"K'u x7elan li ka7e?" xi la.

"Sakil mula la, smula pale la," xi la ti vinik 7une.

"7Aa vo7on bi7!" xi la ti 7antz 7une.

"7Aa k'uxi 7un, mi chibattik?" xut la ti 7antze.

"Chibattik la ta kuch-si7," xi la.

"7A battik!" xi la. "Ja7 me xasa7 7a li k'a7al baketik 7une, mu me batz'i si7uk," xi la ti 7antz 7une.
“Give me three whip lashes!” He gave her three whip lashes. The white mule landed way off. It wouldn’t carry its load. He gave it a good whipping. He looked for firewood. But it was just bones, rotten bones for warming the ghosts who [had committed] the worst crimes. That’s why [Hell] is called “warmed by bones.”

As for the priest’s mule [it was called that] because once long ago there was a priest. There was a wedding couple. [The priest] snatched the boy’s hat, and went inside shutting the girl up inside, with it. He knelt on the hat and gave it to the girl. That’s why the girl was called the priest’s mule when she died.

Well, as for the man . . . it grew dark. “Too bad, husband, we can’t sleep together. You sleep apart,” said the woman. The man slept apart. He woke up in the night. He was going to touch his wife, but there was just a pile of bones there. The man was terribly frightened. The next day his wife spoke to him, “Don’t be stupid, husband, rub your sandals on a rock. Then you’ll return immediately,” said the woman.

“All right,” he said. He rubbed his sandals very hard on a rock until the sandals were worn out. He traveled about. There were many toilers. Whoever dies in infancy comes to suck sap. Whoever is a little bit older sucks on tree roots, but the blood pours from their mouths. Whoever is very lazy at work goes to herd goats among the rocks, but the blood pours from their feet. Whoever wants to die has lice appear on their flesh. They are seated under a tree, but the tree is nothing but lice. The lice are massed on the tree. The man saw everything. The sandals wore out. “Go back!” he was told.

This tale seems to have few parallels outside the Chiapas area. Dreams of visits to the dead where the dreamer is told, “It isn’t time for you,” are frequent in Panajachel (Tax, 1950:130–131). A tale from Belize traces the fate of a witch who assumes a mule’s form (J. E. Thompson, 1930:158). A Yucatec story tells of a priest who sleeps with his comrade and becomes a mule in Hell (M. Redfield, 1937:19–20), but these are mere scraps. In the Huichol afterworld any Spaniard (non-Indian), male or female, who had shared the delights of a Huichol bedmate is transformed into a mule. This concept gives dramatic support to the threat of sterility that Huichols associate with such illicit behavior (Furst and Nahmad, 1972:50–52). An eighteenth-century writer, describing Chiapas Indian cosmology, refers to the use of bones as firewood in Hell, but this must have been borrowed from Christian belief (León, 1907:31).

Romín version of the visit to Hell has counterparts in Chamula (Gossen, T70, T82, T147), Chenalhó (Gutierrez-Holmes, 1961:258–260), Ouchuc (Montes Sánchez, c. 1959:83–86, Villa Rojas, 1946:469–471), and Tenejapa (Stross, 1973, T10). I will try to synthesize the plots of the seven stories above (assigning them the letters a to g): bereaved husband meets Ladino, who takes him to Hell (d); husband is ferried across river by a black dog (c); husband is given new shoes (d); husband is told to load firewood (bones), he whistles and washes women become horses (d,e,f); the priest’s maid is a white mare, the priest a black stallion (d); the maid is branded and impaled on a red hot poker, the priest must eat her genitals (d); the maid is told to load firewood (bones), he whistles and washes women become horses (d,e,f,g); husband is told by maid to rub his shoes (d); wife cooks beans, but they turn into flies (a,b,d,g); husband tries to sleep with his wife, but she turns into a pig (d), or he returns home and soon dies himself (a,b,c,g).

Several of the elements above, though not appearing in Romín’s tale, are believed by him to be part of the infernal landscape—the black dog, the beans that buzz off into the sky, the Bosch-like punishments of the carnal sinners. The tree infested with masses of lice that fall on those who wish for death is a striking analogue to the heavenly tree of abundance described by Landa and to the breast tree awaiting the souls of Tecoxil babies in the sky. Romín imagines the babies sitting under the tree with their mouths gaping wide to catch the drops of sap. Even more bizarre is the journey to the five-branched wild fig standing on five roots in the Huichol afterworld, the final destination of the Huichol spirits who labor toward it, carrying in their arms the vaginas or penises of all those with whom they have slept. Once at the foot of the fig they drop their

7A ti smula palee yu7un ti vo7ne 7o to 7ox jun pale, 7oy la jun jnupunel, 7istzakbe la ochel spixol ti kreme, 7ismak la ta na ti tzebe, 7iskjelebin la ti pikxale, 7iyak'be la ti tzebe, yech'oi ti mula pale sib ti tzeb k'alar 7ichame.

Bwéno, 7a ti vinike, 7ik'ub la ti 7osile. "Te k'alar 7un, vinik, mu xu7 jchi'in jbatik ta vayel slekoj chavay," xi la ti 7antze. Slekoj la 7ivay ti vinike 7iyul la xch'ulel ta 7ak'ubalik ha la spik ti yajnile, pero naka la bak te busul, 7ixi7 la ta j-mek ti vinike, 7isakub 7osil 7ik'oponat la yu7un ti yajnile. "Mu xapas sonsoal, vinik, juxo ta ton laxonobe, xasut 7o ta 7ora," xi la ti 7antze.

"Yechuk," xi la. 7Isjux la ta j-mek ta ton ti xxonobe, y07 to k'u cha7al 7ilaj ti xonobile, 7ipaxyaj la 7ep la j7abeleletik, 7a ti buchu' nene7 chchame, ya7e7el te7 la ta kx'ot xchu7un, 7a ti buchu' muk'muk' xa j-set' chchame yibel te7 la ta xchu7un pero lok'emik xa la xch'ich'el ye, 7a ti buchu' toj ch'aj ta 7abele ta la x7och ta chabiej-chivo ta tontik, pero ta la xlok' xch'ich'el ti yokike, 7a ti buchu' tz'akan xchamele ta la x7ayan sak-ch'ak ta sbek'talik ta yolon te7 la chotanbil pero ti j-tek' te7e naka la sak-ch'ak, pich'ajtik la ta te7 ti sak-ch'ake, 7iyil skotol ti vinik 7une, 7ilaj ti xxonobe. "Sutan ech'el." x7utat la.
burden and toss up several of the sexual parts, knocking down
the fruits for all the assembled spirits to feast on (Furst and
The detail of the priest kneeling on the groom's hat as he
ravishes the bride is not only a vivid Freudian image, but a neat
reversal of Zinacantec custom, for often men use their hats as
prayer cushions in church. See also T19, T33, T173, and their
notes.

The Priest and the Constable

T10

Once there was a priest. He was a witch. He could
turn into a devil.
He bore a grudge against a constable. “Go, go
leave [this] message. Come back immediately,” [the
constable] was told [by the priest]. But it was very
far. He arrived there and delivered the letter. The
clerk looked at it.
“Oh, this is worthless,” [the constable] was told.
“You’ve been tricked, you’ve been abused. You’ll
see tonight, at dark, you’ll meet a devil on the road,”
said the clerk.
“Well, too bad,” said the constable. He returned.
It got dark on the way [back]. The moon was bright.
A devil appeared. He had long hair. The constable
had a stave.
“Let’s fight,” said the devil.
“Well, let’s fight,” said the constable. [The devil]
drew a circle [on the ground].
“Stand here!” said [the devil].
“All right!” said the constable. The devil rose up
in a whirlwind. The constable tossed his hat in the
circle. He himself stood back. He saw that the devil
was coming down now. [The devil’s] sword clove
through his hat.

Since [the devil] was concentrating on his hat, [the
constable] struck him quickly with [his] stave. Finally
they tired out. The constable's hat was left riddled
with holes. The devil died from [the constable's
beating]. The constable sewed up the dev-
il's skin and put it on. He celebrated Carnival in it. He went to show it to the priest. The priest died in a fit of rage. "It's a shame, my poor devil, I knew he was killed," said the priest. He died of it—from rage.

In Zinacantán young men who have acquired a reputation for antisocial or irresponsible behavior are appointed to serve for a year as constables at the courthouse. Although their year of service is ranked as the first step in the religious hierarchy, constables are jokingly referred to as "fly-swatters." They must run errands for the magistrate, make arrests, escort defendants to court, search for missing persons, etc.

The 7ak te7 or stave used by the constable suggests that Zinacantec constables, who now carry modern-style billies, once carried staves as their Chamulan counterparts still do. These staves are of polished palm heartwood so sturdy that an axe can cut it only with the greatest difficulty.

The opening gambit in this contest suggests that the constable may once have been the European folk hero, Johnny Fourteen, who was ordered to deliver a letter to the devil (Mason and Espinosa, 1926:263–264). Among the Chontal, a priest sends his godson, Johnny Fourteen, with a message to the devil, but the devil is no match for Johnny (Belmar, 1900:50–58).

The actual battle between the constable and the devil, however, takes on a form that seems peculiar to Zinacantán. See also T95, T104, T109, T158, and their notes.

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Rabbit in the Melon Patch

There was a rabbit who came to steal melons every night. The owner of the melons went to look every day, but he never could see how they disappeared. The melon owner had three sons. He sent one of his sons to watch over the melons, but he just went to play. Every night he asked for tortillas to take along, but he never reached the melon patch. Every day his father went to look. "Why do the melons keep disappearing?" asked the old man.

"I don't know, because I didn't see anything. I never was able to see anything," said the boy. But it was just because he never went there, because he was afraid of the dark.

Then he sent another of his sons.

"Me, I'm going. I'm brave. Buy me a guitar! I'm going to play it in the melon patch," said the boy.

He was given his tortillas to take every night, but even more of the melons disappeared. The boy never reached there, because he had a mistress. He just went to play his guitar at his mistress' house.

The old man saw [what was happening]. He gave him a good whipping.

The youngest son was sent the next time. "Well, father, I guess I'll go. I guess I'll go see what it is that arrives there," said the boy.

[When] one night was up—"I saw it. It's nothing, father. It's the sonofabitching rabbit," said the boy. "It's nothing much. Give me a lump of wax. I guess I'll go," said the boy. He went. The boy made legs and arms and a face out of the wax. He went out and stood it up on the rabbit's trail. The rabbit came along. It looked like a person he found standing there.

7O la j-kot t'ul, ta la xk'ot yelk'an melon ju-jun 7ak'ubal, 7a ti yajval melone, chbat sk'el ju-jun k'ak'al pero muk' bu sta ta 7iilel, k'usi chlaj 7o, 7ox-vo7 skremotik, ti yajval melone, 7istak la 7ech'el ju-jun skrem 7ak'o ba xchabi ti melone pero naka la tajimol chk'ot spas, skotol 7ak'ubal ta sk'an ech'el yot pero muk' bu ta xk'ot ta melontik, ta xk'ot sk'el ju-jun k'ak'al ti stote. "K'u yu7un, ti yak ta lajel ti melone?" xi la ti mole.

"Mu jna7 yu7un muk' bu chkil, muk' bu ta jta ta 7iilel," xi la ti kreme. Pero yu7 nox la muk' bu chk'ot, yu7un la chch'el7 ta 7ak'ubaltik.

7Entónse, 7istak la 7otro jun skrem. Bwénó, "7A li vo7one chibat tzotz ko7on manbon junuk jkítara, chba jítj ta yut melontik," xi la ti jun kreme.

Bwénó, ch7ak'bat ech'el yot ju-jun 7ak'ubal, pero mas chlaj ti melone, 7a ti kreme muk' bu ta xk'ot yu7un la 7oy yantz, naka la ta saa yantz ta xk'ot stij ti skitarae.

Bwénó, 7iyil la ti mole, lek la 7iyak'be 7arsial.

Bwénó, slajeb 7itiz'inal, 7itake 7otro jun bwelta. Bwénó, chibat kik vo7on che7e, tot, chba jk'el kik k'usi li chk'ote," xi la ti kreme.

Bwénó, 7ilaj ti jin 7ak'ubale. "7Ilk xá, mu k'usi, tot, ja7 li püta t'ule," xi la ti kreme. "Mo7oj 7ak'bon j-pich'uk chab, chibat kik," xi la ti kreme. 7bat la 7ismitzanbe yok, sk'ob, ssat, chab, ti kreme, 7ay sva7an ta sbe ti t'ule, 7ital t'ul, te va7al yul sta krixchano yilel.
"You bastard, what are you looking for here, blocking my way?" said Rabbit. The wax didn't answer.

Then he hit it once hard. One of his hands was stuck there. He attacked it with his other hand. It stuck there. "I'm going to give it to you with my other hand," said Rabbit. He gave it to him with his other foot. It stuck fast there. "If you don't free me, I'll bite you now," said Rabbit. He bit it. [His mouth] stuck fast.

Then at daybreak the melon owner went. He found Rabbit lying there. Quickly he cut off its tail with a machete. "I'll just give you a punishment. Don't do the same another day!" said the melon owner. That's why rabbits don't have [long] tails.

This Tzotzil version of Br'er Rabbit and the Tar Baby stops short of the episodes that characteristically follow Rabbit's entrapment in the Middle American melon patch. Both the introduction featuring the farmer's three sons and the sharp finale are unorthodox but not unique since the former was recorded among the Zapotecs of Ixtlan (Radin and Espinosa, 1917:46) and the latter among the Totonacs (Ichon, 1969:44).

It can be assumed that the melon owner is conceived as a Ladino, because watermelons are not normally grown by local Indians. It would also be thought incongruous for a Zinacantec to serenade his girl friend, but Ladinos are known to indulge in such romantic conventions. See also T20, T49, T50, T90, T166, and their notes.

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John Skin Slays the Sea Serpent

Once there was a man named John Skin. He was called John Skin because he always wore clothing just [made of animal] skins.

He went out to get a job. He left. He travelled. He met a friend on the road. "Where are you going?" John Skin was asked.

"I'm going. I'm going to look for work. I don't know if I'll find work anywhere," said John Skin.

"Oh, but do you have any tools?" asked his friend.

"No, I don't know what I can work with," said John Skin.

"Oh if you want something, something good, buy a sickle and an axe," said his friend.

"Ah!" he said. "All right, then, thank you for telling me. I'll buy them if that's the way we can earn money, if then we can get a job that way," said John Skin.

"That's the way!" said his friend.

"Well, thank you, then. We'll see each other! I'm going," said John Skin. He continued on. He bought a sickle and an axe. He went on. He arrived in a big town. He was looking for a job. "Have you any work?" he asked when he arrived at a house.

"What kind of work do you want?" asked [the man].

"I want whatever there is, if there is thatch-cutting, that's all I want," said John Skin.
“Ah!” he said. “There is, but just by the job,” said the person who lived there.

“Oh fine, I guess I’ll see, then, if it can be done, if I can finish the job. I guess I’ll try it out. I guess I’ll work if you give me the job,” said John Skin.

“Go to work, then!” said the boss. He went to work. He didn’t give a thought to any of the jobs at all. He earned a lot in a day. Who knows how many jobs he finished in a day of work. Every day his grass was piled up there.

But you see, little by little it was learned that there was somebody by the name of John Skin. A king heard. The king sent for him because there was a huge serpent that came to the king’s house. At midnight it [came] looking for a meal. The serpent would come. The serpent would lure the people away so that it could eat them, so it could fill its belly. That’s why [John Skin] was summoned to another country. “Well, I’m going, then!” said John Skin. “Are you there, Your Majesty?” said John Skin when he arrived.

“I am here,” he said.

“Ah, what do you wish? What is your bidding?” asked John Skin.

“There is no mandate. I am simply asking you if you don’t wish me to make you my son, if you don’t wish to become my son, if you don’t wish to give you one of my daughters, if you don’t wish to marry her,” said the king.

“Ah!” he said. “Where is your daughter?” he asked.

“She is here. She will come. Wait! I will send for her,” he said.

“Ah!” said John Skin. “Send for her, then!” he said. The king summoned his daughter. She came. She spoke to him.

“I have come now. Enjoy yourself! Shall we live together? Don’t you want me?” said the king’s daughter.

“I do!” said John Skin.

“Ah!” she said. “Fine, but that’s only if we stay here for certain—if you don’t run away later on, if you don’t ever leave, if you stay for good,” said the girl.


“Well, I am sleeping here. You go sleep over there with my daughter, in another room a little further away. Go and sleep over there,” said the old man, the girl’s father.

“Well, that’s fine,” said John Skin. He went to spend the night alone with his wife. [The king] let him take her. He was going to sleep with her the very first night. He left [with her]. He was overjoyed because he was going to be with his wife now.

“7Ajl” xi la. “7Oy, pero naka taria,” xi la ti yajval lum 7une.

“7A bwéno ta jk’el kik che7e mi xlok’e mi xlok’ ku7un i tariae, ta jpas kik preva, chi7abtej kik mi chavak’bon kabtele,” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une.

“7Abtejej che7el” xi la ti yajval 7abtele. 717abtej la 7un, ke mu la kwentauk xa7i ju-jun taria ta j-mek 7un, 7ep la spas kanal ta k’ak’al, jna7nik la jawib taria ta j-mek xlok’ ta k’ak’al yu7un ti 7abtel 7une, te la tzelel sjobel ta j-mek ju-jun k’ak’al 7un.

Buy 7un, k’un7un la vinaj 7un ti 7oy jun Jwan Kwéro sbi 7une, 7iya7i la jun rey 7un, 7a ti rey 7une, 7itakvan la ta 7ik’el 7un, porke yu7un la 7oy te j-kot muk’ta chon ta xyul te ta sna ti jun rey 7une, yu7un la ta ssa7 svc7el ta 7ol la 7ak’ubal, ta xyul ti chone, yu7un la ja7 yech taslo7lo 7o ech’el ti krixchanoetik yo7 xti7e 7o 7une, yo7 xnoj 7o xch’ut ti chon 7une, yech’o ti 7istak ta 7ik’el ta jun lum 7une. “Bwéno, chibat che7el!” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une. 7Esté, “Mi li7ote, senyor rey?” xi la k’otel ti Jwan Kwéro 7un.

“Li7one,” xi la.

“7A, k’usi chaval k’usi mantal?” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une.

“Mu k’usi mantal, li7 chakalbee, mi mu xak’an xajch’amalin, mi mu xak’an xakom ta jch’amal, mi mu xak’an chakak’be jun jtzeb, mi mu xak’an xavik’,” xi la ti rey 7une.


“Ja7 li7e, ta xtal, malao ta jtal ta 7ik’el,” xi la.

“7A!” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une. “Tako ta 7ik’el che7el!” xi la 7un. 7istak la ta 7ik’el stzeb ti rey 7une, 7ital la 7un, 7is7k’opon la 7un.

“Li7 litale, kux 7avo7on mi chchik’ jbatik mi mu xak’an anon?” xi la ti stzeb rey 7une.

“Ta jk’an!” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une.

“7A!” xi la. “Bwéno pero yu7un me li j-moj chikomotik 7o 7une, mu me k’unuk to xajatav 7un, mu me bu xabat 7un, yu7un me li chakom 7o 7une,” xi la ti tzeb 7une.

“Bwéno, yechuk!” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une. Mal la ti k’ak’al 7une, 7och la 7ak’ubal 7un.

“Bwéno, 7a li vo7one li7 chivaye, 7a li vo7oxuk xchi7uk i jtzbe, ba vayanik le7 ta jun kwartoe, 7a li mas nomnomtik ba vayanik te yo7e,” xi la ti mol 7une, stot i tzeb 7une.

“Bwéno, stak’,” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une. Stuk ba vayuk xchi7uk ti yajnil 7une, 7i7ak’bat yik’, 7xchi7in primero 7ak’ubal to 7ox 7un bi, 7ibat 7un, xmu7ibaj xa 7un, yu7un xa xchi7in yajnil.

“7Aj!” xi la. “7Oy, pero naka taria,” xi la ti yajval lum 7une.

“7A bwéno ta jk’el kik che7e mi xlok’e mi xlok’ ku7un i tariae, ta jpas kik preva, chi7abtej kik mi chavak’bon kabtele,” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une.

“7Abtejej che7el” xi la ti yajval 7abtele. 717abtej la 7un, ke mu la kwentauk xa7i ju-jun taria ta j-mek 7un, 7ep la spas kanal ta k’ak’al, jna7nik la jawib taria ta j-mek xlok’ ta k’ak’al yu7un ti 7abtel 7une, te la tzelel sjobel ta j-mek ju-jun k’ak’al 7un.

Buy 7un, k’un7un la vinaj 7un ti 7oy jun Jwan Kwéro sbi 7une, 7iya7i la jun rey 7un, 7a ti rey 7une, 7itakvan la ta 7ik’el 7un, porke yu7un la 7oy te j-kot muk’ta chon ta xyul te ta sna ti jun rey 7une, yu7un la ta ssa7 svc7el ta 7ol la 7ak’ubal, ta xyul ti chone, yu7un la ja7 yech taslo7lo 7o ech’el ti krixchanoetik yo7 xti7e 7o 7une, yo7 xnoj 7o xch’ut ti chon 7une, yech’o ti 7istak ta 7ik’el ta jun lum 7une. “Bwéno, chibat che7el!” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une. 7Esté, “Mi li7ote, senyor rey?” xi la k’otel ti Jwan Kwéro 7un.

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“Ja7 li7e, ta xtal, malao ta jtal ta 7ik’el,” xi la.

“7A!” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une. “Tako ta 7ik’el che7el!” xi la 7un. 7istak la ta 7ik’el stzeb ti rey 7une, 7ital la 7un, 7is7k’opon la 7un.

“Li7 litale, kux 7avo7on mi chchik’ jbatik mi mu xak’an anon?” xi la ti stzeb rey 7une.

“Ta jk’an!” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une.

“7A!” xi la. “Bwéno pero yu7un me li j-moj chikomotik 7o 7une, mu me k’unuk to xajatav 7un, mu me bu xabat 7un, yu7un me li chakom 7o 7une,” xi la ti tzeb 7une.

“Bwéno, yechuk!” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une. Mal la ti k’ak’al 7une, 7och la 7ak’ubal 7un.

“Bwéno, 7a li vo7one li7 chivaye, 7a li vo7oxuk xchi7uk i jtzbe, ba vayanik le7 ta jun kwartoe, 7a li mas nomnomtik ba vayanik te yo7e,” xi la ti mol 7une, stot i tzeb 7une.

“Bwéno, stak’,” xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une. Stuk ba vayuk xchi7uk ti yajnil 7une, 7i7ak’bat yik’, 7xchi7in primero 7ak’ubal to 7ox 7un bi, 7ibat 7un, xmu7ibaj xa 7un, yu7un xa xchi7in yajnil.
They went to bed. John Skin didn’t get sleepy at all. He paced there. He paced back and forth there. “Come on, go to bed, Johnny! Come on, let’s go to sleep! Come on, let’s get together!” said the girl.

“Oh, wait a minute, I’ll go to bed,” said John Skin. He walked there, pacing back and forth inside the house. He didn’t get sleepy.

“Come on, hurry up, Johnny. Let’s go to sleep!” said the girl, because she wanted her husband to join her.

“Oh, I can’t. Wait a bit! I’ll be there in a minute,” said John.

“Well, see here, then, Johnny, I’ll tell you openly. Are you prepared, then? Because a serpent is coming. Because we are going to die now. It’s too late, because it’s already coming here to eat us,” said the girl.

“A serpent is coming, then?” he asked.

“A serpent is coming, because it arrives every midnight. At midnight it comes here. Because it comes wanting food. So I lure it in the way I brought you. I’m telling you openly,” said the girl.

“A!” said John. “Is a serpent coming, then?” he asked.

“A serpent is coming, because it arrives every midnight. At midnight it comes here. Because it comes wanting food. So I lure it in the way I brought you. I’m telling you openly,” said the girl.

“No, the serpent comes to eat people. Now, as it is, we are [both] going to die,” said the girl. The girl cried and cried now.

“Well, don’t worry, child. I guess we’ll see if I’m up to it. Then if I’ve won I’ll go tell your father in the morning,” said John.

“Fine!” she said.

“Please don’t cry!” said John. “I won’t,” said the girl. “But can you win? Because it has survived [everything]. Soldiers came again and again [but] it survived the bullets. It didn’t die. It can’t be killed with bullets. They tried and tried,” said the girl.

“Just the same, I guess I’ll see for myself,” said John Skin. “But only if you love me with all your heart,” said John.

“With all my heart, darling, if you mean you’ll take me forever, too,” said the girl.

“Oh, we’ll see, I guess. The important thing is—exactly what time will it arrive?” he asked.

“Right at midnight,” she said.

“Good!” he said. John was ready now. With his sickle over his shoulder he went and stood next to the door. “[Now], child, you just stay there. You can go to bed, but keep an eye out for what I’m going to do,” said John.

Now when the serpent came poking its head inside the house, John Skin didn’t get sleepy at all. He paced there. He paced back and forth there. “Come on, go to bed, Johnny! Come on, let’s go to sleep! Come on, let’s get together!” said the girl.

“Oh, wait a minute, I’ll go to bed,” said John Skin. He walked there, pacing back and forth inside the house. He didn’t get sleepy.

“Come on, hurry up, Johnny. Let’s go to sleep!” said the girl, because she wanted her husband to join her.

“Oh, I can’t. Wait a bit! I’ll be there in a minute,” said John.

“Well, see here, then, Johnny, I’ll tell you openly. Are you prepared, then? Because a serpent is coming. Because we are going to die now. It’s too late, because it’s already coming here to eat us,” said the girl.

“A serpent is coming, then?” he asked.

“A serpent is coming, because it arrives every midnight. At midnight it comes here. Because it comes wanting food. So I lure it in the way I brought you. I’m telling you openly,” said the girl.

“No, the serpent comes to eat people. Now, as it is, we are [both] going to die,” said the girl. The girl cried and cried now.

“Well, don’t worry, child. I guess we’ll see if I’m up to it. Then if I’ve won I’ll go tell your father in the morning,” said John.

“Fine!” she said.

“Please don’t cry!” said John.

“I won’t,” said the girl. “But can you win? Because it has survived [everything]. Soldiers came again and again [but] it survived the bullets. It didn’t die. It can’t be killed with bullets. They tried and tried,” said the girl.

“Just the same, I guess I’ll see for myself,” said John Skin. “But only if you love me with all your heart,” said John.

“With all my heart, darling, if you mean you’ll take me forever, too,” said the girl.

“Oh, we’ll see, I guess. The important thing is—exactly what time will it arrive?” he asked.

“Right at midnight,” she said.

“Good!” he said. John was ready now. With his sickle over his shoulder he went and stood next to the door. “[Now], child, you just stay there. You can go to bed, but keep an eye out for what I’m going to do,” said John.

Now when the serpent came poking its head inside the house, John Skin didn’t get sleepy at all. He paced there. He paced back and forth there. “Come on, go to bed, Johnny! Come on, let’s go to sleep! Come on, let’s get together!” said the girl.

“Oh, wait a minute, I’ll go to bed,” said John Skin. He walked there, pacing back and forth inside the house. He didn’t get sleepy.

“Come on, hurry up, Johnny. Let’s go to sleep!” said the girl, because she wanted her husband to join her.

“Oh, I can’t. Wait a bit! I’ll be there in a minute,” said John.

“Well, see here, then, Johnny, I’ll tell you openly. Are you prepared, then? Because a serpent is coming. Because we are going to die now. It’s too late, because it’s already coming here to eat us,” said the girl.

“A serpent is coming, then?” he asked.

“A serpent is coming, because it arrives every midnight. At midnight it comes here. Because it comes wanting food. So I lure it in the way I brought you. I’m telling you openly,” said the girl.

“No, the serpent comes to eat people. Now, as it is, we are [both] going to die,” said the girl. The girl cried and cried now.

“Well, don’t worry, child. I guess we’ll see if I’m up to it. Then if I’ve won I’ll go tell your father in the morning,” said John.

“Fine!” she said.

“Please don’t cry!” said John.

“I won’t,” said the girl. “But can you win? Because it has survived [everything]. Soldiers came again and again [but] it survived the bullets. It didn’t die. It can’t be killed with bullets. They tried and tried,” said the girl.

“Just the same, I guess I’ll see for myself,” said John Skin. “But only if you love me with all your heart,” said John.

“With all my heart, darling, if you mean you’ll take me forever, too,” said the girl.

“Oh, we’ll see, I guess. The important thing is—exactly what time will it arrive?” he asked.

“Right at midnight,” she said.

“Good!” he said. John was ready now. With his sickle over his shoulder he went and stood next to the door. “[Now], child, you just stay there. You can go to bed, but keep an eye out for what I’m going to do,” said John.
the house, John Skin grabbed it and cut off its head with the sickle. He cut off the serpent's head.

Then, groaning, the serpent died. Its head was cut off. It couldn't do anything anymore. It had no way to bite people. Its rear end was left lying on the ground.

In the morning, the serpent's head was lying there on the ground. But [in the past] it had survived bullets again and again. It had been shot for sure, but it never died, not until John won out.

In the morning he went to talk to their father, "Father!" said John Skin when he arrived.

"What?" said the king.

"Well, go see for yourself, go look at the serpent! It's mine this morning. I cut off its head. Its head is lying there on the ground. Go see for yourself!" he said.

"Oh!" he said. "Are you telling the truth?" said [the king].

"I'm telling the truth," he said.

"But what kind of a man are you? What did you do to be able to cut off its head? [My soldiers] shot it. They shot it again and again, but it wouldn't die," said the king. "It arrived at my house all the time since the ocean is very nearby," said his father-in-law.

"Oh, but no, of course it was me who won out. Go see for yourself!" said John. The old man went to look.

The serpent's head was lying there now. "Well, that's fine! I love you with all my heart. With all my heart I give you my daughter. Take my daughter forever, because you will stay here in my home," said the king. "You will work here, you will stay here. You won't ever leave," said the king.

"Well, all right, then," he said.

Now [the king] sent someone to the place where the soldiers had come from, after they had come and looked and done their best, to notify them that one man, John Skin himself, had won.

He left. He took a trip to another town, dressed in his skin clothing. "What is it you're looking for?" asked a Ladino whom he met on the way.

"I'm not looking for anything. I'm looking for work, but I've found it already," he said.

"Where do you work?" he asked.

"Oh, I don't work anywhere. I work at the king's house. The king is my father-in-law. I married his daughter," said John Skin.

"Go on, you stupid jerk! Would you be given a girl, the likes of you, you beggar? Is that the way you pose as a man? Would girls be given to something like that?" said the Ladino.

Bwéno, ja7 yech te banal 7isakub ti sjol ti chin 7une, pero yu7un kuchem yu7un ta j-mek, balael tik yich’oj bala ta j-moj pero muk’ bu chchas, ja7 te kuch yu7un ti Jwan 7une.

Bwéno, sakub 7osil ba la sk’opon stotik. 7Èste, "Töt!" xi la k’otel ti Jwan Kwéro 7une.

"K’usi?" xi la ti rey 7une.

"Bwéno, ba k’el avil, ba k’el avil ti chin 7une, te me sakub ku7un 7un, 7ijtuch’be sjol te banal i sjole, ba k’el avil!" xi la 7un.

"7A!" xi la 7un. "Mi yech 7aval?" xi la 7un.

"Yech kal," xi la 7un.

"Pero k’usi vinikalot, k’usi xana7 ti stuch’ 7avu7unbe sjole, pero milbil ta bala, 7ak’bil bala ta j-mek pero mu xcham," xi la ti rey 7une. "Yu7un li7 chul ta j-mek ta jnae, ja7 li nopol ta j-mek mare," xi la ti sni7-mol 7une.

"7A pero mo7oj, 7ijkuch ku7un i vo7on a7a, ba k’el avil!" xi la ti Jwan 7une. Ba la sk’el ti mol 7une.

7Entónsé, te xa banal sjol ti chinone. "Bwéno, lek 7un che7e, sjunul ko7on chajk’an, sjunul ko7on chakak’be li jtzebé, 7ik’o ta j-moj i jtzeebe, yu7un li7 chakom ta jnae," xi la ti rey 7une. "Yu7un li7 chaj7atej, yu7un li7 chakom 7oe, mu xa bu xabat," xi la ti rey 7une.

"Bwéno yechuk che7e," xi la 7un. 7Èra, stak la ta 7ale7e ti buy likem tal ti solteroe, ti buy 7ech’em yo7one, tal sk’elik exi ke yu7un jun vinik yech 7ikuch yu7un ti Jwan Kwéro 7une.

Bwéno, 7ilok’ la, 7ibat la ta paxyal ta 7otro jun jtek-lum, te xlapet yu7un ti snukul k’u7e. "7A li k’u chasa7 li vo7ote?" xi la ti, 7a ti jun jkaxlan te snup ta be. "Mu k’u ta jsa7 ta jsa7 7abetel, pero 7oy xa jtaloj," xi la 7un.

"Buy cha7atej?" xi la 7un.

"7A, muk’ bu chi7atej, chi7atej tzna rey ja7 jni7-mol i reye, ja7 kik’ojbe stzeb," xi la ti Jwan Kwéro 7une.

"7Andala sonso pendéjo, mi cha7ak’bat tzeb la x7elane jk’an-limuxnaote, mi vinikot le7e, mi ja7 yech 7elan ch7ak’bat tzeb chak le7e?" xi la ti jkaxlan 7une.
"I'm telling the truth, it's really true. Even if you ask, go find out!" he said.

"Huh, but are you so great a man?" said the Ladino.

"Ah, I won't say whether I am a [great] man or not. I'm some kind of man," he said, of course.

"Oh, go to work, I guess! Cut a few swaths of the wheat here—a day's [work]—if you're telling the truth that you can work. Reap the wheat!" he said.

"All right!" he said. [As you will see] he was able to reap [all] the wheat. [But first] they made a bet, to see how much they would risk.

"Oh, but do you have any [money]?" that Ladino asked first.

"I do, why wouldn't I?" he said. "Well, we'll risk this much if you have [the money], too," said John Skin.

"I do," he said. "If you are telling the truth that you are up to it, if you are telling the truth that you can win. I'll leave you my house, I'll leave you my cattle. As for me, I'll go to borrowed quarters," said the Ladino.

"Ah!" he said. "Well, you wait [for me], then! I'll come at this very same time. I'll come when the sun is just like this. So I'll go bring my father-in-law for you to see," he said.

"Bring him, then!" said the Ladino.

"Well, see here, father," he told the king when he arrived.

"What?" he said.

"This is what a Ladino told me, that I am just skinning him, that I am just tricking him, that you are my father-in-law. The king is my father-in-law, I told him. He didn't believe it. You're really a beggar, you idiot," he told me.

"Now he made a deal with me, that if I could do the work he would give me his horses. I would leave me his house, he would leave me his cattle. For him, he would go to borrowed quarters," he told that father-in-law of his.

"Oh fine, let's go, then. Let's go talk to him, I guess," said the king. They went. They wanted to talk to him.

"Are you there?" [the king] said to the Ladino when he arrived.

"I'm here," he said.

"Is it so, is it true what you conversed about with my son-in-law?" he said.

"Is he telling the truth that he is your son-in-law?" asked the Ladino.

"Yes!" said the king.

"Oh, hell!" said the Ladino, now.

"Well, let him work!" said the king. John Skin went to work. In a minute he cut the proper number of swaths of wheat for a day's work. He was able to

"Yech kal, batz'i yu7un melel 7ak' 7o mi xajak' ba 7ava7il" xi la 7un.

"Je7, pero mi batz'i toj vinikot?" xi la ti jkaxlan 7une.

"7A, mu xkal mi mu vinikon, vinikon smelol," xi la 7a.

"7A, 7abtejan kak 7un a7a, lok'eso 7a li jayibuk tavlon ta k'ak'al 7a li trigo li7e, mi yech aval xa7abteje, lok'o trigo!" xi la.

"Bwénô!" xi la. 71lok' la yu7un ti trigo, spasik 7a li 7apostal 7un, k'u yepal ta xch'ayik 7un.

"7A pero mi 7oy 7avu7un?" xi la ba7yi, taj jkaxlan 7une.

"7Oy, k'u cha7al mu 7oyuk?" xi la. "Bwéno, ta jch'ayitik k'u yech yepal chak li7 mi 7oy mava7un 7uk 7un," xi la ti, 7a ti Jwan Kwêro 7une.

"7Oy," xi la. "Mi yech 7aval ti xu7 7avu7une, mi yech 7aval ti xkuch 7avu7une, chakak'be komel i jnae chakak'be komel i jvakaxe, chakak'be komel i jka7e, vo7one chibat ta ch'om na," xi la ti jkaxlan 7une.

"7A!" xi la. "Bwénô, xamala che7e, 7a li ja7 ye7ch 7ora chital chak li7e, ja7 ye7ch k'ak'al chital chak li7e, 7entonse chba kik' tal li jni7-mol avile," xi la.

"7Ik'o tal che7el" xi la ti, 7a ti jkaxlan 7une.

"Bwénô, k'el avil, tot," xut la k'otel ti rey 7une.

"K'usi?" xi la.

"Ja7 ye7ch liyalbe jun jkaxlan chak li7e, ke ta no la jcho7, ta no la jlo71o ti jni7-molote. Ja7 jni7-mol li reye, xkut 7une. Mu xch'un 7un. Batz'i jk'an-limuxnaot sonsoot, chiyut 7un."

"7Ora lispasbe xa trate mi xu7 la ku7un 7abtele, ta la xiyak'be sna, ta la xiyak'be komel yosil, ta la xiyak'be komel svakax, 7a li stuke ta la xbat ta ch'om na 7un," xut la taj sni7-mol 7une.

"7A bwénô, battik che7e, ba jk'opontik ka7tik," xi la ti rey. Bat la 7un, ba la sk'oponik 7un.

Bwénô, "Mi li7ote?" xut la k'otel ti jkaxlan 7une.

"Li7one," xi la.

"Mi yech mi melel ti x7elan lalo7i1aj 7achi7uk 7a li jni7e?" xi la 7un.

"Mi yech xal ti ja7 7ani7e?" xi la ti jkaxlane.

"Ja7!" xi la ti rey.

"7A karájol!" xi xa la ti jkaxlan 7un.

"Bwénô 7ak'o 7abtejuk!" xi la ti rey 7une. 717abtej la ti Jwan Kwêro 7une, j-likel la 7islok' ti jayib tavlon trigo ta k'ak'al 7une, 7ilok' yu7un ti trigo
reap the wheat. So the house was left to him, the land was left to him, all the cattle was left to him. So that's how John Skin won even more. That's how the story ends.

Here, as in many other tales, I have translated mol as "old man," but the term signifies a man of the older generation, in his thirties or older.

It is customary for a Zinacantec man to address his fiancée's parents as "father" and "mother."

More fortunate than his predecessor, Laocoon, John Skin differs little from the heroes, bearing diverse but equally humble names, who act in this tale type (A-T 507). In Ixtlan the boy, hiding behind a door, slays the seven-headed serpent and gains the princess (Radin and Espinosa, 1917, T103). Among the Popoluca the hero is not confronted with a sea serpent, but after he marries the princess he bets a hacienda owner that he is the king's son-in-law and so wins the hacienda (Foster, 1943a:230–232). A version from the Southwest and another from Jalisco combine the slaying of the sea serpent with the wager, but the former contains elements more typical of European folktales—winning the bride by making her laugh and achieving success by faithfully following three counsels (Rael, 1957, T317, Wheeler, 1943, T166). See also T170 and notes.

When One Stupid Indian Won

Once the Mexicans had a dispute with another land. Who knows where the country was. Ooh, even the Mexicans couldn't win. They weren't up to it anymore. They did their best in battle. Many of them had died already. They were terribly fierce in that country, wherever it was, because now the Mexicans couldn't overcome them.

Now the [Mexicans] made plans. They had heard that the Zinacantecs were stronger. Orders arrived. A message arrived.

"All of you are supposed to go now. All of you are wanted," it said in the message that arrived. "All the leaders of the troops want you," said the message.

"All right!" they said. The Zinacantecs came to a decision.

But you see it wasn't that all were to go—one went. He arrived. He arrived at Mexico City. One man arrived, dressed in his ceremonial robe, his head tightly bound in a turban, with his fine ceremonial sandals, carrying his net properly. He arrived to talk to them. "Sir, what are the orders? I have come now," said the man.

"Ah, have you all come?" asked the leader of the troops.

"I have come. I have come by myself, not many have come," he said.

"Ah, didn't a lot come?" asked the leader of the troops.

"No, I just came alone," he said.

"Ah, but would you win? What help are you? Ugh, stupid Indian, go back home, just go on! What use are you to me? You aren't any help. Forget it! Go on! Go back home!" said the leader of the troops.

"All right!" he said. He came back. The poor
Zinacantec came back. He came back carrying his net. He came back dressed in his ceremonial sandals. He came back. He was coming along the road. Happily, he came back, “Since I’m not of any use, then, I’ll return,” he said.

They discussed it. The leaders of the troops talked together. “A Zinacantec came here,” said the first one.

“What did he say?” they asked.

“He asked what the orders were. Are we to help each other perhaps?” he said when he arrived,” said [the first leader].

“Ahh!” they said.

“But would one help?” said the other.

“That’s just what I told him, that’s why I told him, Go back!” said the first one.

“You should have delayed him. If you had told him, ‘Stay here, then, and wait!’ who knows what he would have done. It would have been better if you had delayed him,” said the other leader of the troops.

“I didn’t stall him. Go on, poor Indian, if you still know anything. You don’t know how to do anything! I told him, indeed!” said the first war chief.

“Oh no, have them go and catch up with him on the trail. Have him come back!” said the other. They went and caught up with him.

“Zinacantec!” he was told.

“What?” he asked.

“Are we to help each other perhaps?” they asked.

“Eh, I won’t go back now. I’ve come too far already. I’m tired,” said the Zinacantec.

“No, you are supposed to return, because they are going to talk to you,” they said.

“Maybe I’ll return, then,” said the Zinacantec. He returned. “What are the orders?” he said when he arrived.

“If it’s nothing much. Will you be so kind as to help us? Please, just stay here!” he was told.

“Oh, who knows if I can. I can’t do anything. I’m no help, since I’m a stupid Indian,” he said. [That’s what] he answered back.

“Oh, but all right, forgive me for having told you that. But no, on the contrary, please help us here! We aren’t able to do it by ourselves anymore,” said the leader of the troops.

“Well, okay, then,” said the Zinacantec. “Well, it’s nothing much, then, if you really can’t do it by yourselves, if you are worn out now. If I am to help you, I’ll help you,” he said. “That’s all, go send out a message. Have them wait three days!” he said. They sent out the message telling [the enemy] to wait three days. They were to wait three days so that the Zinacantec could work just as he pleased. He left. The [Mexicans] strung out a rope. They fastened it
to who knows what, in the place where [the enemy] would approach.

When [the rope] was absolutely taut the [enemy] was blocked off.

Now when the time came, the [Mexicans] were ready. “Let’s go! Let’s go wait for them!” they said. They sent out another message. “Come On! Come on in!” said the message. [The enemy] advanced, well-satisfied they came, since they had seen already that they were winning. They came. They advanced. Wherever they cut it in two or did whatever they did to the rope that was stretched taut, they got entangled. All the soldiers were burned up there [as if it had been an electric wire]. Just heaps of ashes were left. That’s how the dispute was settled. That’s how the fight was ended long ago, like that.

The earliest Zinacantec reference to Mexicans occurs in the Diccionario en lengua sotzil (possibly dating from the sixteenth century), in which they are termed svolel tzequi (svolel tzekil), "wrap-around skirt" (Diccionario, n.d.:78).

An appeal from Mexico City for military aid is reported by Vogt in another tale that parallels this one told to Romin by his father. Here the six Zinacantec elders, Fog, Thunderbolt, Whirlwind, Hawk, Butterfly, and Blowfly go to work. Under cover of a heavy fog they fence the enemy in with crosses, fill the corral with sea water, and set the crosses ablaze so that the water boils. Hawk prevents the enemy from escaping; Butterfly guards against the coming of reinforcements; Blowfly confirms the k’usi ti stimanik 7une, ti yo7 bu ch’ech’ tal 7une.

Bwéno, k’alal lek timil xa skotol 7une, te smakoj ta be 7un.

7Orá, k’al standa yora 7une, listoik xa 7un. “Battik 7un, ba jmalatik!” xiik la. Stak la ech’el 7otro j-liik vun 7un. “La7ik 7un, tocchanik tal 7un!” xi la ech’el ti vun 7une. 7Ochik la tal 7un, jun xa yo7onik talik kómo yiloj xa ti xkuch yu7unik 7une, 7italik la 7un, 71ech’ik la tal 7un, mi stuch’ik van j-7o71oluk mi k’u xcha71eik ti ch’ojon te timil 7une, te la 7itz’oteik te la 7ik’ak’ skotol ti soltero 7une, solel la tan busul 7ikom 7un, ja7 yech te to meltzaj 7o ti k’op 7une, ja7 yech 7ich’ab 7o ti k’op ti vo7ne chak tak 7une.

Musician’s Delight

T132

Once there was a woman in Naben Chauk [Thunderbolt Lake]. She was a bride.

Now there was a musician. He came from Zinacantán Center, here. His name was Petul Buro. He went to Naben Chauk as a musician [to play at the wedding].

Then after [the bride] and groom were married they went to bed. They had just been married. During the night the woman went outside to pee. Then in the dark she came back inside. Then she met up with their musician. The musician was delighted because it was a newlywed, a virgin, who came [to him]. As for the groom, the man, it seems he was asleep there. He had fallen asleep. He wasn’t aware of the passing of the night. Another man went and slept with his wife, a virgin. But it was somebody else who deflowered her. It was that musician who joined her first. That’s the story the musician tells now. Now he talks about how he had her the whole night. He joined her. She recognized by his face that he wasn’t her husband. She got up, went and lit her fire.

Then that musician got up and went to warm himself. But the woman was embarrassed now. She covered her face because it wasn’t her husband who had joined her for the night. She had offered herself to another man. Another man tried her out first. But her husband who was with her at the wedding didn’t pay her any attention. He fell asleep and ignored her. That’s the story the musician tells.

The Child They Couldn’t Send on Errands

T136

There was another woman, too. But the story isn’t very old. Those who saw it are still alive. She couldn’t have children. She had no children. He had no children. The church warden now, it was his wife
who couldn’t have children. She was given [a cure] to warm her. She was given many [cures] to warm her. She thought it was just because her belly had grown cold.

She did all she could. She waited and waited for a baby to be left in her belly, but one was never left. No baby has been left to this day.

And once she went to the river asking and asking for a baby. She was going to buy one. The first [person] she asked, “Your little child is beautiful!” she said.

“It’s beautiful. I have a child now because I have a husband,” said the other person.

“Ahh!” she said. She was probably a bit embarrassed, since she had a husband, but no children of her own.

Then she started asking, “Won’t you sell me your child? Sell me one. I long to have a baby,” she said.

Romin, in very much the same words and in the same year, related this pathetic story to Victoria Bricker (Bricker, T43), but her version makes no mention of the doll’s inability to run errands—a defect that Romin thought hilarious.

I have deleted the names of the principals because they are still living. But only half of the gossip is explicit here, for all the neighbors would know that the woman who so righteously refused to sell her children had been married to an alcoholic, who abandoned her and their four children to desperate poverty while he imported a girl from a distant Tzotzil town to be his wife. After her husband’s premature death she, in fact, had sold one of her boys to Romin’s mother for fifty pesos. For several years he was raised by his foster mother before returning home to his real mother. And so the childless woman’s fate is balanced by that of the woman who had so many children she didn’t know what to do.

The Three Suns

It used to be that there were three suns, long ago, they say. There was no darkness. The suns took turns. It was always daytime because of the three suns, long ago. They travelled together. They went for a walk. They went to look for fruits. The two older brothers climbed a tree. The younger brother stayed at the foot of the tree. “Give me a fruit. I feel like eating one. Throw one down to me,” said the younger brother.

“Come on, climb up!” said the older brothers.

“I’m not going to climb up; throw them down here!” said the younger brother. They were thrown down to him, but just the chewings. He picked up the chewings. He made hind legs and forelegs for them. He buried them at the foot of the tree.

Now they turned into an animal. They turned into a gopher. It gnawed the roots into pieces. The older brothers felt the tree moving now. “What are you doing, Xut?” asked the older brothers.

“I’m not doing anything. Eat the fruit,” said the younger brother.

The tree fell. Down came his older brothers. He

“I won’t sell any. Make one yourselves, then your child will probably come, too!” said the other. That was the end of the matter. She didn’t get the baby.

Then she was seen. People passed in the distance, it seems, by the side of her house, it seems. They looked down, because her house is below the path. She was seen. She had bought a doll as a substitute for her child. No baby ever came. It was better if she bought a doll. She cuddled it next to her in bed. She and her husband hugged it one after the other. They hugged it equally, the substitute for their child. The only thing was, they couldn’t send it on errands. It couldn’t walk. They just cuddled it in bed. That’s all.

And that’s the way it was, that she bought herself a doll in compensation. Now it seemed as if she had a child. Because she couldn’t have children. That’s what was seen.

7 This and all following references to Backer’s unpublished texts employ the numbers assigned by her to her field material.

7A ti jch’ul-tottik vo7nee, 7ox-vo7ik to 7ox la, mu sna7 x7ik’ub 7osil tzjel sbaik li k’ak’ale, 7oy k’ak’al ta sbatel 7osil, ja7 li 7ox-p’ej ti k’ak’al vo7nee, ko7ol ta xxanavik, chbatik ta paxyal, ba ssa7ik ssat te7 7imuy ta te7 ti bankilale, xcha7-va7alik, 7a ti 7itz’inale te kom ta yok te7. “7Ak’bon tal j-p’ejuk li lo7bole, chak jlo7 ka7i, tenbon tal j-p’ejuk,” xi la ti 7itz’inale.

“La7 muyan tal!” xi la ti bankilale.

“Mu ximuy teno tal li7 toe!” xi la ti 7itz’inale. Ta la xtenbat yalel, pero naka la matz’ben, 7istam la ti smatz’benale 7ispasbe la yok, sk’ob, 7ismuk la ta yok te7.

7Ora, 7ipas ta chon, 7ipas ta ba, laj ssep’an yisim te7, 7iya7i ta xbak’ xa te7 ti bankilaletike, “K’usi me chapas, Xut?” xi la ti bankilaletike.

“Mu k’u ta jpas lo7an me lo7bol,” xi la ti 7itz’inale.

Bwéno, 7ilom ti te7e, 7iyal i sbankiltake, 7ibat ta
went home. He arrived and told his mother, "Mother, give me six tortillas. I'm taking them, because I'm hungry," said Xut. He was given the tortillas. He went and grabbed his older brothers. Quickly he stuck noses and ears on his older brothers. He made them into pigs. One, he turned into a peccary. The other, a domestic pig, he shut up in his house. The peccary ran off. It went to the woods. He was only able to catch its tail. Its tail came off. It fled for it. The pig is hungry," said Xut.

"All right," said his mother. "Where are your older brothers?" asked his mother.

"I don't know. They must be having a good time someplace," Xut said.

"Ah!" she said. The first day she believed it. [Then] his mother cried and cried. Her tears flowed. That's why the moon's light is faint at night.

Although rodent allies are frequent actors in North American tales, the combination of elements in this story is peculiar to the Mayan area. In the Popol Vuh the twin heroes Hunahpu and Xbalanque are mistreated by their stingy elder half-brothers. But the theme of brothers being converted into monkeys after being persuaded to climb a tree to recover the birds that they have shot, these half-brothers are converted into monkeys; the heroes become sun and moon (Edmonson, 1971:87-89).

The theme of brothers being converted into monkeys after they are sent to climb a tree occurs among the Cakchiquel (R. Redfield, 1946:252), Chuj (Shaw, 1972:101-102), Kanjobal (Siegel, 1943:123-124), Mopan (J. E. Thompson, 1930:122-123), and Kekchi (Dieseldorff, 1926:5-6). In a Palencano Choi version and a Tzeltal version cited by Thompson (1970:361-363) the elder brothers fall from the honey tree and become tame animals.

The porcine fate of the elder brothers has been recorded many times in the Chiapas highlands, often with only minor variations: in the Tzeltal towns of Amatenango (Nash, 1970:198-200), and Oxchuc (INI, T1, T3-31), in the Tzotzil towns of Chamula (Gospen, T17, T42) and Chenalhó (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:184-185).

Two variants from Zinacantan identify the hero as Christ. In the first he is pitted not against his older brothers but against his older cousin, his mother's brother's son (Ritvo, 1972:63-64). The porcine fate of the elder brothers has been recorded many times in the Chiapas highlands, often with only minor variations: in the Tzeltal towns of Amatenango (Nash, 1970:198-200), and Oxchuc (INI, T1, T3-31), in the Tzotzil towns of Chamula (Gospen, T17, T42) and Chenalhó (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:184-185).

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In the second and very elaborate version Christ's mother hides his knowledge of his birth from his older brothers, but they find one of his toys and lie in wait until they surprise him. They take Christ to work, promising their mother that they will be good to him, but no sooner do they arrive in the cornfield than they try in vain to burn him up. The next day they fail in their efforts to drown him in a river. And the third day they are no more successful in their attempt to bury him in a swamp. Then follows the honey tree episode, Christ's revenge, and his final triumph over the forces of nature (Ritvo, 1972, T2). Ritvo argues conclusively that the entire sequence represents a developmental model for the Zinacantec child (Ritvo, 1972). The tortillas that Xut stuck on his brothers' faces to turn them into pigs are a small oval variety with a hole in the center. In everyday life they are given to little children to induce them to learn to talk, on the theory that the hole in the center inspires them to open their mouths. This variety is also given to young girls who are learning to make their first tortillas.

Romin did not know why the younger brother's name was Xut. Today that word is otherwise used only as a name for a wild bean (Phaseolus leiosepalus). See also T155, T162.

Why the Woman Had No Children

Once there was a Chamulan [girl]. A girl and a boy got married. The [young] woman couldn't give birth. She had no children.

Even with the passing of time she couldn't give birth. No baby ever came.

"How can that be? Why can't she give birth?" said her mother-in-law. "Well, but what can I do about her? What can I do for her?" said the old lady.

"A ti vo7ne 7oy la jun 7antz 7ulo7, tzeb krem 7iyik' sbat, 7a ti 7antzu mna sna7 x7alaj, ch'abal yol.

Bwéno, mi ja7uk te bat 7o k'ak'al, mi ja7uk 7o bu x7alaj, muk' bu xtal ti 7unene.

Bwéno, "K'u yu7un van le7e, k'u yu7un ti mna sna7 x7alaje?" xi la ti yalib me7el 7une. "Bwéno, pero k'usi ta jnopbe le7e, k'usi ta jpasbe le7e?" xi la ti me7ele.
Then she got the boy drunk. The woman got the [young] woman and her husband drunk. They got drunk. They slept now, lying curled up. That daughter-in-law of hers slept now. Just the old lady was there.

The old lady didn't fall asleep. She sat there listening for the woman's child to come out, it seems. But it wasn't a baby, not a real baby. It was a hornworm. The woman had a hornworm. The old lady heard that the hornworm was making kissing sounds. It was nursing.

Then quickly she went to block off the hornworm's path. The hornworm didn't go [back] in now. It was caught. There were two hornworms. The red hornworm she threw out. The white one she stuck [back] in.

Now when the woman woke up she was fine. She awoke.

Now the time passed. Then her child was born.

Then she had many children. She was the one who had had a red hornworm. Everybody has just one hornworm apiece, even men, they say. And each has his hornworm.

Here, as in many other tales, I have translated me7el as "old lady," but the term signifies a woman of the older generation, in her thirties or older.

When this cure is administered, a peeled green banana is inserted in the woman's vagina temporarily to prevent the worm's reentry.

In Chenalho it is believed that "a woman who is content with her husband has little white worms in her vagina, while a nymphomaniac has little red worms" (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:130). Sexual license is associated by the Huichol with a kind of white grub. The Aztecs laid the blame on a grey grub that subsists on the roots and stalks of corn plants (Furst and Nahmad, 1972:64-65).

The hornworm is the caterpillar of the hummingbird moth that can easily be mistaken for a hummingbird as it darts from flower to flower sipping nectar. Erotic associations extend also to hummingbirds themselves. A sure way to soften a girl's heart is secretly to carry to the trysting place a hummingbird wrapped in green or blue ribbon.

Tortor Beebee, Papa!

There was a man, too, who arrived, they say, at work every day, at his work. It reached midday and he knew that he had no children, no one to come and call him.

Something came to call out, but he didn't know what it was. It was lying on top of a stump. "Tortor beebee, papa!" said the thing that was calling there.

"What's that?" said the man when he finished the row. "Eh, who knows what it is. Maybe it's some kind of animal," he said. The next row finished, the very same thing.

"Tortor beebee, papa!" it said.

"But what is that? What sonofabitching animal? I guess I'll go see if it's an animal or what. Maybe it's a devil. Maybe I'll die now," said the man. And he went to look. He discovered a hornworm lying on...
the stump. "Oh, hell, I see it's a hornworm here, then. I thought there was something. It's going to cut short my life. Hell, it's too late! I'll die now. Who knows, maybe I'll die from this tomorrow or the day after. I've never seen anything like this. I've never heard of anything like this. Whatever it is, it's calling to me," he said.

Then the man lost his temper, quickly he killed the hornworm.

Since the man didn't know what it was, he didn't know where the animal came from, he left. He returned home. He arrived to tell about it. He arrived to tell his wife. "Are you there, wife?" he asked.

"I'm here," she said.

"I'm hungry," he said.

"Eat!" she said.

"I just don't know what it was—What [it was that] went and called to me, lying there on top of a stump," he told his wife.

"What did it sound like to you? What do you think it called?" asked the woman.

"Oh, it sounded very strange. Tortor beebee, papa! It kept saying to me," said the man.

"Ah!" said the woman. "What did you do? Did you leave it there? Did you do anything to it?" asked the woman.

"I killed it. I don't know why. Maybe I'll die now. Maybe it will cut short my life. I've never heard of such a thing. I've never heard it before where I work. Nothing ever comes to call out to me," said the man.

"Oh, My Lord!" said the woman. "Could you have killed that child of mine? Didn't you know what my child was like? The hornworm was my child. That's why I never gave birth," said the woman. The woman cried and cried.

"Oh hell, so that's what your child is, then. That's why you don't give birth, you bitch!" said the man. The man kept on bawling her out. The woman cried and cried.

"Well, never mind. Take care of yourself! So be it! Get someone to take my place! There's nothing we can do. That was the only child I'll ever have," [she said].

"Now, in three days I will die, because that's the way it is, my child can't die by himself. I'm going too," said the woman.

"Is that so?" said the man.

"Yes, because that was my very own child, because the hornworm is my child. Didn't you hear it, then? It went to call you [home]. Didn't you understand? Didn't you hear what it told you? Tortillas and beans, papa! it said. So, Go eat some tortillas! Go Eat some beans! was what it was saying. Didn't you kavron, buluk' sat ka li7e che7e, ka7uk to me 7u k'usi yu7un chislabta che7e, kavron, mu xa yorauk yu7un xa chicham, jna7tik xa 7ok'ob cha7ej nan chicham li7e, muk' bu xkil yech, muk' bu xka7i yech k'usi xiyok'ita," xi la 7un.

7Óra, 7ikap sjol ti vinike, j-likel 7ismil ti buluk' sate.

Bwéno, kómo li vinike che7e, mu sna7 k'usi, mu sna7 bu talem ti chone, 7iba7at la 7un, 7isut la ech'el ta sna, k'ot la yal 7ik'ot yalbe ti yajnil. "Mi li7ote, 7antz?" xi la 7un.

"Li7one," xi la 7un.

"Chive7 che7e," xi la 7un.

"Ve7an!" xi la 7un.

"Batzi mu jna7 k'usi, 7an k'usi 7a yok'itaon te kajal ta ba chuman te7," xut la ti yajnil 7une.

"K'u x7elan 7ava7i 7un, k'u x7elan 7ava7i ch7ok'?" xi la ti 7antz 7une.

"7A batzi yan xal. 7A la papa7 cheche7 tata7 xiyut ta j-mek," xi la ti vinik 7une.

"7Aji!" xi la ti 7antz 7une. "K'usi 7ach7a7le 7un, mi te 7akomes mi k'usi 7ach7a7le?" xi la ti 7antz 7une.

"7Ijml mu jna7 k'u yu7un yu7un nan chicham xa yu7un nan chislabta, muk' bu xka7i yech mu k'usi xka7i buy xi7abeje, mu k'usi xk'ot yok'itaon," xi la ti vinik 7une.

"7Ay kajval!" xi la ti 7antz 7une. "K'an me 7amilbon jutuk kol me taje, mu me xna7 k'u x7elan kol, ja7 me kol i buluk' sate, yech'o me li muk' bu chi7alaje," xi la ti 7antz 7une. 717ok' la ta j-mek ti 7antz 7une.

"7A kavron, va7i ka k'usi 7avol che7e, yech'o li mu xa7alaje, kavron!" xi la ti vinik. 717ilin to la ta j-mek ti vinik 7une, 7ok' la ta j-mek ti 7antz 7une.

"Bwéno pasënsia te k'el aba 7un, teyuk, sa7o jk'exol, mu k'u xu7 jpasit, 7a taje batzi kol jtk.

"7Óra, ta k'al 7oxib k'ak'al chicham 7un, yu7un ja7 yech mu xu7 ti stuk xcham ti kole yu7un chibat 7uk," xi la ti 7antz 7une.

"Mi yech 7un?" xi la ti vinike.

"Yech porke yu7un kol ta j-mek taje yu7un me kol i buluk' sate, mi muk' bu xava7i che7e, yu7un me bat yik'ot tal mi muk' bu xava7i, mi muk' bu 7ava7i taj x7elan layalbe? 7A la papa7 cheche7 tata7 xie che7e, yu7un me Ba ve7an papa7, ba ti7an chenek' yu7un me xì 7un taje, mi muk' xava7i che7e, yu7un me ba
understand, then? It went to call you [home], to do you a favor, because that was your child, we could say," said the woman.

"Oh, but I didn't know. Why didn't you say so, then? As for me, I certainly didn't know what your child was. I never saw your child being born. That's why I said to myself, I don't know what sonofabitching animal that is!" he said.

"Ah, never mind, there's nothing we can do now since you killed it. For I'll die, then. We'll see each other. Just if you will bury me, if you will shroud me, because it is sure now that I'm going since that child of mine died," said the woman.

"All right then, patience! There's nothing we can do, for I didn't know it. Out of my stupidity I went and killed it, but I didn't know it was your child," he said.

"Of course it was my child, but never mind, there's nothing more to say. Get someone to take my place!" said the woman. She died. That's how the story ends.

An account of a "barren" wife who sends her child to the fields with a meal for his father was recorded in Spain (A.M. Espinosa, 1967:158-159), but "Tortor Beebee, Papa!" appears to be a product of native genius! In Chenalhó it is a good omen to see many hornworms in the fields or along the trails at the time of a baby's birth. They are "the child's soul, and if we kill them the child will die." (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:251). In Chamula there is a similar proscription against killing hornworms. A Chamulan variant of this tale has the hornworm calling out, yik'ot tal taje, 7ak'uxubinel me, yu7un me 7ach'amal chkaltik taje," xi la ti 7antz 7une.

"7Aj pero mu jna7 k'u yu7un mu xaval che7e, mu jna7 k'usi 7avol li vo7on a7a, yu7un muk' bu x7ayan chkil 7avole, yech'o ti Mu jna7 k'usi puta chanu! xichi 7une," xi la 7un.

"7An yech pasénśia, mu k'u xu7 jpastik xa, va7i yu7un 7amile yu7un chicham 7un che7e, te jk'opon jbatik, ja7 nox kwenta mi chamukone mi chapixone yu7un xa 7onox j-moj chibat, ja7 taj 7icham xa taj kole," xi la ti 7antz 7une.

"Yech 7un che7e pasénśia, mu k'u xu7 jcha7letik ja7 li mu jna7 li vo7one, ba jmíla ta jbolil pero mu jna7 mi 7avol," xi la 7un.

"Ja7 kol a7a, pero yiyil ch'abal xa k'op chak taje, sa7o jk'exol!" xi la ti 7antz 7une. 7Icham 7un, ja7 yech 7ilaj 7o ti k'op 7une.

"Father, she is making tortillas on canna leaves. I need many more canna leaves. We'll be eating soon, father" [my translation]. The man squashes the caterpillar underfoot and its heartbroken mother dies (Gossen, T4).

It is not unusual for the dying wife to tell her husband to find a substitute for her, because traditionally her husband must announce before her body is removed from the house who his future wife will be.

How the Weak Ones Won, Rabbit Wins and Rabbit Loses

Once upon a time there was a man who went hunting with his wife. He went to wait for a deer at a spring.

They reached the spring. There they found many toads.


"What?" he asked.

"Nothing much, let's make a bet to see who can win," said Deer.

"Okay!" said Toad. One toad made the deal. The toads lined up.

"Let's race!" said Toad.

"Fine!" said Deer. Ooh, lots of toads lined up. Deer ran, but he tired out. He was worn out [trying] to outdistance Toad. "Don't you [ever] seem to get tired?" Toad was asked.

"But why would I get tired? We're invincible," said Toad. Ooh, [Deer] ran, but he didn't succeed. It was the toads that won.

7A ti vo7nee 7o la jun vinik 7ibat ta paxyal xchi7uk yajnil, 7ibat smala te7tikil chij ta vo7.

Bwéno, 7ik'otik ta vo7e te 7ep 7ista 7amuch, 7ik'ot ti chije.

Bwéno, "Mira, sápo," xi ti te7tikil chije.

"K'usi?" xi.

"Mu k'usi, jpastik jun 7apwesto 7aver buch'u xu7 yu7un," xi ti te7tikil chije.

"Xu7!" xi ti 7amuche. 71 j-kot 7amuch 7ispas trate.

Bwéno, 7ixchol sbaik 7amuchetik.

Bwéno, "7Anilajkotik 7un!" xi li 7amuche.

"Bwéno!" xi li te7tikil chije. 7luj, 7ixchol sba 7ep li 7amuchetike, 7i7anilaj te7tikil chij, pero 7ilub, 7ijiltzaj, ta stek'el ech'er li 7amuche. "Mi yilel mu xalub?" xut li 7amuche.

"Pero k'u yu7un chilub, vinkotik," xi ti 7amuche. Jii, 7i7anilaj, pero muk' xu7 yu7un, ja7 7ispas kanal li 7amuchetike.
[Deer] went on. Deer came to a hollow to drink. He met many mosquitoes there.

"Are you here, Mosquito? Why don't you let me drink?" he asked the mosquitoes.

"Oh, if you want to, let's try and see who can race," said Mosquito.

"Fine, let's race!" said Deer. Mosquito perched on Deer's ear.

"Well, let's go! Let's race!" Ooh, Deer ran. "Hey, did you fall behind?" he asked Mosquito.


"Well, never mind, I can't do any better. You run too fast," said Deer.

"I race because I'm the best," said [Mosquito].

[Now back to] the man who had left his wife behind when he went to look at the deer. He went to look for his wife. He went to look where his wife had stayed behind. No woman now. She was taken off by the devil.

A tiger came. The man was sobbing. "What are you crying about?" asked Tiger.

"Oh man, Mr. Tiger, it's because I lost my wife. The King of the Devils stole her." "Oh man, don't worry. I'll get her back in a minute. Your wife will come [back]," said [Tiger].

"Please then, because I'm crying so hard."

"Well, I'm going to get her right away," said [Tiger].

He went to talk to the king. "Knock, knock, knock!" he banged on the door.

"Who is it?" asked the King of the Devils.

"I'm Mr. Tiger." "What do you want?" he asked.

"I don't want anything. I'm going to take the poor woman back because her husband is crying," said [Tiger].

"Oh, what's that to you? You can't do it," said the King of the Devils. Tiger's ass was broken with a stick. He fled.

"I didn't win out. My ass is broken. They beat me," he said. Ooh, the man cried even more. A bull came along.

"What happened to you? Why are you crying?" asked Bull.

"Look here, Bull, my wife disappeared. She was taken off by the Devil." "Oh, me, I'll go right away and bring her back," said [Bull].

"Oh, you can't succeed. You're even less of a match," he said. "A tiger's already gone. He didn't succeed," he said. "He's stronger," he said.

Bwéno, 7ibat, 7ik'ot yuch' vo7, ta be-o7, ti te7tikil chije, te 7ep 7ista xenen.

Bwéno, "Mi li7ote, xenen, k'u yu7un mu xavak' kuch' vo7e?" xut ti xenen.

"7A mi chak'an jpastik preva 7aver buch'u x7anilaj", xi ti xenen.

Bwéno, "7anilajkotik!" xi ti te7tikil chije, xenen. 7A ti 7isnoch'an sba ta xchikin ti te7tikil chije.

Bwéno, "Bwéno battik 7anilajkotik!" 7iij, 7i7anilaj ti te7tikil chije. "7E, mi lakom?" xi ti te7tikil chije.

"7iij," xi ti xenen ta xchikine. 7Ibat 7i7anilaj ju-like ju-like ju sk'opon ti xenen. "7Ii," xi batel.

Bwéno, pasénsia mu xa xu7 ku7un mas tol xa7anilaj, xi ti te7tikil chije.

"Xi7anilaj porke vinikon," xi.

Bwéno, yiyil Muk' xu7 ku7un, chibat", xi ti te7tikil chije.

Bwéno, 7a ti vinike nom skomesoj ti yajnile, k'al buy ba sk'el te7tikil chije.

Bwéno, ba sk'el yajnil, ba sk'el ti yajnil bu komeme, ch'abal xa 7antz, 7ibat la ta dyablo.

Bwéno, 7ital j-kot bolom, ta x7ok' ti vinike. "K'usi chavok'itu?" xi ti bolome.

"7Ombre, Senyor Tigre, yu7un 7ich'ay kajnil, 7iyelk'an, 7iyelk'an li rey dyabloe."

"7Ay, 7ombre, mu k'u xal 7avo7on chba jlok'es tal ta jlikel, chtal lavajnile," xi.

"7Abolajan che7e yu7un batz'i chi7ok'.

Bwéno, ba jlok'es tal ta 7ora," xi.

Bwéno, k'ot sk'opon li reye. "Ton, ton, ton!" xut ti ti7 nae.

"Kyen es?" xi ti rey dyabloe.

"Yo soy el Senyor Tigre."

"K'usi chak'an?" xi.

"Mu k'usi ta jk'an, ta xkik' ech'el li povre 7antz, yu7un ta x7ok' smalal," xi.

"7A, k'usi 7akwenta 7o, vo7ote mu xu7 me," xi ti rey dyabloe. 7Ik'asbat xchak ta te7 ti bolome, 7ijatav.

"Muk' xu7 ku7un, lik'asbat tal jchak lismajik tal," xi. 7Iij, 7i7ok' mas ti vinike, 7ital j-kot vakax.

"K'usi chapas cha7ok'e?" xi ti vakaxe.

"K'el avil, tóro, 7ich'ay kajnil, 7ibat ta dyablo."

"7A vo7one ta 7ora chibat ba jlok'es tal," xi.

"Oh, but me, I'll go break down the door. I'll bring back your wife," said [Bull].

"Fine! Please do!" he said.

Well [Bull] arrived there. He knocked on the door.

"Who is it?" said [the Devil].

"I'm Mr. Bull," he said.

"What do you want?" asked the Devil.

"Oh, I don't want anything. I'm going to take the woman back," he said.

"Oh, where did you come from?" asked the Devil.

He grabbed a stick. One [of Bull's] horns was broken. Ooh, [Bull] left. He ran very fast.

"I couldn't do it," he told the man when he arrived. Oh, the man cried even more.

Well, a donkey came along. "What are you crying about?" asked Donkey.

"It's because my wife disappeared," he said.

"Oh, no indeed! I'll bring her back," said Donkey.

"God, now it's you who's going to win? You're just a poor donkey!" asked the Devil. He went. Bull went. But they didn't succeed," he said.

"Oh, but as for me I'll break down the door. I have feet. I kick people," said [Donkey]. He went and knocked on the door.

"Who are you?" asked [the Devil].

"I'm Donkey," he said.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"Oh, I want to take the woman back." The door wasn't opened for him. Quickly he gave it a kick. Oh, his hoof fell off. Eh, he hurried away. "I couldn't do it. My hoof came off. I couldn't do it," the man was told. Oh, the man cried even more. Lots of ants came by.

"What happened to you?" they asked.

"Man, my wife disappeared," he said.

"I'll go bring her back," said the ants.

"Poor ants, you can't win. You're even smaller!" he said.

"Oh, but we can!" they said. "We're going," they said.

Well, they went. They knocked on the door.

"Who is it?" asked the King of the Devils.

"We're ants," they said. The door wasn't opened for them. They got in by themselves. When they arrived they went inside, swarming in.

"Oh, so you've come?" said the Devil. Hot ashes were thrown on them. Some of the ants were killed by the hot ashes, the others fled.

"We couldn't do it, man. Your wife didn't come back." Again the man cried.

Well, a rabbit came along. "What are you crying about?" he asked.

"Man, my wife disappeared," he said.

"If you want me to, I'll go bring her back." "God, but do you think you can do it?" he asked.

"7Aj pero li vo7one chk'ot jvok' li ti7 nae chkik' tal 7avajnile," xi.

"Bwéno, 7abolajan!" xi.

Bwéno, 7ik'ot, 7ik'ot stij ti7 na, "Kyen es?" xi.

"Yo soy el Senyor Tóri," xi 7un.

"K'usi chak'an?" xi ti dyabloe.

"7Aj mu k'usi ta jk'an ta xik' ech'el li 7antze," xi.

"7Aj, bu latal?" xi ti dyabloe. 7Itambat jun te7, 7ik'asbat jun xxulub, 7ee, 7ibat 7i7anilaj ta j-mek.

"Mu xu7," xut k'otel ti vinike. 7Aj, 7i7ok' mas ti vinike.

Bwéno, 7ital j-kot buro. "K'usi chavok'ita?" xi ti buroe.

"Yu7un 7ich'ay kajnil," xi.

"7Aj mo7oj chbat jlok'es tal," xi ti buroe.

"Dyos mi vo7ot xa chkuch 7avu7un povre buroot, 7i7ay xa bolom, 7i7ay xa vakax pero muk' xu7 yu7un," xi.

"7Aj pero xchi7uk vo7one ta jvok' komel li ti7 nae, 7oy kok chitek'van," xi. 7Ik'ot stij ti7 nae.

"Buch'uot?" xi.

"Yo soy el buro," xi.

"K'usi chak'an?" xi.

"7Aj ta jk'an ech'el li 7antze." Muk' xjambat na 7istijbe j-moj likel ta tek'el, 7oj, 7ikol svoy, 7ee, 7ibat ta 7anil. "Mu xu7, 7ilok' xa jvoy, mu xu7," xut ti vinik 7une, 7oj, 7i7ok' mas ti vinike, 7ital 7epal xinich.

"K'usi chapas?" xi.

"7Ombre, 7ich'ay kajnil," xi.

"Chba jlok'es tal," xi ti xiniche.

"Povre xinich, mu xu7 7avu7un, mas bik'itoxuk!" xi.


Bwéno, 7ibat, 7ésou 7istij ti7 na. "Kyen es?" xi ti rey dyabloe.

"Sómos ormígas," xi. Muk' 7ijambat na 7i7och stuk.

Bwéno, 7ik'ot 7i7och ta yut na xlamet xa k'otel.

"7Aj mi latal?!" xi la ti dyabloe. 7i7ak'bat k'ak'al tan, 7icham j-707ol ti xiniche ta k'ak'al tan, 7ijata j-707ol.

"Mu xu7, 7ómbre, mu xlok' tal lavajnile. "7I7ok' yan ti vinike.

Bwéno, tal j-kot t'ul. "K'usi chavok'ita?" xi.

"7Ombre, 7ich'ay kajnil," xi.

"Mi xak'an chba jlok'es tal." "Dyos, pero mi vo7ot xa xu7 7avu7un 7ana7o7?" xi.
"Of course I can do it, why not?" said Rabbit.
"Please do, then!" he said.
"Oh, but first get a gourdful of wasps, a gourdful of hornets, a gourdful of honey bees," he said. "With three gourds I'll go," said Rabbit.
"Okay, fine," said the man. He got three gourdfuls.

Well, [Rabbit] arrived at the Devil's house.
"Knock, knock, knock!" he banged on the door.
"Who is it?" said the Devil.
"I'm Uncle Rabbit," said Rabbit.
"What do you want," asked the Devil.
"I've come to visit you," he said.
"Well, come in!" said [the Devil]. [Rabbit] went in. He saw the woman sitting inside.

He went up to the hearth. He broke all three gourds. Oh, all the devils were killed by the bees.
Quickly Rabbit picked up the woman and carried her out. He left. He took her back. "Well, are you here?" he asked the man.

"I'm here," he said. "Don't cry any more," he said. "Here, your wife has come back," he said. "But you'll pay me a little at least," said [Rabbit].

"What's your price?" he asked.
"Oh, I don't want money," said [Rabbit]. "I'll sleep for just one night with your wife," he said.
"Fine, let's go to bed!" said the man. "My wife can be in the middle," he said. "You sleep behind her," he said.

Then, in the middle of the night the woman let a great fart. Ooh, Rabbit fled. He was scared. He thought it was a bullet. He thought it was a gun. He ran away. That's why rabbits are timid now. They can't be gotten with guns. No! That's how it ends.

The race between the deer and the toads is run in Africa, Asia, the Northwest Coast (Boas, 1912:253) and throughout Latin America (Hansen, 1957: 275A). It was reported among the Tarahumaras (Lumholtz, 1902, 1:301), the Mixe (Radin and Espinosa, 1917, T97), the Aegovatec (Shaw, 1972:74), and Pocoman (ibid., 195). A Nahua variant substitutes a coyote for the deer, and skunks for the toads (Gonzalez Casanova, 1965:76-81). See also T59.

I am unaware of any Old World versions of Rabbit's rescue of the abducted wife. Among the Popoluca an elephant, a coyote, a bear, and a jaguar are unable to help the weeping man recover his wife from a giant. Rabbit asks for a whip, a gourd of blood, and a gourd of corn gruel. He whips the giant, breaks the gourds on his forehead, and fools the giant into believing that he is losing his brains. Rabbit escapes with the man's wife (Clark, 1961:129-145). In Rabinal, Guatemala, a jaguar, a coyote, a bear, and an elephant have no luck in recovering an unfaithful wife who is consorting with a lion; Rabbit clubs the lion and tricks him into staying in his den until he dies of starvation. Then Rabbit returns the woman to her husband (Teletor, 1955:143-147).

Rabbit's strategy to defeat the Devil recalls the tactics of the Quiche lords when their citadel was surrounded by countless thousands of enemy soldiers. With but four jars of wasps and hornets they routed "the Tribes" (Edmonson, 1971:205-208). In the Titulo de Totonicapan, the Quiche's weapons are described as one jar of big wasps, one jar of little wasps, another of serpents, and a fourth of beetles (Recinos and Goetz, 1953:219-220).

Poor Rabbit's final ignominious defeat is couched in terms that seem peculiarly Zinacantec. See also T169.

How to Take Care of Tigers

Once there were lots of tigers. There was a trail and a large cave there. It was filled with all the
tigers. They didn’t let the people pass by. Everyone met his end there.

There was a man. He said that too many people had been lost.

“I guess I’ll go take a look,” said the man. He took his machete. It was [just] one man who went. He reached the big cave. When he got there he looked for plenty of rocks. He looked for seats for all the tigers.

Then when all the seats were ready he called to the tigers. “Hoo ha!” he said to the tigers. They answered. They all came out, young and old.

“Have you come?” said the tigers. “I’ve come, Mr. Tiger,” said the man. “I’m going to eat you right up,” said the tigers. “No, don’t eat me! Wait a minute! Sit down! I came for a reason. Tell them to come, all of them, if there are still little ones inside your house. Bring all of them now. All of you will eat me,” said the man. All the tigers sat down. All the little ones came, the little tigers. They sat down on the rocks. “There are your seats, sit down!” said the man. “Wait a minute. I’ll take my clothes off. I’ll get undressed. It’s easier if I’m naked,” said the man.

“So when are you coming to eat me? Hurry up!” said the man.

“We can’t,” said the tigers. “Hurry up, hurry up! Come eat me! How much longer [do I have to wait]?” said the man. The man lost his temper.

“What the hell! What are you good for? You are tigers. You eat people. All our countrymen are dead. Just so, eat me too! You get away with eating so many people. Now today you are going to enjoy my machete,” said the man. Quickly he picked up his machete. He stood up. He swished his machete at each of the tigers until he killed all the old tigers. He left three cubs. That’s why there aren’t many tigers today. He left [some] to breed, but only a few. That’s why the tigers disappeared. If it weren’t for him we wouldn’t outlive the tigers.

I have translated bolometike here, and frequently elsewhere, as “tiger,” because the word “jaguar,” does not carry in English the fearful and admirable intimations called forth by “tiger” as in William Blake’s “Tiger, tiger burning bright, In the forests of the night.”

This tale is told with minor variations in Chamula and
Chenalhó. In the Chamulan version Our Lord makes a circle of stones, has the tigers sit down, urges them to eat him as they sit helplessly stuck to their seats. With his staff he slays all but two which he spares for posterity (Gossen, T32). In Chenalhó, God calls the tigers out to eat him. They sit down impatiently while he lies down and insists that they lap up every drop of his blood. He, too, dispatches all but two of the helpless tigers with his staff. After skinning the dead tigers he departs (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:182-183). In both Chamula and Chenalhó this tale is linked to another episode that recounts the origin of toothaches. (See notes to T41).

I know of no occurrences of this tale outside of Chiapas. In a Los Altos tale the devil sticks to his seat until he grants the hero another fifteen years of life (Robe, 1970, T51). In Jacaltenango, the monster, Tililik, sticks to a growing stone and is slain by a man named Chiapa (La Farge and Byers, 1931:116-117). The hot seat in Hell described in the Popol Vuh seems too far removed to be relevant (Edmonson, 1971:70). There is also a tale from Guatemala where the trickster, Pedro, carries out a number of the same deceptions played by his namesake in Tale 6, and then tricks the Jews into sitting down on and sticking to seats of molten lead (Recinos, 1918:478).

When His Slip Was Showing

T137

There is another [story], too. There was a Chamulan. He had just been married. It was on a day like today. They entered the house, it seems, because those people don't have weddings. They marry at the house entrance [ceremony].

Then they went. They went to bed. And they joined each other in bed. [The groom's] father and mother slept there together with them still. The petitioners got drunk—the relatives of the boy's parents. The woman's relatives slept there still, too, because it was the first night that they accompanied each other.

The man hadn't fallen asleep. He went and slipped inside the skirt with that wife of his. So two people were inside the skirt.

The man probably couldn't get to sleep at all when night came. And [the next day] he was left asleep. The man didn't wake up early in the morning. The woman slipped out of her skirt. The man didn't even feel his wife slipping out. She picked up another skirt. She put it on.

Then the man was left there wearing the skirt. Then she peeled off her husband's pants and threw her husband's pants up on the rafters.

Then when the woman had put on her other skirt, she went to grind corn, went to make tortillas. She had gotten up long before.

Then the man woke up when the sun was well up. The men were already gathered, drinking now. Only the husband wouldn't wake up. He was the only one who couldn't wake up. When he awoke he was just wearing the skirt. His brown balls were shining transparently at the fireside. He woke up. He was ashamed now. He didn't want to show his face now.

Then, wearing the skirt, he left. He ran away. The man went home, because he had no pants. He left. He was ashamed now. He never went to see his wife. He left for good—to the plantations. He simply forgot his wife forever. He never came to see her, because of the shame he had had when he was all alone by the fireside with his bare ass.

Ja7 la yech noxtok, 7oy la jun 7ulo7, 7ach' to 7ox 7iyik' sbaik chak k'u cha7al lavi ya7el k'ak'al li7e, ba 7ochuk ta na ya7el, kómo le7e mu sna7 xnupunik ta 7ochel ta na chik' sbaik.

7Óra, bat 7un, 7ivayik 7un, 7i 7ixchi7in sbaik ta vayel 7un, te to tzobol 7ivay ti stot sme7 ya7el 7une, ti 7oy yakubik jjak'oletit xchilitak ti sme7 stot ya7el ti krem 7une, 7o to te vay noxtok xchit7itak ti 7antze yu7n primero 7ak'ubal 7ixchi7in sbaik.

Bwéno, 7a ti vinik 7une, mu to 7ox la x7och svayel 7un, ba la stik' sba ta yut tzekil 7un, xchit7uk 7a li ta yajnili 7une, cha7-vo7 7i7ochik ta yut tzekil.

Bwéno, mu nan x7och svayel ta j-mek ta yochel 7ak'ubal ti vinik 7une, 7i yawem 7i7iktat 7un, muk' xa7i7osil ti vinik 7une, 7a ti 7antz 7une, 7i 7a ti 7lok' ti ta yut stzek 7une, mi ja7uk 7o bu ya7i lok' ti yajnil ti vinik 7une, 7i k'al mu to 7ox ta stzhan sk'ok' ti 7antz 7une, ba la stam tal 7otoro j-li7k stzek 7un, 7islap 7un.

7Óra, ja7 te slapoj 7ikom tzekil ti vinik 7une.

7Óra, 7a ti ssvex ti smalal 7une 7ixcho7 7un, 7i 7isjipbe muyel ta jol na li ssvex ti smalal 7une.

7Óra, k'alal slapoj xa j-li7k 7o stzek ti 7antz 7une, ba la juch' unsk 7un, ba smeltzan vaj 7un, nax 7ox la slikel 7un.

7Óra, ti vinik 7une, ja7 to yul xch'ulel lek ta toyol k'ak'al 7un, te xazobol ti viniketi7e, yolel xa chuch'hik, ja7 nox mu chul xch'ulel mu x7ech' svayel ti vinik 7une, k'al yul xch'ulele stuk xa slapoj i tzekile k'ajom k'an-jayan sbek' yat ta ti7 k'ok' 7un, 7iyul xch'ulel 7une xk'exav xa 7un, mu xa sk'an xak' 7iluk ti ssat 7une.

7Óra, slapoj la lok' ti tzekil 7une, jatav la ech'el 7un, bat ta sna ti vinik 7une, ja7 ti ch'abal xa la ssvex 7une, bat 7o 7un, chk'exav xa 7un, mi ja7uk xa bu ba sk'el ti yajnile, bat 7o k'alal pinkatik solel 7ixch'ay komel ta spat sjol ti yajnile, mu xa bu tal sk'el 7un, ja7 ti k'exlal 7ista 7une, ti k'ajom xa stuk te ch'ojol sbe stzo7 ta ti7 k'ok'e.
Now he discarded the skirt on the way. He had no pants. His pants were lost. That's what I've heard them say. The woman was left behind. When he was in bed he had a hard time getting up since the voices of those men and women could be heard, since he was just left wearing that skirt. That's what I've heard them say.

In Zinacantan a house entrance ceremony confirms that a boy and girl will be married in a month's time or so, and often this marks the first occasion when the groom can legally sleep with his bride. In Chamula, however, the couple never go before the priest and so this is the wedding proper. Even the groom's oversleeping was humiliation enough, for his first duty to his in-laws should have been to serve them drink early in the morning to chase their hangovers.

This tale was retold by Romin during the same year. The two versions differ very little. In the second rendering the wedding guests' and bride's laughter is quite explicit. The groom fled home (Bricker, T59).

Romin's first version is roughly a third longer and the richness of vocabulary is proportionally greater. Three-quarters of the words in the shorter version are found also in the above. Even though the plots are nearly identical and the vocabulary so similar, the individual sentences do not conform at all to a set pattern.

The Buzzard Man
T43

There was a very lazy man. He went to clear trees. But he asked for tortillas to take along. When he arrived, he slept. He was very lazy, lying on his back in the woods, watching the buzzards gliding in the sky. “Come on down, buzzard, come here, let's talk! Give me your suit!” the buzzard was told. The buzzard never came down. The man returned home every day. He was given tortillas to take. He just went to eat.

“How's your work?” asked his wife.

“There is [work to do], there is still [work to do]. There is quite a bit, because it can't be done easily. There are so many large logs,” said the man.

Well, on the third day the buzzard came down.

“What do you want?” the man, who slept in the woods, was asked.

“I don't want anything. Won't you give me your clothes? I like them a lot,” he told the buzzard.

“Ah!” said the buzzard. “But how come? Can't you like your work? Why don't you work?” asked the buzzard.

“Because I just can't work. I can't do anything. It seems better the way you do, gliding in the sky. It's not much work for you to get your food,” said the man.

“Ah, but it just looks like that to you. But it is very difficult. Sometimes we can't find food. Sometimes we go to bed hungry,” said the buzzard. “If there isn't any [food] we find shit. We look for where the vapor comes out of dead horses, dead sheep, dead dogs. We eat, but not every day,” said the buzzard.

“But never mind, if you will do me the favor [of giving me] your clothes,” said the man.

“Well, close your eyes, then!” said the buzzard. The man closed his eyes. When he left he was

7Óra, 7a ti tzekile, te xa xch'ay komel ta be, ja7 ti ch'abal xa ti svexe, ti ch'aybat svex 7une, ja7 la yech 7un xik 7ika7i 7un, kom 7o ti 7antz 7une, 7a ti k'alal te vayeme vokol xa la lik 7un, k'u ti yu7n xnik xa la taj viniketik 7une, taj 7antzetzik te 7une, k'u ti stuk xa slapoj kom taj tzekil 7une, ja7 yech la 7un, xik 7ika7i 7un.
already a buzzard. He never found food. Every day he went to bed hungry. The buzzard who was now a man returned. He arrived at the house. “Are you there, wife?” he said.

“I’m here,” she said.

“Ahh, I’m hungry,” he said.

“Eat!” said the woman. “What stinks so?” asked the woman.

“I don’t know what it is. Do you notice something? I don’t notice anything at all!” The buzzard just the same every day.

The man spoke. “It’s true I’m not your husband. I’m a buzzard. Your husband is so lazy he asked me for my clothes. He took them and left,” said the buzzard man. The former husband arrived. He was flapping about outside next to the house, picking up soft corn kernels. He was waiting for his wife to come out and take a shit. Then he would go eat it. Or if his successor came out to take a shit [he would eat it]. He couldn’t get his food by himself. “That is your husband there. He turned into a buzzard,” said the successor.

“Ah!” she said. She hadn’t known that it was her husband. She beat him off. She broke his legs with a stick. He fled to the roof. He wanted to go inside, but there was nothing he could do now. There he died. He died of hunger. That’s how he died.

The tale of the Buzzard Man appears to be a New World creation. In Mexico it has been reported from the Yaquis (Giddings, 1959:27), the Tapanecs (Lemley, 1949:81–82), the Mixtecs (Dyk, 1959:115–123), and the Tzotzil of Chamula (Gossen, T25, T50) and Chenalhó (Gutieras-Holmes, 1961:204). It also occurs in Guatemala among the Mam (Applebaum, 1967:79–80), Cakchiquel (Schoemb, 1905:221–222, Tax, 1950, T7), Agua catec (Shaw, 1972:71–72), and Tzutujil (Rosales, 1945:802).

The buzzard’s attempt to dissuade the lazy man from changing his way of life is expressed in nearly identical words in the Yaqui version: “The life of a buzzard is very hard. There are days when there is nothing to eat. Buzzard food is not a sure thing.” (Giddings, loc. cit.)

Buzzard’s instructions to the man to locate his food by the rising fumes is given also in San Pedro la Laguna (Rosales, loc. cit.).

There is some variation in the tell-tale characteristics of the buzzard in man’s guise. He hops (Giddings, loc. cit.), has hairy legs (Gossen, T25), or has feathers on his knees (Gossen, T50), doesn’t wash, but only drinks his water, and refuses chili (Bricker, T24), or neglects to eat his tortillas (Applebaum, loc. cit.), but mostly he stinks (Giddings, loc. cit.; Lemley, loc. cit.; Rosales, loc. cit.; Shaw, loc. cit.; and Tax, loc. cit.). He may protest that his foul odor is caused by hard work (Rosales, loc. cit.) or that he was the unlucky target of a bird overhead (Lemley, loc. cit.).

The fate of the man who elected to fly lazy circles in the sky is not always the same. He may be chased off by his wife (Tax, loc. cit.), become too weak to fly (Giddings, loc. cit.), or be forced to eat his wife’s excrement (Bricker, loc. cit.). He may return home only to have his wife toss boiling water on him, forever scalding his head red (Gossen, loc. cit.), or he may plummet fatally into a garbage fire (Rosales, loc. cit.). In the Tapanec version he is allowed to resume his human shape, but on condition that he feed the buzzard good meat (Lemley, loc. cit.). Among the Agua catec the buzzard allows him to return to his former condition, but only if he keeps his three-day adventure a secret. Unable to resist telling his wife, he dies soon after (Shaw, loc. cit.).

The moral of the Protestant ethic is given a final twist in the Mam story—after the loafer is restored to his human shape his wife gives birth to a child begotten by the buzzard. While his own children neglected him, his stepson cares for him faithfully. So, today, the Indians are condemned to work in the sun, and the Ladinos, offspring of the buzzard, work in the shade! (Applebaum, loc. cit.) See also T42, T69, their notes, and T48.
What's Man Like?
T3

Long ago there was a man who loaded a cart to be drawn by a pair of oxen. The oxen were standing in the middle of the road. Coyote arrived. "What are you doing, Ox?" he asked.

"I'm not doing anything. I have a load," said Ox.

"Who gave you your load?" asked Coyote.

"Man did," said Ox.


"But how can I gore him? He'll stick a pole up our ass."

"But exactly what does Man look like?"

"Well, like a man. He walks on two legs. [He has] two arms. He stands."

"Well, what's the use! There's nothing I can do for you. Take care! I'm going!" said Coyote.

A tiger arrived. "What are you doing, Ox?" he asked.

"Nothing, I'm just walking along here," said Ox.

"Who owns your load?" asked Tiger.

"It's Man," he said.

"What's Man like?"

"Well, he walks on two legs," he said.

"Hell, you're so stupid. You should gore him," he said.

"Oh god, there's nothing you can do for me. Take care! I'm going!" said Ox.

A tiger arrived. "What are you doing, Ox?" he asked.

"I'm not doing anything. I have a load," said Ox.

"Who gave you your load?" asked Coyote.

"Man did," said Ox.


"But how can I gore him? He'll stick a pole up our ass."

"But exactly what does Man look like?"

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"It's Man," he said.

"What's Man like?"

"Well, he walks on two legs," he said.

"Well, what's the use! There's nothing I can do for you. Take care! I'm going!" said Coyote.

"But exactly what does Man look like?"

"Well, like a man. He walks on two legs. [He has] two arms. He stands."

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"It's Man," he said.

"What's Man like?"

"Well, he walks on two legs," he said.

"Well, what's the use! There's nothing I can do for you. Take care! I'm going!" said Coyote.

A tiger arrived. "What are you doing, Ox?" he asked.

"Nothing, I'm just walking along here," said Ox.

"Who owns your load?" asked Tiger.

"It's Man," he said.

"What's Man like?"

"Well, he walks on two legs," he said.

"Well, what's the use! There's nothing I can do for you. Take care! I'm going!" said Coyote.
“Oh, no reason. I’m going to eat you. Why do you torment animals so much?” said Tiger.

“Ah, wait a minute, ‘til I finish splitting my wood,” he said. “Sit down a minute.”

“Oh, my, wait a minute, ‘til I finish splitting my wood,” said Man. “Sit down a minute.”

“Okay,” said Tiger. “Well, but for how long, because I’m getting hungry. I’m going to eat you,” said Tiger.

“Well, if you’re getting hungry, help me split my firewood,” said Man.

“But how do I split it?”

“Like this. Stick both your paws in the split in the wood,” said Man. [Tiger] stuck his paws in. [Man] pulled the ax out. Both [Tiger’s] paws were held tight. Then he was screaming.

“I can’t, it’s impossible. It hurts terribly. I can’t split it. Help me! Please! I won’t eat you any more. Forget it! Free my paws for me!” said Tiger.

“Oh,” said Man. “How come you aren’t going to eat me? Eat me today, bastard!” said Man. He picked up his gun. Quickly he shot at Tiger. [Tiger] pulled his paws out quickly. He ran away. He reached a stream. There he found a lot of women washing clothes.

“What’s Man to you?” the women were asked.

“Oh! [He’s] my husband,” said [one of] the women.

“Your husband?”

“My husband.”

“But he’s such a devil. He’s always killing [us]. He shot me. A bullet hit me in the ribs,” said Tiger.

“Oh, that’s not fatal. He was kind to you. Look at him! He’s split our flesh wide open. Smell it and see! It stinks,” said the women. Quickly they lifted their skirts at him.

“Oh, that’s too much. But you’re already dying. You’re wounded too badly. It stinks already. Me, I’m splitting!” said Tiger. He left. He ran away. That’s why tigers don’t eat us much any more.

I have chosen the colloquial expression “to split” as it reproduces exactly the Tzotzil metaphoric extension of jatav.

Tiger’s lesson that man is a two-legged, erect, walking animal who persecutes all others gives a specially Zinacantec slant to this ancient story. Tiger’s or Lion’s search for the king of the beasts, and his unhappy encounter with the woodsman form the entertainment for the 146th of the Arabian Nights. The tale was bequeathed to us by the woodman who persecutes all others gives a specially Zinacantec slant to this ancient story. Tiger’s or Lion’s search for the king of the beasts, and his unhappy encounter with the woodsman form the entertainment for the 146th of the Arabian Nights. The tale was eventually expanded to become a literary classic of Western civilization!

I’m going to tell you, on your way home to supper, a charming little, short stories, which is to be found in Frater Lubinus, libro De compotationibus mendicantium.

In the days when the beasts talked, which was not three days ago, a poor lion, wandering through the forest of Fontainebleau and saying his short prayers, happened to pass under a tree up which a country coal-merchant had climbed to cut down some wood. The merchant, seeing...
the lion, dropped his hatchet, thereby wounding the beast terribly in one thigh. The lion limped and ran away the best he could through the forest in search of aid, when he happened to meet a carpenter, who very willingly looked at his wound, wiped it as clean as possible, and bandaged it up with moss, telling the lion to be careful to keep the flies away, so they would not do their durn there, while he went to search for the carpenter's herb. And so the lion, his wound having been looked after, was walking through the forest, when he fell in with an old hag who was cutting fagots and gathering wood in that same forest. The hag, seeing the lion coming, was so frightened that she fell down on her backside while the wind blew her dress, petticoat, and chemise above her shoulders. Beholding this, the lion, out of pity, came running up to see if she had hurt herself; and looking at her what-you-may-call-it, he exclaimed: 'Oh you poor woman Who has wounded you like that?' As he said this, he caught sight of a fox, and called to him: 'Brother fox, come here, come here.' When the fox came up, the lion said:

'Old fellow, my friend, someone has wounded this good woman here, most viciously, between the legs, and there is an obvious dissolution of continuity. Look how big the wound is, all the way from the rump to the navel; it must measure four, or even five and half spans. It's a hatchet-wound, and I don't believe it's very old. However, in order to keep the flies from getting at it, we ought to help one another out in cases like this. And so, swat it well, my friend, swat it, for this wound must be swatted very often; otherwise, the lady will not rest easy. And so, swat it well, old man, swat it well. God has provided you with plenty of tail; you've a big one and thick enough; swat it hard, and don't weaken. A good swatter who, by constantly swatting, swats with his swatter will never be swatted by flies. Swat, old balls; swat, my little cutie, and I'll be back in a jiffy.'

Then he went to look for a supply of moss, and when he was a long way off, he called back to the fox:

'Keep it up, old fellow, swat it well; swat and don't weaken, and I'll make you official swatter to Don Pedro of Castille. Swat, that's all; swat; you haven't anything else to do.' The poor fox swatted with might and main, this way and that way, inside and out; but the old hag fartyed and pooped and stunk like a hundred devils. The fox was very uncomfortable, not knowing which way to turn to avoid the perfume that came from the hag's farts; and as he turned around, he saw that there was another aperture on her back-side, not so big as the one he was swatting, from which the wind that was so stinking and infectious appeared to come.

The lion finally returned, bringing with him more than eighteen bales of moss. He proceeded to cram the moss into the wound, by the aid of a stick that he carried with him. He had already put in sixteen bales and a half, when he cried out in astonishment:

'What the devil! But this wound is deep. More than two carloads of moss have already gone in,'

Whereupon the fox gave him a piece of advice:

'Brother lion, my friend, please don't put all the moss in there; keep a little of it, for there's another little aperture underneath here that sinks like five hundred devils. I'm poisoned with the smell of it, it's so vile.'

And so it is, you would have to protect those walls from the flies, and employ hired swatters!

Then Pantagruel spoke:

'How do you know that the shameful members of the women are so cheap as all that? There are many good women in this town, chaste ones and virgins!

"Et ubi prenus?" demanded Panurge. 'And where will you find them?'

(Rabelais, 1951:301-304).

See also T168.

The Jaguar and the Jaguarundi
T16

A man slept by the trail above Bik’it Nich [Little Flower]. Night fell. A jaguarundi came. It was prowling around, howling. It wanted to bite him. The man had bought [some] meat. He threw it several pieces. The jaguarundi finished eating his meat. It slept. It guarded the man, but the man was terribly scared. A jaguar came. It sniffed the man’s feet. It was going to eat him, but the jaguarundi defended him. It fought the jaguar until it killed it. It ate the jaguar. The jaguarundi came back. It guarded the man again. It left when the sky line was getting light. That’s how the man escaped [with his life].

This story was told to me to prove the belief that jaguarundis are companion animal spirits of strong-hearted people.

The theme of a weaker feline protecting man from jaguars is also found in Chamula, where salt was left along the trails for mountain lions so that they would protect travellers from the jaguars (Gossen, T29). In Panajachel a man was miraculously defended from a jaguar’s onslaught by a house cat (Tax, 1950, T15). The Ixil, too, tell how a cat defended a man from a lion, but the cat also tattled on his wife and so was mistreated (Shaw, 1972:114-117).

The Man Who Didn’t Know How
T138

Once there was an old woman and her son. And probably the old woman had no husband, the boy...
had no father. Who knows if he died. Who knows if it was because the boy was illegitimate.

Now the boy grew up. He matured. Now he was a full-fledged man. He had never gotten a wife.

Now his mother saw that her boy was never going to get a wife. She told her son, “See here, son, it would be better, if you can’t pay [the brideprice] for a woman, if you can’t get the money yourself, go speak to some girl. Go into the streets. I’ll stick your tortillas [in a bag] for you to take. Go for a few days and see, I guess, if you meet one to speak to. Take her! It’s better if you get a wife,” his mother said.

The boy did as she said. He left. He was given his tortillas to take along. He ate before he left. He wasted maybe a week or more arriving to wait for the girls there in the street.

Well, his mother asked him, “What’s happened, son? Were you able to speak to a girl? Did you see one?” she asked her son.

“Ah, they pass by there. They don’t say anything. They never spoke to me,” he said.

“Ah, stupid, why did you imagine that they would speak to you? It’s you who should speak!” said the old woman.

“Ah, I thought they would speak to me. I was standing there on the corner, of course, but they passed stra—ght by. They didn’t say anything. They didn’t speak at all,” said the boy.

“No, you’re the one to speak!” said the old woman. “Well, go now, I guess, for a day or so, then!” she told her son. She gave him his tortillas to take along. He ate before he left. He went. Then the boy spoke. He spoke to the girls.

Then he returned home in the evening. His mother asked him again. “Did you find one, son?” she asked her son.

“I found one. She answered me. You are right that they have to be spoken to. I thought they would speak to me. But they wouldn’t speak at all. They just passed by.

“Now since I spoke to them they answered me,” he said.

“Ah, good then. Take her once and for all if she answers you. That’s better,” she told her son.

“Well, okay, then,” said the boy, too. He followed it up. He spoke, he spoke to the girl.

He took the girl. They got married. They slept together.

Maybe night fell. Maybe he was going to sleep with his wife, but the boy didn’t do anything. He just slept. He slept happily. He didn’t do anything to his wife. But the woman wanted to know the man. She wanted to join her husband.

Then she would shake her husband awake. She would take his hand and put it on her thigh. She would let him know what it is that girls like to give.
Then during the night the boy was shouting, "Mother, I don't know why my wife doesn't let me sleep. She grabs my hand. She sticks it up her thigh. I don't know what it is there. It has a mouth, it seems. It feels as if it will bite me. It bites people. It feels as if it has teeth. If my hand is hurt, I don't want that. I don't want to sleep with her anymore," said the boy.

"Stupid, no! You're supposed to climb on. It's because that wife of yours loves you very much. How come then? Don't you do anything to your wife? Don't you give her anything? Don't you climb on?" asked the old woman.

"No!" said the boy.

"Ah, but the next night you climb on top, then. Don't be afraid of it. That's a good thing! It's because your wife longs to enjoy you," said the old woman.

"All right!" said the boy. The next day he got his ladder ready. He found a ladder. He leant it next to his bed for the night. Maybe he thought he was supposed to climb up on the rafters in a hurry.

Night was just about to fall. His ladder was ready, it seems. "Climb on quickly when night falls!" said his mother.

"All right!" said the boy. He waited for night to fall. Quickly he climbed up the ladder.

Then maybe the ladder wasn't leaning properly. Down they came together. They fell. He landed on top of his bed, and on top of his wife, too. Down they came—he and the ladder. "What are you all doing, crashing around? What are you all doing, banging around?" asked his mother. "Don't give me such a fright!" she said.

"Ah, I didn't know! It's your fault! It's your fault, mother. Now you told me, Climb on up, climb on up during the night, when night falls! you told me. I just thought it was good [advice]. I put my ladder there for the night. See here, I came down with it. It would have been your fault if I had broken [a bone]. It would have been your fault if something had happened to me," the boy told his mother. He probably thought he was supposed to climb up onto the rafters.

But you see, he was supposed to climb on his wife. Because his wife wanted to fuck, too.

But you see, he didn't know what it was. The woman, she knew what it was.

Now the man didn't know what it was. That's why he went and set up his ladder to climb onto the rafters. That's why he fell down.

Now he was scolding his mother. And the next time the old woman gave him good advice. "Is it on the rafters that you climb, then? It's on top of your wife that you should climb, not onto the rafters," she told her son again.
"Ah, I see where I should climb, then! I thought I was to climb into the rafters to spend the night," he told his mother again.

"No, you should climb on top of your wife. You should stick your prick in where you say she has that mouth, where you say she has that beard. That's where it goes in. That's what your wife wants so badly. So give it to her! Stick your prick inside her!" said the old woman.

"Ah, I understand, then," he said. The boy learned. The next night that's what he did. That's how the boy became a bit wiser. And he had a hard time learning what to do. That's the way it was.

The boy's failure to "speak to" the girls is doubly funny to a Zinacantec, for clearly it is the literal meaning of k'opon, "to speak to," that is intended here rather than the verb's figurative meaning, "to have sexual relations with." The humor would be just as apparent to many Guatemalan Indians, for the same extension of the verb, "to speak to," occurs in a number of Mayan languages.

Although Tax collected a number of folktales in Panajachel relating the misadventures of innocent newly weds, I know of no competitor to this lively numbskull story.

Respect the Dead!
T15

Once there was an Ixtapanec who heard a tale [of what would happen] if you didn't wait for the ghosts every All Souls' Day. He did it. He tested to see if it were true that the ghosts come to take us away. All Souls' Day arrived. He waited for the ghost. He left bull shit for it. He climbed a tree to see if it were true that the ghost himself would come walking in. He thought he would take his wife up into the tree. The woman didn't want to [go with him]. She stayed inside the house. The spirit came at midnight. He arrived. He waited inside. "Are you there?" he asked the woman.

"I'm here," she said.
"Where has he gone?"

"He's gone. He went out," she said.
"Well, where is my meal?" he asked. "Am I to eat bull shit? I've just come for this one fiesta. It isn't every day I return," said the spirit.

"I don't know. That's what he left," said the woman.

"Well, I guess we'll see. If you're here all the time you can eat the bull shit," he said. "As for me, I'm going. I have friends. I'll see who will give me a meal," he said. He went. He left. The man came down from the tree. He had heard everything the spirit said. The man climbed down the tree. Dawn came. Already his body ached. No hope for him.

"It feels as if I'm dying. What's the use?" said the man. "I guess I'm going to look at my horse. If I return, I return. If not, if I haven't come back, go look for me then," said the man. He left. He never returned. He died when he was looking at his horse.

"7Aa, va7i, buy chimuy che7e, ka7uk me ta jol nauk chimuy vayikon," xut la ti sme7 noxtok 7une.

"7I71, ta sbe ma lavajnil chamuye, ja7 me te chatik' lavat yo7 bu 7a taj 7o ye chaval 7une, 7a taj 7oy yisim chaval 7une, ja7 me te ch7och 7un, yu7 me ja7 tzk'an ta j-mek lavajnil taj 7une, yu7n chavak'be chapajbe ochel lavat 7une," xi la ti me7el 7une.

"7Aa, ka7i che7e," xi la 7une. 7Ichan 7o la ti krem 7une, 7ispas xa yech ta 7otro jun 7ak'ubal 7un, 7i ja7 yech 7ip'jjub 7o j-set' 7i krem 7une, 7i vokol 7i chan ti k'usi ta spas 7une, ja7 yech 7une.

"7O la jun jnibak ti vo7nee ya7yoj la jun kwento, ti mu xich' malael ti ch'ulelal ju-jun Santoe, 7ispas la yech, 7ispas preva, mi melel, ti chtal yik'otik li ch'ulelale, 7ital la jun Santo, 7ismala la ti ch'ulelale, 7iyak'be la tzov7 vakax, 7imuy la ta te7, ta la sk'el, mi melel, ti xva7et tal stuk ti ch'ulelale, yak'uk la yik' muel y te7, ti yajnile, mu la sk'an ti 7antze, te la 7ikom ta yut na, ta 7o7ol 7ak'ubal 7imal ti 7animae, 7ik'ot 7i7och ta yut na. "Mi li7ote?" x7utat 7a li 7antze.

"Li7one," xi.
"Bu batem?"
"Batem, lok'em ech'el," xi la.
"Bwéno, buy li jve7ele?" xi. "Mi ja7 ta jlajes, li tzov7 vakaxe, yu7un k'ajom jun k'in lital, mu sbatel 7osiluk chiyul," xi la ti 7animae.
"Mu jna7, ja7 yech 7iyak' komel," xi la ti 7antze.

"Bwéno, jk'eltik kik, mi sbatel 7osil li7oxuke tek lajesik li tzov7 vakaxe," xi la 7un. "7A li vo7one chibat 7oy kamikotak, te ta jk'el buch'u xisk'elanbe jve7el,' xi la. 7Ibat la, 7ilok' la ech'el, 7iyal la ta te7 ti vinike, ya7yoj skotol ti k'usitik 7iyal ti 7animae, 7iyal ta te7, ti vinike, 7isakub 7osil cholop xa spat, xkokon, mu yorauk 7un.

"Chicham ya7el pasensia," xi la ti vinike. "Chibat jk'el jka7 7a ti mi lisut tale, lisut tal, 7a ti mi7n mu7yuke, muk' xisut tale, te xbat 7ak'elikon," xi la ti vinike. 7Ibat la, mu la bu sut tal, te la 7icham ta k'el-ka7, ba la sk'elik, te la pak'al, ta balamil, ja7 yech.
They went to look. He was lying on the ground. That's how he died. The spirit came to take him away.

I have translated Santo here and elsewhere as All Souls’ Day though it is really a three-day period including Halloween and All Saints’ Day. In every home a table serving as an altar is covered with the favorite food and drink of the deceased. Great netfuls of fruit are carried to the graveyard, where the fruit is placed on the graves. Candles are lit, the responsories are chanted by the sacristans (in Zinacantan Center), and quantities of cane liquor are consumed. In the Church of St. Lawrence a large table is studded with flickering candles for the souls that died without surviving kin.

Stories of the dire consequences that attend the failure to feed the spirits on All Souls’ Day must be a standard element of Middle American folk literature, yet almost none have been published. A Sayula Popoluca man who neglected to feed his wife’s spirit repented and reformed after seeing and hearing a host of spirits complaining of their harsh fate (Clark, 1961:93-98). A Tepehua’s repentance under similar circumstances came too late to save his life (Williams Garcia, 1972:96-98). Two tales of the fatal neglect of spirits on All Souls’ Day were collected in Yucatan (M. Redfield, 1937:18-19).

The Revolution

War broke out once. There was an officer in the courthouse. He came to ask for men to carry baggage all the way from Ba Stentej [Upper Meadow]. Men were called up. They were forced to go. They didn’t want to go very much, because of the dispute. The baggage arrived. The soldiers arrived at the courthouse. “See here, Magistrate,” they said. “Now, today we are camping in Zinacantan Center,” they said. The magistrate was frightened. He returned home. Old Petul Tzu of Naben Chauk [Thunderbolt Lake] came. He tried his best.

“But what are you scared of? Sit down! Listen to good advice,” said Old Petul Tzu.

Well, the magistrate never overcame [his fear].

So, Old Petul made a big issue of it. He was installed as magistrate. He gave orders. He did all there was to be done in the war.

All the soldiers came, the Obregónists. They placed a cannon next to Old Selso’s house. They fired the cannon. The Pinedists went up into the hills. They went to Na Joj [Raven House]. They shot at the Obregónists from the top of Na Joj.

Then the Obregónists went climbing up the hills. Stealthily they went.

Now the Pinedists were lying on their stomachs on the top of the hill. [Nearly] all the Pinedists died, the others went to Ventana [Window]. The Obregónists returned. They came to their emplacement. Pineda returned to the top of Na Joj. Half remained at Ventana. The Obregónists fired a cannon. Many of the Pinedists died. One group of the Pinedists was stationed at the tip of Na 7Ichin [Horned Owl House]. They shot towards [the town]. Another group was at 7Ak’ol Mukenal [Upper Graveyard].

First they sprayed bullets at the top of Na Joj, then they shot at the top of Na 7Ichin, then they shot at 7Ak’ol Mukenal.
The Obregónists chased the group of Pinedists at Ventana on foot. They went and fired towards Ventana. [The Pinedists] were left stretched out. The Pinedists fled. They reached San Cristóbal. They shut themselves up. They entered the houses. They were driven all the way to Comitan.

Then the trouble ended. But [the Obregónists] stole many sheep. They stole chickens. They stole horses. They stole skirts. They made them into tortilla bags, but they weren't even washed! [The Obregónists] cooked at Vo7-ch'oj Vo7 [Five Springs]. The poor corpses were lying on the ground. Looters came. They took off their watches. They took their money. They took the gold teeth of all the corpses. Everything. They picked up many rifles. Everything. That's how the trouble ended long ago.

Romin was embarrassed to tell me about the Mexican Revolution because he only knew what he had heard from his mother, who, he said, still remembered it vividly.

The battle between the revolutionary soldiers loyal to Obregón, and General Pineda, commander of the reactionary forces of San Cristóbal, was fought on 1 May 1924. As Romin's account agrees essentially with others here, but is much briefer, I will defer further comments until later. See also T112, T148, T152, T154, and their notes.

A Lick and a Poke

There was a man, newlywed. He slept with his wife in their bed. They fucked at night.

Now they had a cow tethered next to their house in front of the window.

Now when they had finished giving it to each other, “Hey, sweet!” she said to her husband. “What, honey?” he said.

“My pussy is dirty now. I'm going to let the cow lick it,” said the wife. The wife stuck her ass out the window, next to her bed. The cow licked it. “Ouch!” she said. “The cow's tongue hurts so badly,” she said.


“Well, the bastard won't go anywhere. I'll kill it!” said the husband. He picked up his machete, went out and quickly cut off the cow's head. The poor cow died. It wasn't its fault. It was because the wife had a lover. She said it was the cow's horn that was put up her. It wasn't. [It was] her lover's prick. It was too thick. That's why her pussy was ripped more. The poor cow suffered in vain. The lover had fled. That's how the story ends.
When Zinacantecs Rode Home on Horseback

Once there was a war. Who knows if the war began in Tabasco or where. It came nearer. It came nearer to Zinacanántan Center. It passed on. There was a battle there. They fired on each other.

They fought hard. The army that was pursued fled up [to Zinacantán].

Now the soldiers, the commander, seized many [men to serve as] porters. The poor Zinacantecs went to deliver the packs. The packs were carried. They went as far as the [Guatemalan] border.

Now the army that was pursued reached an ocean. Then they gained the advantage. The others, the army that came up in pursuit was about to reach them. The ones who were immersed in the water couldn't be killed. The ones who were on land were killed. A great many died. They died. They were worn out. Now they had no way to succeed. So many had died. They fired cannons at them, too, but not even with them were they able to win now. They were finished. They were faint with exhaustion. Their bullets had run out now.

So when the porters, our poor countrymen, saw that the soldiers in the army had grown weak, it seems, they made plans. "Can't you do anything?" one asked, since they had been saying "I'm going back. I'm, going back."

"Oh, if you go back I'll kill you first!" they were told. That's how they regained their courage. They battled there.

Now they couldn't win any more. So they asked each other if there were somebody who could do something. One of them spoke, "Me, I can be a little thunderbolt," he said.

"Ah! And you?" they said.

"Me, I can't do anything at all. I'm terribly stupid," said [one].

"But even the least thing will help if you can do a little something," said Thunderbolt.

"I can't do anything at all," he said.

"Go on then, move aside, idiot, I don't want you to come, to come with me here. Don't come bothering me!" said Thunderbolt. "If you can't be of any help, move aside!" he said. "And you, can you do anything?" he asked another of his companions.

"Me, I can't do anything. I can only be a little butterfly," he said.

"Oh, but that will certainly do!" he said. "And you?" he asked another.

"Me, I am a whirlwind," he said.

"Oh hell, as for you, we'll go together!" he said. "And you?" he asked another of his friends.

7Entonces, k'al 7iyil ti yu7un xa 7iyochik ti j7ak'-k'ok' j-chop 7une, 76ra 7a ti j7ikatznometik 7une, ti povre jchi7iltaktik ya7el 7une, 7isnopik la 7un. "Mi mu k' xana7?" xi la ti jun 7une. K'usi yu7un la "Chisut chisut," xiik 7ox 7un.

"7A, sutan vo7ot, ba7yi chajmil!" yu7un la x7utatik 7un. Yecho ti 7ispasik tzatzal 7une, 7iyak'ik k'ok' te yo7 7une.

"7Ora, mu xa xu7 yu7unik 7une, ja7 7isjak'be sbaik ti buch'u, mi 7u k' usi sna7 7une, 7iyal la li jun 7une. "Vo7one jna7 j-set' chauk," xi la 7un.

"7A, 7a li vo7ot 7une?" xi la.

"Vo7one batz' i mu k'usi jna7, batz' i yech sonsoon," xi la.

"Pero bal batz' i j-set'uk mi 7u k'usi j-set'uk xana7," xi la, ti chauk 7une.

"Yu7un batz' i ch'abal," xi la.

"Batan che7e, k'ej abapendéjo, mu jk'an chatal la, xtal jchi7not li7 toe mu xtal 7asa7 joll!" xi la ti chauk 7une. "Mi mu k'usi balot 7oe, k'ej ab!" xi la 7un.

"7A li vo7ote k'usi xana7 j-set'uk?" xut la ti jun xchi7il 7une.

"Vo7one mu k'usi jna7, k'ajom jna7 j-set' i pepene," xi la.

"7A pero xu7 bi al!" xi la. "7A li vo7ote?" xut la ti jun.

"7A li vo7one sutum 7ik' on," xi la.

"7A karájo, 7a li vo7ote che7e, ta jchi7in jbatik!" xi la. "7A li vo7ote?" xut la ti jun xchi7il.
"Me, the only thing I can be is a little tornado," he said.

Oh well, fine then! There are three of us who are good. Let's find out, I guess, about one or so more.

So, "And you, what can you do?" he asked another of his friends.

"Me, I can be a little blowfly," he said.

"Oh, that's fine!" he said. "Well, and you, what can you be?"

"I can be a little something, but the only thing I can be is a hawk!" he said.

"Oh damn, let's go together, I guess. But we can't reject him," said that Thunderbolt. "You're a bit of a help, you can tag along," said Thunderbolt.

They talked it over and agreed that the soldiers were done in.

They went to speak to the leader of the troops.

"Well, sir, are you worn out now? Have you done all you can? We will help you a little if you want us to. We'll make a try, I guess, ourselves, and see if we can do it," said Thunderbolt.

"Do you mean it?" said the leader of the troops.

"Yes, sir, we'll try it out a little," he said.

"Oh, go ahead, then!" he said, since many had been killed already by that army that was immersed in the water. Since the first army was on land, that's why more of them had died.

"Well, we are going, then, with the agreement that we'll just fight three hours," he said.

"Fine!" said the leader of the troops.

"Well, we beg you to fix our meal when we have finished fighting, it seems, [when] we have re-

"All right!" he said.

"Let's go, but don't let a single soldier go near that place!" said Thunderbolt.

"All right!" said the leader of the troops.

When they had drawn near, they went on [by themselves]. They reached the border. Butterfly left. They sent him off. He went gliding along the seacoast. He returned. He came to report [to them].

"What are they doing?" asked the elders.

"Oh, they are scattered on the beach. They have come out. They are cooking their food contentedly. They are scattered there warming themselves happily in the sun."

"Ah!" they said. "I guess you should go now, Hawk!" they said. Hawk left. Hawk went soaring off.

"What are they doing?" asked the elders again when Hawk came back.

"They are spread out there, happily," he said.

"Well, I guess you should go now, Blowfly," the blowfly was told. Blowfly left. He went to that place. They were well satisfied. Their meal was cooking.

"7A li vo7one jna7 j-set' k'ajom no 7ox liki-chob," xi la.

"7A bwéno, lek che7e, 7ox-vo7otik lek taj 7a, ka7itik ka7itik xa junuk," xi la.

7Entónsé, "7A li vo7ote k'usi xana7?" xut la ti jun xchi7ile.

"Vo7one jna7 j-set' 7unen yaxal vo," xi la.

"7A lek bi 7a!" xi la. "Bwéno, 7a li vo7ote k'usi xana7?" xi la.

"Jna7 j-set' pero xik no 7ox jna7 vo7on a7a!" xi.

"7A kere, jchi7in jbatik kik 7un, pero mu xu7 xa jch'aytik taj a7a," xi la taj chak 7une. "Baltik j-tz'uje, tek nap'etan," xi la ti chak 7une.

Bwéno, 7istzob la sk'opik 7un ti yu7un xa 7ilaj chillik ti j7ak'-k'ok' 7une.

Bwéno, ba la sk'oponik 7un ti totil j7ak'-k'ok' 7une. "Bwéno, senyor, 7a lavie mi lalubzajik xa, mi 7ech' xa lav7onik 7une, chajkoltaik 7unin j-set'uk mi xak'anike, ta jpas kik preva ta jutkitokítok 7aver mi mu xu7," xi la ti chak 7une.

"Mi yech 7aval?" xi la ti totil j7ak'-k'ok' 7une.

"Yech senyor, ta jpastikôtik preva j-set'uk," xi la.

"7A xu7 che7e!" xi la 7une. Kómo ti yu7un xa 7ep 7ilajik 7o 7une, ja7 taj tz'ajal ta vo7 taj-j-chop 7une, ja7 ti tzba balamkil chak' k'ok' li j-chop 7une, yech'o ti mas 7ep 7ilaj 7une.

Bwéno, chibattikótik che7e, trate no 7ox 7oxib 7ora chitajinotikótik," xi la 7une.

"Bwéñol!" xi la ti totil j7ak'-k'ok' 7une.

Bwéno, 7aboljanik jk'antik mélzankan jve7el ti mi7n laj tajjinotikótik ya7el 7une, chisutotikótik tal 7un," xi la 7une.

"Bwéñol!" xi la.

"Battik la 7un, pero mi ja7uk jun soltero mu me xnopoj te yo7 7une!" xi la ti chauk 7une.

"Stak!'!" xi la ti totil j7ak'-k'ok' 7une.

Bwéno, 7ibatik la 7un, k'al nopol xa 7une, 7ik'otik ta Raya 7une, 7ibat la 7istakik la ech'el 7a li pepene, te la xjayet 7ijelav ta ti7 mar, sut la tal 7un, yul la yal 7un. "K'usi tzpasik?" xi la ti moletik 7une.

"7Aa, te lamajítik ta ti7 mar, lok'ëmik jun yo7on ta slakan sve7elik, jun yo7on la tay lamalik tzk'atanik k'ak'al," xi la ti pepene.

"7A!" xi la. "Batan xa kik vo7ot, xikli!" xi la. Bat la ti xik 7une, xjayet la ech'el ti xik 7une. "K'usi tzpasik?" xi la ti moletik noxtok k'al yul tal ti xik 7une.

"Te te lamalik jun yo7onik," xi la 7un.

"Bwéno, batan xa kik vo7ot 7un che7e, 7a li yaxal vo," x7utat la ti yaxal vo 7une. 7ibat la ti yaxal vo 7une, 71ech' la te yo7 7une, jin la yo7on lajal ti sve7elik 7une.
So, quickly, Blowfly laid eggs in the food. They saw it. Just maggots appeared. “Oh, hell, the enemy has come again!” they said. “There’s no time left!” they said. Right off they went back into the ocean. They submerged themselves in the water again.

“Well, let’s wait, I guess!” they said, because they were waiting for their enemies to approach again.

“What are they doing?” that Blowfly was asked when he arrived.

“They’ve gone in now. They went into the water. They submerged in the water now. And it’s just because they are upset, because I left maggots in the food,” he said.

“Oh, fine! If that’s the case it won’t be long before we get into the act,” they said.

“Oh, good, let’s go, then!” the three elders said to each other.

Now Tornado left. Tornado finished scooping out the water, but you couldn’t see what scooped the water out. The water just seemed to come out by itself.

Whirlwind arrived. Whirlwind was one terrific whirlwind. Now Thunderbolt was cracking here and there. Ohh, Tornado finished hurling the soldiers leagues away. The ocean was just left dry. “So we won!” said the elders. They came back. “Well, sir, go see for yourselves! See how it was left. We were able to do a little by ourselves,” said the elders.

“Is that right?” said the leader.

“Yes, sir, go see for yourselves. Go and make sure!” they said.

“All right!” said the gentleman. They went. Lord, nothing was left! The enemy was gone. “Well, this is wonderful!” said the leader of the troops.

When they returned, they ate. The elders feasted.

The elders were given horses. They returned. Mounted on horseback, they returned. As for the leader of the troops, he came with his tumpline fastened. It was he who carried back the baggage! Now it was the soldiers who carried back the tortillas, the posol and everything. So they came on foot. They just came walking back on foot. But our countrymen, the Zinacantecs, just came on horseback. Then the dispute ended like that.

Two Jacaltec tales contain elements so similar to this legend, told to Romin by his father, that there is clearly a pan-Mayan tradition. The heroes of the first version are two elders, Señor Juan and an anonymous assistant, both humble porters mustered by the President of Guatemala. The soldiers, awed by the elders’ display of power as Thunderbolts, offer to carry their packs while they march to the President. The elders demand that only seven soldiers accompany them to show them the enemy hiding in the middle of the ocean. The two Thunderbolts strike the water and dry it up, turning water to blood. They spare a few for “seed.” Then they return to the edge of their town, where they turn to stone. In the second version, much as in the Zinacantec legend, one of the elders exclaims, “If only there was some little thing I knew—but then, I am very stupid.” (La Farge and Byers, 1931:119-124). The Chorti, too, speak of armies submerging in the ocean for protection (Fought, 1972:356).
From the Quiche colonial chronicle, *Title of the House of Ixquin-Nehaib*, comes a scene that heralds the contemporary Jacalteco, Chorti, and Zinacanteco legends. Gucumatz, a Quiche chief, transformed himself into an eagle and plunged into the ocean, where he remained briefly to prove to his soldiers that he could conquer even the ocean (Recinos, 1957:80-81).

The contrast between the Zinacanteco riding home victoriously on horseback while the soldiers carry their packs recalls the lines from the *Popol Vuh*, "The towns fell and took up the tumpline . . . And all the tribes took up the tumpline." (Edmonson, 1971:236-237). Until recent times Indians in the Chiapas highlands were forbidden to ride horseback. Even today a mounted Indian is a somewhat unusual sight.

It is possible that this and other legends of wars with Guatemala were kept alive by the Soconusco border dispute between Mexico and Guatemala in the mid-nineteenth century, though there is no evidence that Zinacantecos were involved. See also T160 and notes.

**The Man Who Took the Spook’s Wings**

Once there was a man who went to the lowlands. He was returning from the lowlands. He had many mules. He unloaded them half way up the mountain. He piled up all his packs there half way up the mountain where he [was going to] sleep.

The man slept. And he ate contentedly before he went to bed.

Now that night was coming he got very scar—red. He shoo—k. He was qua—king now terribly.

"God, My Lord, what’s going to happen to me later on tonight?" he said.

He had a gun.

Well, he ate plenty before going to bed. He slept. He slept in the midst of his packs. He lay his gun down at his side when he went to bed.

Because he was tired he fell asleep. He slept. And when he woke up there was a Spook squatting there at the fireside eating. He had put aside some leftover beans for the night, thinking he would eat them the next day. When he woke up, the Spook was having a good meal. He was squatting and eating happily.

"Oh, no! But what can I do about that?" said [the man]. And quickly he picked up his gun. Quickly he sent bullets whizzing after [the Spook].

The Spook’s chest was well peppered with bullets. Oh, the Spook fle—w off now. He went to the other side of the mountain. The moon was very bright. It was light. The man had seen where the Spook landed.

When dawn came he went to look. He took up his gun. We went, went to look. [The Spook] was squatting in a gully. Squatting there in the gully, the Spook was bandaging his chest.

When the man arrived carrying his gun, "Ooh, don’t kill me!" said the Spook. "Don’t do that! I’ve already been hit, but look at the size of the bullet wounds," he said.

"What a bastard! Why shouldn’t you be shot, you bastard! Why did you come scaring me in the dark? What are you looking for?" said the man.

"Well, if you want [me] to, I’ll give you lots of money, but not if you mean to kill me. Only if you let
me go free, then I'll give you lots of money," said the Spook.

"Well, give it to me then, as much money as you want. Give it to me! Then I surely won't kill you," said the man. He was given money. He was given lots of money. The Spook gave it to him. First the man took the money and then he sent bullets whizzing after him again. He peeped at him with bullets again.

[The Spook] died. Then the man cut the Spook into little pieces.

He looked at him, turned him over, turned him around. There was something on his heels. "What could that be?" he said. "Could that be his flying apparatus?" said the man. He took the things off his heels, the Spook's flying apparatus, it seems. He stuck them on his own heels. And then he stuck them on his heels . . . since maybe he wanted to go look to see where the home of the Spook's wings was, wanted to return them to their home.

The man stuck them on his heels. Maybe he thought it was a good idea.

Now when he finished sticking them on his heels, one after another, he flew. Gliding off now, he left. It was the Spook's wings that carried him away, it seems. He left. He arrived in Guatemala.

"What are you looking for?" asked the people there in Guatemala.

"I'm not looking for anything. It happened like thus and so. A spook went and scared me a bit. I don't know why," he said.

"Oh, but that one, you see, he left in a hurry. But I saw him. He was standing here just at dusk," said the people there.

"I certainly don't know. I saw him like I told you. He went and scared me," said the man. "That's why I killed him," he said.

"Go on, then!" said the people. "Go! Now you have your money. You [can] return, you [can] go enter your house," they said.

Well, the man was elated now that he got lots of money. On and on he came. He came from very far.

"Well, I'll let everyone know what the Spook is like, how far [the wings] carried me," he said.

Well, he came. He returned home. There wasn't any trouble at all. He just returned to show his money.

Well, he returned to tell his children what had happened to him. "The Spook did this and this and this to me," he said when he returned.

Well, that's the way it was. They still talk about it, about how it is true that a man once hit the Spook with bullets. That's why it was left that way. He told his children about it. That's why [it has been handed down] till today just like that.

chakoltaon 7o komel, chakak'be 7ep tak'ine;" xi la.

"Bwéno 7ak'bon che7e, k'u yepal sk'an 7avo7on tak'ine, 7ak'bon, 7entöse muk' chajmil 7un bi 7a," xi la ti vinik 7une. 7I7ak'bat la tak'ín, 7epal tak'ín la 7ak'bat, yak' ti j7ík'al 7une, ba'yi7 yiich' ti tak'ín 7une, ja7 7o 7isjisbe bala noxtok 7un, le—k 7islambe bala noxtok 7un.

Bwéno, 7icham, te sp'asulan ti j7ík'al 7une.

Bwéno, 7éste, 7ísk'el la svalk'un ssutp'in, 7éste, 7o la k'usi 7oy te ta xchak yok 7un. "K'usi van le7e?" xi la. "Mi ja7 van svileb?" xi 7un, xi la ti vinik 7une. 7ísk'elssbe la ti k'usi 7oy ta xchak yok 7une, ti svileb ya7el ti j7ík'al 7une, 7isnap'an la ta xchak yok 7uk 7un, 7i k'alal 7isnap'an ta xchak yok 7une kómo ta nan sk'an 7a k'el ti buy ti sna ti svileb ti j7ík'al 7une, sk'an sutesel ta sna 7un.

Bwéno, 7ísnap'an ta xchak yok ti vinik 7une, xák'uk nan lekuk 7un.

7Óra, k'alal laj snáp'annáp'an ta xchak yok 7une, 7ívil 7un, xjaye—t xa ech'el 7íbat, ja7 xa 7ík'van ech'el ti svileb ya7el ti j7ík'al 7une, 7íbat, 7ík'ot k'al Watimala.

Bwéno, "K'u chasa7?" xi la ti krixchanoetik te ta Watimala.

"Mu k'usi ta jsa7, ja7 yech ja7 yech chak li7e 7a ssibtason jutuk j7ík'al mu jna7 k'u yu7un," xi la.

"7Áa, pero taje k'uxi bat ta 7anil pero kil to 7oxe li7 me xva7et lek 7oresyontik 7un taje," xi la ti krixchanoetik te yo7 7une.

"Mu jna7 7un a7a, ja7 yech kil chak le7e 7a ssibtason," xi la ti vinik 7une. "Yech'o xal 7un, 7ijmil 7un," xi la.

Bwéno, 7i "Batan che7e!" xi la ti krixchanoetik 7une. "Batan, lavi 7oy 7atak'ine xasut ochel xak'ot ta 7ana," xi la.

Bwéno, 7a ti vinik 7une, xmuviyaj xa 7ísta 7ep tak'in, 7ítal 7un, 7ital, 7ital ta j-mek 7un.

Bwéno, "Bwéno ta xkalbe ya7i bik'it muk' ti k'u x7elan ya7el li j7ík'ale, k'e snatil liyik' tal," xi la.

Bwéno, 7ítal la 7un, yul la ta sna 7un, 7a li mi ja7uk 7o 7e7este k'usi k'op, ch'abal, k'ajom yul yak' 7iluk i stak'ine.

Bwéno, yul yalbe xch'amaltak ti k'u spase. "Ja7 me yech ja7 yech i j7ík'al 7ixcha7le chak li7e," xi la yulel.

Bwéno, 7íkom 7o yech 7un bi, 7i 7ástá 7óra ke ta to slo7ítalak yech 7un ti yu7un yech ti staoj ta bala jun vinik ti vo7ne ya7el ti j7ík'al 7une, yech'o 7un ja7 7íkom, ja7 7íslo7ítalbe komel ti xch'amaltak 7une, ja7 yech k'al tana chak taj 7une.
This tale of a Chamulan taking the Spook's wings is reminiscent of a Chamulan tale in which a flying devil gives his wings to a Tenejapan. They address each other warmly as compadres, but the Tenejapan serves his devilish friend a meal so hot that he expires in agony. The Tenejapan hides in the ocean, but is discovered by the devil's friends who flourish their razor sharp knives, kill him, and take his body home to feast on (Gossen, T7). The mention of knives lends support to Sarah Blaffer’s theory that Spooks are really bats, for among the trials of the heroes of the Popol Vuh is the House of Bats:

There was nothing but bats inside the house,
A house full of Death Bats,
Huge beasts.
Like knives were their fangs,

One wonders if the bat that was the symbol of Zinacantan at the time of the Conquest became, under Catholic instruction, the devil. In Acala today both Zinacantecs and vampire bats are called "chinacos." And two legends from Chiapa de Corzo describe how the town of Ostuta, that once stood near Acala, was destroyed by thousands of huge black bats (Navarrete, 1964:322–324). Perhaps this refers to an historical incursion of Zinacantecs.

These conjectures have been given substance by my recent discovery in the Diccionario en lengua sotzil that Zinacantan had two names, coitezem (Sotz'leb) “Place of Bats” and ye'kal oghouh (7Ik'al 70jov), “Black Lord,” (Diccionario, n.d.:5, 78). See also T124 and notes.

**A Bottle Won't Do**

There was another woman, too, one who was just the same [as the one] I told you about. She had just the same evil ways like the first one. She didn’t want to be spoken to nor did she want to respond to men, because she had a half pint bottle. “But it’s better with this. I think I'll see. I'll stick the bottle up,” she probably thought to herself. In the night she went and stuck the bottle up herself.

Then after she kept shoving the bottle in and out for a long time, probably, the bottle got air in it. The bottle was sucked in by itself. Then the whole bottle was going in. She was screaming and crying now. Because she couldn’t pull the bottle out. Then it was discovered, too, what her evil ways were. She probably thought it would feel good. That pussy of hers simply came bulging out. And that’s how it was discovered, too, when she was screaming. She went to have the bottle broken, but now it was known. Now she showed what her evil ways were. It was somebody else now, her father, her mother who went and broke the bottle. Then she recovered. The whole bottle should have gone in. That’s what the people said long ago. That’s the story they tell.

As noted earlier the verb k'opon, “to speak to,” is a euphemism for engaging in sexual relations. I am not certain whether the conditional phrase 7a ti ye'quotek indicates that had the bottle not been broken it “would have” entered entirely or whether I am correct in translating it as “should have,” expressing Romin’s outrage at the woman’s unnatural behavior. See also T133, T134, and their notes.

**The Charcoal Cruncher**

Once there was a man. He had a wife. The woman went out to crunch charcoal every night. She went out all the time. The man woke up. He shook his wife. She didn’t move. He spoke to her. He touched her head—no head.

Then he carefully prepared salt, tobacco, and garlic. He put it on her flesh. The woman’s head returned from crunching charcoal. It didn’t stick on anymore. The woman got mad. Quickly [her head] went and stuck on next to her husband’s head.

The poor man walked with two heads. The man went hunting in the woods. A deer came along. Quickly the woman’s head jumped off. The deer left, carrying it away. [That was the end of it] to this day.
Romin's abbreviated account of the Charcoal Cruncher is told with none of the other storytellers' emotional involvement. There are a number of witch tales from Puerto Rico that feature witches who remove their heads or their skins, often to indulge their necrophagous appetites at the cemetery. They return to find that their flesh has been rubbed with salt and chili. Their skin is burnt so badly that they quickly die. (Hansen, 1957, 749B; Mason and Espinosa, 1926:304–308: 322–323, 346–349).

The Zapotecs also rub salt on witches' flesh (Parsons, 1936:366). From both the Mixe and Mixtecs come stories of male and female witches whose heads depart. The Mixe witches mistakenly affix their spouse's head on their own neck (Radin and Espinosa, 1917:151). The Mixtec witch heads sally out in the dark to devour babies and upon their return also attach mistakenly onto their spouses' body (Dyk, 1959:99–104). A Chamulian tale recounts the plight of a young man who discovers his bride to be a Charcoal Cruncher. The problem is resolved when the groom's father-in-law returns the brideprice to him and takes his unnatural daughter back home (Gossen, T19).

The concoction of salt, tobacco, and garlic is also considered efficacious in Zinacantan for ridding the town of the devils known as yalem bek'et, “Fallen Flesh.” See also T81, T82, and their notes, T47, T60, and T175.

How Rabbit Tricked Coyote

There was a rabbit who came to steal fruit. The owner of the fruit arrived. The rabbit was caught and tied up. “Tomorrow [I] will come and kill it,” said the owner of the fruit. A coyote arrived.

“Have you come, Coyote?” asked Rabbit.

“I've come,” he said. “Ah, what are you doing?” asked Coyote.

“I'm not doing anything. I was caught. I was tied up,” said Rabbit. “I didn't do anything. I'm not guilty. I'm being given a girl. I'm being awarded a girl. But I don't want her,” said Rabbit. “If you want to stay in my place, I'll bind you up well, just the way I'm bound, if you want to take the girl yourself,” said Rabbit.

“I do want her,” said Coyote.

“Ah, if you want, then, I'll leave you tied up to the tree trunk here. Then you wait for your fiancée. They will come to give her to you,” said Rabbit.

“Do you mean it?” asked Coyote.

“I mean it. They say that the girl is very beautiful. Why don't you wait for her?” said Rabbit.

“Well, all right then,” said Coyote. Then he stayed tied to the tree trunk. The owner of the fruit came, carrying his machete.

“Now indeed the fruit stealer will die!” said the man. But Coyote was really scared.


“Where are you going?” asked Rabbit.

“Bastard, you still talk to me? You tricked me well. Where is the girl they were going to bring?” asked Coyote.

“When did I tell you?” asked Rabbit.

“That time you tricked me,” said Coyote.

“Ah, but forget it, forgive me. I won't do anything to you. Don't eat me,” said Rabbit. “If you want, [why don't] you go see a fiesta, because I'm getting married,” said Rabbit.

7O la j-kot t’ul ta la xk’ot yelk’an lo7bol, 7ik’ot yajval ti lo7bole 7itake, 7ichuke ti t’ule. “7Ok’ob xtal yich’ milel,” xi la ti yajval lo7bole. 7ital la j-kot 7ok’i1.

“Mi latal, 7ok’i1?” xi la ti t’ule.

“Lital,” xi la. “7Aa, k’usi chapas?” xi la ti 7ok’ile.

“Mu k’usi ta jpas, yu7un litzake lichuke,” xi la ti t’ule, “Mu k’usi jpas ch’abal jmul, chi7ak’bat jun tzeb, yu7un chik’elanbat jun tzeb, pero yu7un mu jk’an li vo7on 7une,” xi la ti t’ule. “Mi xak’an vo7ote koman ta jk’exol, chajpech’ komel lek k’u cha7al pech’bilon vo7one, mi xak’an xavik’ vo7ot ti tzebe,” xi la ti t’ule.

“7Aa li vo7one ta jk’an,” xi la ti 7ok’ile.

“7Aa ti mi chak’ane che7e, chajtiman komel li7 ta yok te7e, te xamala lalekom 7une, te xtal yak’belot 7un,” xi la ti t’ule.

“Mi yech 7aval?” xi la ti 7ok’ile.

“Yech kal, batzi lekek la sba ti tzebe, tek malao 7un,” xi la ti t’ule.

“Bweno, teyuk che7e,” xi la ti 7ok’il 7une. Te timil 7ikom ta yok te7, 7ital ti yajval lo7bole, stamoj tal smachita.

“7Ora si, 7a li j7elek’ lo7bole, li7 ta xlaj 7une!” xi la ti vinike. Pero batzi xi7 la ti 7ok’ile.

“Dyos, li7 xa chilaj 7une, 7ijch’un xa li lo7loele, mi ja7 tzeb le7on 7une?” xi la ti 7ok’ile. 7isjipulan la sba 7ikol ta vokol li 7ok’ile, 7ibat la 7ijatav, 7otro jun bwelta 7isnup la ta be, ti 7ok’ile.

“Bu k’al chabat?” xi la ti t’ule.

“Kavron ta to xak’oponon, lek 7alo7loon, bu li tzeb chtal yak’ele?” xi la ti 7ok’ile.

“K’u 7ora lakalbe?” xi la ti t’ule.

“7A li 7alo7loone che7e,” xi la ti 7ok’ile.

“7Aa pero yi7if lajuk lavo7one, mu xajpas yech, mu xati7on,” xi la ti t’ule. “Mi xak’an ba k’elo k’iin yu7un chinupun,” xi la ti t’ule.
When are you getting married?” asked Coyote.
“Oh, I’m getting married late this afternoon,” said Rabbit.
“I’ll go then,” said Coyote. He forgave [Rabbit].
“Exactly where are you getting married?” he asked.
“Oh there in the middle of the [tall] grass,” he said.
“Well, is it for sure?” asked Coyote.
“Well, certainly,” said Rabbit. Rabbit went off to bring matches. He went to encircle the grass with 
fire. Ooh, then Coyote got burned. Then he went howling. Rabbit fled. Away [he went] laughing and 
laughing. Coyote escaped from the fire. His fur was burned.
“But he isn’t going anywhere. I’ll eat him up for 
sure!” said Coyote. He met [Rabbit] again on the 
trail. “Now I’ll eat you up for sure. Why did you 
trick me so?” asked Coyote.
“What do you mean? I’m not the one. I’ve never 
seen you. I’ve never met you on the trail. It’s 
probably someone else. Look here, my clothes are 
different,” said Rabbit.
“Do you mean it?” said Coyote.
“I mean it, it’s not me. It must be someone else. I 
don’t know you. I’ve got a good heart,” said Rabbit.
“As for me, I speak like a man. If you want, let’s 
go drink up the water there in the well. If we finish 
drinking it all up they say there is a pretty girl. We’ll 
find her then,” said Rabbit. They drank the water.
“Me, I’m full already. Your stomach is bigger. Try 
hard! Finish up the water,”said Rabbit. Coyote tried hard.
“My belly can’t take any more. I’m full now.
“Try harder, because the girl will be yours if you 
can finish the water,” said Rabbit. Coyote got terri-
ribly full. He couldn’t walk anymore, but Rabbit was 
laughing and laughing.
“But where is the girl?” asked [Coyote].
“You’ve about [done it]. Try harder!” When 
[Coyote’s] belly was about to burst, Rabbit ran off.
“Ha, ha, ha, I just tricked you,” said Rabbit. He 
left. That’s how the story ended.

Rabbit’s bag of tricks is filled here with old ones well-known 
throughout Middle America (see A. M. Espinosa, 1943; Marden, 
1896; Mechling, 1912, 1916). They are included in the set of 
linked episodes discussed in the commentary to Tale 49. See also 
T21, T49, T50, T90, T166, and their notes.

Now, White Dove, Now Is the Hour

There was a man and a woman, newlyweds. The 
husband goes out. He leaves. He travels. The wife 
stays at home happily, it seems, but she has a lover.
She is happy with her lover. The husband heard the gossip from his other friends. The husband returned home. "Wife," he said, "Look at my lice for me!" he said.

"All right," said the wife. The husband bowed his head. When his lice were being looked at, the husband pretended to be dreaming.

"Hee, hee, ha, ha!" said the man. "All right whorish woman, what's your trick? I've seen what you're doing!"

What am I doing?" asked the wife.

"You didn't tell. Your pussy told me before. You didn't tell me that you have a lover," said the husband. "Hell!" he said. "You've got a bad habit." He grabbed up his machete. He hit her with the flat of the machete. The wife cried now.

After the wife was beaten—"All right," said the wife. "You caused me to be beaten. I paid with a beating. It's your fault. I didn't say anything," said the man [when he arrived].

"Ahora no se puede esta quemado, esta quemado," said the wife. That's how the story ended long ago.

This rather sadistic story told to Romin by the same young man who told him "A Lick and a Poke" (T45) is considered equally hilarious. The connotations of lice-picking are quite different for Zinacantecs. I recall one couple distinctly enjoying the sessions when the husband would stretch out between his wife's legs, leaning his head against her breast while she searched through his hair and popped the creatures between her teeth. For this couple it was one of the few occasions of domestic intimacy and tranquility!

Of course, ya es ora could be translated more colloquially as "now's the time" or "the time's come." Both Spanish lines are sung rather than spoken.

The Spook and the Girl from San Andrés

Once there were two men who went to the lowlands. The sun set [before] the men [reached their destination]. They slept by the path at 7Anob.

Night fell and they slept on the side of the trail.

Well, when night fell, one of them had chills. He just had chi—lls. He was shivering and qua—king from the cold. "Oh, hell, I don't know why I'm shivering so from the cold. I don't know if something is going to happen to us tonight," he told his friend.

"Hell, what are you doing? Hell, aren't you a man?"
Haven’t you any balls?” [the other one] said to his friend. One of them was brave, one was. “What are we scared of? Hell, do you think something is going to come?” that one said.

“Ah!” said the other. He didn’t answer.

When night fell, the moon was bright. A terrific wind came. It was very strong.

Now they saw him. It was quite late at night. Gli—ding along, he arrived. Carried by the wind, he arrived. He landed at the foot of a big tree.

Now as for our friends [our fellow Zinacantecs], they were sleeping happily.

After he arrived he was squatting at their fireside. “In the name of God what can I do about it now?” said one [after they had waked up]. [The Spook] came [closer]. Both of them had certainly seen him. The other one [who had spoken bravely] just slept [it seemed]. He was helpless. He was paralyzed. He just lost his strength. He was helpless.

Now when [the Spook] arrived the one [who had been scared] quickly shot at him.

[The Spook] left. He flew off. He landed in a gully.

Now [the man] said to his friend, “Hurry up, [you] bastard! What are you doing? Whoever heard of such a thing? So it’s just your mouth talking to yourself. You didn’t tell the truth—that you are brave,” he told that friend of his, the fellow was told, the one who had said back in Zinacantan Center, “Are you brave?”

Well, then, that’s the way it was. He just killed [the Spook]. He just shook [his friend], but his friend was helpless. So he killed [the Spook] by himself in the gully.

Now when he returned he had already killed the Spook. He came to the fireside. He came to shake his friend. They went. Their friend woke up. They went to look at what had landed at the foot of the tree. They went to look. There was a straw mat. Something was rolled up inside the straw mat. “Hell, what could it be? Come on, let’s untie the straw mat!” the two men said to each other.

They untied it.

You know what? They found a San Andrés girl there. They took the San Andrés girl with them. They went and lit their fire for her. They let her warm up. They gave her tortillas. They fed her. They slept with her.

Now they came. They came up [to Zinacantan].

“God, where are you from?” they asked the girl.

“Ah, I’m from San Andrés. I was caught. I was caught by a Spook, because I went out to pour out my nixtamal water,” she said. “When I went outside the Spook caught me. It was he who carried me
here. So won’t you please take me back to my mother and father in San Andrés. Won’t you please take me back,” said the girl.

“Okay, why not?” those men to—Ild her.

They went, went to leave her in San Andrés. Then they arrived and met her father. “God, thank you, friends! Thank you! May God repay you for bringing my daughter back to me. She was taken off by a Spook,” said the gentleman.

Our friends [our fellow Zinacantecs] delivered the girl. “Well, thank you, friends! Thank you! Here is your meal. Drink a little!” they were told. The men were given drinks in thanks for having returned the girl, it seems. So that’s how the girl returned. She got home. That’s how it ended.

San Andrés is San Andrés Larrainzar, a Tzotzil town to the north of Zinacantan.

Nixtamal water is the water in which corn is boiled to prepare it for grinding. Lime is added so that the skins of the kernels will slip off easily.

A tale told by the Mams who live on both sides of the Guatemalan border, is the only example I know of a Spook tale from outside the Chiapas highlands that shares strong similarities with Zinacantec accounts: A “strong” boy and a “weak” boy, or let’s say a brave boy and a coward, are confronted by a “Negro.” The coward fights the “Negro,” tosses him in his fire and takes his money (Bucaro Moraga, 1959:27). Not many years ago an unfortunate Negro merchant, who ventured into the Chiapas backwoods, was waylaid by a group of Chamulans, who believing him to be a Spook, hacked him to death (de la Fuente, 1961:310). See also T123 and notes.

A Visit to the Underworld

Once there was a Chamulan whose wife died. His wife was a very good person. The man cried and cried. He wept over his wife. [When] All Souls’ Day arrived the woman came in, [came] walking into the house. “Are you here?” she asked. “What are you doing?” she asked.

“I’m not doing anything,” said the man. Then they chatted for a little while. He left the woman sitting inside the house. The man went outside. He was scared, because he was alone. For a moment the man couldn’t see. When he looked [again], there she was sitting beside him. “I’m going. Are you still here? I’m going visiting. It’s all right. You stay!” said the man. He didn’t want to talk very much, because he realized that his wife was dead. His wife was dead, but she had been sold to the Earth [Lord]. The man cleared out. The woman went crying along the trail. She came another time. She was just like a real woman.

“Where are you going?” asked the woman.

“Till I’m going anywhere. Is it true that you were sold to the Earth [Lord]? Because I miss you very much, because I’m going to [go] see you there where you have been sold,” said the man.

7Oy la jun 7ulo7, 7icham la yajnil, 7a ti yajnile, batz’il ek ta j-mek yo7on, 7a ti vinike batz’i ch7ok’, ta xok’ita ti yajnile, tal jun k’in Santo, 7i7och la tal ti 7antze, xva7et la ochel ta yut na. “Mi li7ote?” xi la. “K’u chapas?” xi la.

“Mu k’usi ta jpas,” xi la ti vinike. Te la 7ilo7ilajik j-likel, te chotol 7iyikta ta yut na, ti 7antze, 7ilok’ ta pana li vinike, 7ixi7 porke yu7un stuk, 7ich’ay j-likel ssat ti vinike, K’alal 7iyile te xa chotol ta xuxkon.

“Chibat che7e, mi li7ot toe, chibat ta vula7al, teyuk, koman,” xi la ti vinike. Mu sk’an xk’opoj lek porke yul ta sjol ti chamem xa ti yajnile, chamem ti yajnile, pero chonbil ta balamil, 7inamaj ech’el ti vinike, 7a ti 7antze, 7ibat 7ok’uk’ ta be, 7ital 7otro jun bwelta, 7entero stuk 7antze.

“Bu chabat?” xi la ti 7antze.

“Muk’ bu chibat, mi yech ti chonbilot ta balamile, yu7un batz’i chajna7, yu7un chba jk’elot ti buy chonbilote,” xi la ti vinike.
“Ah, go see me, then, I can’t say anything myself. Speak to the Earth [Lord]. Enter the cave here!” said the woman. Then the woman vanished. The man went. He entered the cave. He met [another] man on the way. He continued. He passed on by.

“Go talk to the Earth [Lord]. It’s whatever he himself says,” the [other] man said. [The husband] continued. He arrived and spoke to the Earth [Lord]. It seemed as if there was sunlight there, but who knows where it was. The man was startled. He was panic-stricken.

“How can I get out of here?” asked the man.

“What did you come looking for? You should have just talked [to me] up above,” said the Earth [Lord]. He let him go, but the man went mad. He went crazy. The man is still alive. Now he is fine.

The expression chonbil ta balamil, “sold to the Earth [Lord],” means that the man’s wife died from witchcraft. The Earth Lords have many attributes. They are “owners” of caves and springs, lords of rain, and wind, guardians of vegetation and the riches of the earth. Like the European devil they bestow both treasure and death. The Earth Lords are envisioned as thunder-bolts, serpents, and fat, rich, Ladino ranchers. In this case an Earth Lord has been persuaded by an enemy’s prayers and offerings in some remote cave to take the woman’s soul as a servant. When her period of service has ended, her soul will be freed for the final judgment.

**Not Men—Beeswax**

There is a girl named Lolen. They say she doesn’t like men. She doesn’t like to be spoken to by men nor does she want to be with men. She scolds them. She hits them. They go to speak to her when she goes to watch the sheep.

She was seen once, lying on her back under a tree. She was sticking beeswax up herself. That calmed her desire, because she didn’t like men, or something. She doesn’t like men because it is known that children are born.

But the beeswax leaves nothing behind. That’s why she does it by herself. And she was seen another time, too. She had an old dog. The male dog was sticking its head up her skirt. And they say that she has grown used to the dog. “It has seen its meal,” they say. “She probably calms her desire with her old male dog,” they say. That’s the story the people tell, that she sticks beeswax up herself, that she has grown used to her male dog, too. It sticks its nose way up her skirt. Then that male dog was wagging its tail. It was seen from the distance. Because it was seen where, lying on her back, face up, she stuck that beeswax up herself. That’s the way it is, they say.

When I asked Romin if there were any tales that were not told in the presence of women, he responded with eight stories (T132–T139). The majority of these are gossip. I have censored from this account the last name of Romin’s unnatural neighbor. The community’s disgust with her behavior is clearly communicated by Romin. See also T134, T135, and their notes.

**Long Hair**

Once there was a Long Hair in a big cave at Juteb Chauk [Bit of Thunderbolt]. He held up the trucks. They were bringing cargo. They were bringing thread. They were bringing muslin. They were bringing everything that is for sale here, here in San Cristóbal. But the Long Hair held up the trucks. Then he led them into his cave. He had a big cave.
The big cave was filled with a little bit of everything. There he guarded all the muslin, all the things that were there.

The government officials, the government decided to come and shoot him. He was to be shot. But they didn't win. They couldn't win out. “But why is it?” they asked.

So there was a man, a countryman. “But God, My Lord, but why can't they ever win? The Long Hair can't even be killed with bullets. But what can I do?” asked the man.

He fitted himself out. He left. He took with him his machete and his stave. He left. He arrived at the Long Hair's cave. When he arrived at his cave he came sweeping out. He came. He came to the entrance of his cave and stood there. [The man] greeted [the Long Hair]. He shook his hand. “Well, I've come here. How is it? Can I pass by?” asked the man.

“Oh, you can't. You will stay here,” said the Long Hair, Turnabout Foot, as they call him.

“Well, but how come? Why can't I pass by? I'm not going to steal anything,” said the man.

“Even so! If you are so terribly strong then, let's fight!” said the Long Hair.

“Well, let's see, then, I guess. Let's try it out, I guess!” said the man.

“Well, stand here, then!” said the Long Hair. He was made to stand in the middle of the road.

Now the Long Hair rose into the sky. He had a sword that he was going to stick into the man's head. When the sword approached, then the man stepped to the side. The man won with just a stave and a machete. The Long Hair grew more and more exhausted. Maybe the stave, then, is a little more effective. That Long Hair grew exhausted, he grew weak.

Now that man [fought] until he downed the Long Hair. He left him sprawled at the entrance to his cave.

That man went to tell them that trucks could pass by now, that he had opened the road. He went all the way to Mexico City to tell them.

“Are you telling the truth?” the man was asked.

“I'm telling the truth. Go see for yourselves, I'm not lying,” said the man.

“Oh, fine!” they said. The government officials came in fear. They came [with] soldiers. They came to see if it were so, if it were true.

It was so. They discovered the Long Hair sprawled there.

So, “Now a man overcame him. He won. The only thing to do is to send for a band to come. With music he will enter. Send for many trucks. All the things inside the cave here are going,” said the governor in Mexico City.

Bwéno, 7a ti muk'ta ch'ene, 7inoj ta labal k'utikuk j-set' juteb, te schabi skotol ti mantae ti k'utik 7oy ta j-meke.

Bwéno, ta 7ox snopik li jyu7eletike, li gobeyernoe ta 7ox tal yak'beik bala ta 7ox xich' bala, pero muk' skuch yu7un, muk' bu 7iyu7 yu7unik. “Pero k'u yu7un?" xiik 7un.

7Entoncé, 7oy la jun vinik, jchi7itik. “Pero dyos kajval, pero k'u yu7un ti batz'i mu xkuch yu7unike, mi ja7uk scham ta bala ti jnatikil jol 7une, pero k'usi ta jnop 7un?" xi la ti jun vinike.

Bwéno, 7ischap la sba ech'el, 7ibat, 7iyich' la ech'el jun smachita, jun yak te7 7ibat la 7un, 7ik'ot ta sch'en 7un, k'alal 7ik'ot ta sch'enke, xjayay xa la lok'el ta, 7ital, va7al 7iyul ta sti7 sch'enke, lek la 7isk'opon 7istzakbe sk'ob. “Bwéno li7 litale, k'u x7elan, mi xu7 xijelav?" xi la ti vinike.

“7Aj mu xu7, li7 chakome," xi la ti jnatikil jole ti jvalo-pat-7ok, chalik 7une.

“Bwéno, pero k'yu7un yu7el k'u yu7un ti mu xu7 xijelave, mu k'usi ta xkelk'an, xi la ti vinik.

“Manchuk ti mi yu7un toj mas tzotzote che7e, tajinkotik!" xi la ti jnatikil jole.

“Bwéno jk'eltik kik 7un che7e, jpastik preva kik!" xi la ti vinik 7une.

“Bwéno, va7lan li7 toe che7e!" xi la 7un. 71va7anat la ta 7o7lol be.

7Öra, ti jnatikil jol 7une, 7imuy la ta vinajel, 7oy la jun yespara ta la xtik'bat ta sjol ti vinike, 7a ti vinik 7une, ja7 7o la ta sk'ej sba ta xokon ti k'alal ta xtal ti 7espara 7une, naka la 7ak te7 7i machita 7ikuch 7o yu7un ti vinik 7une, mas 7ilubtzaj ti jnatikil jol 7une, li 7ak te7 che7e, mas nan xu7 yu7un j-set', 7a li taj jnatikil jol 7une, 7ilubtzaj 7une 7ik'unib 7une.

7Öra, 7a taj vinik 7une, 7ástaka leom yu7un, te chevel 7iyikta ta sti7 sch'en ti jnatikil jol 7une.

Bwéno, 7ibat yal taj vinik 7une ti xu7 xa x7ech' kar0 ti jam yu7un ti be 7une, ba yal k'alal 7olontik 7un.

Bwéno, “Mi yech 7aval?" x7utat la ti vinik 7une.

“Yech kal, ba k'el avilik mu7nuk yech ta jnop," xi la ti vinik 7une.

“7A, bwénel!" xi la 7un. Xi7em la talik ti jyu7eletike ti tal la solteroetik tal la sk'elel mi yech mi melel.

Bwéno, ke yech la te chevel 7istaik ti jnatikil jole.

Bwéno, 7entoncé, “Lavie che7e, jun vinik 7ikuch yu7un, 7ispas kanal, mu k'usi, 7ak'o ba taluk 7a li junuk banda musika, ta musika ch7och li7e, 7ak'o taluk 7epal karoetik, ta xbat skotol i k'usitik 7oy li7 ta yut ch'ene," xi la ti jyu7el ta 7olontik 7une.
Many bands came. A fine marimba came. Lots of food came for the man who had won.

Now all that they discovered packed tight inside the cave, it was all given as a present to the man. He was given all the money that was there. He was even given several thousand pesos by the government officials, by the governor, as we say.

The man entered with music. He went before the governor. He arrived to announce that the region had been opened up by him, the road had been cleared by him, that it had been cleared by one man, that he had won. So the road has been open ever since, there at Juteb Chauk. That's how the story ends.

The cave of Juteb Chauk is located on the edge of what used to be the old carriage road from Tuxtla to San Cristóbal. The new road to Pichucalco and Tabasco forks off from the Pan American Highway nearby.

That the contents of the cave should be cloth is probably a holdover from the time when cloth was the principal form of tribute to the Spaniards.

Romin speaks of the distant past as a time when the elders were "bad, but clever." They were endowed with the ability to see straight into the mountains to discover the treasures of cloth and thread until God and the Earth Lord made a pact to dim their eyes.

A similar account of the defeat of the Long Hair is told in Chamula (Gossen, T144). The battle is waged in another cave within sight of Juteb Chauk. Two sandal merchants, one armed with a stave and the other with an ax, challenge the Long Hair. They draw a cross on the ground. Each time that the Long Hair descends to recover his sword they assail him with stave and ax until he collapses. They cut off his head, cut out his heart, and throw his body to the ground while he ascends into the sky to drop his sword on the ground.

Shielded by his bulletproof hair, this representative of Zinacantec demonology has two other remarkable characteristics—his head has a face front and back and his feet have toes front and back. In another Chamulan tale he is described as cannibalic (Gossen, T106). These demons are also known in the Tzotzil towns of Chenalhó, Huituapan, and Larrainzar.

The Long Hair, known by a variety of names and assuming a variety of disguises, inhabits the spectral landscape from Oaxaca and Veracruz to Yucatan, Guatemala, and Belize. These creatures may be associated with the Aztec god of war, Huitzilopochtli, or Huichilobos as the Spaniards called him. In Veracruz they are known as chilobos, gran salvajes, or tisismite, by the Nahua. The Mixes call them salvajo (García de León, 1969:296). The Popolucas know them as hunchuts (Foster, 1945a:182). Among the Mazatec the salvajes are also black-skinned and lacking a knee joint. They can be killed by making them collapse in laughter (Laughlin, 1957).

In Yucatan occurs "Wood Man," a huge red cannibal lacking joints and sporting turnabout feet. If you pick a green branch and wave it about, dancing all the while, you can make him collapse in laughter. As he can't bend his legs, he can't regain his feet. He was reported by Berendt to be well-known also in Tabasco around Palenque, and in the Petén (Brinton, 1890:176). Among the Mazatec the salvajes are also black-skinned and lacking a knee joint. In San Luis Jilotepeque, where they are known as sisimite, they have shrunk to dwarf size but have not lost their peculiar feet or their long hair (Tumin, 1946:439). According to the Chortí the sisimite's feet are specially adapted to enable them to slide speedily down waterfalls (Fought, 1972:73–74). In Belize they go by the name of sisimito. Here too they are hairy, but only their big toe is turned backwards (J. E. Thompson, 1930:67). See also T10, T95, T158, and their notes.

The Man Who Lived a Dog's Life

Once a boy and a girl got married. They acquired many maids.

Well, the woman went out every night, but the man didn't hear his wife leave. He thought she just went outside [to pee].

It was the same every night. The man noticed it. When he went to bed he had his gun and his machete ready.

He didn't fall asleep. At midnight the woman got 

7A ti vo7ne, 7inupunik la jun krem, jun tzeb, 7issa7 7ep skriaraik.

Bwéno, 7a ti 7antze ta la xlok' ju-jun 7ak'ubal pero mu la xa7i xlok', yajnil ti vinike, xak'uk no 7ox ta xk'ot ta pana.

Bwéno, skotol 7ak'ubal yech, 7iyich' sba ta kwenta ti vinike, 7ichap vayuk jun stuk', jun smachita.

Bwéno, muk' x7och svayel, ta 7ol 7ak'ubal 7ilok' ti
up. She felt her husband’s chest to see whether he was asleep or awake. When she felt that her husband didn’t move, she went out at midnight. The man got up, too. He took his gun and his machete. He followed his wife wherever she went. “Could she have a lover?” said the man. “But I’ll kill both of them now!” he said. [His wife] went, she went very far. She arrived at the graveyard. She arrived to dig there. She tried out a corpse. She left it. She went to another and dug it up. Then she found good meat. She ate it. The man was watching from a distance. “Well, never mind. I’ve seen now what she’s doing,” said the man. “Well, never mind, I’ll go back,” he said.

He arrived home. He arrived and went to bed. He waited for his wife to return. He looked as if he were asleep. He didn’t move. His wife arrived and opened the door. She came to sleep.

“Well, where did you go?” he asked his wife.

“I went outside. I went to pee,” said the woman.

“Hell, that’s a fine thing you’re doing!” he told his wife. Quickly he picked up his machete and hit his wife with the flat of the machete. “How can it be? Are you a dog? Are you a buzzard? Why do you eat corpses?” his wife was asked. Then the woman cried and cried. Suddenly, the next day, her husband turned into a black dog. The poor dog wasn’t given its tortillas. It just ate shit. But it couldn’t stand that. It wasn’t used to that. [As a] man he had been familiar with another town. He [used to] go there on his trips. He had a good friend there. “Well, I’m going. I can’t stand it. I’m starving,” said the dog. He arrived at the store. He sat down on a chair. There were many newspapers scattered about. The dog looked at them.

“But this isn’t a dog. It knows how to read,” said the storekeeper. The dog was spoken to. “Have you always been a dog?”

“No!” it said.

“Are you a human being?”

“Yes!” it said. The dog made signs with its head. The lunch hour arrived. They ate. It was given a lot of meat, tortillas, and bread by the storekeeper. The dog was given everything. An old woman arrived. She came to buy bread.

“If you want, we’ll go away right now.”

“Let’s go!” said the dog. It went with the old woman.

“Have you always been a dog or are you a human being?” she asked.

“Yes, [I’m a man],” it answered with its head.

When they arrived at the old woman’s house—

“Do you want to turn into a human being again?” asked the woman.

“I do!” said the dog. Suddenly it became a human being.

7antze, 7ispikbe yo7on ti smalale mi vayem, 7o mi julem, ya7i ti mu xbak’ ti smalale, 7ilok’ ech’el ta 7ol 7ak’ubal, 7ilik ti vinik 7uke, 7istam stuk’, 7istam smachita, nap’al 7ibat, ti bu chbat ti yajnile. “Mi yu7un van 7oy yajmul?” xi la ti vinike. “Pero ta jmil xcha7-vazal tana!” xi la 7un. 7ibat, 7ibat ta j-mek, 7ik’ot la, k’al mukenal, 7ik’ot sjok’, 7ispas preva ti 7animae, 7iyikta komel, 7ibat ta 7otro jun 7isjok’ ja7 to te 7ista lek sbek’tal 7ist7 un, nom sk’eloj ti vinik 7une. “Bwéno, yiyil, 7ikil xa k’usi ti tzpase,” xi la ti vinik 7une. “Bwéno, yiyil chisut ech’el,” xi la 7un.

Bwéno, 7ik’ot ta sna, k’ot vayuk, 7ismala k’u 7ora 7ik’ot ti yajnile, vayem yilel mu xbak’, k’ot sjam na, ti yajnile, k’ot vayuk.

Bwéno, “Bu la7ay?” xut la ti yajnile.

“Li7ay ta pana, li7ay ta k’abnel,” xi la ti 7antze. “Kavron lelek ebi la k’u chapase!” xut la ti yajnile. J-likel 7istam xmachita 7iyak’be pat machita ti yajnile. “K’u cha7al mi tz’i7ot, mi xulemot, k’u yu7un ti chati7 7a li 7animae?” x7utat la ti yajnile. Te la 7i7ok’ ta j-mek, ti 7antze, ta yok’omal j-likel 7ispas ta 7ik’al tz’i7, ti smalal 7une, povre tz’i7 mu la xa 7ak’bat yot naka tzoz7 tzlo7, pero mu stak’ yech, mu nopemuk xa7i kómo ti vinike xojtikin 7otro jun 7o jtek-lum, ta xk’ot ta sbayaje, 7o la lek yamiko, te yo7e. “Bwéno, chibat, yiyil, chak’ vi7nal,” xi la ti tz’i7e. 7Ik’ot la ta jun tyenta, 7ichoti la ta j-kot xila, te la lamal 7ep periodikoetik ta la sk’el ti tz’i7 7une.

“Pero li7e ma7uk tz’i7, sna7 vun,” xi la ti yajval tyentae. 7Ik’oponat la ti tz’i7e. “Mi tz’i7ot 7onox?”

“717il” xi la.

“Mi krixchanoot?”

“Ji!” xi la. Ta sjol la ta spas senya 7un, ti tz’i7e, 7ista la yora ve7ebal 7ive7ik la ti yajval tyentae, 7i7ak’bat la, 7ep bek’et, vaj, kaxlan vaj, skotol, 7i7ak’bat ti tz’i7 7une, 7ik’ot la jun me7el, 7ik’ot la sman pan.

“Mi xak’an xibattik ta 7ora.”

“Batik!” xi la ti tz’i7e, 7ibat la, xchi7uk la ech’el ti me7el 7une.

“Mi tz’i7ot 7onox?” xut la. “7O mi krixchanoot?” xut la.

“Ji7,” xi la ti sjol 7un.

K’alal 7ik’otik ta sna ti me7el 7une -- “Mi xak’an chak’atajes, ta krixchano, 7otro jun bwelta?” xi la ti me7ele.

“Ta jk’an,” xi la ti tz’i7e, j-likel la pas ta krixchano.
“Is it you, then?” said the woman.
“It’s me,” said the man.
“What happened to you?” he was asked.
“Well, it was my wife who was doing all sorts of things, so I hit her. Because it was like thus and so,” he said.

Well, the maids missed him. “Mistress,” they said.
“Where is our master?”
“Who knows, maybe he went to look for his girlfriend,” said the woman.
“Ahh!” said the maids.

As for that old woman [he had met]—“What do you think you’ll do to her? Do you want to do something to her?” the man was asked [by the old woman].

“Ah, but I don’t know how. I’d like to, but I don’t know how to do it,” he said.

“Ah, well, if you give me plenty of money I know what to do.”
“I’ll give it to you,” said the man.

“Ah, and I learned together. She knows less. I’m stronger,” said the old woman.

“Please, I’ll give you however much you want,” said the man.

“Well, all right, we’ll see. Go, go into your house,” said the woman.

“Fine, I’m going then. Please, I’ll come bring your pay,” he said.

“All right, go on! She can’t do anything to you now.” He arrived home.

“Oh, master, you’ve come back?” asked all the maids. “We thought you had died!” said the maids.

“No, God doesn’t want that. I’ve returned,” he said.

Quickly he was given his meal. He ate well. The maids embraced him and kissed him. “Are you here, woman?” he asked his wife.

“I’m here. Have you come back?” she said.

“I’ve come back,” he said.

Suddenly the woman turned into a mare. “Look, daughters,” the man said to his maids.

“What, master?” they asked.

“Take the mare away! Go tie it in the stall, but let it starve to death. Don’t give it its meal, because it has done wrong,” said the man. Then, tied up, it starved. Then it grew thin. Then the mare died.

“Where did our mistress go?” the maids asked their master.

“Who knows where she went. Maybe she went to look for another husband.”

“Ahh!” they said. Just so ends the story for now.

“Mi vo7ot che7e?” xi la ti 7antze.
“Vo7on me,” xi la ti vinike.
“K’usi 7apas?” x7utat la 7un.
“Pwes, ja7 li kajnil skotol k’u tzpas yu7un 7ijmaj porke ja7 ye7, ja7 ye7 chak li7e,” xi la 7un.

Bwéno, 7a ti kriarailetike ta la xna7vanik
“Patróña,” xi. “Bu ti jpatrone?” x7i.
“Jna7tik, te nan bu ta ssa7 yantz,” xi la ti 7antze.

“7A!” xi la kriarailetike.
Bwéno, 7a taj me7el 7une -- “K’u chanopbe mi 7u k’u chak’an chapasbe?” x7utat la ti vinik 7une.

“7A, pero mu jna7, ko7onuk pero mu jna7 k’u spasel,” xi la 7un.
“7A, pwes, ti mi chavak’bon 7ep tak’ine, jna7oj k’u ta jcha7le.”
“Chakak’be,” xi la ti vinike.
“7A li7e ko7ol jchanojitokí7i, mas jutuk sna7, mas tzotzon vo7one,” xi la ti me7ele.
“7Abolajan che7e chakak’be ti k’u ye7al chak’ane,” xi la ti vinik 7une.

Bwéno, teuk, te ta jk’el7i7i, batan, 7o7an7 ech’el tanae, xi la ti me7ele.

Bwéno, chibat che’c, 7abolajan, te chtal kak’ lato7ole, xi la 7un.

“Teuk, batan, mu xa k’u xascha7le.” 7ik’ot la ta sna.

“7Ay patron, mi latal?” xi la skotol, ti kriarailetike.

“Kak’uk me lachami!” xi la ti kriarailetike.

“Mo7oj, mu sk’an yech rior, lisut tal,” xi la 7un.

Bwéno, ta j-likel 7o, 7ak’bat sve7el 7ive7 lek, ta xa la xme7yvan, ta xa la xbutz’van ti kriarailetike. “Mi li7ote, 7antz?” xut la ti yajnil.

“Li7one,” xi la. “Mi latal?” xi la.

“Lital,” x7i.

Bwéno, ta j-likel 7o, 7ipas ta ye7ax ti 7antze. “K’el avil, 7ija,” xut la skiri, ti vinike.

“K’usi, patron?” xi la.

“7Ik’o ech’el li yevaxe ba timano ta peserve, pero tek chamuk ta vi7nal mu xavak’be sve7el ju7un 7oy smul,” xi la ti vinike. Te la timil 7ilaj ta vi7nal te bakub te la 7icham, ti ye7ax 7une.

“Bu bat ti jpatrone?” xut la spatron ti kriaraile.

“Jna7tik te nan bu bat, bat nan ssa7 yan smalal.”

“7A!” xi la 7un. Ja7 te yech laj 7o k’op k’al tana.

A man just married discovers that his bride scarcely eats more than a grain of rice. One night he secretly trails her as she goes to the graveyard to dance with the ghosts. The next day he scolds her for not eating, asking her if she prefers ghosts’ food.

Long after I had searched in vain through all my sources for a tale similar to "The Man Who Led a Dog’s Life" I was sitting on the Metroliner reading to my children from a selection of Tales from the Arabian Nights when I came upon the following:
Angrily she tosses a glass of water in his face and transforms him into a dog. She beats the dog out of her house. It is chased by other dogs into a butcher's shop, is kicked out, and dashes into a baker's shop. The baker keeps it as a pet. One day the dog proves that it can tell the difference between false coins and true gold. After the dog has gained some notoriety for its feat, an old woman comes in and tells it to separate the six good coins from the false. When it succeeds, the woman takes it home. She tells her daughter to toss a cup of water on the dog. It is restored to its human form. The old woman advises the man to douse his wife too with water. When he does so, she turns into a mare. The caliph sees the man riding his mare, beating it savagely. When he has learned the man's sad tale, he orders him to douse his mare with water. Once again a woman, she becomes a loving wife. Moral: Don't mistreat animals as they may be enchanted people (Hoopes, 1968:100-105).

A Long, Hard Night for Crickets

Once [two] green crickets were caught by the dark.

Now when it grew dark each of them looked for a home. There was a drunken woman lying there on the ground. But the crickets were compadres. One went up her pussy. The other went up her ass.

Now the drunken woman was raped during the night [by a man]. The woman was abused all night long.

Now the next morning the crickets came out of their house. They talked to each other. "Did you spend a good night, compadre?" one asked.

"God, I spent a terrible night, compadre because a drunk came to my house last night, but he threw up all over the inside of my house," said the one who slept inside her pussy. The drunk that he spoke of was the prick poking away. The vomit he spoke of was the semen.

"Did you spend a good night, compadre?" he asked the other one.

"As for me, compadre, a drunk came knocking on my door, too, but I simply never opened it for him," he said. The drunk he was speaking of were the balls bouncing on her ass. That is what they say, but who knows if it's true.

The Flood and the Dwarfs

Long ago there was a flood. The dwarfs died—the first people. Some died. Some shut themselves up in coffins. Some climbed trees. They crunched nuts. They lived on acorns. The world was flooded long ago.

They were transformed. Their tails appeared. Then hair appeared. They turned into monkeys. Well, that's how the world ended long ago.

Then came another kind of people. Then it was us. The dwarfs are down below, but they say that they pray to the gods all the time. They have gotten tired of living on acorns so they have decided to do something else.
of the underground, because the sun is too hot. They have gotten tired of just dressing in mud. They want to come back up here. That's why they say the world's about to end.

For Zinacantecs the flood is an historical benchmark. “Did it happen before the flood?” is a critical question in discussions of early events. Even so, Zinacantecs are more reluctant than their neighbors in Chamula and Larrainzar to specify clearly the sequence and even number of cosmic creations and destructions. There were men of clay, jointless men, men of great vision, dwarfs, and monkeys. There were at least two floods; one of which rained down boiling water. And to confuse matters more, Adam and Eve, Noah, and Christ figure in the creations and destructions in a primordial, but seemingly random way. As the events occurred in the very dim past, there is little demand for a strict accounting.

The various Middle American creation and deluge myths have been reviewed so succinctly by Eric Thompson (1970:330-348) that I feel free to restrict my remarks to points of minor detail.

The abode of the dwarfs is believed to be located “beneath the world,” below even Hell.

The dwarfs of this tale do not seem to be related to the Nahuatl yeyecatl or rain dwarfs that are believed responsible for cases of “wind.” They are probably kin, though, to the dwarfs that perished in the deluge of Yucatan (M. Redfield, 1937:24; R. Redfield and Villa, 1934:330) and Belize (J. E. Thompson, 1930:166).

The unbearable heat of the sun at the time of creation is reported from the Tzeltal town of Chanal (Montes Sánchez, c. 1959:6-7) and was a distinguishing feature of the Fourth Creation in the Popol Vuh (Edmonson, 1971:180).


The threat of their reemergence from the underground is paralleled in Yucatan by the belief that the Itzá will some day burst forth from their subterranean home (R. Redfield and Villa Rojas, 1934:331). Today the Zinacantecs claim that, when the year 2000 arrives, the world will flip over and the dwarfs will be on top. See also T24, T55, T70, T89, T96, T142, T161, and their notes.

The King and the Ring
T11

Once there was a poor boy, [but he was really] a king. He used to go and play on the side of Muxul Vitz. He would fiddle around with the sand. He went every day. He found a ring buried there. He went home. Then he went to borrow a pot. The next morning all the pots, water jugs, and hearth pots, all of them were filled with money. The king was [now] a very rich man.

The Mexicans heard about it. They came to lead him away with music, with marimbas, rockets, and a fiesta. He left very grandly.

The people of the town here assembled. The people of our town scattered a lot of money.

The San Cristóbal people strew pine needles. That's why they stayed richer. The king was allowed to choose a wife. “Hide [the ring] here,” he told his wife. [She swallowed it.]

They left. The woman, too. They slept by the road. A mouse arrived. Quickly it stuck its tail up the girl's nose. The girl sneezed right away. She farted. The ring came out. The mouse took it away. A cat went and took it from him. Then they chased wildly after the mouse until the king, himself, got hold of the ring.

Then the king put it on his finger. He didn't give it to anyone else anymore. He arrived in Mexico City [and never came back]. That's why the Mexicans are richer.
This tale has a decidedly European quality. The scene of the wife and the mouse differs from three other versions, T31, T64, and T165, in which the mouse aids the king by sticking its tail up a thief's nose to make him sneeze and eject the ring—an element that occurs also in a Puerto Rican story of Juan Bobo (Mason and Espinosa, 1922:14–15). But curiously I know of no tales from outside Zinacantan that follow the same general plot or whose protagonist is a poor boy turned king. The popularity of this legend in Zinacantan may derive from a cultural memory of the prominence of the town at the time of the Spanish conquest. The relative importance of Zinacantan can be measured by the lowering of tributes in 1546. The tribute owed by Chiapa was reduced by 1500 gold castellanos, that of Zinacantan and Copanaguastla by 1000 castellanos, and the tribute of other towns was reduced by 500 castellanos (Remesal, 1932, 2:113). Even today the Zinacantecs are considered by Chiapas Ladinos and Indians alike, to be the "most civilized" or haughtiest of the Indian people.

The custom of tossing money at the feet of visiting governors and bishops ceased in Chiapas in 1857 (E. Pineda, 1845:55). A tale from Chamula relates how the Ladinos strew rose petals at God's feet, while the Chamulans tossed coins. This is why the Chamulans exchange their labor for rich Ladinos' coins (Gossen, T183).

This same theme is repeated by the Mazatecs of San Martin Soyaltepec who say that "when Christ was born the leaders of every nation went to offer him gifts. The gringos and the others brought him flowers, while we brought him money—that is why you are rich and we are poor" (Laughlin, 1957).

That Zinacantecs do not see kings in the same light as we do was driven home to me when showing pictures of contemporary European kings and queens to Romin. He asked if they were immortal. Not satisfied with my negative reply, he persisted, "But they come from caves, don't they?" See also T31, T34, T64, T113, and T165.

Chili Cure
T134

There was a woman once in Pasey who was just the same [as the one I told you about].
Now she was just the same. She didn't want to be spoken to either. She didn't want to respond to men.
Her husband saw that she had some beeswax inside her basket, inside the container for her thread.
Then she left to watch the sheep. She went to watch the sheep. She came back in the evening. He knew [the hour] when she [usually] stuck the beeswax up herself. But it was rubbed now with chili, early, in the daytime. That beeswax was smeared with chili. That beeswax [dildo] was good and thick.
She didn't know that her beeswax had chili.
You see, she [meant to] calm her desire with it.
Then during the night she went and stuck it in and when she felt it, she started screaming. She couldn't bear the pain of that chili. As soon as she stuck it up herself she was smeared with chili. She was heard screaming now. She was crying. She got up. "What did you do, you bitch?" asked the man who was there, who slept there. Then she got up. She went to get some water. She washed herself. Then her evil ways were discovered. "See, I was right, then. That's why she doesn't want to respond to me," said the man. That's how he took revenge, too. He went and smeared that beeswax with chili. He was amused. He thought it was funny when she was screaming in the night and it was because of the pain of that chili. That's the way it was.

In early times they say there were so few men in Chamula that a lustful woman resorted to a mustard root until her evil doings were discovered. The poor woman died from the painful cure and mustard roots have stunk ever since (Gossen, T34). See also T133, T135, and their notes.

When the Soldiers Were Coming
T17

Once a war broke out. [The soldiers] came up. They left from Chiapa. They came to wage war. They were stopped on the way, because there were many bowls dancing. They all broke. Above Chiapa. That's why [the place] is called "Bowl Spring." They paid no attention. They came on up. They arrived at Ixtapa. They came up above Tzoj Lum [Red Earth]. There was a pine tree. It danced, but they didn't look. That's why [the place] is called...
“Pine Tree.” They paid no attention. They passed on. They came to Tz’akav 7UK’um [River Fork]. The flow of water in the river kept being cut every little while. They paid no attention at all. They came on up. They arrived at Yav Ch’ivit [Market Site]. They found a large market. They entered to buy just a little. They enjoyed themselves there. Some disappeared there. The others came on up. They arrived at Jolom Na [Weaving House]. They found many weavers, but they paid no attention to them. They watched for a minute. They came on. They arrived at Tz’ajom Pik’. At Tz’ajom Pik’ there was a lake. Many naked women were bathing there. That’s why [the place] is called “Submerged Clitoris.” The soldiers went as if they were herded, as far as Lach-chikin [Pricked Up Ears]. That’s why there are just soldiers stuck in the earth there. They became Tuterary Gods there. That’s how the matter ended long ago.

Because this legend conforms so closely to two other versions (T25, T36), I have assigned the same title to all three, but in fact when Romin recounted this legend to me, he was of the opinion that it referred to the Mexican Revolution! Both his mother and his aunt were astounded at his ignorance, assuring him that this was dated back many, many years, but, of course, for Romin the Mexican Revolution, too, was ancient history that he had only known of by word of mouth.

Contemporary legends from Middle America, outside Zinacantán, cast very little light on this tale. The Mixe speak of enemy troops being swallowed up in the mountains (Miller, 1956, T6), but there the resemblance ceases. Turning to earlier sources, both the Titulo de Totonicapán and the Popol Vuh present a scene of bathing girls sent to divert the enemy (Rucinos and Goetz, 1953; 220–221; Edmonson, 1971:194–197).

You are to go, our daughter. Go and wash clothes by the river. And if you see those three sons Then undress yourself before them, And if they desire you
You are to invite them so that we can come after you . . . (Edmonson, 1971:195).

Searching elsewhere for clues, two of the place names, “Bowl Spring” and “Market Site,” are suggestive of early occupation. When George Collier and I surreptitiously visited “Bowl Spring,” we discovered it to be a narrow cave. From the floor protruded a sharp stake surrounded by candle drippings. Potsherds littered the whole area. These later proved to be Late Classic and post-Classic pottery similar to kinds made in Chiapa de Corzo. At “Red Earth” Early-Middle post-Classic Ixtapa Fine Buff sherds are heavily scattered in “a thin but dense occupational strata [sic]” (McVicker, n.d.:13). “Market Site” shows an abundance of obsidian, shell flake and sherds suggesting a peak of occupation during the Middle to Late post-Classic. The lack of structures and the presence of bones and the shells of the fresh water snails that still today are considered a Lenten delicacy suggests that this indeed was a bustling market (McVicker, 12).

Turning now to written records, we find that the enmity between the Zinacantecs and the Chipanecs at the time of the Spanish conquest was reported by Ximénez. [The Zinacantecs] were men of great valor in war, for it seemed that the whole world was against them. They had constant war with Chiapa over the salt works. Although at times they made peace and exchanged presents, for Zinacantán lacked many things that were in abundance in Chiapa, nevertheless soon they were enemies again, killing and sacrificing each other [cited in Navarrete, 1966a, 99].

The route that the Chipanecs allegedly followed was, until construction of the Pan American Highway, the principal access to Zinacantán from the north. By this route Bernal Díaz travelled with two hundred Chipanec Indians and two hundred Zinacantec porters, spending the night by the salt works and arriving in Zinacantán at noon the next day, Easter Sunday, 1524, where they rested before pressing on to the conquest of Chamula.

Fray Alonso Ponce traversed this route in 1586 describing with considerable feeling the torments that I too shared on this same footpath four hundred and seventy-seven years later (Ponce, 1948:passim). Indeed the first friar to settle in Zinacantán, Tomás de la Torre, arrived there on foot so sick and exhausted after his trek up the mountain trail that he could scarcely stand (Ximénez, 1929, 1:358).

Outsiders from the north funnelled continually up this trail. Zinacantán Center was the last stop before San Cristóbal on the trade routes from Mexico City and Veracruz to the Chiapas highlands. Armies marched up and down this trail many times. In 1559 they passed muster in Zinacantán, gathering new forces as they proceeded magnificently towards the Petén. In 1823 when Chiapas was in a turmoil trying to decide whether to be a part of Mexico or of Guatemala the general of the Tuxtla army met in Zinacantán with the representatives of San Cristóbal. Ten years later, when an armed rebellion erupted in San Cristóbal, a hundred government troops poured into Zinacantán surprising and routing the rebel infantry and cavalry—all one hundred and fifty souls! In 1833 a biweekly mail coach was in service from Chiapa to Palenque by way of Zinacantán. In 1848 troops coming from Tuxtla and Chiapa were stopped in Zinacantán upon receiving word that rumors of a native revolt in Palenque were false. In 1863, 1864, and again in 1866 the liberal forces in Tuxtla representing Benito Juárez were pitted against the imperialists in San Cristóbal. The liberals, forced to spend the night of 18 September 1866 in Zinacantán complained that no one would sell them a single tortilla. Again in 1869 the governor's armies
marched through Zinacantan in the War of the Castes. In 1910 a white automobile, the first motorcar in Chiapas, was landed at Arriaga and bumped up the coach road through Zinacantan on its way to Zapaluta. In the Mexican Revolution battles were waged in the town in 1920 and 1924. (For historical sources see Castaño Gamboa, 1931; Bravo Izquierdo, 1948; López Sánchez, 1960; Montesinos, 1935; Moscoso Pastrana, 1960; V. Pineda, 1888; and Trens, 1942.)

It is believed that occasionally you can hear the soldiers’ trumpets and drums sounding from the cave of “Pricked Up Ears,” though in one tale it is said that these instruments were left there by Saint Sebastian before his martyrdom (Wasserstrom, 1970:212–213). The Tutelary Gods are ancestor deities who live in the mountains surrounding Zinacantan Center guarding their descendants from conquest and the forces of evil. See T25, T56, and notes.

**Elopement**

**T18**

Once there was a man who had a daughter. The girl looked for a husband, but her mother cried and cried, because the old man beat his daughter out of the house. That’s why the girl fled. She found a husband. She left. The woman sent her husband off to go look for their daughter. The girl was going along with her husband. She had a comb. She left it on the trail. The comb turned into many brambles so that her father couldn’t pass by. He continued. The old man passed through the brambles. The girl tossed her mirror down. It turned into a large lake. The old man passed by. He went on again. The girl turned herself into a mare. Her husband turned himself into a male mule. The old man arrived and spoke to the mare. It didn’t answer. The old man came back. He returned to tell his wife that he couldn’t find their daughter. The woman cried [even] more. “Take your rope! That mare is my daughter!” said the woman. The man went another time. Now there were no horses. He went further. He came to a church. A priest was standing there inside the church, with a nun. The man spoke to the priest.

“Haven’t you seen my daughter? She fled with her husband,” said the man. The priest didn’t answer properly. He just said, “Come, come in, hear Ma—ss!”

“Haven’t you seen my daughter?” the man kept asking.

[The priest] just said over and over, “Come, come in, hear Ma—ss!”

“Go to hell then, you aren’t a priest! I’m taking the nun away. She’s probably my daughter,” said the man. The man seized the nun. The priest came along right behind. [The nun] was [the man’s] daughter. That priest was her husband. They returned home. Her mother stopped crying. They were happy then. That’s how the matter ended.

This magic flight closely resembles Spanish escapades in which the devil, advised by his cannier wife, pursues the lovers, who toss behind combs and mirrors. The girl becomes a church, as her lover, in priest’s guise, announces mass (A.M. Espinosa, 1967, T122–T125). In the New World the girl may fashion thickets with a needle, vines with a comb, a lake with salt, a mountain of lime, a slippery hill of soap (J. E. Thompson, 1930: 167–172), or a hill of yarn (Radin and Espinosa, 1917, T111). A
Once there was a man named Johnny Fourteen. He was called Johnny Fourteen because he ate fourteen times [a day]. At each meal there were enough helpings for fourteen men, it seems.

He would leave. He would travel wherever he traveled, wherever there were big animals, because he caught them, because he had no use for them, so he killed them.

It was learned that there was a Johnny Fourteen. "Well, come here if you want. Come and do some work!" he was told. Since he never could get enough food, because he ate so much, he left [home]. "All right, I won't pay you. The only thing you'll be paid is... you'll just be paid your meals," said the boss where he was summoned.

"Ah!" he said. "All right!" he said.

"You are to roll sixteen, [no] sixty rocks here," he said. Sixty rocks. "So if you can roll them, if you can move them aside, then you can eat," he said.

"Fine!" said [Johnny]. He went. He did the job, but they were just big rocks. The rocks were the size of a house. He finished pushing them aside.

"Now how is your work going?" asked [his boss]. "It's finished," he said.

"Do you mean it?" he said.

"I mean it," said [Johnny].

"Good!" he said. "Now!--it was on the next day, too—"Now you will go on an errand. You will go stand guard by the tree over there. There are lots of bananas," said [the boss].

"All right!" he said. He went there. He went to guard them.

"But you will spend the night there," he was told.

"Okay!" he said. He spent the night there, because he was tricked, because lots of animals had just arrived, since it was known that he would be eaten by the animals.

He took a machete along with him. He had it with him where he slept at the foot of a cliff. The animals arrived. He couldn't get to sleep. But he finished killing them all.

He came back the next day at daybreak. "Well, I've come back," he said.

"Didn't anything happen to you?" he was asked.

"No!" he said.

"Do you mean it?"
"I mean it."
"Didn't you see anything at all?" asked the boss.

"Nothing," he said.
"Now, then, it's nothing much. You are going again," he was told the next day. "You are going to deliver a message. Take the message! You will go here," he was told. He left. He arrived and spoke to a Ladino at the first door.

"I've come to deliver a message," [Johnny] told him.

"Ah, go, go in, go and speak to the person who is way inside there," he said.

"Fine!" said Johnny Fourteen. He went in. The gentleman way inside looked at the message.

"Ah!" said the gentleman. "Well, good, you aren't to return. You are to stay here. That's what the message says. We will stay here now. We will be together," said the gentleman inside there, the owner of the house.

"Ah!" said Johnny Fourteen. "But who said so?"

"I say so!" he said.

"Are you the one who gives all the orders?" said Johnny Fourteen.

"Well it's me, as I told [you]. Get out, I guess! How are you going to get out?" he said.

"If I really want to, I'll get out," said Johnny Fourteen. "It just doesn't make any difference. So what! I guess I'll think it over whether I get used to it or not," said Johnny Fourteen. He had come through sixty doors.

Now when Johnny Fourteen lost his temper he just kicked the doors one after another until he finished breaking down all sixty doors.

So that's how he came out again. He came back again. He spoke to the boss where he worked. "Ah!" said [the boss]. "Did you get out?" he asked.

"I got out," he said.

"Oh, but how did you get out?" he asked.

"I just got out by myself. I opened the door. I was able to open the door. Nothing happened, nothing. I just escaped," he said.

"Ah!" said [the boss]. "So that's fine, then. Today you are to go to the graveyard," said the boss. "You are to go there. Just be there, you don't have to work. Just go spend the night there," said the boss.

"Well, okay!" said Johnny Fourteen.

He spent the night at the graveyard. When he went to bed he didn't fall asleep. He paced there. He kept walking around. Maybe it was because he had been told not to sleep. And at midnight all the ghosts came. "What are you looking for here?" all the ghosts asked.

"Yech kal."
"Mi mu k'usi 7avil j-set'uk?" xi la ti yajval 7abtel 7une.

"Ch'abal," xi la.

"7A li7e che7e, mu k'usi, chabat noxtok," x7utat ti ta jun 7o k'ak'al 7une. "Chba 7avak' j-lik tun, 7ich'o ech'el j-lik tun, chabat li7 toe," x7utat la. 7Bat la 7un, 7ik'ot la sk'opon jun jkaxlan ta primero ti7 na.


"7A batan, 7ochan ech'el, ba k'opono li jun taj ta j-mek ta yute," xi la 7un.

"Bwénol!" xi la ti Jwan Katórse 7un. 7I7oc la 7un, 7isk'el 7a ti vun ti jun mol te ta yut ta j-mek 7une.

"7A!" xi la ti mol 7une. "Bwénol, lek, muk' chasut, li7 chakome, ja7 yech yaloj tal vune, li7 xa chikomotie, li7 ta jchi7in jbatike," xi la ti, 7a ti jun mol te ta yut 7une, yajval ti na 7une.

"7A!" xi la ti Jwan Katórse 7une. "Pero buch'u xi?" xi la 7un.

"Vo7on xichi!" xi la 7un.

"Mi vo7ot batz'i xapas mantal?" xi la ti Jwan Katórse 7une.

"Pwes vo7on ti k'u kale, lok'an kik, k'u xi chalok?" xi la.

"Ti sk'an k'ol xhilok"," xi la ti Jwan Katórse 7une. "Ja7 no 7ox muk' ta 7alel, yiyil, ta jnop ka7tik mi xinop mi mu xinop," xi la ti Jwan Katórse 7une. 7Ox-vinik la ta k'ol ti ti7 na 7une, ti 7och 7une.

7Óra, ti k'alal ti kap sjol ti Jwan Katórse 7une, naka la slikel ta tek'el 7un, ju-jun ju-jun ti ti7 na 7une, 7asta ke laj svok'an komel skotol ti sesenta ti7 na 7une.

7Entoncé, ja7 yech 7ilok' 7o tal noxtok 7un, 7isut tal noxtok 7un, ta sk'opon ti yajval ti buy ch7abtej 7une. "7A!" xi la. "Mi lalok' tal?" xi.

"Lilok' tal," xi.

"7A, pero k'u xi lalok' tal?" xi.

"Yech lilok' tal jtkuk, 7ijjam li nae, 7ijjam no 7ox ku7un, muk' mu k'usi 7ikpas mu k'usi nada mas likol," xi la 7un.

"7A!" xi la. "7Entoncé lek che7e, lavie chabat ta mukenal," xi la ti yajval 7abet. "Chabat te yo7e, te yech no 7ox mu7nuk cha7abtej, ba nox 7ech'uk 7ak'ubal te yo7e," xi la ti yajval 7abet 7une.

"Bwénol stak!" xi la ti Jwan Katórse 7une.

Bwénol, te la ba vayuk ta ba mukenal, 7a ti, 7a ti vayemek, muk' la x7och svayel, te la xva7et te la xjoyet ta j-mek 7un, yu7un no la yech 7albil 7un, ke ti mu xvay 7une, 7i ta 7ol 7ak'ubal 7un, 7ital la skotol i 7animaetik 7une. "K'u chasa7 li7 toe?" xi la ti skotol ti 7animaetik 7une.
“I’m not looking for anything. I’m just having a good time,” said Johnny Fourteen.

“You won’t look for anything here, now. If you want to, let’s go into my house,” they said.

“Who said so? Who’s giving the orders?” said Johnny Fourteen.

“It’s whatever we say,” said the ghosts. He was taken inside. He didn’t know how. He went through sixtee—through sixty levels of the earth he went.

And, “Ooh, but I’ve come way down now,” said Johnny Fourteen. “God, but what can I do about this?” he said. He thought carefully. There was no longer any way to get out. He was at the very bottom of the world now. “I guess I’ll try,” he said. In a minute he went and kicked [his way] out of the world. He was able to open it. Johnny Fourteen got out.

He continued on happily. He went on. He went to speak to that boss. “Well, I’ve come back now,” he said again, the next morning.

“Have you returned again?” asked his boss.

“I’ve returned,” he said. It was just that he ate and ate. He ate fourteen helpings a meal.

“Ah!” he said. “Eat, then!” [the boss] said again.

“Well, you are to go another time,” [Johnny] was told again.

“Where am I to go?” he asked.

“ar to the graveyard again, you are just to go there,” said [the boss].

“Ah,” said [Johnny Fourteen]. “Okay,” he said.

They came, lots of soldiers came. They came to wage war, to kill him, since it had been heard that he couldn’t be killed, that one man had the strength of fourteen men. “So let’s go kill him with bullets, then!” said the soldiers. They arrived. They attacked him with bullets. Johnny Fourteen was standing unconcerned. The bullets passed by. He just dodged and dodged the bullets as they passed. The soldiers ran out of bullets. [The bullets] missed him.

He took his little machete. He went to capture them. He went to kill them. He went to capture them. He wrestled all the soldiers. He finished off all the soldiers, too. He returned. He arrived to tell his boss again. “I’ve come back now,” he said again.

“Have you come back again?” [the boss asked].

“I’ve come back,” he said.

“Huh, hell! But what kind of a man are you?” said the boss over and over.

“Really, I’m no special kind of man,” said [Johnny].

“Didn’t anything happen to you? Didn’t anything come along?” asked [the boss].

“Nothing, it seems. There wasn’t anything,” said [Johnny].

“Huh, but do you mean it?” he said.

“Mu k’u ta jsa7, yech no 7ox ta jkux ko7on,” xi la ti Jwan Katörse 7une. “7A lave mu k’usi chasa7 li7 toe, mo yax’aned 7ochikotik ta jna,” xi la.

“Buch’u xi, buch’u spas mantal?” xi la ti Jwan Katörse.

“Ja7 ti k’uxi chie,” xi la ti 7aniameakot 7une. 7i7ik’e la ochel, muk’ la xa7i k’u xi, 7och ta vak-la… ta 7ox-vinik ta k’ol lum 7i7och la 7un.

7i “Jii, pero nat na liyal ta 7un,” xi la ti Jwan Katörse 7une. “Dyos pero k’u ta jnoped li7e?” xi la 7un. 7i7snop la lek 7un, mu xa k’u xi xlok’, batz’i ta chak balamik xa ech’el 7un. “Ta jpas kik preva,” xi la. J-likel 7a spij lok’el ta majel ti balamik 7une, 7ijam la yu7un 7un, 7ilok’ ti Jwan Katörse 7une.

Bwéno, jun yo7on 7ibat, bat, ba sk’opon 7a li taj yajval 7une. “Bwéno, li7 me lital 7une,” xi la noxtot 7un. Sakub ti 7osil 7une.

“Mi lasut tal noxtot 7un?” xi la ti yajval 7une.


“Bwéno, chabat 7otro jun bwelta,” x7utat noxtot 7un.

“Bu chibat 7un?” xi la 7un.

“Te 7onox jun ta ba mumenal te nox chabat,” xi la 7un.

“7A!” xi la. “Stak’uk!” xi la 7un.

Bwéno, tal 7un, tal la 7epal soltotoetik, tal la 7ak’-k’ok’ 7un, yu7un ta xmile, kómo 7a7yat xa ti mu stak’ mil el ke chan-lajun-vo7 vinik spersa ti jun vinik 7une. “7Entonse ba jmiltik ta bala che7el” xiik la ti soltotoetik 7une. K’otik la 7un, yak’beik la bala 7un, jun la yo7on va7al ti Jwan Katörse, ch7ech’ la ti bala 7une, stz’ëantz’èan no la sba ti 7ech’ ti bala 7une, 7ilaj la sbala ti soltotoetik 7une, 7ech’ yu7un 7un.

Bwéno, stam la ech’el yunen machita, ba la stzak ba la smil, ba la stzak ssotitan ta j-mek skotol ti soltotoetik 7une, 7ilaj yu7un skotol ti soltotoetik noxtot 7une, 7isut ech’el 7un, 7ik’ot yalbe ya7i ti yajval noxtot 7une. “Li7 me lital 7une,” xi la noxtot.

“Mi lasut tal noxtot 7un?” xi la.


“Je7, kavron, pero k’u k’uxi vinikalot?” xi la ta j-mek ti 7ajvalil 7une.

“Melel mu k’usi vinikalot,” xi la.

“Mi mu k’usi 7apas, mi mu k’usi k’ot?” xi.

“Ch’abal yilel, mu k’usi 7oy,” xi la.

“Je7, pero mi yech 7aval?” xi.
"I mean it."

"So, you bastard, just stop eating here, then! You just eat and eat. Who knows what will happen to you," he said. The boss had seen now, had heard now that [Johnny Fourteen] had won over and over.

"Go on then, go far, far away! If you want whatever you want, go jump into a war or something! Today there is no food for you," he was told. [Johnny] went on. He disappeared. That's how the story ends.

As the word lo7bol means both "banana" and "fruit," Johnny could be guarding an undisclosed variety of fruit tree.

Johnny Fourteen is known also from Puerto Rico (Mason and Espinosa, 1926:263-264), Jalisco (Wheeler, 1943:798) and the Chontal of Oaxaca (Belmar, 1900:50-58). He appears in the southwest under the alias of Juan Sin Miedo (A.M. Espinosa, 1911, T12) and in Guadalajara as Juan Huevon (Robe, 1970, T74). His exploits are similar to those in European tales (A-T 346, A-T 525), in which the protagonist must overcome his fear as he is confronted by skeletons, ghosts, etc. See also T10, T170, and notes.

What an Old Woman Will Do to You If You Do It to Her

T139

Once, the people said, the older people, that we couldn't desire women. We couldn't fuck an older woman when we were still young. We would get sick from it. Our animal would leave, because that's what the people say. Even now they say that we have animals. If we fuck an older woman our animal will come out. If she is just the same age, like our brothers and sisters, then of course you can.

Now if we grab an older woman our animals will leave. Our potency will end. Our hair will fall out. We can't do anything at all. We're left completely useless.

That's the way it was, of course, for the people long ago. Today it probably isn't that way anymore. But the people long ago probably received less strength. There were those who fucked older women. One fucked an older woman, it seems. His animal left. His potency was lost. The hair fell from his head.

They didn't know what medicine [to use]. They didn't know how to treat themselves for it. They didn't know about doctors. They didn't know about better medicine. They just found it by themselves. They gave it. They gave it to each other, the people of long ago.

That boy got sick. He told his older relatives, it seems. "Well, see here, son. Treat yourself because you are dying," they said.

"What kind of medicine is it? What do you think can make me well? Because I'm dying. I have no strength. I did this stupid thing," he said.

"Ah, no, [don't worry] son, this is what should be done," they said. He carried the planks of his old bed. He circled three times around the outside of the

Bwéno, 7a ti vo7nee, chalik ti krixchanoetike, ti mas moletike, mu la xu7 jk'upintik 7antzt, mu la xu7 7a li jkobtik me7el lavi bik'itotitike, ta la xi7ipajotitik 7o, ta la xlok' 7o jchontik porke ja7 yech chalik i krixchanoetike, k'al tana yech chalik ti 7oy jchontikite, 7a ti jkobtik la jun me7ele, ta la xlok' jchontik, 7a ti mi ja7 no la yech k'u cha7al jchililtik ta ch'iele xu7 la 7un bi 7a! 7Ora, ti mi jtzaktik me7ele, ta la xlok' jchontik ta la xla7 7o jpwersatik ta la xtol 7o jjioltik, mi ja7uk xa la xu7 k'usi jpa7stik babt'ye yech la ta j-mek chikomotik.

Bwéno, 7o la yech ti vo7ne a7a, 7a ti vo7ne krixchanoetike, lavie mu xa nan yechuk pero mas to 7ox nan yochol pwersa yich'oj ti krixchanoetik vo7nee, 7o la tzkobik me7el 7iskob yae7el ti me7el ti jun 7une, 7ilok' la xchon 7ilaj la spwersa 7itul la stzatzal sjol.

Bwéno, mu sna7ik k'usi ti pox 7une, mu sna7ik k'usi tzpoxta 7o sbaik 7un, mu sna7 k'usi loktor, mu sna7 k'usi mas lek pox, batz'i ja7 nox ta ssa7ik stukik ta xak'ik, te nox ta xak'be sbaik ti vo7ne krixchano 7une.

Bwéno, 7i7ipaj la ta7 jun krem 7une, 7iyal la ti moletik xchi7iltak ya7el 7une. "Bwéno, k'el avil, kere, poxta aba ya7u la xa me chacham," xi la.

"K'usi li spoxil 7une, k'usi xikol 7o xana7, yu7n ya chicham, batz'i mu xu7, ja7 yech 7ijpas bolil chak li7e," xi la 7un.

"7A mo7oj, kere, ja7 me yech smelol chak li7e," xi la 7un. 7Iskuch la ti stenel te7al sk'a7-tem, 7i7joyin la 7oxib bwesta ti pana xxokon nae, skchoj ti steme,
house, carrying his bed. Another beat it on the back like a slit drum. He beat it on the back. The first [man] was walking ahead carrying it. After he circled his house three times, he went in like that. He entered his house. His bed was carried in by him.

Maybe, gradually, he got better [after] doing that. That's what the older people say to this day. If we grab older women, if we fuck older women our hair will fall out, our animal will leave. We'll die from it little by little. That's why they say it to this day, but now they don't know proper form. Once the young boys grabbed older women so often. Now the young boys just think of girls. They speak to many of them. Now they don't respect their fathers or their mothers. It's nothing to them.

Well, that's all. There was another one, too, a different one.

He thought he was pretty smart. He never carried his old bed, because it would be embarrassing if all the people heard about it. They would talk about it if they heard that we carried our beds, that we did something [with the beds].

Now that person fucked a woman who was older than he was.

He probably realized that he was left in bad shape after he had fucked her. He simply went to talk to that old woman, "See here, woman, it's like this. I feel as if I'm getting sick. It's probably because my animal left," he said.

"How do you feel?" asked the old woman.

"Like this and so. I'm very sick now, it seems. I don't know if maybe it isn't because you took my animal from me," he told the old woman.

"Ah, no, [don't worry], come at dawn," she said. "Come at dawn. I'll pee at dawn. See if your animals come out," she said. The next morning he went to look at the old woman. He went to look where she peed. He found those animals of his lying there. They came out. They came out in the old woman's piss. He picked up his animals. He swallowed them again. After he swallowed his animals, gradually he regained his strength. He recovered. He grew strong, because he found his animals again. That's what they did once, like that. That's why they say that to this day. That's the story the people tell about to this day—that our animals will come out if we fuck older women, women more mature than ourselves. That's why we're not supposed to do it, but today it doesn't make any difference to them at all. That's what they say.

Bwénó, te nan k'unk'un 7ikol chak taj 7une, ja7 yech chalik lavi k'al tana li moletik 7une, 7a ti yu7n la jtzaktik me7ele, ti yu7n la jkobtik me7ele, ta la xtul 7o jjo7tik, ta la xlok' 7o jchontik, ta la xichamotik 7o ta k'unk'un 7une, yech'o ti ja7 yech chalik k'al tana, pero lavie mu xa masuk yech krixchanoetike, mu xa masuk yech i kremotike, toj xa ztak7ik me7el, 7o xa sk'upinik me7el, 7a li k'o7x kremotike, naka xa ja7 sna7ojik i tzebetik, chlaj sk'o7ponanik, mu xa buy ti lekil k'op sna7ike, 7a ti vo7nee che7e mu sna7 k'usi chopol k'op li k'o7x kremotike, 7a lavie toj mas xa naka xa ta 7at, ta chak sk'o7pon sbaik i k'o7x kremotik lavie, muk' xa sk'o7plal yu7un, mu xa sp'is ta vinik jun stot jun sm7e7ik, muk' xa ta 7alel yu7un.

Bwénó, laj taj 7une, ja7 la yech 7o ju7 noxtok, parte xa.

Bwénó, ja7 nan p'ij j-set' ti yaloj 7un, muk' bu skuch ti sk'a7-temwe porke k'xjal 7a ti xa7i skotol krixchano che7e, ja7 xa chlo7ilaj 7o ti ya7i ti 7oy ta jkuch jtemtik, 7o 7oy k'usi 7ijpastike.

7Ora, taj 7une, 7iskob la jun me7el mas yij xkaltik ke li stuke.

Bwénó, ya7i nan ti chopol xa kom ti k'alal laj skob 7une, solel ba sk'o7pon taj me7el 7une. "K'el avil, 7antz, ja7 yech chak li7e, te me xi7ipaj ya7el 7un, yu7n nan 7ilok' jchon," xi la.

"K'usi x7elan chaxcha7le?" xi la ti me7el 7une.

"Ja7 yech ja7 yech chak li7e, batz'i7ipon xa ya7el, mu jna7i mi yu7 nan 7alok'esbon jchon," xut la ech'el ti me7el 7une.

"T'Aa, bwénó, mo7oj che7e, xatal 7ik'-luman," xi la. "Xatal 7ik'-luman xtal 7ak'e7el, ta xik'abkin 7ik'-luman, xak'el mi 7o chlok' lachone," xi la. Ta yok'omal 7un, ba la sk'el ti me7el 7une, ba la sk'el ti bu k'abkin 7une, te la bis7al 7ista taj xchon 7une, 7ilok', kapal 7ilok' ta sk'ab ti me7el 7une, 7istam la ti xchon 7une, 7isbik' la 7otro jun bwelta 7une, k'alal laj sbik' ti xchon 7une, k'unk'un la 7ayan spwersa 7un, 7ikol la 7un, 7itzatzub la 7un, porke yu7n 7ista to 7otro jun bwelta ti xchone, ja7 la yech spasik ti vo7ne chak taj 7une, yech'o ti ja7 yech chalik, k'al tana yech tzlo7ilatik k'al tana ti krixchanoetik 7une, ti ta xlok' 7o jchontik ti jkobtik me7el mas yijij 7antz ke li vo7o7tik, yech'o ti mu stak' ti sk'o7plal 7une, pero lavie muk' sk'o7plal yu7unik ta j-mek ja7 yech chalik chak taj 7une.
Unfortunately I failed to ask Romin about these “animals.” I presume that they are worms, perhaps the hornworms mentioned in T105 and T106.

As in other tales the verb k’opon, “to speak to,” is a euphemism for “to have sexual relations with.”

The Adventures of Peter

Once upon a time there was a [boy named] Peter. He was an orphan. He went to look for a babysitting job. He was given the babysitting job.

He asked for a needle. “Mistress,” he said, “Give me a needle, I’m going to sew my clothes with it,” he said. He was given the needle.

He went to put the baby to sleep. He stuck the needle in its breathing spot.

The baby died. He went to the kitchen to ask for his meal. “I’m hungry, Mistress,” he said.


“No, don’t go look, it’s still asleep,” he said.

Well, eat right away then,” she said. He was given his meal. He ate right away.

Then, when he had finished eating, he fled. He went to another town.

[When] he arrived, “Are you here, Master?” he asked.

“Why [do you ask]?” said the man.

“Have you any work?” asked [Peter].

“What kind of work do you want?” he asked.

“I want to herd pigs if there’s [a job],” he said.

“Oh, there is, if you want it. Work!” he was told.

Well, he went to herd the pigs, lots of pigs. A Ladino came along. “Won’t you sell one of your pigs? I’ll buy them,” said [the Ladino].

“Hmm, I won’t sell them,” said [Peter].

“Sell them! I’ll give you a lot of money,” he said.

All right, take them then. But just the meat. The tails and ears I won’t sell,” said [Peter].

“Ah!” he said. “That’s all right,” said the Ladino.

“Well, take them then,” said [Peter]. “I just want silver [for them],” he said.

Good enough,” said the Ladino. [Peter] sold all the pigs. The Ladino left with all the pigs.

Well, Peter buried all the pigs’ tails and ears in the mud.

He left. He went to talk to his master. “Master,” he said. “All the pigs died. They all went into the quicksand,” he said.

“Oh, let’s go look right away! Where [are they]?” he asked.

“Here,” said Peter. “Come, look at their ears,” he said. Peter pulled the ears. It looked as if he were trying hard. Peter landed way off on his ass. “Oh, here are their tails,” he said. He pulled their tails.
“Oh, now we can’t reach their tails to pull them out,” he said.

“Well, go then, go ask for a pick and shovel,” he said. “Go ask your mistress for them,” he said. [When] he arrived, “Mistress,” he said, “I was told to ask for a turn behind the door.”

“What? What do you want?” she asked. “Are you hungry?” she was asked.

“No, he says to give me a toss behind the door.”

“Ooh, what is it you want? But could it be this maybe?” she asked. Quickly she uncovered it for him to see.

“Yes, that’s what I want,” he said. Well, he left. He ran off. He stole lots of flowers.

Then he stuck the silver coins onto those flowers.

A Ladino came along. “Do you want these? I’ll sell them to you,” said [Peter].

“What are they good for?” asked [the Ladino].

“This is treasure,” he said.

“How much are you asking?” Peter was given maybe two or three thousand pesos.

“But the silver I’m keeping. I’ll just give you the flowers,” he said. “Tomorrow you’ll see when you wake up that they will be just like this again,” he said.

“But are you telling the truth?” asked [the Ladino].

“Yes, I am,” he said. “Well, I guess I’ll see tomorrow,” he said.

“You’ll see, then you’ll see,” said [Peter].

“I’m going,” he said. [Peter] took in more money again. The poor Ladino was tricked. The flowers were dead when he woke up. [Peter] saw another Ladino coming, riding on horseback.

“But what can I do? I guess I’ll take a shit,” he said. “Aha!”

Quickly he took a shit. He covered it with his hat. The Ladino arrived. “Well, where are you going?” he asked the Ladino.

“I’m going hunting,” said [the Ladino].

“Oh, if you want, I’ll sell you a little bird,” said [Peter].

“Where is it?” he asked.

“Here, I’ve covered it with my hat,” said [Peter].

“Eh, I guess I’ll take a look,” he said.

“You can’t look! It pecks,” said [Peter].

“Oh, but how can it be taken out?” he asked.

“I’ll take it out if you have a cage for it,” said [Peter].

“I don’t. I do, but it’s at home,” he said.

“But if you [can] come back right away, go and bring it,” said [Peter].


“Mo7oj, 7ak’bon la j-tenuk ta pat mak ti7 na,” xi la.

“Jee, k’usi chak’an, pero, ja7 nan li7e che7e,” xi la. J-likel 7ijolbat yil.

“7Éso, ja7 ta jk’an li7e,” xi la. Bwenó, 7ibat la, 7ijatav, 7iyelk’an la ech’el, 7ep nichim. 7Entóense, 7isnap’an la ech’el naka plata, taj nichime. 7Stío el, 7isnap’an la ech’el naka plata, taj nichime. Bwenó, 7ital la jun jkaxlan. “Mi xak’an li7e, chajchonde,” xi la. “K’usi stu li7e?” xi la. “Li7e me7 tak’in,” xi la. “K’u cha7al chavak?” xi la. 7Ak’bat nan mi cha7-mil mi 7ox-mil tak’in ti Pégro 7une. “Pero 7a li plaeke, ta jkomes ja7 no 7ox naka nichim chakak’be,” xi la. “7Ok’ob xak’el avil ja7 xa yech sakub chak li7 xtokote,” xi.

“Pero mi yech 7aval?” xi la.


Bwenó, j-likel la 7itza7an, 7ismak ta spixol, 7ital ti jkaxlan. “Bwenó bu chabat?” xut la ti jkaxlan.


“Ch’abal, 7oy pero ta jna to,” xi la un. “Pero mi ta 7ora chasut tal, ba tamo tal,” xi la.
"Maybe [I can] right away," he said.
"Who knows, if you like, give me your horse, I'll go myself," said [Peter].
"Go on, then," he said. Peter mounted the horse. He pricked the horse with a needle. The horse reared.
"Oh, your horse isn't used to me. Give me your clothes, give me your shoes! I'll hurry back," said [Peter].
"Take them," he said.
"All right, you stay here. Don't look, because it pecks terribly," said [Peter]. No [sign of him], no Peter. He left for good.
"Well, so what, even if it does peck me I'm going to look, I guess," said the Ladino. He raised the hat. As soon as he grabbed it [he realized] it was shit he was touching. "Oh, the bastard! He's a thief. He fooled me completely," he said. "So what, he's gone now," he said. Peter went off feeling very pleased with himself. He went on. He met a devil on the road.

"What do you say, Devil?" he asked.
"Nothing," said the devil.
"Do you want to make a bet to see who can make a hole in a tree?" asked Peter.
"Well, are you telling the truth? Are you a real man?" asked the devil.
"That's what I say.
Earlier Peter had gone to cut the hole in the tree. He left a [piece of] bark covering [the hole]. "Let's go!" said Peter.
"Let's go, then!" said the devil.
"You throw [the rock] first," said Peter. The devil threw it. He couldn't put a hole through the tree.
"You throw!" said the devil.
"All right," said Peter. He threw it. He put a hole in the tree. The bark just fell. Peter won more money.
"Uh, but I won't give up," said the devil. "That money of mine has got to come back," said the devil. "If you want to, tomorrow [we'll make] another bet," he said.
"Okay!" said Peter.
"Tomorrow we'll each roll a rock," said [the devil].
"Okay," said Peter.
Well, Peter first went to make a hole under [his] rock.
On the next day, "Roll it, I guess," said Peter.

"Rock it towards me!" said the devil.
"All right," said Peter. But the rock didn't budge. "Well, rock it towards me!" Peter said. He stuck his head where he had dug before. "Rock it towards me!" he said. The devil rocked it and [when Peter pushed] the boulder rolled away.

"Ta 'ora nan," xi la.
"Jna7 tik mi xak'ane, 7ak'bon ech'el laka7e, chibat vo7on," xi.
"Batan che7e," xi la. Ta xkaji ta ka7 ti Pegroe, ta spajbe 7akuxa ti ka7e, ta xva7i ti ka7e.

"7A, mu xisnop laka7e, 7ak'bon ech'el lak'ut7e, 7ak'bon ech'el lasapatoe, chibat ta 7anil," xi la.

"7Ich'ol" xi la.
"Bwéno, koman 7un mu me xak'el 7un, yu7un mu be batzi ta xti7van," xi la. Ch'abal, ch'abal ti Pegroe, 7ibat 7o.

"Bwéno, pasénsia, yech te k'alal, ti mi listi7e ta jk'eI kik," xi la ti jkaxlane. 7Isjam la li pixalale po7ot xa stae spikoj, 7ik'ot li tzo7e. "7Ay kavrø!" xi.

"K'u xi, dyáblo?" xi la.
"Mu k'u xi," xi la ti dyáblo.
"Mi xak'an jpastik jun 7apostal jk'eltik buch'u xch'oj yu7un jtek' te7?" xi la ti Pegroe.
"Bwéno mi yech 7aval, mi vinikot?" xi la ti dyáblo.
"Yech kal," xi la.
Bwéno, ja7 la xch'oj ba7yi te7 ti Pegroe, 7iskajanbe komel, pat te7. "Battik 7un!" xi la ti Pegroe.

"Battik che7e!" xi ti dyáblo.
"Teno ba7yuk," xi la ti Pegroe. 7Isten la ti dyáblo, muk' la xch'oj ti te7e.
"Teno vo7otel!" xi la ti dyáblo.

"Bwéno," xi la ti Pegroe. 7Isten la, 7ixch'oj la ti te7e, maka 7ip'aj la pat te7e 7ispas kanal mas tak'in ti Pegroe.

"Stak'," xi la ti Pegroe.
"7Ok'ob jbalch'untik, ju-p'ejuk ton," xi la 7un.

"Stak'," xi la ti Pegroe.
Bwéno, 7a ti Pegroe, baxch'oI ba7yi yolon ton ti Pegroe.
Bwéno, ta yok'omal -- "Balch' uno kik 7un," xi ti Pegroe.
"Toyon tal che7e!" xi la ti tyavlo.
"Bwéno," xi la ti Pegroe. Pero mu la xbak' ti tone. "Bwéno toyon kik vo7one!" xi la ti Pegroe. 7Ispaj la ochel sjol ti yo7 buy sjok'oI ba7yie. "Tayon tal 7un!" xi la. 7Itoyvan la ti tyavlo 7une, 7ibalch'uj la ech'el ti mol tone.
Peter won more money. "So what, I can't win," said the devil. Peter went on. He walked along. He met a lot of muleteers on the road.

"Ah, here comes Peter!" said the muleteers. "Poor Peter, now he'll die here for sure!" said the muleteers. "This one's a real bad robber," they said. They caught Peter and stuck him in a burlap bag. They tied it up tight with lassos. "Well, now he'll spend the night here. Tomorrow we'll go throw him in the river," they said. Peter spent the night there. The next day he woke up when the sun rose. The muleteers hadn't arrived.

"Oh, what can I do?" he said. Peter looked for his razor. There were lassos there. He put [the food] in his own place [in the bag]. He tied it up tight. Well, Peter fled. He went to the other side of the river. The muleteers arrived. "Poor Peter, he's going now," said the muleteers. They picked [the bag] up and went to chuck it in the river. They reached the river. Just dishes came out. "Poor dinner, it's gone now," said the muleteers. "That bastard, Peter, he's scrambled," they said.

"Hurray!" said Peter from far away. "Well, what can you do?" said the muleteers. That's how it ends.

This account of the merry pranks of the Indian counterpart to Till Eulenspiegel conforms quite closely to the Spanish model, usually known as Pedro Ordemales (A. M. Espinosa, 1967: T163–T165). Many of the episodes can be traced at least to the beginning of the seventeenth century, to the picaresque Spanish novel El Subtil Cordobés Pedro de Urdemalas by Alonso Jerónimo de Salas Barbadillo. From New Mexico to Guatemala, Pedro plays these same tricks over and over (A. M. Espinosa, 1914a: l19–l24; Gamio, 1922: l20, l314; Mason, 1914: l68–l71; Parsons, 1932a, T14; Pittman, 1945: l0–l7; Recinos, 1918: l47–l48; Robe, 1970, T14, T122, T132; Rosales, 1945: l83; Tax, 1950, T106; Wheeler, 1943, T148–T151). The only unusual feature of Romin's version is the needle episode, but even this occurs in a Puerto Rican tale of Juan Bobo, who mistakes the baby's breathing spot for a tumor (Mason, 1914: l46). The deliberate confusion as to what Pedro's boss told him to get back home was once probably a play on words, since lost in translation. Indeed this occurs in a tale from Teotihuacan, in which Pedro is told to bring a digging stick and a shovel. Instead he urges his bosses' wife and daughter to submit to him. When they protest, he calls to his boss, "Aren't I right—both of them?" To which his boss nods "Yes!" and the deed is done (Gamio, 1922: l34). Pedro's escape, by substituting the muleteers' food for himself, seems to be a typical Zinacantec touch. In Mitla (Parsons, T14) and Guatemala (Recinos, 477) he fills the sack with lassos. The Aguacatec, who know their hero by the name of Pedro Tecomate, have him substitute a doll made of the muleteers' food and lassos (Shaw, 1972: l69–l71). Among the Tepecanos he entices a goatherd in the sack (Mason, 1914: l70). In New Mexico he lures the bosses' wife into it (A. M. Espinosa, l20).

Some months before Romin told me "The Adventures of Peter" he had recounted the tale to B. N. Colby in Spanish following the identical plot, but with slightly greater detail. Colby chooses this epic to illustrate the social situation in the highlands of Chiapas where Indians at least until very recently have been submissive and nonretaliatory despite centuries of exploitation at the hands of the Ladinos. Ladino power and prestige is envied while Ladino personality is condemned. Peter's aggressive behavior, argues Colby, must be viewed in the light of "the effectiveness with which the Ladinos have kept Indians under control since the time of the conquest" (Colby, 1966: l42). In fact the catharsis that Petul provides his Zinacantec audience must be very similar to that which Till Eulenspiegel provided the German peasants living under the yoke of the burghers and nobility in the fifteenth century and beyond. See also T171.
Romin Tan-chak comes of a well-to-do family in Stzellejtik, where the houses have a sweeping view over the Pan American Highway as it cuts through Na Chij. He is the youngest brother of Romin Teratol's wife and ever since their marriage has been the friendliest member of the family. Ten years ago, when he told me "The Messengers of Calvary," he claimed to be twenty-five, but he scarcely looked twenty. He is short, but well-proportioned, with regular features, a dazzling smile and a deep, throaty laugh. On fiestas he walks tall in his high-backed ceremonial sandals, his clothing immaculate, his short shorts gleaming white. Despite his family's hostility to gringo anthropologists and other newfangled things, he always treated me with consideration and, I liked to think, warmth. Romin agreed to tell me a number of his dreams and, with no reservation, described the dreams of shamans. "The Messengers of Calvary" was an elaboration of religious beliefs that were touched upon in a typical shaman's dream (D62).

Our first encounters, though, were guarded and formal, since I was his brother-in-law's employer. I only had occasion to see him en famille when Romin Teratol had a matter of some importance to broach to his awesome in-laws. It was a revelation to me, then, as the three of us made the six-hour trek to the lowlands to buy some corn, to see this Lowell or Peabody of the Zinacantec world tearing down the mountain trail hurling after the mules, with great gusto, a constant barrage of the most horrendous Spanish oaths. I had not realized that Spanish was the language used to address Ladinos and mules.

This sketch of Romin Tan-chak was drawn first in Of Wonders Wild and New: Dreams from Zinacantán (Laughlin, 1976:54).

The Messengers of Calvary

At Calvary they say there is everything. There is the hummingbird. There is the great horned owl, the screech owl. Yes!

Now you see, they watch those of us who never pray at the meeting place. Then, "Go, go tell him, because he is going to die now," say the Tutelary Gods. But the hummingbird doesn't wait. He hasn't heard whose name it is where he's supposed to go announce it. He just leaves in a hurry. He arrives at someone else's house. He arrives at another house. Yes!

That's why he's not trustworthy. What he says doesn't happen either. Yes!

We call him the witch hummingbird. Yes!

If the great horned owl goes, "You go, because you are supposed to go. Go announce it to them!" say [the Tutelary Gods]. Yes!

The great horned owl arrives at our house or he arrives to call at someone else's house. He announces our names. Yes!

He announces our names. Whatever our names are, that's what he says. Yes!

The Tutelary Gods send them. Yes!

7A li ta Kalvaryoe, te la skotol li k'utik, te la li tz'unune, te la li 7ichine, li kuxkuxe. Ji7!

7Ora va7i, 7a li ta la sk'el bu xa muk' bu xik'opojojtotik ta tzoblebal 7une. Ja7 la te, "Batan, ba 7albo yu7n xa chcham," xi la li totil me7il 7une, pero li tz'unune mu la smala 7ora, mu la buch'u ya7yojbe buch'u sbi ti te chba yale, yech nox chbat ta 7anil, 7o la yan na xk'ot 7un, 7o la yan na xk'ot 7un. Ji7!

Yech'o muk' bu 7ich'ob rason 7un, mu xk'ot lek k'u xal 7uk 7un. Ji7!

Li j7ak'-chamel tz'unun xkaltike 7une. Ji7!

Va7i, ti mi bat la 7ichin 7une, "Batan vo7ote, yu7n melel chabate, ba 7albo ya7il" mi xi la 7une. Ji7!

Chk'ot i 7ichin ta jnatik mi 7o bu xk'ot 7ok'uk tznae, tzlok'es jbitik 7une. Ji!

Tzlok'es jbitik, k'usi jbitike, ja7 la yech chal. Ji7!

Ja7 ta x7ak'van tal li totil me7il 7une. Ji7!
They send them. They dispatch them, as we say. Yes!

"You tell him yourself!" Because that's the way it is. They announce, they call out our names the way a Ladino calls our names from a paper. They look to see where we are about to die. Yes!

"Go tell this one, because he is dying now!" they say. Yes!

If they arrive and cry out at our houses, they announce our names. Yes!

If you take care of yourself still, if you hold a curing ceremony right away, then [the sickness] will pass. Yes!

But if you don't take it seriously you won't last long. You will last three or four days, that's about all. We get sick. We die. It doesn't pass. That's not all, they say that if the great horned owl flaps over the path, if it hoots on the path when we are travelling on the path, on a path far [from home], we will meet up with a highwayman. Yes!

If it cries "Hoo, hoo!" or if the great horned owl flaps by, then we are sure to meet up with a highwayman. We'll meet up with a highwayman just a little bit ahead. Yes, that's what they say!

Yes, that's what they say! Yes!

The shrine of Calvary on a hill overlooking the town is believed to be the meeting place of the Tutelary Gods. There they sit at a table to decide the fates of the citizens of Zinacantan. They are envisioned as old men, their heads bound in red turbans, dressed in ceremonial robes, supernatural models for the elders of the human community below. In Chamula, Our Lord is attended by horned owls, screech owls, and hummingbirds. The horned owls sit on the top of the table, and their message of death comes true, but the screech owls are underneath the table and so their words are lies (Gossen, T21).

The concept of owls as lying messengers is found also in the Popol Vuh where they serve as messengers for the Lords of Hell (Edmonson, 1971:66).
If he is not immortal, he is well advanced in that direction. At last report Xun Vaskis claimed to be one hundred and twenty years old, but, when the ashes fell from the sky in 1902, he was still a young boy. Whatever his age, there is no man today in Zinacantán who would not bow to him. In 1934 he passed through the fourth and highest rank of the religious hierarchy, having attained the most coveted post at each level. Probably no other Zinacantec has lived so long as to see his own son too become an elder and even one of the six holy elders to whom alone is entrusted the duty of fastening Christ’s body to the cross on Good Friday.

Unschooled, his knowledge of Spanish is prodigious in obscenities, but otherwise atrociously deficient. Even so he became for many years the secular leader of his hamlet, Naben Chauk, and, after a political schism, the chief representative of the opposition. Indeed, Xun (pronounced Shoon) was a principal apponent of the township boss, and his assistant, Xun 7Akov. There was no mistaking the Vaskis crowd when it arrived in San Cristóbal to lodge a complaint, with Xun in an antediluvian gait at the forefront, his hobnailed sandals clacking smartly down the center of the “King’s Highway.” It was difficult to censure this youthful potentate for the chicanery that his political ascendance must have demanded.

Xun is, of course, a veteran of the Revolution (captor of one horse).

Though too infirm now to reach the lowlands, Xun is patriarch of a lineage that for many years has farmed on a grand scale with hired foremen, rented trucks, and even bank accounts.

Xun’s gracious hospitality to American anthropologists enveloped every visit. But he thought in exchange we ought at least to find him a pretty American girl for a wife. When I asked what would happen to his present wife, he replied loftily with a chauvinistic twinkle in his eye, “Oh, she can sleep by my ass!”

Once when my infant daughter refused to nurse for anxious days on end, Xun told us that “evil eye” was the cause and offered to pray on her behalf. He prescribed in addition to the burning of candles, a rubdown with elderberry branches and eggs. When I asked if the eggs should be hard-boiled, he roared with laughter, “Why she would be dead then!” Shortly after Xun performed the ceremony, my daughter resumed nursing and since that day Xun and his wife know full well that my daughter’s soul is safely in his care.
Time after time our visits to Xun’s house have been stopped abruptly in the front yard by a relative, who has told us grimly that Xun was in quarantine and at death’s door—only to see him two days later hoeing his corn field. Seven years ago he dreamt that the Tutelary Gods had told him to ask each of his children and grandchildren which one would carry on his spiritual knowledge. When none stepped forward, Xun calmly accepted his fate—he would have to live until the gods’ wishes were fulfilled. At this very time Xun became desperately ill. He was diagnosed by a prominent doctor from Cambridge, Massachusetts, who found that Xun had an inflammation of the urinary tract. The doctor prescribed antibiotics, but added, “He’s had it. Even if they cure him, he’ll never walk again.” Xun soon grew impatient with pills and tried the services of three shamans in succession. As a last desperate resort his relatives asked me to take them to the “talking saint” in far off Soyaló, but their candles kept falling over while the saint maintained an ominous silence. The medium conveyed to us Saint Michael’s suggestion to seek out a doctor, but the Zinacantecs were sunk in gloom. Nevertheless, after our return, when Xun asked what words “the grand old man” had spoken, they replied, “He said you will live a long time, but that we should take you to a doctor.” The next day as Xun, in excruciating pain, prepared to leave for San Cristóbal, he was asked if he would wear his hat. “Wear my hat?” Of course I will wear my hat! Let the young and the old laugh as they watch a sick man walk by, but I am a man and I will walk like a man!” Ten minutes after the doctor had inserted a catheter and drained his bladder, Xun sat up and beamed at the doctor, exclaiming, “I’m as fit as a soldier!”

When his hospital stay was over, Xun stood in the doorway with a triumphant smile, waved his hat, and roared, “Let’s go home!” Then he wept with happiness. After a period of recuperation the doctor planned to operate on Xun’s prostate. The family agreed to keep that detail a secret. When the day came, Xun strode into the hospital and boomed in, Xun, with his neckerchief wrapped around his head in a turban, sat beaming. His wrinkled face was glowing with life and happiness. His wife, too, was smiling broadly. Xun fussed over everyone, making sure that we all got seats. Then he had the table set down. His voice rang with authority as he directed the women to set down a gourd of water. With gusto he ordered us to rinse our hands, then our mouths. He directed the serving of the corn gruel and saw to it that the two gourdfuls of freshly boiled corn on the cob were set before us. “Drink gruel, compadre, eat corn on the cob, compadre, fill your stomach!” Again and again he filled our cups, laughing heartily, reminding us that this is what we had come for. I asked him where his corn field was. With a great smile he exclaimed, “Right over there above Mikel’s house. Now it has many ears!” Then he began to cry noislessly, rubbing his eyes with his neckerchief while his wife explained to us that when Xun had fallen ill the ears of corn had not yet appeared.

I once pressed Romin Teratol, who clearly felt some sympathy for old Xun, if he wasn’t really a wonderful person, Romin replied with a quiet smile, “Yes, he seems good-hearted but go live with him for three months and then see what you think!” Still, of Xun it could probably be repeated what was written on the gravestone of an exceptionally charitable and fine-spirited citizen of a village in Maine, “He averaged pretty well for these parts.”

When Xun tells now of his youthful exploits, his grandchildren laugh at him. Here too hints of senility are heaped with scorn. They have heard those stories too often, but to a foreigner their drama was irresistible. “You of course are all too young to have seen these things, but I saw them myself!” Then, immediately, so involved in the Revolution that a half pint of Comiteco is left standing forlornly on the ground between his knees, Xun punctuates his lines with well-aimed spits. Cannons boomed, machine guns rattled, bullets whistled by, the ancient biplane sputtered overhead. “We have to record it on the machine. It mustn’t be lost!”

Xun, himself hard of hearing, spoke to the tape recorder. It didn’t answer. He spoke again, still no answer. He scowled with indignation, but finally consented to tell it a whole tale, even though it seemed quite pointless. After the first playback, pandemonium broke out as Xun listened to his words, interrupted them, shouting new details, thundering “That’s right! That’s right!” and bursting into his tale again. Even his family, so inured to Xun’s style, collapsed in laughter as the machine cried out, “Sonofabitch!” “Holy Mary!”

Not long afterwards, with characteristic graciousness Xun invited us all to a feast. When we stepped in, Xun, with his neckerchief wrapped around his head in a turban, sat beaming. His wrinkled face was glowing with life and happiness. His wife, too, was smiling broadly. Xun fussed over everyone, making sure that we all got seats. Then he had the table set down. His voice rang with authority as he directed the women to set down a gourd of water. With gusto he ordered us to rinse our hands, then our mouths. He directed the serving of the corn gruel and saw to it that the two gourdfuls of freshly boiled corn on the cob were set before us. “Drink gruel, compadre, eat corn on the cob, compadre, fill your stomach!” Again and again he filled our cups, laughing heartily, reminding us that this is what we had come for. I asked him where his corn field was. With a great smile he exclaimed, “Right over there above Mikel’s house. Now it has many ears!” Then he began to cry noislessly, rubbing his eyes with his neckerchief while his wife explained to us that when Xun had fallen ill the ears of corn had not yet appeared.

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If I was laggard in beginning the next round of Comiteco, Xun would demand it. When I requested one more tale, "One more tale, one more pint!"

Xun's accounts are sprinkled throughout with both obscenities and ritual words and phrases; the former a sign of his self-assured status in the community, the latter a sign of his pride as a shaman, and an avowal of his intimacy with the gods. Quite deliberately he neglected to add the particle la which indicates that the story was only hearsay, for he wants you to know that he was there at the time of the creation.

Unfortunately the silence of the printed page robs Xun of his most dramatic effects while the obscurities and gaps that were never apparent in the telling become all too obvious in the reading. Even so, during the tales of wars, natural calamities, and supersexual Spooks, clearly the greatest hero of these epics is Xun Vaskis himself!

On my last visit, Xun put down his hoe, sat me in the sun by the front door and told me how it was in the time of Don Porfirio. A week before, his wife, almost totally blind, had told me with finality "Your compadre is dying, he won't survive." Then he called to his granddaughter to give him "the white sack." From the sack Xun pulled a freshly woven hat and, as I sat in bewilderment, handed it to me, reminding me that over a year ago we had stood together in front of the Church of St. Lawrence and I had complained that my hat was so yellowed and tattered that I was ashamed to be seen. "Put it on, now you're a man!"

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When the Ashes Fell

T120

Long ago ashes fell. Ooh, I was a teenager. It certainly was long ago. First there was an explosion to the south. It was after midnight. Then I felt the shivers, but—t it was like a mortar. The next morning everybody was afraid. "Eh, but what fiesta could it be?" they said. They came to ask here [in San Cristóbal].

"A mountain is exploding," they said.

"But you watch, ashes will fall! Who knows if it will be midnight, who knows when," they said. "The ash will fall later today," they said. "The ashes have stopped. It won't erupt anymore. It's all right now."

But at sunset we fled. We went to the woods, to my grandfather's house. That's where we went. It was packed tight with people. "The mountain will explode. The mountain will explode here!" they said. But they were lying. But there wasn't anything. It was far away where it erupted. The ashes came. Ooh, but when it grew light, Holy Mary! The ash was nearly a handspan deep on the holy ground. The horses, the sheep, Holy Mary—they couldn't eat, they couldn't drink the water. It was just like that out there, drizzling like that.

Dawn came over the holy earth. We reached home. It stopped falling. Nothing stirred now. The sun appeared. The dry season began. It was just before All Souls' Day. Just like today. So the rocks exploded at this time of year. The ashes erupted. It was this long before, it was this long before the fiesta, like today.

So then after it erupted, the horses and sheep got diarrhea. Maybe the ashes were hot. They drank the...
water. They ate their food. That's why that happened. Long ago the punishment was a little too stiff. A mountain exploded. The ashes came.

Then candles were offered in the mountains, since the shamans said, then . . . they said that candles should be offered. The earthquakes, ooh [back] in October, the earthquakes had started here, Holy Mary! Who knows if it happened twenty times a day, something like that. Everybody was scared. Everybody cried. They cried. They were scared. They were afraid we would die, since there was quake after quake after quake. For a month it rained, rained and rained like [it's doing] now. The earthquakes continued, Holy Mary! The earthquakes stopped, then the mountain exploded. When the mountain exploded then the ash fell. That's the end of the story.

When Xun attributes the heat of the ashes as a possible cause of the animals' sickness, he is probably referring not to temporary heat but to a fundamental quality of the volcanic ash.

Xun's frequent use of the word ch'ul, "holy," is characteristic of his narrative style. It is an embellishment that perhaps subconsciously emphasizes his close personal relationship with the gods that he feels he has earned as a shaman and as one of the most venerable men of Zinacantan.

The fall of ashes from the eruption of Mt. Tacana in Guatemala in 1902 is now probably the earliest historical event of importance that was witnessed and is still remembered by the oldest living Zinacantecs. It is used as a benchmark for dating subsequent events that are fast receding, too, into mythic time.

A series of earthquakes beginning on 23 September 1902, continued until 25 October, when "mortar reports" early in the morning caused "panic" in San Cristóbal as word spread that it was no fiesta. At nine in the evening the ashes began to fall, the ominous silence cracked by thunderings throughout the night and into the next day (Restori, 1903:18-20).

"It was just before All Souls' Day. Just like today." Indeed it was fifty-eight years and two days before the telling of the tale!

Accounts from Chamula (Gossen, T153, T146) describe a fearful night of weeping, waiting for the mountains to explode, as the ash descended like drizzle, whitening the land, and hiding the paths. It buried the green grass for three days from the sheep and horses, who perished miserably as the Chamulans watched in helpless resignation. Even the meat in the market stalls was spoiled. In Tenejapa as the weeping populace knelt before their house crosses and the religious officials offered candles and incense in the church, the thatch roofs of the old houses were tumbling in all around them (Stross 1973, T22). See also T58.

The Priest and the Bell—the Epidemic and Me

Now the Zinacantec shamans dreamt, three shamans dreamt.

Our Holy Mother Muxul Vitz, she is so good-hearted, our ancient mother, place of recovery, place of revival.

They dreamt about Our Holy Mother, Muxul Vitz. "If you want it, children, I'll give you a bell here. You should go to Our Father, St. Lawrence. Go to Our Lady of the Rosary, and Our Holy Father, St. Dominic! Go see for yourselves, children! I left it for you. Take it yourselves! I'm giving it to you."

The three shamans dreamt. Since they were real men, they were a bit successful! They went by holy daylight. The next holy morning they went to look at the top of Our Holy...
Mother. As for the holy bell, its rim was thi—s big around, peeking out above the holy ground. Holy Mary!

It became known, it was publicized everywhere. [The news] spread to all the children of Our Father, St. Lawrence. They came to pray to Our Holy Mother [to learn] if she would kindly let them remove it. “Fine, take it!” she said. They prayed to her. Who knows how many candles the shamans offered. Our Holy Mother, Muxul Vitz gave them permission.

They dug. They reached it. After three holy days the holy bell delivered itself. Chains were brought. The holy bell was tied up. It was secured with chains now, since it was tied up now. It wouldn’t go anywhere now.

The trouble was, the elders were stupid. “Let’s go eat!” said [some].

“All right!” said [the others]. The priest happened to come. The priest came.

The trouble was, the priest had a maid. The woman happened to come. The elders were in the midst of eating. The priest was standing there. The priest walked around [the bell]. His maid remained standing there.

God, don’t you see, the chains for the holy bell were left lying there. Now as the bell arrived at Na Joj [Raven House], it went “Bo—ng” there. The people of Zinacantan Center wept. The shamans wept. The elders were denounced. “Why does he have to have a maid? It’s wrong for a woman to watch. Only men were taking it out.” Don’t you see, it was the elders’ fault. The bell leapt out, then.

It lifted itself out from the place where it was hanging. It had been tied up. The fastenings then . . . . It was tied up with holy chains, great chains, because it was about to come out. They were starting to put cables on it. It was coming out now. It was lifted already. They had tried it out to see if the bell could be lifted. Who knows if Our Holy Mother wanted it that way—the priest’s maid happened to come along. Who knows if it was the stupidity of the priest who happened to bring his maid. The bell was bright green. It was gold. It came out of the hill. It came out of the cave. It came out of the hill. It came out of the cave. There is [another] bell there [in the church of St. Lawrence], but what a bell! But it isn’t struck by lightning, because it is virility itself. If sickness comes, it rings three times at midnight, but

ch’ul-kampana 7une, 7a li xchikin 7une, xii smuk’ul te nach’al ta sba ti ch’ul-balamile, Maria Santisima!

Bwéno, 7ivinaj 7osilaj skotol ta j-mek 7un, 7ipukij k’yu pal yalab in jiottit 7un, 7itaj sk’oponel li jch’ul-me7tike, mi ch’abalaj slok’es 7un. “Bwéno, 7ich’oil!” xi. 7Isk’oponik 7un, jna7tik k’yu pal yak’ kantela li j7iiloletike, 7iyak’ permiso li jch’ul-me7tik Muxul Vitz 7une.

Bwéno, 7isjok’ik 7un, 7istaik 7un, ta 7oxib ch’ul-k’ak’al 7iyak’ sba 7entrokal li ch’ul-kampananaa, 7itaj xa karina 7un, 7ichuk xa li ch’ul-k’ampananab, bajal xa ta karina kómo chukul xa, mu xa bu xbat.

K’usi 7un, 7a li moletike komo sonso. “Ba ve7ikotik!” xi.

“Bwénol!” xi. Ba taluk tottik pale 7un, li tottik palee tal.

K’usi 7une, skira 7un, ba taluk i 7antze, 7a li moletike yolel che7, 7a li tottik pale te va7al, 7ijoyp’ij tottik pale, 7a li skriarae, te va7al 7ikom.

Dyos, mu xavil, te losol 7ikom in karinae yu7un i ch’ul-kampana, ta Na Joj 7un ti “Ka---n!” xi xa k’ot ti ch’ul-kampanane, 7i7ok’ i ijtek-lume, 7i7ok’ i j7iiloletike, 7ilaj ta 7utel li moletike, ja7 7ilin i j7iiloletike, 7a li tottik paleaj, 7ilaj ta 7utel. “K’u stu7un skira che7e, mu xtun sk’e7 antz puro viniketik ta slok’es.” Ma7n xavil 7un, ja7 smul li moletike, 7a li kampana che7e, 7ip’it xa lok’el ta 7epal kantela, cholol li kantela k’al chlok’ xa, li chlok’ xa ti ch’ul-kampananae, 7itotz xa yo7 xchotleb in kampana 7une, to7zem xa, jok’em xa ti k’al yav k’al tana le7e, 7ak’o sk’e7 bik’it 7ak’o sk’e7 muk’, jamal muk’ta ka---mpana ta j-mek 7un.

Bwéno, 7a li yo7 sjiplebe che7e, 7itotz 7ichuk xa 7un, 7a li chuke che7e, kómo ch’ul-karina chuk 7o, muk’ta karina, yu7un xa chlok’, ch7och xa riataetik lavi, xlo7 xa, 7itotz xa 7un, 7iyak’ xa va7a previ totz i kampana 7une, jna7tik mi sk’an yech i jch’ul-me7tike, ba taluk i skriara tottik pale, jna7tik mi sk’an yech, mu jna7tik mi no 7ox mu x7ak’e lok’el li ch’ul-kampananec, mu jna7tik ja7 sbolil li pale ba, ba yik’ tal skriarae, 7a li kampana che7e, batz’i yox, 7a li 7oro 7a li nonae che7e, lok’em ta vitz lok’ ta ch’en, te xa jun kampana pero kampana, pero mu sna7 xama7e ta chauk, Yu7un xa vinik stuk, mi xtal chamele che7e, 7ox-moj ta stij sba ta 7ol 7ak’ubal pero mi jun krixchano muk’ bu 7ochem, tz’otol i ch’ul-7eklixae, pero li nona lek 7une, nona ja7 ye7h 7albil komel.
not one person has entered [the church]. The holy church is locked tight. But the bell is a good one. It is called a "None" bell.

Their efforts were all in vain. The priest was condemned, too.

So, "Your crime is too great, Father. You are no good. Why did you have to bring the woman along? Women aren't supposed to watch everything." Because women, then, the poor women mustn't come close. The men, then, it is said, men can come close. Women, no sir! Women are more . . . , worse, colder. Men, then, are me—n! Don't you see, Our Holy Father, then, he has a beard. Men have beards. Women never have beards.

So that's why. The trouble there was that Zinacantán lost a little, digging up the holy bell, then.

See how the holy people have been ever since! Who knows if Our Ancient Mother wanted that. Who knows if the holy fathers and holy mothers, at the circuit of the Tutelary Gods, wanted it. Long ago, then, the three shamans were just stupid. They should have offered candles at the circuit of St. Lawrence, the place of recovery, the place of revival, where stands the sustainer, the protector.

Now what they did was to pray to Our Holy Ancient Mother, Mary Muxul. They prayed to her. She gave permission for the bell to be taken out. So she was kind to Our Father, St. Lawrence. She was kind to Our Father, St. Lawrence.

The trouble was, then, that the priest was at fault. If his maid hadn't happened to go, it would have been fine. The elders . . . it was then that the famine came, sir, when the famine came! Now they are a tiny bit smarter. When you look, the people are in a circle, some eat, some . . .

When all the elders met, then, when they met at the Church of the Martyr [St. Sebastian], then, they were dressed up. They had their ceremonial shirts and pants. They were well-prepared, Holy Mary! Loads of gunpowder, rockets, mortars blasting off. Who knows if Our Holy Ancient Mother wanted it, the famine came. The elders went, elders like me. They didn't take authority at all. They lost their heads. They were dumbstruck.

The bell was hurt, that it didn't come out, [the bell] that was dreamt about. "Well, you will receive a little punishment, as I won't be installed. I should have been seated next to Our Father, St. Lawrence. I should have been seated there. We would have watched over our children, our offspring, but now you can wait!" said [the bell]. See how it still is now—some have lice, and some are well-off.

Because Our Holy Ancient Mother was a little heartbroken, the priest, then, died. His maid, then,
died. Too bad! Don’t you see, they were doing evil. The elders, then, died. The other men, then, lived. The shamans, then, lived. They weren’t at fault. They just gave their counsel. They weren’t respected by the elders. You respect them because they are shamans, sir! Take off your hat, because that’s the way it is! That’s indeed the truth, because they don’t lie. They dreamt. They saw it. Our Ancient Mother, Muxul showed it to them, then, Holy Mar—, place of recovery, place of revival. Even if you are sick when you leave [her shrine] then you will come back well. You will eat a few tortillas, now. You will drink a little pinole or coffee.

Because the sickness is left there beneath the feet of Our Mother. That’s why it’s the way it is. Me, I saw the bell, then. I am its child. I am its offspring. I grew up later. It was still a little boy, but then it won’t be long before I’m a hundred years old. But I was still little. It was more than a hundred, longer ago, Holy Mary!

Maybe that’s the way it was left. Look at the bell there [in the church of St. Lawrence]! It is broken now. It is slightly cracked now.

The trouble was, it got cracked. A disgusting woman went up. There weren’t any constables or principals at the courthouse. The schoolboy bell-ringers went to ring it, so the bell cracked then. The woman had gone up so that the bell would crack. It was a short time ago that the bell split.

But you see I was told about it. Well, what could I do since the magistrate didn’t witness it? Then I told him, “Well, Mr. Magistrate, why don’t you have any control, man? What use are you, seated in the courthouse?” That’s what I told him, because I was a principal, I was! Me, I’ll direct things. Even if it’s the magistrate, I’ll give orders, because that’s what he’s for, [but] if he won’t take command . . .

Then I told him about it. That holy bell is cracked now. The other one [the None bell] didn’t crack at all. It’s a real bell, yes si—r, My Lord, if sickness comes, then. In the epidemic, then, in the epidemic, then, I was a full-grown man. The [None] bell rang three times at midnight. But no one was there. The holy church wasn’t open. There wasn’t anyone beneath the feet of St. Lawrence. It rang by itself.

In November, God!, the dead! Ooh in sevens and eights they went in [the grave]. Me, I did the burying. I carried the bodies. If there was a chicken standing there, grab it yourself! Eat it! If there was a bottle standing there. Grab it! Drink it! If it was finished, pick up your hoe, go on.

If there was a tortilla there or if there was still someone to give you a tortilla, eat it! If not—have you ever seen a jaguar?—the chickens were gulped down [without tortillas]. That’s how you got

Bwénó, porke 7a li chamele, te chkom ta yolon yok jme7tik 7un, por 7eso ja7 yech 7un, 7a li kampana che7e, 7a li vo7one ta jk’el yalabon snich’nabon li vo7one che7e, vo7one ta7akal to nich’i, k’ox kremon to, pero bwénó 7a le7e jutuk xa sk’an xlok’ ta syen jch’iel 7un, pero bik’iton to 7un, mas tzyn, jun mas moletik, María Santísima!

Bwénó, 7a le7e eee te xa nan kom 7o le7e eee, k’e li kampana le7e che7e, vok’em xa, tzik’em xa jutu---k.

K’usi, ba tzik’uk 7o 7une, 7imuy jun porkeriya 7antz, mu7yuk te li much’u junuk mayor junuk krinsupal ta kavilto 7un, ba stiyik’obil jchan-vun 7un yo7 li tzik’ 7o li kampana le7e, 7antz muyem yo7 li tzik’em li kampana le7 7une, 7ach’ to jav li kampana le7e.

Bu, li7albat xa to, pwes k’u ta jpas porke mu7yuk 7i7il 7a li preserente. 7ikalbe xa, “Bwénó, senyor preserente, k’u ju7un mu xapas mantale, 7ombre, k’usi 7atun ti chotol ta kavilto che7e?” Ja7 yech 7ikalbe, porke vo7on krinsipalon, vo7on ta xkal mantal 7ak’ 7o mi preserenteuk pero ta xkal mantal porke yo7un ja7 stu mu stak’ takel jun preserente.

Bwénó, pwes, 7ikalbe xa 7un le7e, tzik’em xa ch’ul-kampana le7e, 7a li j-p’ej 7une, mu stkiz’ 7un a7a, nona, 7esó si, titti—k, kajvalti—k, mi xtal chamele che7e ta chameltike che7e, ta chameltike che7e, lek vinikon, 7ox-moj 7istij sba li nona ta 7ol 7ak’ubal pero muk’ much’u, mu7nuk jamal ch’ul-7eklixa, mu7nuk 7o much’u ta yolon yok San-torensoe, 7istij sba stuk 7un.

Bwénó, na novyembre 7un, dyos, li 7anima, jii, 7o7ech ta vukub ta vaxakib, 7a li vo7one, limuklomaj 7ikean 7anima, mi 7o te xkotet kaxlan tzak 7atuk, ti7an, mi 7o te vuchul junuk limete tzako 7uch’an, laj 7un tam 7avasaluna 7un, batan 7un!

Bwénó, mi 7o te junuk vaje, mi 7o to much’u 7ak’one, 7o te junuk vaj ve7an, mo7oje, mi 7oy xavilik jun bolome, vinkil ti7ili li kaxlane, ch7och 7o pwersa labal 7eoval.
strength for the constant carrying [of corpses].

Then, so then, I went to bury one [body]. I came back to pick up the next one. I buried it. I came back to pick up another. I buried it. I came back to pick up another. I was worn out now. Then I didn't want to do it anymore. It was better to go and sleep for one or two nights, because I couldn't go on. My strength was gone. It was at the time of the epidemic long ago, the epidemic long ago. Me, I reacted well to the sickness—probably because I am fairly strong. I was bedridden for seven days, but it wasn't so bad. I'm walking. My wife died. I was left penniless. One son was left, one daughter was left. My little boy was [still] crawling. I cried. I left. I went to my mother's.

So then, afterwards, I decided to get a wife. [She has been with me] ever since.

The importance of dreams in Zinacantán as the spectacles for true vision is manifest in this legend. The subject of the shamans' dreams is Maria Muxul, the Tutelary God of the hill known as Muxul Vitz that stands at the main entrance to Zinacantán Center. At the foot of this hill is one of the major shrines for curing ceremonies and so Muxul Vitz is addressed by Xun as kokebal, kuxebal, "place of recovery, place of revival." The hill is personified and referred to as "Our Holy Mother." As such it was offered candles by the shamans—so many candles that they stood marshalled in rows. The bell was last heard at "Raven House," a cliff to the northwest of Muxul Vitz.

When Xun describes the bell as batz'i yox, "bright green," he may be saying as well that it was a great treasure, for yox implies good luck, good fortune.

Then follows a brief digression concerning the power of the noma or "None bell" in the Church of St. Lawrence, which, as its name indicates, apparently rung at the 3 p.m. None service that is no longer held in Zinacantán.

In trying to understand the loss of the bell, Xun suggests that the shamans were at fault for offering candles only at Muxul Vitz instead of at all the shrines surrounding Zinacantán Center and at the Church of St. Lawrence. "The holy fathers and holy mothers" are the Tutelary Gods who reside at these shrines.

Xun seems to date the loss of the bell at the time of a famine that must have occurred at the end of the nineteenth century. I do not understand the significance of "the people are in a circle," but apparently the famine began at the Fiesta of St. Sebastian as punishment for the townspeople's negligence.

Then follows Xun's description of the cracking of the great bell in the Church of St. Lawrence, which occurred when he was a principal or representative of his hamlet, Naben Chauk, in the courthouse. It is not clear whether the epidemic came as a result of the great bell's cracking, but the None bell announced the onset of the epidemic.

This epidemic, that bore off Xun's wife, was the flu known as "la gripe español" that ravaged Mexico in 1918-1919. A Chamulán account blames the "Carranza saint-burners" for its introduction into the highlands (Gossen, T164).

The primacy of the church bell as a symbol of community identity was revealed to me on my very first visit to Zinacantán. As I sat by the hearth in the thatch-roofed hut of Chep Xantis, storyteller of Tale 47, the church bells began to toll in the valley below, announcing the arrival of the priest for Sunday Mass. With deep feeling, Chep, though an unsentimental man with many ties to the Ladino world, exclaimed, "You have never heard those bells before! The bells of St. Lawrence sound the most beautiful of all, more beautiful than any in San Cristóbal!"

The association of bells with the forces of nature seems to be common in southern Mexico and Guatemala. The Chinantecs speak of bells returning to the mountains (Weitlaner and Castro, 1954:110). The Mazatecs hear bells ringing in the depths of a river (Laughlin, 1957). Both Chamulans and Zinacantecs know of bells that have disappeared into mountains (INI, 2:5 and 3:17-18). The Quiché tell of two bells that were stolen in the night and later found suspended by thunderbolt snakes in the mountain (Bucaro Moraga 1959:30). The Tzutujil recount a tale of the elders who abandoned a newly discovered bell while they went to seek help, only to find it later on the mountaintop (Bucaro Moraga, 36).

Church bells, undoubtedly the single most valuable objects introduced into Indian communities by the Spanish colonizers, have become the symbol of municipal wealth. Much in the manner of the early crowns of England, they represent not only present riches, but assure good fortune in the future. While still in the mountains they are under the control of the Earth Lords, those unpredictable figures of supreme power who are part serpent and part Spaniard.

In Panajachel it is said that young boys were hurled into the cauldrons of molten metal during the casting process in order to assure a good tone (Tax, 1950:2115-2116)! This belief brings to mind the Zinacantec taboo against female contact with bells. Bells and waterholes must both be shielded from women's defilement.

During the recasting of the great bell of the Church of St. Lawrence in 1972 the most elaborate precautions were taken to ensure the security of the bell. From beginning to end, day and night, it was closely guarded, surrounded continuously by shamans and performing musicians.

Even stronger evidence of the persistent power of native belief was presented in 1969, when a Zinacantec boy from Naben Chauk dreamt that a bell was buried in a hill bordering the hamlet. The boy reported his dream to a shaman, who accompanied him on a visit to the local official and then to the magistrate. After the work was authorized, shamans made a
Then that Maryan Nuj dreamt about it. He dreamt that the bell was there. It was there.

Well then, somebody went to look at the bell. The elders. The elders, but . . . Have you seen the white-headed elders in Holy Week who carry [the cross]? Like them. Six elders went. But they were all Thunderbolts. But they weren't real people who went to look.

Then, they went. They found it, indeed! The bell was there in the place, in the place of Our Holy Mother [Muxul Vitz]. You've seen the place?

You see, the bell was quickly bound with chains. The bell was bound, bound with chains, bound.

But the priest went. He went.

Then the priest said nothing. The priest went to bless it. The bell was baptised.

You see, his maid went. The whorish woman went. [The bell] didn't want a woman [to be there]. Ooh, that was the end of it. Then they heard it at Na Joj [Raven House]. At Na Joj, by Muk'ta Vitz [Great Mountain]. It was bo—nging when it arrived there. They heard it there, then. The chains were left behind, knotted. They were there, since [the bell] was lost. If it weren't for that, who knows if it would probably be hanging [in the church], if it wouldn't be hanging [there]. I don't know. Because long ago Our Holy Father's bell wasn't that bell [that's in the Church of St. Lawrence now]. The [first] bell is in Chiapa. It was never hung. It's in . . . the Church of St. Dominic [in Chiapa] is like this . . . it's there inside the yard, but it can't be seen. It's shut up. [The churchyard] just looks like woo—ds. The bell is face down there.

Then the ancestors sold it.

You see, the holy bell didn't feel at home there. The next morning it was hanging here [in Zinacantán Center]. The bell could be heard, it could be heard as far away as Chiapa. It could be heard as far as Tuxtla. When they rang the bell, it could be heard. They sold it. The Chiapanecs were all Hairy Hands. The Tutelary Gods of the Chiapanecs. The bell had a hard time getting used to it. To this day it's never been hung. It's outside. The bell is there to this day. It wasn't hung. It didn't want [to be hung]. That's
the way it is. That's why the ancestors here became poor. That's the way it was, indeed! Yes!

What were the Hairy Hands like? Chiapanecs. But their chests were covered with hair, here [their shoulders], here [their arms], all over their legs, just hair. You don't think their legs could be seen like our legs? They couldn't be seen. All hair. Hairy Hands. You don't think their legs could be seen like our legs? They couldn't be seen. All hair. Hairy Hands. But they were rain creatures. Nothing could happen to them because they were rain creatures. That's the way it is, indeed!

After a lapse of eleven years I asked Xun to retell the story of the bell of Muxul Vitz. We had been talking about the shaman, Maryan Nuj, who had dreamt recently of a "saint" (a human-shaped rock formation) that had just been discovered in the cave of 7Avan Ch'en in Paste7. Xun attributed to him the discovery of 7Avan Ch'en in Paste7. Xun attributed to him the discovery of the bell, too, though this conflicts with Xun's earlier account that it was three shamans who "saw" the bell when he was "a little boy." Maryan Nuj, though, a vigorous old man, must be ten year's Xun's junior.

Xun describes the elders as being like those who carry the cross in Holy Week. The ch'ul-maletik, or "holy elders" as they are called, are a group of six highly respected old men who choose their own replacements from the most eminent of the slightly junior men. Since telling this tale Xun has become perhaps the only man in Zinacantan who has ever lived to boast that he witnessed his son's appointment as holy elder. But these "weren't real people"—they were Thunderbolts, says Xun. They were transformations or manifestations of powerful souls whose "separate reality" escapes my understanding.

In this second version the blame for the bell's loss is laid squarely on the priest and his maid, but not on the elders.

As before, Xun proceeds from the history of one bell to the history of another. The loss of the bell from the Church of St. Lawrence he had described years ago in similar terms, but in greater detail in Tale 115.

The magical theft of the church bell is a theme widely distributed in the folk literature of Middle America. At dawn the Mixtec chiefs steal a bell from the Spaniards (Dyk, 1959:27-29). The Juchitecs force two Huaves to dig up a pair of bells or be beheaded. The Huaves pull up the bells and carry them on a cloud to their town (Warkinton and Olivares, 1947:223-235). A thunderbolt steals a Zoque bell that later sounds in the mountains (Wonderly, 1947:147-148).

So famous was the bell of Chiapa that it is cited in a geographic description of Chiapas in 1845, as being the largest of the department. Containing a considerable amount of gold alloy, it could be heard for a distance of two or three leagues (E. Pineda, 1845:68). Cast in 1576 "with native gold and Spanish iron," it is reputed to be the first bell manufactured in America. See also T74, T76, T91, T114, T115, T151, their notes, and T102.

The Spook and the Comadre

Well, once there were many Spooks. The women's husbands weren't around. They had gone to the lowlands [to farm].

Now, it seems, they slept at dusk. "Let's sleep. Comadre, will you listen for me [and tell me] if my corn boils over?"

"All right, comadre, I'll probably hear it."

"I won't know because I am going to sleep at the fireside," said the person whose corn boiled over.

"All right, I'll probably hear it," said her comadre. She hears it hissing now. "Comadre, comadre, your corn is boiling over," she said.

But it was the woman's blood now. The Spook was there already. "The corn is ready, comadre!" being the Spook.

Xun has abbreviated the major Spook tale so drastically that there is not even a hint that the poor woman was raped as she slept by the fireside.

The comadres or "comothers," as the Spanish term is sometimes translated, are ritual kin whose relationship to each other has been established during any one of a number of ceremonies. Most typically, two women related to each other as comadres would mean that one was the mother of a child, and the other, that child's godmother. The comparable male relatives are compadres.

I have translated the Spook's retort as, "The corn is ready, comadre!" but the meaning of hux tale is obscure. Hux is boiled corn. The meaning is much less important than the hideous enunciation that the Spook gives to these nonsense words as he draws them out. In Tale 67 the Spook says, "Your corn boiled over." See also T23, T67, T71, and their notes.
Once in Chaklajon they had something that wasn't worship at all. Chaklajon, what—t brutes! They prayed to the caves. They danced there. St. Rose, St. Rose was closed up in a house, a big house in Chaklajon. Eh, the girls, the women! Hah! It was quite a dance, Holy Mary!

But she was the mother of dissension. Little by little, little by little she lost her senses completely. She tricked her countrymen all the time.

St. Rose was there in Chaklajon.

They came out, since the men came out. They came to kill [the people of] their town.

Then their town protested. Chaklajon was far away. St. Rose was her name. She was a devil. They were si—nging and singing, dressed up, fine ceremonial huipils, fine skirts. The men and fine robes, fi—ne ceremonial robes, high-backed sandals.

Hell, they came out. They came to kill [the people of] their town. So many had assembled, the followers of St. Rose. They met at Chaklajon.

Then, so then, their town protested. The Chamulans magistrate protested to the authorities. Not many soldiers came, just one hundred were dispatched. They left from San Cristobal here. They just went on foot.

You see, the soldiers had never helped because there weren't many of them. The Chamulans, the followers of St. Rose, assembled in Chaklajon. There were many of them. Ooh, the bullets, sonofabitch, they weren't thrown off by the Chamulan women who uncovered their asses. Into the pussy went the bullets. Who knows if a hundred died or more, since [the bullets] just went up their asses. Their asses were turned facing [the enemy]. They hadn't worn their skirts because their asses were uncovered to put the bullets out of action.

How would that put them out of action? It was steel at play, foreign gunpowder.

They made an inspection when the shooting cooled down, because many of the Chamulans had died [from wounds] in their pussies. A grea—t many of the bitches had their pussies ripped. They finished coming out from wherever they were. Loads died. Just women died, since there were lots of women. It's true there were some men, but they fled. It was the women who [were trying to] cool [the bullets]. They didn't want to die.

But how would the bullets cool off? It was gunpowder at work. It doesn't cool off. There was nothing left to do when the war cooled. The soldiers went to Chaklajon. [The followers of St. Rose]
didn't have tile-roofed houses. They didn't have anything. They were big, thatch-roofed houses. And their god was there. Who knows what kind of hellishness was there. It burnt up. It was set afire so that [the war] would cool down. [But before] then, wherever there were pretty girls, [the followers of St. Rose] just embraced them, just deceived them. They went off embracing them. They escorted them to the dance. It didn't matter what kind of person they were—if they were from San Andrés or Magdalenas, or wherever it was they were able to grab them. They went to mislead them. They were going to kill [the people of] their town. The magistrate of Chamula was given a hundred soldiers. They attacked with guns.

Now that's what the Chamulans say, then. Hah! There were lots and lots. Ooh, who knows how many thousands of the brutes. One group assembled. The women turned their backs, then. They were killed by the bullets. They were [trying to] cool the bullets so they wouldn't fire. Why wouldn't gunpowder explode? They were fighting. They thought it was just a game. They were pursued until they died.

So when the dispute cooled down in Chaklajon, the houses in Chaklajon, then, burnt up, every one. The mother devil burnt up. That's the way it was.

Now when she died, yes, sir, it cooled down, it cooled down. She burnt up. The Bird was more difficult. The followers of the Bird assembled here [in San Cristobal]. He was a tall Chamulan. He was very tall. When those people of long ago assembled here [they wore] high-peaked hats. But the park was very tall. When those people of long ago assembled here [they wore] high-peaked hats. But the park was packed tight with Chamulans, Holy Mary! Ooh, so many! The St. Rose people were another group.

They uncovered their asses to cool off the bullets so that the bullets wouldn't fire. Why wouldn't they fire? They went up their asses. They died.

The War of St. Rose, or the War of the Castes as it is known in the literature, was fought from 1868 to 1871. A Chamulan shepherdess, Agustina Gomez Chechev, in the hamlet of Tzajal Yemel (not Chaklajon as Xun recalls) discovered on 22 December 1867 three bluish black pebbles which she told her mother had fallen from the sky. She placed them on the house altar and soon the rumor spread that they were "talking stones." They were submitted to the local official, Pedro Diaz Cuzcat (Kuskat), for authentication. He put them in a box for safekeeping but a detachment of 50 men was sent during the night of December 2, 1868 to Tzajal Yemel. The chapel was sacked, and Agustina and her mother captured and carried off to San Cristobal. After eluding capture, Cuzcat was identified by a Zinacantec in Xintapa and taken to jail in San Cristobal.

Nevertheless, the cult continued to flourish. On Good Friday
of 1869, according to unverified Ladino reports, Agustina's ten- 
or eleven-year-old brother was crucified. "They put him on the 
cross already well-tied, and began their barbarity. He gave out 
the most painful shouts, overwhelmed by the hubbub of the 
infernal furies, drunk on liquor and blood. The 'saints' caught the 
body and blood of the crucified, while others incensed him. 
"We do not know (or will ignore) what the new jews tied 
with the body and blood of the martyr of savagery, although it is not 
improbable that they drank the blood." (V. Pineda, 1888: 76-77). 

Shortly thereafter Cuzcat's wife was awakened in her sleep by 
the arrival of three Ladinos, Ignacio Galindo, his wife, and a 
friend. Galindo, a mysterious adventurer and social revolution-
ary, declared he had been sent by Cuzcat to liberate Agustina 
and Cuzcat. He promptly hypnotized and "brought back to life" 
several children, claiming that just as he had revived these 
children he would revive after three days all who died for their 
faith. The black-bearded Galindo was identified immediately 
with St. Matthew, his wife with the Virgin Mary, and his 
companion with St. Bartholomew. Galindo gave a call to arms. 

The news spread terror in San Cristóbal, but the governor 
ignored their pleas for military support. The priest and the 
teacher of Chamula and three others traveled to Tzajal Yemel 
on 1 June to try to dissuade Galindo, but finding him absent, set 
fire to the native church and carried off the saint images. This 
outrage was quickly answered. An ambush party was dispatched 
and the priest, the teacher, and all but the younger of their 
companions were massacred. In the next few days Galindo 
opened his campaign. His rebel army sacked and put to the torch 
a dozen ranches. A hundred of their Ladino occupants were 
brutally slain with machete and pike. Several thousand Indian 
servs were liberated to join the cause. 

By the 17th of June Galindo and his forces were on the 
outskirts of San Cristóbal. The fortifications were still to be 
finished, weapons and ammunition were scarce, reinforcements 
from Chiapa had not arrived. The local garrison comprised 95 
soldiers and a hundred ill-trained and ill-equipped volunteers. 
The commandant declared San Cristóbal indefensible and or-
dered the women and children to take refuge in the church 
where they might just possibly be spared.

On 17 June, the commandant, Captain Rosas, sent word to 
Zinacantán for the governor to advance with his three hundred 
troops. On the same day the captain met Galindo and his troops 
at the Quinta and persuaded him to surrender himself, his wife, 
and companion for three days as hostages in exchange for the 
release of Cuzcat, Agustina, and her mother. The next day Galindo 
and his companion were executed before a firing squad 
in the plaza of San Cristóbal. On the twentieth the governor 
promised to rectify the wrongs that the Indians had suffered if 
the Indians would withdraw.

At dawn on the morning of 21 June, realizing that they had 
been tricked, the army of Indians slipped down the mountain 
slopes into the valley of San Cristóbal. By afternoon they had 
penetrated the town and were advancing towards the center 
house by house. Captain Rosas hastily organized a final line of 
defense around the main plaza, but as dusk fell and the Ladinos 
were faced with total annihilation, the Indians withdrew carry-
ing their dead and wounded into the mountains. Mourning the 
loss of over a hundred of their sons and husbands, the women of 
San Cristóbal made the streets echo with their hideous ulula-
tions.

Mysteriously Pedro Cuzcat lifted his siege of San Cristóbal 
and diverted his forces to the easy capture of four Tzeltal towns. 
On 30 June Cuzcat's army was surprised and routed by 1400 
troops sent by the governor of Chiapa. On 4 July, after 
suffering a series of defeats, the town council of Chamula and 
many others surrendered to the governor of Chiapa in Zina-
cantán. In the following months the fugitive rebels were hunted 
down and executed. Pedro Cuzcat escaped capture but died 
miserably in a cave in 1871, while Agustina Chechev disap-
ppeared without a word. (See H. Favre, 1971 for a concise 
resume from which I have borrowed heavily; Molina, 1934; and 
V. Pineda, 1888. Carter Wilson's novel, A Green Tree and a Dry 
Tree, (1972), projects with nearly supernatural vision the dra-
matic events of the War of Saint Rose.)

The failure of the Zinacantecos to join the extraordinarily 
impelling cause of Agustina Chechev perhaps can be understood 
only by emphasizing the Zinacantecos' latent and centuries-old 
suspicion of the Chamulans, who, though socially inferior, 
outnumber them so dramatically. To worship and give one's life 
for a Chamulan saint would really be beneath a Zinacantec's 
dignity.

Although the vain magical tricks of the Chamulan women are 
not reported in the historical sources, they appear in the folk 
tradition of both the Chamulans themselves (Gossen, T162) and 
the Ladinos (Bricker, pers. com.).

There is an historical antecedent for the magical role of 
women in warfare. Bernal Diaz, describing the battle waged by 
his forces against the army of Chiapa wrote: "In the centre of 
their army was a woman, aged, and immoderately fat, who was 
estemed by them a goddess, and had promised them the 
victory. They [sic] had also incense in a pan, and certain idols 
made of stone. This woman, who had her body painted, and 
cotton mixed with the paint, advanced without any fear among 
our allies, who were formed by companies, and by whom this 
infernal deity was in a very short time torn to pieces" (Kentinge, 
1938:406).

The conversion of the Chiapanecos to Christianity was not 
without its setbacks, for in 1584, thirty years after the Conquest, 
Bishop de Feria complained to King Phillip II that one of the 
Chiapanec chieftains, Juan Atonal, thought to be among the most 
faithful converts, and head of a brotherhood of twelve dedicated 
to the veneration of the saints, was in fact the leader of a 
nativistic resurgence. According to the charges, Juan Atonal 
and his fellow stewards "went out at night, going to one 
mountain after another, and to one cave after another. And in 
the name of religion they held their meetings and consultations 
where they dealt with matters pertaining to their rites and to the 
cult of the devil, against our Christian religion. And they took 
with them two women, one they called Santa Maria, and the 
other Madgalena with whom they did many vile things. They 
carried out certain ceremonies saying that in this way they 
transformed themselves and they spiritualized others. The men 
were converted into Gods, and the women into Goddesses, who, 
as Goddesses had to bear and bring the rain storms and give 
many treasures to whomever they wished . . . ." (de Feria, 
1899:481). Bishop de Feria learned further that Juan Atonal had 
brought an idol from a cave and installed it in his home. This 
same chief declared haughtily that it was sufficient to look at the 
sky to be pardoned for one's sins.

Demonstrating to the king, Bishop de Feria asserted that he 
had jailed Juan Atonal, a chief of Ocosingo, and another from 
Ocotopoc, because he "feared that this cancer had spread 
through the whole bishopric, especially in Cinacantlan because 
of the close friendship of Cristóbal Arias and other chieftains of 
that town with the said Juan Atonal, and because of certain con-
temptible words that we had been told were expressed in the 
said town of Cinacantlan, and that there must be more evil than 
itt appeared" (de Feria, 1899:482). The bishop's defense of the 
Faith, as he bewailed to the king, had been subverted by the 
members of the Inquisition and the judicial officials who, fearful 
that the tributes would not be paid in full, or as the bishop had 
discovered, in excess, had freed Juan Atonal and the other
prisoners, and had appointed Juan Atonal judge. Today in Zinacantán, during the Christmas pantomimes, women's supposed magical power is flaunted by the Dames, who attempt to defend their consorts from the Bull's murderous charge by brazenly lifting their skirts. But the Bull, undaunted, makes a mockery of their efforts by goring their husbands in a vital place. The association of licentious dances with heretical religions persists today in wild stories about the rites that are celebrated by Protestant missionaries in Ixtapa.

Xun's brief digression about the Bird refers to the activities in 1911 of Jacinto Pérez, nicknamed "Pajaro." Although this Chamulan general was of average height, time has apparently made the Bird walk taller (Moscoso Pastrana, pers. comm.). See also T22, T65, T66, T116, T153, T154, and their notes.

The Three Suns

Two men climbed up. They went to get some fruit. The children stayed below. Yes!
The tree suddenly cracked. "What are you doing, Xut? I don't want you to fell the tree!" said the ones who had climbed the tree.

Well then, when the tree fell, Our Holy Father—[Xut] turned into Our Holy Father—he felled the tree. The ones who had climbed the tree turned into pigs. After that he stuck tortillas on their faces, one after the other. To this day pigs have them stuck on here. They still say that [pigs] are Our Holy Father's elder brothers. Yes!

That's how it is. It was the younger brother who made the tortillas and stuck the tortillas on their faces, one after the other. That's how pigs were born.

But they were Our Holy Father's elder brothers, they say, you see. But Our Holy Father was the younger brother. But Our Holy Father won out to this day, it seems. That's how it was, of course! That's the way it was.

See also T13, T162, and their notes.

The King and the Ring

Well, do you want to hear about when the king appeared, the Indian king? Me, I heard about it. My father told me. My grandmother told me about when the Indian king appeared here at Our Holy Mother, Muxul Vitz. A bo—y would bar the way there. He was always ly—ing there on his stomach, every day, every single day. He would stop the people going to and from San Cristóbal, on the path. "Give me one of your torti—lias!" he said. "Give me one of your o—ranges!" he said.

"See here, what do you do, loafer? Work! You have hands, too! I buy fruit to eat because I work, because I'm a man," said the travellers to San Cristóbal. Whoever were his friends, then, "Well, do you want a tortilla?" said the people, those people [who were his friends].

Bwéno, mi chak'an chava7i, 7a ti k'al 7ayan ti reye 7intyo reye, 7a li vo7one 7ika7i, liyalbe jiot liyalbe jmuk'ta me7 k'al 7ayan ti 7intyo reye li7 ta jch'ul-me7tik Muxul Vitze, te ta smak jun be jun krem-te xe7pe--t ta j-mek skotol k'ak'al, skotol k'ak'al ta j-mek, 7a li ijobelaje che7e, ta smak ta be, "7Ak'bon junuk 7avo--t!" xi. "7Ak'bon j-p'ejuk 7anaranjaaa!" xi.

"Ki' k'u xana7 jaragan, 7abtejan, 7o 7ak'ob 7uk, ta jman lo7bol jlo7 yu7un ch7abtej yu7un vinikon," xi li ijobelajele. Much'u 7amigo che7e, "Bwéno, mi chave7 junuk va?" xi li krixchano, much'u krixchaneo.
"Well, give me some, then," said the boy.
"Do you want an orange?"
"Well, thank you," he said. He was playing there. He was scratching about there under a rock, under a rock at Our Holy Mother, Muxul Vitz. Yes, sir, it was there!
Ooh, who knows how long he had asked for alms, begged for tortillas, begged for fruit. He was given things there by the poor people, whoever was kind. Whoever was stupid gave him a bawling out.
You see, when he was scratching about under the rock, the boy discovered a lucky piece, a green ring for his hand. It was bright green. Ha, the boy left. He left. He had a house.
The boy's parents, then, had a chest. But it was a worm-eaten old chest, sir, but it was a big old chest. When the holy dawn came, then, the next morning, [the chest] was filled to the top. The following night there were some pots, too. The next morning they were brimful. It was a ring, a green ring. In one night, by the next morning, the poor boy's parents' old chest was filled with money, just money. There were pots there, sitting face down. He turned them up. They were filled to the brim the next morning. He went to the houses of those who were his friends. Their chests came [into his home]. He borrowed them. "Either I will buy them," he said, "or I will borrow them," he said.
"No, just borrow them," said the ones who were his friends.
Then they heard about it here in San Cristóbal. They went [to see]. "But where did that lazy Indian come from? No, he won't win. That money is ours," they said. But you can't imagine how many chests, how many pots, how many houses [full] there were. He had it by the houseful now.
Then the lords here [in San Cristóbal] went to look.
But you see they went to match the boy's money, then. God, [their money] didn't reach even half of his. It was counted up and left. The gentlemen, the lords, came walking back empty-handed.
Then reports about it went as far as Mexico City, reports went everywhere, to the governor in Tuxtla. Soldiers came. [The boy] became a king. The money, then, Ooh God, since there didn't used to be trucks, who knows how the money went. He became a king, but an Indian king, but a real man when he arrived in Mexico City. Then the king looked after the Mexicans there. So they made him a legitimate Zinacantec Indian king.
Now, if the king hadn't upped and left, if they hadn't come and taken him away long ago, then Zinacantán, here, would be sitting on top today and the Ladinss would be face up. The Ladinss got on

"Bwénô 7ak'bon che7e," xi li kreme.
"Mi chalo7 j-p'ejuk naranja?"
"Bwénô, kol aval," xi. Te chtajin te sjotz'jón te ta yolon ton, yolon ton yo7 jch'ul-me7itik Muxul Vitz, senyor, ja7 tey!

Bwénô, jiii, mu jna7tik k'u sjalil 7isk'an ti limoxnæ, 7isk'an ti vaje, sk'an ti lo7bole, te k'u x7ak'bat yu7un i povre krixchano much'u leke, much'u sonsoe, 7utel chak' komel.
Bwénô, va7i 7un, 7ista ti 7ora 7une, 7a li krem 7une, jun yaxal 7ixtalal skwenta sk'ob solel yo---x ta j-mek te sjotz'jón ta yolon ton 7un, je7 7ibat ti krem 7une, 7ibat 7un, 7o sna.

7Ora, 7iya7i li Jobel li7 7une, 7ibat. "Pero bu to tal li jun jaragan 7intyo, mo7oj, mu spas kanal, 7a taj tak'ine ku7untik," xi. Pero mu xana7 xa jay-p'ej kaxa jay-p'ej p'in jay-p'ej na xa 7oy, ta na xa 7oy.

7Ora, bat li ronetik li7e, ba sk'elik 7un.

Bu, ba ko7olajuk xchi7uk i tak'ín 7a li kreme che7e, dyos, mi ja7uk j-7o71ol mu sta, te nitbat komel 7un, yech xva71aj tal li moletike, li ronetik 7une.

7Ora, bat svunal k'al Mejiko, bat svunal skotol ta j-mek butik 7oy k'al Tuxta ta goyervo, 7ital soltaro, 7ikom ta rey, 7a li tak'ine che7e, jii dyos, kómo mu7yuk to 7ox i karoo jna7tik k'u xi 7ibat i tak'ine, kómo rey 7ikom, pero 7intyo rey, pero yu7un vinik k'al k'ot ta Mejikoke che7e, ja7 to stuk'ulan i jmejiko le7e, ja7 7ismeltzan 7intyo rey tzinakantan jitmío.

Bwénô, 7óra 7un le7 7une, 7a ti ma totzuk li reye che7e ma taluk spojel vo7ne che7e ja7 kajiem tana 7a li 7a li Tzinakánta li7e, 7a li larino javal, 7ikaji li larinoe, porke yu7un 7ibat i reye, bat ta Mejiko, k'u
top because the king left. He went to Mexico City. That's how the place, here, lost.

As in "The Priest and the Bell," batz'i yox, "bright green," is associated with treasure.

Xun's opening and closing details of the Indian king legend agree with Romin's, but the theft of the ring is excluded. The attempt of the San Cristóbal lords to measure their wealth against the Indian king's is a new feature, which is placed in another context in a tale related by Xun 7Akov (T33).

When Xun concludes "Zinacantán, here, would be sitting on top today and the Ladinos would be face up," he is speaking with the perspective of a man who has witnessed seventy-odd years of exploitation by the Ladinos. He recalls that, when he was a young man in the time of Porfirio Díaz, Indians who were arrested for disturbing the peace were conscripted and sent off to the army. He himself was given a gun and put in charge of a group of Chamulan prisoners with orders to shoot anyone attempting escape. Xun 7Akov, too, remembers how Indians who had been cut up in drunken disputes were sent as cannon fodder to the front lines. He also recalls that, when Indians arrived in San Cristóbal before 7 a.m., they were forced to sweep the square. If they were discovered in the town after 2 p.m., they were seized by the police and made to serve as porters. Chep Xantis remembers his grandfather and his mother telling how Indians had to sell their wares at the prices Ladinos demanded. Whenever a Ladino flourished his gun, the Indians would drop their packs and run because Ladinos were known to shoot down Indians without provocation. The first tales that Romin Teratol gave me explained why Ladinos were ill-mannered and rich.

But times have been changing: conscription, curfews, and naked assaults are distant memories. It is probably expressing the general view of Zinacanteces that the Indians' lot has improved because of the agrarian movement in the 1940s, the increased ability of Indians to defend themselves in Spanish, and the efforts of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista to "civilize" the Indian. For over a decade Ladinos have been concerned that the Indians are getting ahead and leaving them behind, or, as Xun Vaskis would say, leaving them "face up." With considerable skill the Zinacantec politicians are manipulating their increased contact with the Ladino legal and administrative structures to preserve and advance traditional Indian values (see Collier, 1973). See also T11, T31, T33, T64, T166, and their notes.

The Bird

There is a story from the time of The Bird about a Chamulan. The time of The Bird was long ago. I had been engaged to my wife. The Bird, then, was a priest. The Chamulans worshipped. The priest brought them together.

Two or three hundred Chamulans met to worship.

The priest was The Bird himself. He wasn't a real priest—he was a real devil!

Then things got out of hand. The priest got wrong ideas.

Now there were three hundred Chamulans who started a fight, a revolution. They met to kill their countrymen. They went to Ixtapa. Seven hundred went to Ixtapa. Seven hundred went there to Ixtapa. The Ladinos there were afraid. There are Ladinos in Ixtapa. [The Chamulans] seized the cattle. The Chamulans, hah! They had lots of lassos, the bastards. If the owners didn't want to talk to them, the Chamulans, The Bird, would kill them, shoot them, hang them on the spot.

So then the priest fled. The government was trying to kill him.

You see, the Bird's followers gathered together and kept on [fighting]. Even we were afraid they would come to kill us. Ooh, but there was plenty of fear, Holy Mar... They killed many of their countrymen. They threw them in the water. They killed women and men, e—very one. They ate the cattle. They went to 7Ach' Jtek-lum [New Town]
Chiapilla. They went. They ate a lot of cattle there. But they were Chamulans!

So then they went to Chiapa. They wanted to go kill the Chiapanecs. They fought. They shot off bullets. What good did it do? They didn't have good weapons. All they had were flintlocks, spears, staves—gewgaws, worthless.

So then, the governor heard about it. Quickly they complained to Mexico City. Soldiers arrived. [The Chamulans] hadn't heard. They went to Yaleb Taiv [Where Frost Falls] to carry off two cows. The rancher there used to have cattle.

Fifty soldiers went, just Chamulans, but soldiers.

Then they seized the cattle in Na Chij [Deer House]. The cattle were lying there, they didn't come to [the Chamulans'] land.

Who knows how the Chamulans heard. The Obregonists came. They were in Tierra Blanca already. The soldiers were piled up there now. The Chamulans were in Zinacantan. One group was at the town hall. But you can't imagine how many thousands. Holy Mary! They wanted to start a war.

The magistrate of Zinacantan, then, complained to the government. "The soldiers have left already. They are about to arrive there. Wait a bit!" he was told. The Chamulans were unconcerned. They hadn't heard yet. The two cows were left at Na Chij, but who knows how the [Chamulans] heard. [The Chamulans] left. One bull, one brown cow—it was a black bull—were left behind. They were left lying there.

Now when [the Chamulans] arrived, then, they arrived to report to the [others]. "The soldiers are coming now, we'll die!" they said. "Eh, what sort of soldiers are they? Hell, the filth of your mother's cock!" they said. Quickly they loaded their guns and readied their spears.

The soldiers came, then, just cavalrymen. They didn't use to have the machines, the cars.

So then the Obregonist soldiers reached Choko7. They reached Choko7 at the edge of Zinacantan. Eh, then they heard! Quickly, who knows if it was twenty bullets, went whistling towards them, right off. Och, the Chamulans, sonofabitch! Some went by Be Chij [Deer Path], some by Ya7am Ton, some on the road to San Cristóbal. But—he'll, the Obregonists chased them on horseback. But the shooting, sonofabitch! The spears were left lying on the path. One group was at the town hall.

[The war] reached their homes since the Obregonist soldiers went to Chamula. They circled this way. They circled that way. The Bird's followers were captured. The ones who were about to be killed, they captured now. As soon as they turned around

Bwéno, 7iday, chha ta Soktom 7un, sk'an chha smil li jsoktome, ta xak' k'ok' ta xak' bala, k'usi bal 7o 7un, mu7nuk mu7nuk lek 7arma yu7un, k'usi batz'i tuk' ta chimeni, lansa, nam-te7al, chúcho, mu xtun.

Bwéno, 7iya7i li goyervne che7e, j-likel 7isk'an parte k'al Mejiko, 7ital li soltaroe, muk' bu cha7i, ta Yaleb Taive 7a szak tal cha7-kot vakax, 7oy to 7ox svakax yajval finka te yo7e.

Bwéno, 7a li soltaroe, 7ibat sinkwenta naka jchamu7 pero soltaro.

Bwéno, 7óra, 7istzak 7a li vakax 7une, ta Na Chij 7une, te puch'i li vakaxe mu7yuk xtal ta slumal.

Bwéno, jna7tik k'u cha7al 7iya7i li jchamu7 7une. 7Ital li 7Ovrekone, te xa ta Tyéra Planka te xa busul li soltaroe, 7a li jchamu7 7une te ta Tzinakantà ta te kakavitjo jun grupo, pero mu xana7 jay-mil María Santísima, yu7un tz'akan ssa7 pletu.

Bwéno, 7a li preserente Tzinakantae che7e, 7iya7'xa kwentà xchì7uk goyerno. "Lok'em xa li soltaroe, te xa ta xk'ot, malao xa j-likel!" x7utat 7un. 7A li jchamu7 che7e, jun yo7on muk' bu cha7i te to 7ox, 7ikom i cha7-kot vakax ta Na Chije, pero jna7tik k'u cha7al 7iya7i, 7ibat skomtzanojik te puch'ul 7ikom, j-kot toro j-kot k'anal baka, jun 7ik'al toro.

Bwéno, 7óra k'al 7ik'ote che7e, k'ot yalbe ya7i, "Te xa xtal 7a li soltaro, chilajotik!" xi. "7Ee, k'u soltaro, kere, yik'ubal yat 7ame7i?!" xi. J-likel xchap tiro, j-likel xchap lansa.

Bwéno, tal soltaro che7e, naka kavayero mu7yuk to 7ox i makina skwenta 7a li karoe.

Bwéno, 7iday, 7ista Choko7 li soltaroe li 7ovrekonista 7une, 7ista Choko7 ta ti7 Tzinakantà, 7ee, 7iya7i che7e, j-likel 7ijisbat jna7tik mi j-tob bala ta 7ora, jii, jchamu7e, jijo la chingadas, jun Ta Be Chij, jun ta Ya7am Ton 7ibat, jun belel Jobel, pe---ro kavro---n, 7a li 7Ovrekone ta ka7 tznutzvan pero jun ba---la chingada, ti lansa te pak'ajtik ta be, kavito j-lom.

Bwéno, k'ot ta snà 7une, kómo 7ay ta Chamu7tik i soltaroe 7Ovrekone, 7ijop'ij 7un, 7ijop'ij xi 7une, 7itzake li Pajaroe, 7a li much'u, much'u chmile che7e, ja7 tzakvän xa 7un, 7ivalk'uj 7un, naka xchepel ta majel tzsa7e ta j-mek, pero dos tres syénto
they were clubbed. They were hunted down everywhere. Two or three hundred were searching in the woods now. The ones who were terrified, the followers of The Bird, were hunted down and killed. The followers of The Bird fled to Rinkontik [The Corners] where they have been ever since.

During the time of the fear, then, Mikel Poy, a [girl named] Loxa, a [girl named] Xunka7, arrived at my house. They weren't his daughters, they were his younger sisters. “Please, be kind to them, sir,” my father was told. “Support me here, but man, your son will have a wife, now!” “I'll marry him!” they said.

“I'll marry him!” said Xunka7.

“I'll marry him!” said Loxa.

“Eh, but he doesn't want to, since he has another [girl],” said my father.

“Let her go back, give her back, because I'll marry him right away. I'll marry him all the same!” said Xunka7.

“Eh, no, I don't want to, it seems.”

“But I have to marry him, please be so kind, sir, I'll marry him.”

“Let them get married!” said Mikel Poy. “Let your son, let him get married, because, because, let him take her. Do you have a skirt? Give it to her if you have a skirt!” my mother was told.

“Of course I do!” said my mother.

“Well, let her take off the black skirt, then, let her put on your skirt. You have clothes, let her change right away. She knows how to work,” she said. “The weaving of ceremonial robes, the weaving of robes, oh, she's very smart.”

Me, I didn't want to. I don't know what I was thinking, otherwise I'd have married a Chamulan woman!

So then Mikel Poy returned [to Chamula]. He left. Oh, he arrived to squash his countrymen, the followers of The Bird. All of the followers of The Bird who escaped, then, they went to Rincón Chamula as Rincón is called. There is a church there now. There are Ash Faces now. They plant “papas,” potatoes, now. Ooh, the bastards there have been rich ever since! But long ago they were the followers of The Bird. They killed many of their countrymen, but many of them died, too, long ago. It was a priest, a priest who started the trouble. Not all priests are upright. The priest wasn't good. He assembled a group of Chamulans, he assembled the worshippers. The worshippers, then, there were girls, men, ooh, a group—p who learned, learned those prayers. They lost their senses. They went crazy. They murdered. The worshippers met all the time. When they didn't go in to worship, they were killed. The soldiers came afterwards. As many of the

Bwéno, ti k'al yolel li xi7ele che7e, 7ik'ot te ta jna Mikel Poy, jun Loxa jun Xunka7, jun 7a li ma7uk szteb, xixel. “7Avokoluk 7a li7, tottik,” x7utat i jto. “Li7uk mak'linone, pero 76mbre 7oy xa yajnil 7akereme, chkik!” xi.

“Chkik’!” xi li Xunka7e.

“Chkik’!” xi li Loxae.

“7Ee, pero mu sk'an kómo 7oy yan,” xi li jto.

“Ja7uk sutuk 7ak'0, yu7un ta 7óra chkik’ ta j-mek yu7un chkik’ mu7nuk jay-loc'el!” xi li Xunka7e.

“7Ee, mo7o7j, mu jk'an ya7el.”

“Pero yu7un ta pwersa chkik’ 7un, batz'i 7avokoluk, tottik, yu7un chkik’.”

“7Ak'0 yik’ sba!” xi li Mikél Poye. “Yu7un 7ak'0 7a lakereme, 7ak'0 yik’ yu7un batz'i 7a li yu7un 7ak'0 yik’, mi 7oy 7atzek 7ak'0, 7a li mi 7oy 7atzek?” x7utat ti jme7e.

“7Oy a7al!” xi li jme7e.

“Bwéno, 7ak'0 lok'uk li 7a li 7ik'al tzekile che7e, 7ak'0 slap latzeke, 7oy 7ak'u7ik 7ak'0 k'exuk ta 7ora ta j-mek, 7a le7e sna7 x7a7te7e,” xi. “Jal-xakitail jal-chamaroil, 7ee, bwén vivo.”

Vo7one, mu jk'an 7un solel mu jna7tik k'u cha7al li jjole, manchuche che7e chamu7al 7antz kik'oj.

Bwéno, 7iday, 7isut i Mikél Poy 7une, 7ibat 7un, 7aa k'o7 stu7usane xchi7il ja7 laj i Pajaroe 7un, k'u yepal kol li Pajaroe che7e, Rinkon Chamula sbi li Rinkone, te xa batem 7un, 7oy xa 7ekli7a 7oy xa tan sat 7oy xa tz7u7un li 7is-ak'e li papae, jii, jk'u7e7j xa k'al tana i kavronetik le7e, pero 7a ti vo7ne Pajaroe 7un, 7ep 7ismil xchi7il, pero 7ep 7icham 7uk ti vo7ne 7une, 7a 7un le7e, pale, slikes k'op pale, 7a li palee mu skotol tuk', muk' lek i palee, chopol sjol j-lom, 7istzob jchamu7 7istzob jresal, 7a li jresale che7e, li tzebetike li viniketike, jii, jin kru--po xchan, 7ixchan li resal le7e, 7isok sjol 7un, 7ivovi 7un, 7imilvan 7un, 7istzob saibak ta j-mek i jresale7ik 7une, 7a li bu mu x7och ta resal 7une, ja7 7ilaj ta milel, ta mas tz'akal 7un 7ital li soltaro 7une, 7i jay 7ilaj stuk i Pajaroe 7une, 7ep 7ilaj ko7ol 7ilaj, 7ilaj li muk' 7ochem ta resale 7ilaj i Pajaroe, ko7ol 7ispakbe saibak 7un ti vo7ne 7une, jii, tyempo ta j-mek, muk' to 7ox nupunemoo--n karájo vo7ne ti Pajaroe, yech
followers of The Bird who died—many others died—just as many died. The ones who didn't go in to worship, died, and the followers of The Bird died. They took revenge on each other equally. Ooh, it to worship, died, and the followers of The Bird died—just as many died. The ones who didn't go in back to their country. They were scared. They were just going to stay. They didn't want to go for free, long ago, but I didn't want them. Long ago, they were a present. They were just going to eat. They didn't want to go back to their country. They were scared.

They grew brave. The soldiers came. The [girls] returned to their country. Neither of the girls was accepted [by our countrymen]. There were other women. Neither one was accepted. They just went back. They looked for work. They weren't paid now. They wo—ve, flu—ffed the wool with their fingers just to earn the tortillas they ate. They looked for work, but they weren't paid. They were paid with food.

Mikel Poy, then, turned out badly. He killed lots of his countrymen. He did to them what they had done to him. His house had been broken into. He had lost his corn. He had lost his beans. His sheep had been killed. He had stuck a pig inside. The soldiers ate it, Chamulans soldiers.

When the Obregonist soldiers came, they entered Chamula. Ooh, the soldiers, Holy Mary! Lots and lots of them entered in pursuit. All the Chamulans were scared. All those who hadn't been involved with The Bird, who didn't involve themselves in the prayers, came out. They spoke to the general, to the Obregonist captain. They spoke to him. They gave him presents. They fed him. He ate corn on the cob. They killed his sheep for him.

Then, ohh, they were treated well. They went with him in the woods searching for the followers of The Bird. They were given orders. “Search in the woods!” They killed the followers of The Bird.

Then, you see, [The Bird’s followers] died.

Then, they got many. They killed them. So the dogs ate them, the buzzards flocked, wherever they died, long ago.

In 1911 the Bishop and the reactionary leaders of San Cristóbal promised the Chamulans land distribution and an end to taxation if they would rebel against the revolutionary government of President Madero. Jacinto Perez Ch’ix Tot, “Robin,” known as “Bird” or “Little Bird,” who had served in the army, was accorded the rank of general, and his followers were issued arms. A thousand Chamulans carried out guerrilla activity during the summer of 1911, occupying eight lowland towns including Ixtapa, Acala, Chiapilla, and Venustiano Carranza.

The historical and now nearly legendary accounts of the period do not all describe The Bird as a native priest nor do all place the conflict in terms of religious warfare, but they are unanimous in speaking of the horrifying acts of plunder, rape, and murder that the Chamulans visited upon their opponents, whether they were Ladinos or fellow Chamulans loyal to the government. Zinacantecs and Chamulans remember how The Bird’s forces advanced, many armed only with loom swords and loom axes. The expletive phrase “the filth of your mother’s cock,” is an expression not used by Zinacantecs, but is known by them to be typical of Chamulans, whose manner of speech is considered racier and coarser than Zinacantecs’.
At least Xun’s description of the Chamulan girls offering themselves eagerly to him adds a light touch if you agree to see the event through his eyes. When Mikel Poy urged Xun’s mother to give her skirt to his sister, he was suggesting that his sister exchange her telltale Chamulan black wool skirt for a blue cotton Zinacantec skirt. In normal times poor Chamulan girls who are commissioned to weave in a Zinacantec home occasionally change into Zinacantec clothing and marry into the community. Romin Teratol’s grandmother became a Zinacantec after leaving Chamula to weave in Zinacantán Center.

Romin Tan-chak’s mother recalls the women advancing with loom swords, chanting “Ta tzajal chilil chimuyotik, ta tzajal chilil chimuyotik tall”—“In red huipils we climb, in red huipils we climb ahead!” Romin’s mother remembers that they “killed” the Christ Child in the church of Chiapilla but were destroyed themselves by a “bomb.”

The Bird’s forces were finally defeated in October 1911. As Xun relates, they fled northward nearly to Tabasco, where they founded a new town, Rincon Chamula. Rincon has remained traditional, retaining the Carnival “Ash Face” characters, who dress up in monkey skin hats and military-style costumes of the past century.

The Bird himself, who was hiding out in the Chamulan hamlet of Sak-laman Ton, came in to San Cristóbal before All Souls’ Day 1914 to buy some bulls. He was seized by the Carrancistas and escorted to the cemetery of San Cristóbal, where he was executed.

The Revolution

Will you hear about a war? There was a war long ago—Obregón against the Pinedists. They clashed together in the month of September.

Now the Obregónists didn’t win. It was Pineda who came out on top. Obregón fled down as far as Tierra Blanca with Pineda sticking right behind. Obregón, Ooh God, he stopped at Ixtapa, at Nibak.

Chava7i jun k’op, 7Oy jun k’op vo7ne, 7Obregon xchi7uk Pinedista, 7ismaj sbaik mes de septyéambre.

7Óra, li Obregonistae muk’ skuch yu7un, 7a li Pinedae ja7 7ikaji, 7a ti 7Obregone jatav yalel k’alal Sak-lum, 7a li Pineda nap’al yalel, 7a li 7Obregone, 7oo, dyos, k’al 7Istapa Nibak 7ipaj, 7a li 7Obregon

![Figure 3. Battle of Ixtapa, 24 April 1924 (adapted from Bravo Izquierdo; 1 = 3rd regiment of line cavalry, 2 = 1st regiment of auxiliary cavalry, 3 = 63rd regiment of line cavalry, 4 = 47th regiment of line cavalry, 5 = Battalion of state volunteers, 6 = 50 men of 47th cavalry regiment, 7 = 80 mm battery (2), 8 = 16th infantry battalion, 9 = ½ mountain battery).]
Obregón left for good in September. He continued on, until April when he came back up.

He came back. Pineda was ready now. Obregón was ready now. A machine appeared in the sky, a red one. Just one appeared, one plane.

So then Obregón came on up here to Cañita. There he left . . . four cannons reached there. Bu—t they were cannons, Holy Mary!

Well, so then Pineda was there in Ixtapa, at the church door. The [Obregónists] brought the cannons, then. At first they fired a test shot to see if he would die or not.

So then, they stopped. As for Pineda, then he fired a machine gun.

They stopped for half an hour. [Obregónist] soldiers arrived from Ba Stentej [Upper Meadow]. One group came down. A group from Soyaló and another group came along the San Gabriel road. [Pineda] was surrounded. The soldiers fired the cannons. Obregón fired.

It was one o'clock. At one o'clock a plane appeared.

[In the end] all the Pinedists died then, all of them, to the ground!

The plane, then, it had dropped six bombs from above. It dropped them. They came down. One hundred people expired then, died then. One hundred men were taken alive. They had come intending to burn the [church of the] Virgin, then. The Pinedists were going to burn it. The [Obregónists] got mad. They seized [the Pinedists]. Cloth had been dumped in front of the Virgin's door [to burn it].

They didn't burn it. The soldiers were captured immediately. It was the Obregónists who captured them.

So then the plane returned. It came back. It stopped for half, for just half an hour. It returned right away. It came back to see how many there were, if there were still more enemies coming down, if there were still more coming from Kakate7 or from Soyaló. There were advance groups there.

So then one hundred men were captured. They were full of all the generals, officers, all the devils of the headquarters, the Pinedist generals. Of the Obregónists, then, just the officers alone were there, guarding them now. They issued orders. They came to the cemetery [in Zinacantán]. The soldiers [there were] a thousand Obregónists. All the [Pinedists] died. The blood flowed now. They couldn't do anything because they were waiting, since the top generals, then, were encamped right here at Ventana. They issued orders because the Obregónists were strong-hearted now. They won now. They came out ahead. All the devils had their hands cut off at Ni-o7 [Headspring].
Now their hands were cut off. It was other soldiers who captured them.

The [prisoners] came to the cemetery from wherever they had started out. They asked a favor to write it down, to write down how they had died. With just five bullets a hundred men died at the cemetery. They didn't have one left. They were carried [and tossed into] one grave. All of them went into one grave. It was very long ago. Ooh, who knows if it was, if it was fifty years ago, the war long ago.

Despite their varying speed of locomotion, infantry, cavalry, and airforce reached their positions sharply at 6:00. The airplane carrying Colonel Pedro Moctezuma dropped the first bomb ever to fall on the state of Chiapas. It was a dud. But undaunted by this mishap, Colonel Moctezuma returned at 11 a.m. Flying low over Ixtapa, he strafed the troops with machine gun fire but, to General Bravo Izquierdo's dismay, soon exhausted all his munitions. It seems too that the pilot, unable to distinguish the enemy's position from that of the government troops, had misdirected his fire. Fortunately there were no losses.

Later in the day Colonel Moctezuma was to carry out the most extraordinary feat of the whole campaign. He flew over San Cristóbal with orders to bomb the enemy barracks, whose location had been discovered by intelligence. The target was missed, but, as if it had been a “smart bomb,” the trajectory landed squarely in General Alberto Pineda’s patio, where it decapitated his finest rooster (Bravo Izquierdo, 1948:119–121).

Meanwhile, back in Ixtapa, after a fierce resistance, the brave soldiers of General Pineda, seeing themselves thoroughly outgunned, attacked from all sides and, sustaining many losses, capitulated. Many officers, including a general, were among the captives. According to Moscoso Pastrana the prisoners had been promised their lives if they surrendered, but no sooner had they laid down their arms than the officers were led off to the cemetery and promptly shot. A special favor was granted to the second in command, who was permitted to scribble a farewell letter to his mother. A tombstone served as his desk top.

General Bravo Izquierdo reports that 300 Pinedist soldiers were routed that same day and pursued up the mountain trail to Zinacantán Center. There is no mention in the historical sources of prisoners having their hands cut off. It seems from Xun’s account that the prisoners were executed in the cemetery in Zinacantán rather than in Ixtapa, but this may be my misinterpretation. It is also difficult to believe that the Pinedists, who represented the conservative clerical interest, intended to burn the church in Ixtapa, for it was the armies of the revolutionary government that achieved notoriety as “saint burners.”

Xun’s estimate that the war was “fifty years ago” placed it ten years too early. See also T14, T148, T152, T154, and their notes.

War, War, War

T154

[In] the fight, The Bird went with prayers. With prayers the [false] priest [went].
A group of Chamulans gathered.
Then, after the prayers, then the killing began.

7Íra, tuch’bat ti sk’obe. Yan xa 7o soltaro stzako.

Bweno, 7itlco pantyon 7un, ti butikuk likem tale, 7itz’ibaj 7isk’an pavor, 7itz’ibaj k’u x7el2an 7ichame vo7ob no 7ox bala jun syen 7ombre 7icham te ta pantyon, mu xa junuk yu7unuk, kuchbi chbat ta jun ch’en, ch7och ta jun ch’en skotol, vo7ne ta j-mek, 7ii, jna7tik mi 7oy ta mi 7oy ta sinkwenta jabil ti pletu vo7ne 7une.
Now, one thousand three hundred Chamulans assembled. The fight began in September.

After it ended . . . it took a long time. It lasted a long time. Until— Janu-
ary.

The Chamulans went, went towards Chiapa. They didn’t go [that far]. They stopped at a cave. As for the cave . . . You’ve seen the cave? Juteb Chauk. They crowded together there. The scribes wrote down, they wrote down [what was needed]. They were going to shoot them [the Chiapanecs]. They were going to kill the Chiapanecs. The [Chiapanecs’] cannons were standing there. That’s all. The Chiapanecs were ready now. Ready now, Holy Mary!

Now, the captain, I forget what the bastard’s name was. I forget what his name was.

Then, [the Chamulans] came [to Naben Chauk (Thunderbolt Lake)]. There was constant fighting. Some guns! They didn’t have percussion caps. They put firebrands to the charge. Broom! All the Chamulans who fled, came here. They came here. All the girls you could want for wives! Girls! “Take her! Let her stay here!” they said now. The bitch of a girl didn’t want to go [back to Chamula].

“Take her! Let her stay here!” they said now. The bitch of a girl didn’t want to go [back to Chamula].

“Take her! Let her stay here!” she said. Since I had corn here—

And the Chamulans, well, they waged war—. Salvador was the chief, but he was a tall man, the bastard. Even Ladinos joined up.

Then the [Chamulan] soldiers appeared. They came in January. They came to steal cattle at Yalem Taiv [Fallen Frost]. A brown cow. They never ate it. It was left at Na Chij [Deer House].

You see, it was reported. A commission came. The [government] soldiers were told about the Chamulans. The Black Clothes [the Chamulans] were coming.

You see, when the soldiers arrived in Zinacantan Center, then, they didn’t appear in the open. The soldiers were hiding. The Chamulans arrived. [The soldiers] heard that they were there now. Ooh, [the Chamulans] dashed to Muxul Vitz. The soldiers came out, all cavalry.

Hell, [the Chamulans] were shot at. Ooh, the bastards were chased far off. They fled.

Then, September . . . September, October, and December, January—five months it lasted. Just war, war, war, war, war!

They fled. Whoever fled went back to his country. The Bird went and killed them. Wherever they were sprawled next to the ponds, in the woods, the buz-
zards were flapping about. There was no talk of finding them then. If there was a group [of fugitives] they assembled two or three hundred of the worshippers. They killed [the fugitives]. The ones who prayed killed. The ones who didn't pray killed. But the worshippers died. They fled. They went far away, as far as Rinkon, [Rincón Chamula] where they've been] ever since.

Well, when they fled the magistrate arrested them. They went to jail.

But it was no jail, to the river they went. They went to the river, thrown in the river.

Well, then little by little, gradually it was settled. It was settled properly. It was settled properly. It calmed down.

Even longer ago, my mother and father said, [there was trouble] in Tzajal Yemel [Red Avalanche], Tzajal Yemel. but the soldiers went, they went to look there in Tzajal Yemel. But the women turned their asses to them.

Then the bullets went up their asses. They died. It simply cooled down. That was a great deal longer ago, of course. As for The Bird, ooh, The Bird was probably eighty years ago.

Well, then they all die—d. The holy earth cooled off. It was fine.

Another group appeared. They climbed up. The soldiers were all federals.

The Chiapanecs fled. They came here. And some put on women's ceremonial robes, [men's] ceremonial robes. Watch out for the cold, you bastards! The mangy ones were dying of the cold. They were lined up by the houses, seeking a place to stay. They were given tortillas, given them [for nothing]. They fled from Chiapa. The bastards were stupid. The other Chiapanecs, the other ones from Chiapa never fled.

There was a woman there called Sirira. She was the younger sister. The older sister was Sinco Rosa. Sirira's husband was Elaidos.

You see, [they had] a house like this. The women had made holes in the walls. They fired from high up. They fired from high up. The officers, the men were on the ground. They had a cannon. The soldiers were pi—led up there.

The federals came, since they were robbers, but they die—d. They were the ones who died. The Chiapanecs won. The Chiapanecs won.

But the Chiapanecs weren't all alone. Julian Grajales appeared from Tzajal Ch'en [Red Cliff]. But he was an old ma—n, but he was a chief. A Thunderbolt, a Thunderbolt. But the federals were killed then, the federals. They die—d. It had cooled down. It had been fine.

Then another group came, too. But Chamula had cooled off for good. There was nothing at all. To

mi rason, mi te stae che7e, mi 7o jun krúpo mas ta stzob sba ta chib 7oxib syen i much'utik 7a li jresaletike ja7 tzmilik, 7a li much'u tspas resale che7e ja7 milvan, ja7 milvan i mu7yuk 7ochem ta resale, ja7 milvan, yan ti jresaletike ja7 7icham jatav 7un bat ta j-mek, k'al Rinkon k'al tana 7un.

Bwéno pwes day, 7a li 7a li ti k'al 7ijatave che7e preserente tzak, bat ta bat ta chukel. Bu, chukel, nab 7ibat, jipe ta nàb.

Bwéno pwes day, k'un'k'un k'un'k'un 7imeltzaj 7un, méltzaj lek 7un, meltzaj lek, ch'ab xi.

7A ti mas vo7ne che7e, ja7 xa chal ti jme7 jto7e ta Tzajal Yemel, Tzajal Yemel, pero 7a li solteroe che7e bat ba sk'elel taj ta Tzajal Yemele pero 7a li 7antze ta la svak'un xchak.

7Ora, ta chak 7i7och i balae, laj taj 7une solel sikub 7un, 7a li mas vo7ne ta j-mek 7un bi, mas, 7a li Pajaroe che7e, jee, 7o nan ta chan-vinik jabil li Pajaroe.

Bwéno pwes, 7ila—j skotol ta j-mek 7isikub i ch'ul-balamile lek 7oy.

Bwéno, 7och j-vok' noxtok 7un muyel 7imuy tal 7un, 7a li soltero 7une naka jvereral.

Bwéno, 7a li jsoktom 7une 7ijatav li7 talik li7 toe, 7i 7o xa slap 7a li xchil i 7antzetike xakital, k'el abā ta sik kavron, sarnóso laj ta sik ta naetike xocholet xa chch'amun na, ch7ak'bat vaj k'elanbat, jatav tal ta Soktom 7une, spentejoal li kavron 7une 7a li yan jchapaneko yan jsoktometik te yo7e mu7yuk 7onox xjatav, 7o te jun me7el Sirira sbi, ja7 mukil 7a li vixile Sinko Rosa, 7a li smalal li 7a li Sirirae 7a li 7Elaidos.

Va7i 7un, 7a li na chak li7 7une, 7a li 7antzetike 7ixch'oj i snae, ta 7ak'ol chak' i balae, ta 7ak'ol chak' i balae, 7a li moletik viniketike ta lumbitek te kanyon 7un te li soltero bu—sul 7un.

Bwéno, 7ital li 7a li fereral 7une kómo j7elek' pero ja7 7ila—j, ja7 laj kuch yu7un i jsoktome.

Bwéno, pero ke mu yu7unuk 7a li stuk i jsoktom 7un to, 7ilok' tal te ta te ta Tzajal Ch'en Julian Grajáles pero mo—l pero totil chauk, chauk, pero te laj, 7i fereral 7une fereral, 7ila—j sikub to 7ox 7un bi lek to 7ox.

Bwéno pwes, ja7 to tal 7otro j-vok' noxtok 7un, yan li Chamu7e sikub ta j-moj, ch'abal ta j-mek k'al
this day, nothing.

Well, then [another group] came, too. But that was recently. It was probably, it was probably sixty years ago. But it wasn't the federals anymore. It wasn't them. I don't know where they came from.

Well, then they came. As for me, I was a courier. As for me, I was shot at. I was shot at, but we weren't hit. I was a courier. I arrived at the district attorney's in Tuxtla. "Leave immediately!" he said.

"Okay!" I said.

"Since the bullets haven't reached [us]," he said. I was a courier for the boss, Claudio. Yes! We were waiting there. I was a courier. I arrived at the district attorney's in Tuxtla. "Leave immediately!" he said. "Okay!" I said.

"Since the bullets haven't reached [us]," he said. As for me, I was shot at. I was shot at, but we weren't hit. I was a courier. I arrived at the district attorney's in Tuxtla. "Leave immediately!" he said.

"Okay!" I said.

"Since the bullets haven't reached [us]," he said. I was a courier for the boss, Claudio. Yes! We were waiting there. Then the mail arrived. "Go immediately!" said the district attorney. "Go right away. Dash off!" he said. Ooh, hell, we came back very fast.

Well then, the bullets were coming close. They didn't shoot yet. They didn't have orders yet to fire the cannons. But Tuxtla was ready, then. We came back. The woman in charge of the mail there didn't come out. She was shut up there.

Well then, the bullets were coming close. They didn't shoot yet. They didn't have orders yet to fire the cannons. But Tuxtla was ready, then. We came back. The woman in charge of the mail there didn't come out. She was shut up there.

You see, we came back. We hurried. We slept in Chiapa. But I couldn't go any further. The forces were stacked up here, here, here in Chiapa.

Oh, but compadre, like ants! Oh, it was too much, too much!

Well then, our horses were scattered there, munching corn, since we were travelling now by night. We didn't sleep anymore. Since it was the mail it continued on, the very same night.

The soldiers came. They came to catch the horses. The house was locked. "They're for the mail," they were told by the owner of the house.

"Even so!" they said.

"But sir, you can't!" they were told.

Three or four officers came, all on horseback.

"What did they say?" the soldiers were asked.

"Nothing, it's the mail," they said.

"Ah, don't touch them, then!" the soldiers were told. But [the mail] passed through, compadre, but ooh, sonofabitch, the brutes, there were so many bastards. So many!

[Was that before the war between Pineda and Obregón?] Ah, Pineda was later, of course, compadre. It wasn't yet. It was later. It wasn't yet. That was against the government. Pineda was afterwards, of course. I was already a full-grown man! I already had a child. I already had Maryan. He was this big!

Well then, they were there. The soldiers were there at the bridge, at the big bridge in Tuxtla. The troops came down here. They didn't do anything at all. Little by little, gradually they came. Little by little, gradually the machine guns came. They went on. We were watching them all pass by. "As for you, we won't bother you, since you're the mail," they 7ora ch'abal.

Bwéno pwes, day, 7a li 7a li tal noxtok 7un, pero ja7 7ach' to, 7o to nan ta 7o to nan ta 7ox-vinik jabil pero ma7uk i fereral xa xe ma7uk xa, mu jna7 bu liken tael.

Bwéno pwes day, 7ital 7un 7a li vo7one korioon, i vo7one kich'oj bala, kich'oj bala mu xa xilajotik korioon, 7a li ministerio lik'or ta Tuxtla 7une. "Lok'an ta 7oral!" xi 7un.

Bwéno! xkut 7un.


Bwéno pwes, 7a li te xa nopol tal li bala 7une, mu to chak' a7a muk' to permiso xak' i kanyone yan i Tuxtae che7e listo xa, litalotikókitik 7un, 7a li 7a li korio jne7el 7ajvale che7e muk' xa xlok' te xa ma7.

Va7i 7un 7a li day, litalotikókitik 7un sujemotikókitik li7 livayotikókitik ta Soktome xa 7une pero mu xa xu7 xibat li7 xa li7 xa busul li pwersi li7 ta Soktome.

Jee, pero, kumpágre, jun xini--ch, jee jee toj ma--s, toj mas!

Bwéno pwes day, 7i te lamal li jka7tikotik tzk'uxa 7ixim 7un, bu ti7n chixanavotikókitik ta 7ak'ubaltik xa mu xa mu7yuk xa mu7yuk xa xivayotikókitik 7un, ta mismo 7ak'ubal chjelav kómo korio 7un to.

7A li tal li soltero 7une 7och stzak i ka7 7une, tz'otol li nae. "7A li7e koréo," x7utat 7un yu7un yajval nae.

"7Onke séa!" xi 7un.

"Pero senyor mu xu7!" x7utat 7un.

Tal la li tal la li 7ox-vo7 chan-vo7 naka ta ka7 molekit. "K'u la xi?" x7utat i soltero 7une.

"Mu k'usi 7a li7e korío," xut.

"7A mu xapik che7e!" x7utat i soltero 7une. Pero jelave, kumpáre, pero ji--jo la chingada vruto toj mas kavron, toj mas ta j-mek!

Day, 7a 7a li Pinedae mas mas tz'akal a7a, kumpa, ma7uk to, mas tz'akal ta ma7uk to 7une, skwenta goyverno taje. 7a li Pinedae mas mas tz'akal a7a ja7 vinikon xa 7ox lek a7a, 7oy 7ox i jun jch'amale, li Maryane 7oy 7ox, xi smuk'ul 7oxe!

Bwéno pwes, day, 7a li te xa ta 7a li, 7a li soltero te xa ta ba k'o mol ba k'o ta Tuxtla 7une, 7iyal li persa li7 7une, mu7 nox k'u xalik ta j-mek, k'unk'un k'unk'um chtal k'unk'un k'unk'um chtal li metrayaro, chbat chjelav skotol te jk'elotikókitik 7un. "Vo7ote mu7yuk bu chakilbajin kómo koróo," xi 7un. "Bu lapasajee?" xi.
said. "Where is your pass?" they said.

"Here!" I said.

"He can't [be bothered]," they said. "Hell, none of the soldiers can [bother him]," they said. "They can't," they said.

Well then, they passed by. After they had passed, "Leave!" said an officer, but the sonofabitch was the top man. "[Who's the] courier?"

"I am, sir," I said.

"Leave, then!" he said. "That's all. There isn't a soldier left. Give the dispatches here, here to the courier!" he said.

"Won't something happen to me?" I asked.

"Nothing will happen to you," he said. "Nothing will happen to you. Five soldiers will go. They will go back with you. Go and join them!" he said. The soldiers came back. I went to join them. I passed by to ask for the messages. "Let's go. Go on, now!" he said.

As for the fugitives, ooh, there were so many, hell! At the bridge they were spraying each other [with bullets]. First, he fired. I've forgotten what the name of the top officer was. I don't remember anymore what his name was. But a paper [with his name on it] is here, compadre. He gave it to me, the governor gave it to me. His paper is here. Eh, I don't know what his name was. But he was pursued down. He was chased a long way, because they were attacking each other furiously.

There were lots of dead. [The mail] reached San Cristóbal. "How is it?" they asked.

"But I don't know how it turned out since I had already left," I said.

"Eh, but isn't [the report] that came in by phone—true—that you were killed," they said.

"No, I didn't die. The district attorney told me to leave immediately," I said.

Then he said ... I don't know what the general's name was, hell! I don't know what it was. I used to know. Ah, General Flores! But he was the top man, the bastard. "Go on! Nothing will happen to you. Take the messages here!" he said. Five soldiers went. "Nothing will happen to you," he said.

We came along. Ooh, would you believe it, compadre, dawn broke [when we were in] our country. Sonofabitch, but [we were so] sleepy, sonofabitch! Eh, don't think we had torches, of course. Just four bells so we could hear if the horses fled. They came jangling along. It quieted down. It stopped. General Flores cooled down. [The war] didn't [last] very long, either.

Then Pineda got up on his ass. [He was] an ugly man with a pock-marked face, the bastard. An ugly old man with a pock-marked face. He was Alberto Espinosa, not Pineda. Alberto Espinosa!

"Li7e!" xkut.


Bwéño pwes day, 7ijelav 7un, laj jelavuk 7un. "Lök'an!" xi tal jun 7ajvalil, pe—ro mero mol jijo púta. "Koréö?"

"Vo7on, sinyor," xkut.

"Lök'an che7e!" xi 7un. "Laj xa mu xa junuk i soltero ch'abal mu xa k'usi 7ech'uk 7ak'o li mensaje li7 ta li7 ta koreoe!" xi 7un.

"Mi mu k'u ipas?" xkut.

"Mu k'u xapas," xi 7un. "Mu k'u xapas 7a li ta xbat 7a li ta sutuk vo7-vo7uk soltero ba ch'i7nol!" xi. Sut i soltero 7une ba jchi7in, 7ech’ jjak’ i mensaje 7une.

"Bámos batan xa 7un!" xi.

7A ti jjatvile, jii, toj ma—s kavron, 7a li ta ba k'o 7une te sillinbe sbaiq te yo7 7une, te yak’be sbaiq ta ba k’o 7une, ja7 primero yak’ i 7a li, ch’ay me xka7i k’o k’u bi batz’i totilee, mu xa jna7 k’u li sbie, pero li7 svunale, kumpagre, yak’ojbon, bu ti kovverno yak’ojbon li7 svunale, 7ee, mu jna7 k’usi li sbie pe—ro net’e yalel ta 7olon, snet’oj 7bat ta j-mek yu7 nox batz’i yak’be sbaiq ta j-mek 7un.

7Animae toj 7e—p, k’ot ta Jobele. "K’u x7elan?" xi 7un.

"Pero mu jna7 k’u x7elan 7ikom kómo lilok’ 7ox tael," xkut.

"7Ee pero mu me yechuk li yul ta ch’ojon tak’ine lalaj xa 7une," xi 7un.

"Mo7oj, mu xilaj, liyalbe li sinyor ministerio ti lilok’ tal ta 7orae," xkut 7un.

7Ora, yal, mu jna7 k’u sbi li jenerale kavron, mu jna7 k’usi jna7oj to 7ox, 7a Jeneral Flóres, pero mero mol kavron. "Batan mu k’u xapas 7a li 7ech’uk 7ak’o mensaje li7 toe!" xi. Vo7-vo7 soltero bat 7un. "Mu k’u xapas!" xi 7un.

Bwéño, litalotikotik 7un, jiii, mi xach’une, kumpa, te me sakub ta jhumaltik 7un, púta pero jun vayele, jijola chinga, je, mu xaval ti 7o 7atoj a7a, k’ajom chan-p’ej kampana ja7 chka7itik mi 7o chjatav i ka7e, stz’intz’on tal ta j-mek 7un, lam 7un 7ipaj 7un ti sikub i 7a li 7a li Jeneral Flóres, muk’ 7onox jal noxtok 7un.

7Óra, 7a li Pinera 7une lik xchak 7un, yil j7ot’om-sat mol pero muk’ta mol kavron, yil j7ot’om-sat mol Pinera 7une, 7a li 7Alvéto 7Espínósa ma7uk i Pinerae, 7Alvéto 7Espínósa!
After that, well, he came when the soldiers were mobilized, ooh! There was a Mariano Osuna living then. He was living here [in Naben Chauk]. His children were born here. Old Chusel was born here. That pimp was born here. He was a real leader. “Join up with Pineda! You’ll see, he’s the boss, he’s our father!” he said. Because the people of Zinacantan Center didn’t want to.

Well then, the [Pinedists] kept on [causing trouble]. We were going to talk to the [government] soldiers in Chiapa. We were scared. We thought we would go talk to them, [taking them] a basket of passion fruit and a basket of eggs. We were scared. We turned back.

Then it was Old Petul [Tzu]. He went, indeed! And Petul—just Petul—Petul Chiku7. And I don’t know what his name was, here at home—Maryan, Maryan Xut. The three of them went, awful snail gatherers. They didn’t go [directly] to talk to [the soldiers]. [They were] posing as snail gatherers. They went to gather them at the edge of Chiapa. It’s said they were seen. They were seen by the people of Zinacantan Center. “Well, what are you doing here?” they were asked. “Sir, we’re going to talk to the governor,” they said. “Ah, let’s go, man!” [The soldiers] threw their arms around them as they went. The three of them got in [a truck]. Hell, they went. Ooh, they went off! They left.

[Bwéno] Yes, Old Petul Tzu, [and] Maryan Xut, [and] Petul Chiku7. The three of them went. They went off, indeed! The next day they simply were accepted. But don’t think there was—nger, hell! There were a devil of a lot of co—ws [to feed the soldiers], hell! I don’t know what the pay was—how much pay they probably earned a day. I don’t know if it was, eh . . . I think it was twenty pesos apiece. They went to Tuxtla by truck. They went. And then they gave orders. Then they were accepted. As for me, I had a corn field here in Joyijel [Roundabout]. It was in April. My corn field was there. I went to replant my corn field. Here, above Joyijel, I met two Chamulans with little aprons. They had several mangoes. “Where did you go, Chamulans?” I said.

“We went to Muk’ta Jok’ [Big Dig],” they said.

“Where did you get the mangoes, then?” I asked.

“Ah, it’s because—ah my Zinacantec—they gave them to us,” they said.

“Oh well!” I said. “All right, then,” I said.

Well then, “What’s it like? Is it true there’s a fight?” I asked.

“We never heard about it,” they said. “We never heard about it,” they said.

[Li7ay ta Muk’ta Jok’,” xi.]

Bwéno pwes, “K’u x7elen mi yech ti 7o pletue?” xikut.

“Muk’ bu xka7i,” xi 7un. “Muk’ bu xka7i,” xi.

“Bu 7avich’ i mankoe che7e?” xikut.

“A vich 7a7i, bu kulo7, te lisk’elanbe tal,” xi 7un.


“7E, bu likemot tal?” xi. K’unk’un k’unk’un 7un te
little, gradually, the jerks were drinking their posol.

“Here in Naben Chauk [Thunderbolt Lake],” I said.

“Sonofabitch, but [how] can we find the house of Xun Vaskis?” they asked.

“Shit, Chamulan, that’s me!” I said.

“Good grief, it’s you, Lord” they said. They admitted it. “Eh, you’re to meet our father, Petul [Tzu]. The war will start tomorrow,” they said.

“They will come from Ixtapa. They will leave. Pineda will be killed,” they said.

“Okay,” I said. Ooh, I never replanted my corn field. I came to report it here. I came to report it. We went to watch there at the graveyard [in Zinacantán Center]. We watched. Eh, first the great cannons were really booming now. They had arrived in Ixtapa. Booming now, booming now, booming now. Ooh, they kept it up for a long time. Every few minutes, “put put put” came the sound of the fucking buzzard [plane] in the sky. It sprayed bullets down on the mountain. The Pinedists were killed in Ixtapa. They were all killed there. I don’t know if there were twenty or twenty-five they caught by the arms, like this. They captured a lot. They captured them. There was an officer, a Pinedist soldier [who had] a tanned goatskin, with the hair turned in. That’s what the soldier was wearing.

You see, the soldiers arrived at Tzoj Lum [Red Earth]. There are cane fields there. We went. I went, myself. Old Petul [Tzu] sent orders. Probably twenty men went. Here by the cliffs, here where the cliffs are. The soldiers were pi—led there. You couldn’t—s—ll “Who goes there?” they said.

“We’re friends,” I said.

“Okay, come on, then!” they said. We reached where the soldiers were. The officers were there. Bu—t the leader himself was there. Ooh, the jugs were in a row this long—Tzoj Lum cane liquor.

“You’ve come!” they said.

“I’ve come,” I said. “I don’t know where Old Petul is,” I said.

“He isn’t here. He went to catch some cows down below,” they said. “Will you wait?”

“I’ll wait,” I said.

“Well, that’s fine that you’ve come, because you’ve come for good,” said [the officer].

“Very good, sir,” I said. There was a gourd this big.

“Drink this!” he said. “Drink it! When you’ve finished it ask for more!” he said. Ooh, how could you finish it? Hell, it was terribly strong cane liquor.

“All of you drink it!” he said.

“We’ve had all we want, sir. Thank you,” I said.

chuch’ yuch’imo7 i pentejo 7une.

“Li7 ta Naben Chauke,” xkut.

“Puta pero mi jta van ta sa7el sna la Xun Vaskes?” xi 7un.

“7A la myerta, Chamula, vo7on!” xkut 7un.

“Misericórcho vo7ot kere!” xi 7un. Jam ye 7un.

“7E, 7abolajan che7e ta la xba nup i jtitik Petule ta xa x7och k’ok’ 7ok’ob,” xi 7un. “Ta xa xtal ta Nibak 7un ta xa xlok’ tal 7un ch7och xa li k’ok’ 7ok’ob ta Nibake ta xa xla7 i Pinera 7une,” xi 7un.

“Bwéno,” xkut 7un. Jii, 7a ti jchobe Muk’ xa 7onox xkaventa tal kal li7 toe, tal kal 7un, ba jk’eltikótik 7un, je, pimero li mol kanyone batz’i stzi—nluj xa li Nibak to yul 7un, stzinluj xa stzinluj xa stzinluj xa, jii spas segir ta j-mek 7un, ta j-likel j-likel 7o, “jor jor jor,” xi tal li 7a li jkobel xulem ta vinajel 7une, stani yalel ta vitz 7un, te laj ti Pinera ta Nibak 7une, te laj skotol 7un, jna7 mi mi j-tob mi benti-sinko xa tzak tzk’ob xie stzakik ta j-mek 7un, stzakik 7un, 7a li 7o to 7ox jun 7a7valil, 7a li j7a 7a li j7a 7a li soltero Pinerae, nukulal chivo k’a7esbil, naka tzo—tzik’ajtk, ja7 xa slapoj i soltero 7une, ja7 xa slapoj 7un.

Bwéno va7i 7un, yul li soltero ta Tzoj Lum 7une te va7letik yo7 7une bat 7un, libat i vo7on 7une, stak xa mantal li mol Petul 7une, bat nan j-tob vinik 7un, li7 ta li7 ta 7o li7 ch’entik li7 ta 7o li7 ch’entik 7une, te bu—sul li soltero mu xajela—v. “Kyen vive?” xi 7un.

“Jchi7il jbatik,” xkut 7un.

“Bwéno, jelavan che7el” xi 7un. K’ototikótik yo7 bu li soltero te te li moletik 7une, pe—ro 7ajvalil stuk 7une, jii, li limetone xi snatil jtit’il spox la Tzoj Lum. “Latall!” xi.


“Muk’ li7e ba tzak tal vakax le7 ta 7olone,” xi 7un. “Chamala?”

“Ta jmala,” xkut 7un.

“Bwéno ja7 lek latale yu7n latal 7o,” xi 7un.

“Muy byen, senyor,” xkut 7un. 7A li xi smuk’ul batz’i boch 7une.

7A li, “7Uch’an li7el!” xi 7un. “7Uch’an ti mi laj 7avu7unike xak’an xa yan!” xi 7un. Jee, bu ba lajuk, kavron 7animal tzotz i tragoe. “7Uch’an 7akotoli7ki!” xi 7un.

“Ta7lo xka7itikótik 7un, sinyor, kol aval,” xkut 7un.
“Well if you want some more in a little while, ask for it in a while,” he said. “Well, please go get some horse fodder.” The horses were [as thick as] ants. “Go and get some horse fodder!” he said.

“But sir, I haven’t any ropes,” I said.

“There are your ropes!” he said. This many pesos. But I went to get the horse fodder. It was as far away as the stile is [from my house]. Pesos! We got ten or fifteen a day.

Well then, we woke up the next morning. “Sit down, don’t worry!” he said. The trouble was there weren’t any tortillas. No tortillas at all. Tortillas were scarce, indeed! But I went to get the horse fodder. It was as far away as the stile is [from my house]. Pesos! We got ten or fifteen a day.

Well then, we woke up the next morning there. “Sit down, don’t worry!” he said. The trouble was there weren’t any tortillas. No tortillas at all. Tortillas were scarce, indeed! This big for a real [12 ½c]. But the fucker didn’t call them tortillas. “Chinque,” he said.

Well then, we were probably there ... eh, we were there a long time. It was probably ... we were probably there a week at Tzoj Lum. He waited the—re. “Now, you, go to Salinas, tell the tithing man to come bring some corn, one fanega,” he said.

“Eh, I won’t go, sir, because the enemy is there,” I said.

“But nothing will happen to you since the advance force has already gone there,” he said. Eh, I mounted the horse. With lots of weapons, hell! A white horse. I came very fast. Sonofabitch, I reached Vo7-bitz [Salinas] all right. I told the tithing man to go deliver the corn. I came back down. Lord, four [soldiers] were bunched there. I got it good! Ooh, Holy Mary, sonofabitch but I was terribly scared, scared, scared. Hell, sonofabitch, I wasn’t hit! I fired four shots, too. I fired four shots. Then the soldiers in the hills saw [the enemy]. They spra—yed [bullets] at them.

I told the officer, “I nearly died,” I said.

“What happened to you?” he asked.

“The bullets pa—seed right through my hat brim. It broke off this much of my hat brim.”

“Ugh, oh sonofabitch, but nothing happened,” he said. “Ugh, twenty pesos for making the effort.” Twenty pesos for the distance I went on horseback. But they weren’t paper [bills] like this, but—they were all the real thing, hell!

Well, we came along. There at Mantza—Have you seen Tz’ajom Pik’ [Submerged Clitoris]? You’ve never seen it? Below Choko7. Haven’t you ever seen it? Below that. We were grouped there. The soldiers were grouped there. We came to look below 7ichin, the cemetery. Haven’t you seen it? You’ve seen it! We were grouped there. We were grouped there. The jerk, Pineda, didn’t let himself be seen. He came here to Muxul Vitz. He took the trail down, the

“Bwéno, ti mi xak’anik to ta j-likele xak’anik ta j-likele, xi 7un. “Bwéno, 7alobalan ba bojo tal ve7el ka7,” 7a li ka7e dyávlo ko7ol xinich. “Ba bojo tal ve7el ka7!” xi.

“Pero, senyor, muk’ bu jlaso,” xkut 7un.

“7A le7 7alasoë!” xi 7un. Xi yepale pexu, pero xi snatil chak k‘u cha7al ti7 be chba jboj tal li ve7el ka7 7une, pexu, 7o jtitatkóik 7a li lajuneb vo7-lajuneb ta k’ak’al.

Bwéno pwes day, 7a li te lisakubotikóik. “Chotlanik mu k‘u xal 7avo7on!” xi 7un.

K‘usi, ja7 ti vaj mu7yuk 7une, ch‘abal ti vaj a7a jol ti vaj a7a, xi smuk‘ule jum tak’in, pero ma7uk vaj chalbe li me jkobele, “Chinke,” xi.

Bwéno pwes, teotikóik nan, 7ee, jai teotikóik, te nan, teotikóik nan vaxakibuk k‘ak‘al ta Tzoj Lum 7une, teee smala 7ora. “7Ora, li vo7ote batan ta Salina, 7albo li mayole 7ak‘o taluk yak‘ 7ixim junuk janika,” xi 7un.

“Jee, mu xibat 7un, sinyor, cómoe te li 7enemigoe,” xkut 7un.

“Pero mu k‘u xapas kómo te xa batem li bandadae,” xi 7un. Je, likaji ta ka7, jun 7arma kavron, sakil ka7, 7anil lital ta j-mek 7un, púta 7ana lek lik‘ot ta Vo7-bitz a7a, lek 7ikalbe li mayole 7ak‘o ba yak‘ i 7ixime, liyal tael 7un te xa lamal kajval chan-vo7 ke lek 7ikich‘ bala, jii Maria Santísima, púta pero lixi7 lixi7 lixi7 ta j-mek kavron, púta 7an muk‘ xilaj, 7ikak‘ to chani bi tiro 7uk, kak‘ to chani bi tiro, ja7 to yil ta vitzitik in soltero, sta—nibe ch‘el, chan-vo7 te li soltero, pero jin xa bat, te kom, te kom.

7ikalbe ya7i li mol 7une. “Jutuk mu lilaj,” xkut 7un.

“K‘u 7apas?” xi.

“Ta yanal jpixol te je—lav i balae toj lok‘el ta yanal xi snatil 7ixut i jpixol 7une.”

“Tz‘, 7ay jiio la gran puta, pero mu k‘u spas,” xi 7un. “Tz‘, ja7 chavak‘ 7o 7avokol j-tob pexu.” J-tob pexu snatil lixanav ta ka7 7une, pero mu7nuk ja7 yech vun, pe---ro naka ja7 stuk kavron.

Bwéno pwes, talotikóik 7un, te li ta Mantza... mi 7avilol in Tz‘ajom Pik‘e, muk‘ bu 7avilol, yolon to li 7a li Choko7e muk‘ bu 7avilol, 7a ja7 yolon to 7un, te lilamiotikóik te yo7 7une te lami li soltero 7une, tal jk‘elotikóik ta yolon 7a li yolon 7a li 7ichine, 7a li kámpo santoe muk‘ 7avilol, 7avilol, ja7 te lilamiotikóik te yo7 7une, te lilamiotikóik 7un, li pentejo mu7nuk 7o bo chak‘ ssat i Pinera 7une li7 tal ta Muxul Vitz stam yalel li be 7a li belel Chamu7
Chamula trail that reaches Chamula, it seems. Four went down [the trail]. We were watching them carefully as they were strolling towards [us]. We were grouped there with the soldiers. The soldiers were piled up. Eh, the machine gun was let go. They were shot at. They came out in the open. They were shot at. Ooh, the white horse was landed on its back, way off. It landed on its back, way off [flat] on the ground. It was shot at a lot. But the no-goods weren’t hit. They fled. One was killed—the horse was killed. The horse was killed, of course. Then the soldiers went in. They went to look. Ooh, chickens came, cane liquor came, cows came, from 7Olon Ravol [Lower Ranch], 7Olon Ravol. Because the bastard [the owner] was there [where] the boarding school [is now]. Ooh, a whole truckful, the whole corralful was herded in. Then the owner went to ask, “But please!” he said. “But we’re friends!” “But you weren’t ever our friend. He’s a bastard. You’re a Pinedisti!” he was told. “No, sir!” he said. Ah, they were given [back] to him. But probably ten [cows] were still left behind. [Left behind?] Le—ft behind! Ooh, we started sk’ot ta Chamu7 ya7ele, stam yalel chan-vo7, lek jk’elotikótk xva7lajet talele te lamalotikótik xchi7uk soltero 7un, soltero bu susul, 7ee, koltabat xa li metrayadore yu7n xa ch7ak’bat 7un, lok’ tal ta jamaaltik 7un tibbat 7un, jii, 7a li sakil ka7e Taj to javal 7ik’ote, Taj to javal k’ot k’al lum, 7ak’bat ta j-mek 7un, 7a li bu muk’ xlaj i 7alkawetae 7ijatavik, jun 7ilaj, 7a li ka7e laj, laj i ka7 a7a, ja7 7o 7oc i soltero 7une ba sk’elik ta j-mek 7un, jii, tal ti kaxlane tal ti trakoe tal ti vakaxe, yu7un 7Olon Ravole, 7Olon Ravol yu7un xa li 7o xa li 7a li kavron 7a li 7internaro 7une, jee, ta—1 sjunul karo makbat sjunul koral, ja7 to 7a sk’an i 7ajvalil 7une. “Pero 7avokoluk 7un!” xi 7un. “Pero jchi7il jbatik!”

“Pero muk’ bu 7achi7il abai kavron li7e, vo7ote Pineraot!” x7utat 7un. “Mo7oj, sinyor!” xi 7un. 7Ana jchi7il 7un, pero kom 7onox nan lajunebuk 7un. 7Iko—m, li7ochotikótik ta labal mil-bek’et labal

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**Figure 4—Battle of Zinacantán, 1 May 1924** (adapted from Bravo Izquierdo; 1 = Obregon headquarters, 2 = Artillery, 3 = 47th regiment of line cavalry, 4 = Battalion of state volunteers, 5 = 16th infantry battalion, 6 = 3rd regiment of line cavalry, 7 = 1st regiment of auxiliary cavalry, 8 = 63rd regiment of line cavalry, 9 = Mountain battery, 10 = Pineda headquarters).
slaughtering the beef, slaughtering the cows, hell! Ooh, the meat, hell, but this much for the awful soldiers. We were counted in. We received this much, too, of course. However much the soldiers received, that's what [we got]. But what good was it? There weren't any tortillas.

[No tortillas?] No, compadre! Nothing could be done about it. I sent word here for them to go and bring tortillas. But they didn't give us any to eat. The soldiers had one real's worth apiece, but this bi—g, like this. Eh, it was so hard [in the time of] Pineda!

You see, we went, we went, it seems, to . . . we left Choko7. He went . . . one of our friends went to Chamula, [another] one to Ravol [the Ranch], [another] one to 7Isbontik [Dogwoods]. They went. They went to let the soldiers see them.

Then, the first one went to show himself at Ravol [Ranch], to show himself to the Pinedists. Eh, they scattered a lot of [bullets]. Ooh, hell, the Pinedists still attacked there. Afterwards the [second] one showed himself in Chamula. Afterwards that one went [there]. Even later the [third] one went to 7Isbontik. The first one showed himself at Ravol. Eh, the soldiers were killed down below. One officer was shot here. It went in the soldier [right] here, [in his chest], it went in [right] here [in his throat]. Lord they chased them. It came . . . then the airplane appeared in the sky. Then they moved out, but the corpses the—re on the back side of Ventana, where the Chamulan houses are . . . there was a family there where the tile-roofed house is. Eh, the corpses were sea—ttered. Ooh, the blood, hell! Like a river, compadre, but it would strike fear into you. Eh, hell!

Ch'a---bal, kumpârê, mu k’u cha7al xbat li7e, jtk xa tal mantal li7 toe, chba yak’el sîl li vaje pero mu x7ak’e jve7tik, li solteroe jn—uen jn tak’in xi smuk’tik—i xi toe, je, toj vokol ta j—mek i Pineræ.

Bwéno va7i 7un, 7a li jn 7un, batotitókitik ya7el taa, toztotitókitik 7un ta ta Choko7 7une 7a li bat 7a li jn jchi7ilitik bat ta Chamu7, jn ta Ravol, jn ta 7Isbontik, bat 7un ba yak’be yil li soltero 7une.

Bwéno pwes, 7a li 7a li ba7i 7a yak’ i ta Ravole, ba7i 7a yak’ i Pineræ, je, lek 7išišiši ta j—mek, jii jkorn, 7o to nox te yak’ i Pineræ ja7 tz’akal 7iayk’ ta Chamu7e ja7 tz’akal 7itab, ta 7Isbontike ja7 mas tz’akal noxtok, ja7 ba7i yak’ ta Ravole, je, laj i soltero ta 7olone, jun 7ajvâllî li7 tikt’bat li7 toe, soltero li7 7oche li7 7oche, kere snutzik 7un, tal ja7 to tal li 7aryoplan ta vinajel 7une, ja7 to sk’ej sbâ pero li 7ajina ma ta—j ta pat Ventana yo7 sna chamu7etik 7onoxe, te 7o xả te j-chop yo7 mu texail nae, 7ee, solel la---mal li 7ajinae, jii, ch’iche’, jkorn, 7uk’um yilel, kumpârê, pero xi7el xavîch’, 7e jkorn ta j—moj, 7ii, busul ta j—mek i 7ajinae.

“Battik!” xi7 7un. Ja7 jchi7uktikókitik taj mol batz’i ja7 stuk mol jeneral 7une. “Bwéno, 7ochikotik!” x7utat i mol Pelut 7une. “7Ochikotik, Pêgô, mu k’u xal 7avo7on li7otik,” xi. Solterœ tzi—nil ta j—mek, ta yak mu xa ta ka7uk, naka xa ta yok, k’ajom xa ta ka7 li moletik jay-vo7 kapitane li 7ajvalîle k’ajom xa.

Bwéno pwes, k’usi 7a li 7a li much’utik 7onox ya7el 7a li 7ochime jun yo7on, 7a ti much’utik muk’ 7ochime, 7a li nae puje ta majel, li ch’ivite, jkorn, ti much’u 7o tak’in 7o xela sjópojíjojop chlök’ik i jkobeletik 7une, “ji, muk’ smelo—l, muk’ smelol ta j—mek, ch’ivîte, jkorn, solel yavîo ta j—mek’ ti 7a 7at’z’ame ti 7iche ti pope ti k’utik nox ta j—mek jkorn.

Ta Jobel 7une, laj staik yikatz i jchi7iltaktik 7une, laj staik 7un. “Bwéno, vayan li7 toe!” xi. Ju—n na te jch’amuñiktókitik 7un, pûta solterœ tzi---nil, te livayotikókitik, katz’alotikókitik ta 7o7olol.
“Well, you get out, Magistrate!” [Then] Old Petul [Tzu] became magistrate [of Zinacantan]. He was stuck in. The [Pinedist] soldiers, the [former] magistrate had fled. It was Maryan Nuj. The father of the other Maryan Nuj. That one you were talking about. It was his father. [No,] 7Antun Nuj [was the name of] Maryan Nuj's father.

Well then, we came. “You all go on, compadre, go on! I’m going to the courthouse,” said [Petul Tzu]. “One hundred soldiers are going with me,” he said. Those soldiers came to his seat [of office]. A hundred soldiers came with him.

You see, they came along the road that descends here at Na Chij [Deer House]. We met up with the soldiers. “Oh, we’ll be killed now, hell! But aren’t they probably Pinedists?” we said to ourselves. They were the ones from below [from Tuxtla].

“How is it?” they asked.

“They’ve gone way off. Now they’re to the east of San Cristóbal,” we said.

“Okay!” they said. They had thi—s much jerked meat. “Do you [want to] eat some meat?” they asked.

“Well, give it to us!” we said. They gave us this much. Hell! You don’t think it was a little bit of meat? It wasn’t a little bit. Whoever, . . . There were burdens, they had jugs. Empty jugs. They poured out the cane liquor! They poured it out! They brought the jugs. Eh, the cane liquor ran along [the ground], disappeared. Ooh, terrible. It was so hard long ago, so hard!

Well then, what could you do? Till it cooled off. [The soldiers] left. The soldiers from down [in Tuxtla] went to the west of San Francisco. An airplane was shot down there. It was shot down there in the valley that the road crosses. The soldiers were over here, the soldiers were over there. The airplane passed over. It was shot down there. It lay upside down. One was brought down in Ixtapa, but it fell all by itself, indeed! But on the road to Comitán it was wrecked by soldiers. Then we continued on. Me, I went. I went with the officers. I was following right behind the officers. On horseback now. There was shooting now. There was shelling now. The airplane was lying there upside down now. The wings were ruined by bullets. The whole machine was ruined. It was lost. Sonofabitch, the soldiers, hell, there were loads of them, thousands of them with me. Bullets came out of the woods then. But who knows what it was, but it wasn’t just people, compadre! [The soldiers] went in. They went into the awful heavy forest and rocky places, but they drove them out now, the soldiers captured them. Eh, the soldiers were terribly mean. Mea—n! Hell, it was so hard long ago, compadre. It was bad. Yes!

“Bwéno lok’ani k vo7ot 7une, preserente!” Ja7 kom ta preserente li mol Petule ja7 xa tik’e, soltero, preserente jatav xa, ja7 ti Maryan Nujie, ja7 stot i jun Maryan Nuj 7a li 7a taj chavale, ja7 stot 7un, 7Antun Nuj, stot i Maryan Nuj 7une.

Bwéno pwes, 7a li 7a li 7i talotikotík 7une. 7A li “Batanik i vo7oxuke, kumpáre, batan, vo7one chba jta jkavilto,” xi 7un. 7A li “Chba jchi7in jun syen soltero,” xi. Tal ta xchotleb taj soltero, jun syen soltero xchi7uk tacle 7un.

Va7i 7un, tal ta be ti chyal li7 ta Na Chij 7une jnuptikókit i soltero 7une. “Ji, lilajotik tana karájo pero mi ma7uk van 7a li Pineda?,” xichiotikókit. Ma7uk 7un, ma7uk ja7 li 7olone.

“K’u x7elan?” xi 7un.

“Bat xa ta j-mek, te xa ta yak’ol xa Jobel,” skuttikókit.

“Bwéno!” xi. Xi ye---pal taxux bek’et 7une. “Mi chati7ik bek’et?” xi.

“Pwes k’elanbon!” skuttikókit. Ke, xi yepakil yak’e, kavron, yu7 van 7o sjalal bek’et 7un, muk’ sjalal, much’uti7 7onox xikatzine 7o slimetonic, xokol limetone, 7a li tragoe smal, 7isma—, ja7 7isukch tal li limetone, je, trakoe 7okin bat, 7oo, ta j-mek toj vokol ti vo7ne ta j-meke, toj vokol!

Bwéno pwes, yu7n yech te k’alal, ti k’al sikub 7une 7a li bat 7un, li7 ta yolon San-pransisko 7une bat 7i 7a li 7a li soltero ta 7olon 7une te jipe jun 7aryoplano yo7 7une, te jipe ja7 li sjomal xjelal i be te yo7 7une, xi li soltero, xi li soltero, 7ijelal i 7a li 7aryoplano te jipe 7un, te javal com, jun 7ijipe ta Nibak pero p’a7 stuk a7a, yan i ta belei Komitanie laj soltero, ja7 7o te ljelavotikókit ba ba to jchi7in i moletik vo7on 7une, te to xinap’et jchi7uk 7a li moletik 7une, ta ka7 xa 7un, 7ak’-bala xa, 7ak’-tak’in xa, te xa javal li 7aryoplano lajem ta bala xik’ek xajem xa skotol makinane, batem xa, püta li soltero, kavron, 7ep ta j-mek ta mil jchi7uk, 7o to te lok’ tal bala ta te7tik xa 7une, ke, pero na7tik k’usi pero mu7 nox krixchanouk, kumpágre, 7i7och, 7och yil pimil te7tik tontik pero smak xa tal soltero szakozjik xa taleur, je, toj ben pukuj i soltero, puku—, jayvo toj vokol ti vo7nee, kumpágre, chopol. Ji7!
Throughout this reminiscence Xun addresses me as “compadre” because I am his grandfather’s godfather.

Xun’s long account of the wars that he has witnessed or heard of is extremely difficult to follow, even for someone familiar with the terrain and the history of the area. In no case does he show the slightest awareness of the political issues involved. It just amounts to fear and hardship relived again and again, with a very small dose of adventure added.

The first war involving The Bird in 1911 was described more fully by Xun twelve years earlier in Tale 116. He assigns the name Salvador to The Bird, whose real name was Jacinto. He can no longer remember the last name of the Chamulan who offered his daughters or younger sisters to him, but the story follows the same outline. The first action occurs at Juteb Chauk, the cave where, in Romin Teratol’s Tale 104, the Long Hair is defeated and the road is opened.

A Chamulan account echoes Xun’s remarks on how the Chamulans took their compatriots to the courthouse and from there dumped them in the lake nearby. The Chamulan narrator tells too of a makeshift guillotine fashioned with a huge axe head that saw much use behind the courthouse wall (Gossen, T78).

The second war, the War of St. Rose fought in 1869-1870, is described more fully by Xun in Tale 117.

The third battle cited by Xun may date from 1863, when General Ortega, representing the imperial capital of San Cristóbal, marched on Chiapa with 1300 men to defeat the liberal government in Tuxtla. On 20 and 21 October the Chiapanecs, outnumbered by more than 3 to 1, repulsed the imperialist army. On 4 January 1864 Julian Grajales, general of the liberal forces, defeated the imperialists in Ixtapa, pursuing them up to San Cristóbal, where they were finally subdued on 22 January after an eleven-day siege.

I have been unable to place historically the fourth battle, in which Xun was a courier. Nor could I identify General Flores. As this affair preceded General Pineda’s involvement, it must have occurred prior to 1920, when there were frequent skirmishes between the revolutionary government in Tuxtla and the conservative resistance movement in San Cristóbal.

The fifth engagement centers on General Alberto Pineda. (Who knows why Xun changed his last name to Espinosa?) Xun shares none of the admiration for Pineda that many Indians felt. Though Pineda represented the San Cristóbal Ladosinos, who wished only to keep the Indians under heel, his resourcefulness became legendary. It is said that he escaped detection many times dressed as an Indian charcoal maker. When I first lived in San Cristóbal in 1959, General Pineda, then in his 90s, could often be seen taking walks in the plaza.

Xun’s account begins in April just before the battle of Ixtapa. For Petul Tzu and his two companions to venture into the lowlands near Chiapa to join the army could be dangerous, so they took the precaution of posing as snail gatherers. Since fresh water snails are customarily gathered by Zinacantecs as a Lenten delicacy, this was a good front. When they were finally enrolled in the army, the wage of twenty pesos a day must have seemed phenomenal.

When Xun met the Chamulans on the road, it was obvious from their mangoes that they had been to the lowlands and not merely down the road a piece to Muk’ta Jok’ as they claimed. The posol that they were drinking is a refreshing drink of corn dough mixed in water. After Xun learned the news, he and nineteen other Zinacantecs left the Center to join up with Petul Tzu half way to Ixtapa in Tzoj Lumi or, as it is known in Spanish, Tierra Colorada. He remembers that they were camped about a week there with the government soldiers. This corresponds very well to the information provided by General Bravo Izquierdo that his forces chased 300 of the Pinedists from Tierra Colorada to Zinacantán Center on the afternoon of 24 April. They remained in Tierra Colorada until 1 May, when they launched their attack on Pineda in the Center. General Izquierdo deployed his troops under the eyes of the governor of Chiapas. Eleven hundred Pinedists were camped in the hills on the northwest flank of the Center while another 400 were camped in San Felice. As before, General Izquierdo used a three-pronged attack that, according to Xun, was preceded by Zinacantec scouting activities. The Ventana, the pass leading from Zinacantán Center to San Cristóbal and the scene of so many battles through the ages, was finally gained at noon by General Izquierdo after five hours of engagement. The Obregonists lost six men, the Pinedists, 25. The army of Pineda scattered, fleeing to the far side of San Cristóbal.

The heroic Petul Tzu, named magistrate of Zinacantán when the incumbent abandoned his office, I recall as a tall, shuffling old man, who in 1959 used to beg rides from me, wagging his tortoise head and smiling unctuously. But for many years he had shared with Xun Vaskis the political reins of his hamlet Naben Chauk.

Printed words can not convey the incredulous pain in Xun’s voice as he described the government soldiers emptying the jugs of their precious cane liquor, pouring it on the ground—an act as senseless and irreverent to a Zinacantec as it would be for a Frenchman forced to witness soldiers pulling corks on jeroboams of Chateau Mouton-Rothschild.

There is no mention in historical sources of airplanes being downed. But the battles of San Francisco and Yerbabuena on 18 June 1924 were as fierce as Xun intimates. General Pineda marshalled 1800 soldiers to confront General Izquierdo and his army of 1000 men. The hopelessness of the conservative resistance must have become apparent, though, for the Pinedists were routed, losing 60 men against the Obregonist’s loss of only nine. This marked the final major battle of the Revolution in Chiapas. See also T14, T22, T25, T66, T112, T148, T152, T153, and their notes.

The Spook and The Girl from Magdalenas

Once the Spook, well, he had a fight with the Zinacantecs. Two of them slept in a cave. “Oh, I don’t know why I’m afraid. Man, what if something should come!” said one of them.
“What are you scared of? What the hell, are you blue-assed? [do you wear women's skirts]?” said the other.

“So—nofabitch, but I don’t know. You be brave!”

“I am brave, man. Put a lot of firewood on. Good. Are you blue-assed? What are you scared of, man?” he said. [The other] was very scared. He was chilled.

Oh, la—we at night the Spook came whoo—shing down. He saw the fire gleaming in the cave. There is a field there. He set down his pack there.

He went in to talk to them. Oh, hell, as for the brave man, his ass was sopping wet now. He had pissed on himself. To the man who [first] had been scared—“What’s up, friend? What are you doing?”

“Sir, I’m not doing anything.”

“I’ll warm myself.”

“Fine, warm yourself, sir,” he said.

“What are you doing? Do you want a smoke?” asked [the Spook].

“I’ll smoke,” said [the man]. He was given a cigarette. He crumbled it up like this. He just wasted it. He crumbled it up this way.

“Bastard, what are you doing to your cigarette? Hell, I haven’t finished one,” said [the Spook].

“Well, sir, I’m smoking the way I always smoke. Hell, I’ll smoke,” he said. Well, [the Spook] gave him another. Three cigarettes he took.

“Bastard, what kind of act is this good. Bastard, you’ll see! Do you want to fight?”

“Well, fight if you know how to fight, sir, but me, I don’t know how to fight. I’m just sitting here warming myself,” he said.

The bastard [the Zinacantec] had a goo—d stick. What a man!

Well, you see, “You bastard!” said [the Spook].

“Look here, whose bastard? Hell, I’m not your bastard, because your hair is so kinky, you bastard,” said the man.

“Well, wait, I’ll draw a line.” [The Spook] drew the line. It was made now. “Well, stand here,” said [the Spook].

“Fine,” he replied. [The Spook] rose up. He had a sword. He thrust it point downwards like this. But he thrust it into the ground. The man whacked him two, three times right off when he rose up.

Well, you see, he came down. He grew weaker and weaker. Now he rose up only a little bit. [The man] hit his legs. He was the same distance as a bird. He came down to the ground. But the “brave” man’s pi—ss was just pouring out. Oh, nothing could be done, the bastard’s filth ran out [as he watched from the distance].

Then [the Spook] died. His [teeth] were ba—red in

“K’u chaxi7 7o, karájo, mi yax-balán 7achak?” xi la li jun 7une.

“Pu—ta, pero mu jna7 to tzotzar me kik vo7ote!”

“Tzotzon, 76mbr, 7ak’o 7ep si7, bwéno, mi yax-balán 7achake, kere, k’u chaxi7 7o, 76mbr?” xi la. Xi7 ta j-mek 7ak’bat sik. 7iil, na—x la 7ak’ubal xjumume—t xa tal li j7ik’al 7une, 7iyil ti xnopet k’ok’ ta nail ch’ene, 7oy te stentej 7une, te spuman i yikatz 7une.

Bwéno, 7och k’oponel 7un, jii, kavron 7a ti much’u tzotz vinike pitz’il xa xchak 7isk’ab ta sba, 7a li much’u xi7 7une -- “7iday, 7amigo, k’u xi?”

“Senyor, mu k’u xi.”

“Chik’atin,” xi la.

“Bwéno, k’atinan, senyor,” xi.

“Mi chasik’olaj?” xi.

“Chisik’olaj,” xi la. 7ak’bat jun ssik’ole xi stuch’ilane naka xch’ay xi stuch’ilane. “Kavron, k’u chacha7le lasik’ole, 76mbr karájo, vo7one yilel mu xla7 jun,” xi.

“Pwes senyor, chisik’olaj che7e, pwes k’u x7elen ta jpas fumar che7e, karajo, chisik’olaj,” xi. Bwéno, 7iyak’be xa jun ja7 no 7ox yech, 7iyak’be xa jun, 7oxib 7un 7istzak sik’al.

“Kavron, chak li7e muk’ lek 7amanya, kavron, xak’el avil mi xak’an xitajinotik.”

“Pwes tajinan mi xana7 xatajine, senyor, yan i vo7one mu jna7 xitajin li7 no 7ox chotolon chik’atine,” xi la 7un.

Bwéno, kavron le—k jun te7 jijo la chingada vinik.

Bwéno, va7i 7un, “Kavron!”, xi la. “Ke k’usi kavron mu 7akavronikon, karájo, ja7 to yu7un ti batz’i muruch’ 7ajole, kavron,” xi li vinike.


“Bwéno,” xi la. Muy 7un, yespara 7un, xi la tz’ukul 7ispaj yalel xi toe. Bu, lumtik tzpaj 7un, 7a li vinike lek tzt’inbe cha7-moj 7ox-moj ta 7ora k’al chmuye.

Bwéno, va7i 7un, yal tal k’unib k’unib ta j-mek pek’el xa muy 7un, 7ismajbe yok yech snatil chak k’u cha7al jun mut 7une, yal tal ta lumtik 7un, pero 7a ti buch’u tzotz vinike solel xchoron sk’a—b, 7ii, mu xa k’u xavut jelav yila7al kavron.

Bwéno pwes, cham 7un, solel ch’ivi---l xa si7 7ik’al
his horrible black mouth. The Spook's teeth were bared. He died.

[The man] tied his neck. With a lasso he tied it. Turning blue [in the face, the Spook] died. He was tied. He just turned blue.

You see, [the man] went to look where [the Spook] had left, where he had left . . . . There rolled up in a new straw mat was a girl from Magdalenas. “Bastard, what kind of thing are you? Are you a Spook?”

“It's me, sir. Don't kill me! Untie me!” she said. He untied her. Now a wife had come to the ma—n. The girl was a lu—sh babe. He married her. He didn't return her.

Well, but what happened to you?” he said [to his companion]. Now that he had a wife, the Magdalenas girl sitting there, he was swishing a switch, but the [“brave” Zinacantec] got a goo—d beating.

“Never mind, if its just a whipping. Don't kill me! Take her! I thought I was brave. I wasn't brave at all,” said [his companion]. [She was] a Magdalenas girl.

“Sonofabitch, it [must be] a Magdalenas man coming!” said some men who had stayed behind. “But how did the bastard do it?” said the men. “He wasn't afraid. She's a devil. She has taken the devil's orders.”

This tale is similar to Romin Teratol’s story “The Spook and the Girl from San Andres” (T126), but the Spook is dispatched in the same manner as the Long Hair was in Romin’s Tale 104.

Despite the hero’s bravery he is derided by the other Zinacanteces with what seems to be a touch of envy for having a Magdalenas girl walking behind him as his wife. But they can write her off as a devil for having obviously had to submit to the devil both body and soul. See also T95, T104, T126, T158, and their notes.

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**Why the Valley of Naben Chauk Is Flooded**

T119

The sinkhole of Naben Chauk flooded. Long ago, say the old men and women, there didn't used to be any people. It was woods, deep forest. There were tigers. There were monkeys. There were horned guans. In the evenings, my grandmother said, they called “Tom, tom, tom, tom,” but on a great mountain in a cave there.

Once there were woods, pine trees. People appeared, then. The lake receded. The holy earth wanted to have children.

You see, they went, my grandmother, and my father who was little then.

So, the, people came in. The lake receded. It dried up. The people grew contented. When I became aware of things, when I approached manhood, I had never seen the lake like this. I had never seen it. It's true there always was the sink, of course. Bu—t, anyway, once there were great pines, old trees...
leaning over. I would go with my grandmother, looking for scaly lentinus mushrooms. I had my net when I went along with my grandmother. Me, I would climb up the leaning pines. I climbed up to pick the lentinus mushrooms. I went with my grandmother as she poked along with her walking stick.

The lake never flooded.

I reached manhood. The squatters of the owner of Yaleb Taiv [Where Frost Falls] went in and cut down the heavy forest. Long ago it was never touched. The old trees, the heavy forest, wasn't ever touched. That would have been [like] asking for the water to appear there [in the sink]. The owner granted permission. The old trees fell.

Now the rivulets flowed [carrying] the sediment. The sink hole was stopped up, the way it’s been ever since. It hasn’t been fixed. There is water, a lake, a large lake. Once what is now the edge of the lake used to be tall grass, pines, yellow pines, corn fields, beans. Yes, it’s true, it was long ago. [The corn] turns brown right away now. You can’t get any [corn] anymore. It’s just lake now. Me, I saw it myself. I still saw all the hu—ge trees where there are now meadows, meadows. I once saw the great pines, long ago. Me, I was born long ago.

Where do you see woods there? Where do you see pine trees? There’s just a lake. The people who used

ichijuk jun jnuti7, vo7one chba jchi7in jmuk’ta me7, vo7on chimuy ta ba k’atal toj chimuy jtuch’ i tajchuche, xpajpon snam-te7 jmuk’ta me7 chba jchi7in.

Bwéno, muk’ bu xnoj nab.

Bwéno, 7ijta vinikal 7i yajval Yalem Taive che7e, 7i7och yajbaltio 7istz’et ti montanyae, ti vo7ne che7e, muk’ bu chapike, muk’ bu chapike mol te7tike, montanya tzk’an tal vo7 le7e, 7iyak’ permiso li 7ajvalile, 7ilom i mol te7tike.

7Ora, 7ibat ti balak’ vo7e li tz’ubal lume, 7imak i yochobe li x7elan k’al tana 7une, mu xa smeltzaj 7un, vo7, nab, muk’ta nab, vo7ne che7e ti7ti7 nab ya7el lavi x7elan le7e, muk’tik jobel, tojtit, 7ajan tojtit, chobtit, chenek’, ja7 tyémpe melel xkanub ta 7ora lavie 7une, mu xa bu xata 7un, naka xa nab, vo7one jk’el vo7one che7e 7oy to kil muk’tik te7—tik ta j-mek te yo7 stentejrike stentejik, muk’tik tojtit kil to 7ox i vo7one, vo7one vo7ne jch’iel xa.

Bwéno, 7a le7e bu chavil te7tik, bu xavil tojtit naka nab 7oy, mak krixchano che7e, 7o to 7ox nakal
to live along the edge of the lake were driven out. Long ago they never saw floods. They have been chased out now. The government doesn't want to bother. Last year I went to talk to the engineer. “I'll go there next year,” he told me. I don't know if he'll go now. I'm waiting. It needs to be dug out. Three years ago it was dug out. Not much water went out. Not much water went out. Three women arrived. They went to look at it. So [the sink] just lost its temper, it seems. Who knows if the holy water is based on the generations. Who knows if the holy water is based on the generations.

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Three years ago it was dug out. Not much water went out. Not much water went out. Three women arrived. They went to look at it. So [the sink] just lost its temper, it seems. Who knows if the holy water is based on the generations. Who knows if the holy water is based on the generations.

Now all those young beans, all those beans you ate, where can you find beans? The people lost a lot of land there. They simply didn’t plant corn fields. They used to plant them, but long ago. They were submerged. They died. We'll see how the holy year turns out, if the governor helps out, if he might
bother, if he helps to dig it out—depending on how he feels. Today it’s terrible. It isn’t good any more. Who knows if it’s because the holy earth there is angry. Settlers have gone there. Who knows how it is, since I don’t know how it is. It is very bad there now. When I grew up long ago it was fine. It isn’t good any more. Who knows if it’s because the holy earth there is angry. Settlers have gone there. Who knows how it is, since I don’t know how it is. It is very bad there now. When I grew up long ago it was fine. I never saw a lake. Mu—ch longer ago, says my grandmother, a lake was once there, but it dried up. People came in. The holy earth wanted to have children. Ooh, but the watermelon squashes, the peaches, the chayotes, the corn fields when the people came in there! It’s true, things have grown there all right, but the trouble is the lake is so wide now. Who knows how it will turn out. It looks bad. It looks very bad. The sink was just stopped up, it seems, when the old trees were cut down. The charcoal went into the sink, the earth went there, the sand went there. That's how it was tossed in. But that's why it can't be fixed, that's why it can't be dug out. It’s bad there. Who knows how it will be.

Xun’s sentiment for the giant pines that once towered above Naben Chauk and his perception of the drastic effects of deforestation sounds a lonely echo in Zinacantan, where even the steepest mountain slopes are being laid bare by axe and fire. Xun’s conviction, that women’s contact with the sink was a contributing factor in its stoppage, would be endorsed by most Zinacantecs. This is clearly related to a widespread Mayan belief that “virgin water” should be protected from contact with female impurity. Even though it is women who draw water from the wells, they are conspicuously absent on the Cross Day ceremonies, when the wells are cleaned and the Earth Lords are worshipped.

Today the growing and selling of pinks, daisies, and a number of other cultivated flowers is an increasingly important factor in the economy of Xun’s hamlet, Naben Chauk. The flowers are sold in the market in Tuxtla. Children sit or stand on the roadside at Naben Chauk, waving bright bunches of pinks at each passing car.

The Villistas

Long ago—nothing happens now—long ago there were the Villistas, son of a bitch! They came to Jok’ Ch’enom. Thirty Villistas came to steal at Muk’ta Jok’ [Big Dig]. They cut across Jok’ Ch’enom. Right away [the Zinacantecs] heard about it, when they were grouped in Muk’ta Jok’. The hamlet of Naben Chauk [Thunderbolt Lake] heard, the hamlet of Chobtik [Corn Field] heard, the hamlet of Sek’emtik heard. The men of Naben Chauk were real men. The Chobtik men were scared. They fled far off. The Naben Chauk men were crouched near the road. They all had their weapons. They all had shotguns. [The Villistas] approached. They came from Muk’ta Jok’. They had come half a league. There used to be houses there. [The Villistas] stole weaving. They stole coils of woven palm. They stole pants. They stole skirts, money, everything.

Then they blew their horns. They had picked up horns. Already they had taken strips of weaving. Already they had taken coils of palm. The billhooks—they cut the handles off the billhooks, Bwéno, vo7ne che7e, 7a li7e mu xa k’u xbak’, 7a ti vo7ne che7e, jun Biyisto ji jo la chingádas, 7ital ta Jok’ Ch’enom, lajuneb xcha7-vinik Biyisto tal 7elk’ajuk ta Muk’ta Jok’ ta stuch’ jelavel Jok’ Ch’enom.

Va7i 7un, 7a li vinaj ta 7ora 7un, k’al te lamal ta Muk’ta Jok’ che7e, 7iya7i parajel 7a li Nabén Chauk 7iya7i parajel 7a li Chobtik, 7iya7i parajel Sek’emtik, jnaben chauke che7e, ja7 vinik 7a li jchobtike chi7, nom jatavemik, jnaben chauke ta tz’el be tzunajtik, naka 7oy yabetjeb naka 7oy stuk’, 7ital 7un, 7ilok’ tal ta Muk’ta Jok’ 7une, 7olol reva xa 7ital 7un, 7oy to 7ox te naetik 7un, chel’kan jolobil, chel’kan setbenal xan, chel’kan vexal, chel’kan tzekil, tak’in skotol ta j-mek.

7Óra, 7ok’ kachu 7un, 7o kachu 7un, 7istam be, ta xa yich’oj jisomal jolobil te xa setbenal xan yich’oj luk 7isp’asbe yok i luke, tik’ xi ta koxtal jip xi ta jol xila.
popped them in bags, slung them from the pommel.

They turned a bend. They came with their guns pointed. They came ca—ntering here behind Jok’ Ch’enomal Vo7. That’s where the Naben Chauk men were grouped. But, hell! You talk about men, hell! But the Coons’ [Villistas’] weapons were just thirty-thirties and Mausers.

Before they knew it [the guns] were roaring. Nine horses were killed by the bullets. One colonel was sprawled there in the meadow. He was hit right in the ear. [The bullet] came out the other side. But it was a shotgun [pellet]. The poor men, the Naben Chauk men, advanced. Then the thirty-thirties were grabbed up. Then the Mausers were grabbed up. Now it was man’s work! Nine of the Villistas’ horses were limping off. They had been hit in the haunches. Nine were captured. I don’t know if there were eight guns that were confiscated. There were nine horses.

There was one gray male mule. It was hit in the eye. That eye just came out, too. The poor male mule couldn’t see anymore. It was just led along. But the horses, then, the saddles, then, were captured for sure. Bu—t hell! If the people of Chobtik spoke to the Naben Chauk men, they were just hit with rifle butts. Hell! They fled. They were scared. There were only thirty men from Naben Chauk, bu—t, hell! They shot a lot of them. There was a colonel, the leader himself—If, a red-faced man, a Ladino, but he was left with his ass showing, the bastard. He took a long time to fall. The horse was still walking. It was scared by the bullets. Finally he was tossed off somewhere. He was left lying there, dead. His gun was confiscated, then.

O—ne was left who kept going. He was the very leader himself. The next day he was shot. He got his, too. The corpses went into one grave. The government dug it for them. Then. “Well, fine, thank you, don’t bury them! Let the birds eat them!” said the government. “Well their men were fucked. That’s fine!” they said. “Come and ask for other weapons!” [our] men were told. Out of sheer stupidity they didn’t ask for them. If they had asked for them, it wouldn’t have been fine. The weapons would certainly be here now!

Now there was a mango seller named José Velio. “What business is it of yours? The poor people! Man, I’m going to protest to the authorities. What business

Bwénó, k’atp’uj 7un, tijanbat tal bala 7une, sli—chibe tal 7anil 7un, lii7 ta pat Jok’ Ch’enomal Vo7 7une, ja7 te lamal jnaben chauk 7une, pero, kavron, xaval vinik a7a, kavron, pero yabtejeb i napache che7e naka trenta naka maus.

Bwénó, k’al xa7ie che7e, ke lek 7it’ininanbat, 7a li ka7e balun-kot 7ilaj ta bala, jun koronel te level ta stentejik lek 7itik’bat ta mero xchikin, lok’ k’al j-jot, pero batz’i tuk’ 7un, 7ispas xa 7abansar li povre viniketike che7e, li nabon chauke che7e, 7itzak xa li trentae, 7itzak xa li mause che7e, ja7 xa 7abtel, balun-vo7 to butajtik i Biyistoetike, li 7a nabon chauke che7e, ja7 no 7ox muk’ xich’, stzakik ta j-mek, jun Lokário Péres 7isjatbeik ye, ja7 7o te te7lal kosil ta ta Jok’ Ch’enom, te jelav sk’a7-k’u7e, te lichil kom ta ni7 te7 ta te7lal, jelav, ta ye jatbat, 7ispak’be stzo7 ka7 ta ye, 7a li ska7e che7e, te xa xkoxkon ech’e—l ta j-mek ta stenav xchak yich’oj, 7a li balun-kote 7itzak, mu jna7 mi vaxakib tuk’ 7ipoj, 7a li ka7e balun-kot.

Bwénó, 7o j-kot yaxal machu, ta ssat 7i7och, te no 7ox 7ilok’ taj p’epj ssat noxtok, mu xa xk’o—ssat ti povre machu, nibtal xa ta j-mek, yan i batz’i ka7etike che7e, li xilaetik che7e, te 7itzak ta pwersa ta j-mek pe---ro kavron, nabon chauke che7e, much’u xk’opoj i jchobtieke naka stijbel chak tuk’, kavron, yu7un 7ijatav yu7un 7ixi7, nabon chauke che7e trenta 7ombre no 7ox, pe---ro kavron, 7istzakik ta j-mek, jun koronel che7e, batz’i me---ro 7ajvalil tzajal vinik ron pero te ch’i7il xchak 7ikom kavron, vokol 7ip’aj, 7ixanav to li ka7e che7e, 7ixi7 ta balae che7e, ja7 to ti bu jipe komel, te puch’ul 7ikom chamem xa, 7a li stuk’e che7e pojbat xa.

Bwénó, ju—n xa te kom, te chanav ta j-mek mero 7ajvalitik sba, ta yok’ob 7itzak, bala yich’ noxtok, 7a li 7animae che7e, jun xch’enal 7i7och, 7isjok’beik, 7a li govyerno che7e. “Bwénó, lek, kol avalik mu xamukik 7ak’o sti7 mut!” xi li govyerno. “Pwes, spas sba ta joder i svinike che7e, lek chak taje!” xi. “Xtal 7ak’an yan 7avabtejebik!” x7utatik i viniketike.

Spendejoal muk’ sk’an 7un, sk’anuke che7e, lek, li7 tana li li 7arma bi a7a!

7Óra, 7o te jun jchon-manko Jose Vélio sbi. “K’u 7atunik i povretteik, 7ombre, ta xkak’ kwenta, k’u 7atun chamilik i povre, mi7n 7u k’u chal?” xi li
is it of yours killing the poor people? Have they done anything?” said the jerk. Oh God, the bastard was covered with pinta. His scabs were flaking off. He got it badly. He just was beaten with the butt of a gun. The box of mangos, nobody knows where it went. Who knows if each of the soldiers, the killers, got one. He was crying now. He was tied up. They captured him alive. They were going to hang him. They didn't hang him. He got down on his knees. He was freed, but with a five peso fine.

He paid the five peso fine. His mangos disappeared. Maybe each of the soldiers, the ones who had killed people, got one apiece. Me, I went then. A brown stallion was standing there, wearing a saddle. It was standing in the woods now. It was eating now. When I arrived, the shooting was over. They were already crumpled up there. The blood was already flowing. I got nine horses. Me, I captured the horses here at Sek'emtik. I returned on horseback, with a gun. “Well, but did you shoot at them?” I was asked.

“I never did shoot at them, but I chased them far away,” I said. But I was telling the truth. I chased them for a long distance. I couldn't reach them with bullets. Me, I shot at them, but I never met any of those who were fighting, on the road. They had captured guns. They had captured blankets. [The Villistas] had captured a seal. They were carrying an apparatus [a stamp] of Ixtapa. Who knows where those bastards, the Villistas, went doing evil. But, well, we were real men, hell! They never won. They didn't come back again. They were scared because [their men] had been killed. They didn't say they'd come again.

The leader of the Villistas made peace. They became friends. There was no mention of anyone having died. They got on good terms [with us] now. They guaranteed that we could travel [in safety] anywhere, both on the other side of the Grijalva River and here on our side.

Now we could [travel]. They didn't do anything to anybody [i.e. not to our people]. You see, [their leader] was pacified. He asked for a pair of boots and spats together with a jug of cane liquor.

Then they were on good terms [with us]. Everything was all set now. No one did anything to anybody. No! “If you want to eat beef, brother, ask me. Ask me and I'll slaughter them for you for nothing,” he said. Just the cattle of the rich. The Villistas couldn't be meddling with the bastards. The devils had lots of guns, but they didn't come up to steal anymore. The robbers were all lowland ranchers. The real Villistas themselves never stole. The ranchers fancied themselves [as Villistas]. They kept
When the Bell Was Lifted and Three Stupid Indians Won

Long ago the Tutelary Gods ... it was an earlier generation of elders. The bell of Our Holy Father, St. Lawrence, isn't here anymore. But it was hung [there once].

You see, when the world was made, the Creator Gods left it. They left a bell for Our Holy Father, St. Lawrence. But it was quite a bell! But—t when the bell rang it could be heard as far as Chiapa, as far as Tuxtla.

The holy bell was hung for the Tutelary Gods. It was given by the Creator Gods.

You see the blotchy Chiapanecs were just Hairy Hands, Sunbeams.

[The Chiapanecs] said to the Zinacantecs, “Go bring the bell! Come, hang it here!” The more foolish elders were spoken to. Who knows how much it cost to bring it—if it was given, it seems, or bought, or a present. Who knows how much they sold the bell for, the people long ago. The elders sold it, then. Among the Zinacantecs, there was Sunbeam, Thunderbolt, Wind. They were the Zinacantecs. The foolish elders talked together, the ancestors. The bell went to Chiapa. The children of St. Lawrence were asked to go and leave it. Who knows how they went and lost St. Lawrence’s bell. That’s why there has been punishment ever since for the young and the old. But [we] aren’t all just the same now. Some, some [have enough to] eat, some don’t. Because they

Bwéno, 7a li vo7ne che7e, 7a li to7i me7ile ma—s otro j-koj moletik 7a li kampa7a yu7un jch’ul-tottik San-tenso7oe che7e, mun7yuk xa li7e pero jipie7m.

K’usi 7une, ti k’al pas balamile che7e, 7iskomtzan ti jottik vaxak-mene, 7iskomtzan jun kampa7a yu7un jch’ul-tottik San-tenso7oe, pero jun kampa7a, pe—ro xvinaj to k’al Soktom k’al Tux7a ti x7ij ti kampa7a.

Bwéno, jipil li ch’ul-kampa7a yu7un to7i me7il yak’ komel jottik vaxak-men.

Bwéno, va7i 7un, 7a li xok jso7tom 7une, kómo naka tzot7 k’obetik xojo7etik.

Bwéno, bwéno, 7a li jtzinakantae, “Ba kich’tik tal li kampanae, tal jok’an li7e toe!” xi li 7un. 7ik’oponat ti mas sonso moletik 7une, jna7tik k’u yepal 7imanbat, k’usi 7ak’bat ya7el, mi manbat 7o mi matanai jna7tik k’u yepal xchon i kampa7a ti mas moletik 7une, 7ixchon, 7a li moletike che7e, 7a li tzinakantae che7e, 7oy xo7job, 7oy chau7k, 7oy 7ik’.

Bwéno, va7i 7un, 7a li jso7kometik naka tzot7 k’obetik, naka tzot7 k’ob, 7a li tzinakantae che7e, 7oy chau7k, 7oy 7ik’i, 7oy vak-nab, 7oy pepen tzinakantae 7une, 7isk’opon sba ti sonso moletik 7an7ivo7etik 7une, 7ibat ti kampanae, 7ibat ta Soktom, 7albat pavor ba yak’ 7un i, 7a li xch’amal tottik San-tenso7oe 7une, jna7tik k’u cha7al ba xch’aybeik i skampana ti San-tenso7oe 7une, ye7cho 7oy kas7iko k’al tan k’u cha7al bik’it muke, pero muk’ bat7z’i parejouk x, j-lom, j-lom xa xve7, j-lom xa mu xve7, porke muk’ yiloj, 7a li moletike che7e ba sk’opon sba7ik xchi7uk i

grounded on the serfdom of the Indians and the landless La-
dinos, they waged guerrilla warfare for three and a half years, from 2 December 1914 to 29 July 1917. They won the people’s support by casting themselves as defenders of local tradition in opposition to the meddling bureaucrats and armies of the north. And so, ironically, the oppressed advanced the cause of their oppressors. On two occasions they nearly captured Tuxtla, the capital of Chiapas. They did succeed in gutting the Government Palace, but never gained control. Nevertheless, their leader, General Tiburcio Ruiz, became governor of Chiapas, not long after the cessation of hostilities (Casahonda Castillo, 1963:33–43). See also T149.
didn’t see [what happened]. The elders, then, went to talk to the Hairy Hands, the Chiapanecos, the Chiapanec. “Please, do us a favor!” they said. [The bell] left. It went in the Wind. It was struck by Thunderbolt. It left. It was picked up. Rainbow arched over.

It left. It was hung in Chiapa.

It was hung, it seems at whatever hour it arrived in Chiapa. The next morning it was gone. It was here now in Zinacantan. The holy bell was bonging there [in the Center]. They went to leave it another time.

And the next morning it was gone. It was here now in its country. The holy bell had a hard time getting used to that place!

The third time, “Well, watch out, then. See how it turns out for you. Wait a bit!” said Our Holy Father, the bell. “You think I’ll hang,” it said. It wasn’t hung in Chiapa. A house was built for it. It surrounds [the bell]. If you go look, then quickly, [the bell] scatters water on the people. Even now, even now we can’t look at the holy bell. It has been face down ever since. It was never hung, then. It had been angered.

Now, it won’t stir itself to come back. Wind lost. Rainbow lost. Thunderbolt lost. It was their fault that the holy bell left. [Our Lord] gave the command. The Sunbeams lost. Rainbow lost. That’s why the holy bell is like that. There is a bell in [the Church of] St. Dominic in Chiapa, but that isn’t it. It is big indeed. It is bi—g, but that isn’t it. The other one could be heard as far as Tuxtla. It could be heard as far as Comitan when the bell rang, when the priest held Mass. But you know it was quite a bell, but it was bi—g!

You see it was never hung. The blotchy Chiapanecos were going to hang it. The Hairy Hands, the Tutelary Gods, were going to hang it immediately. The Chiapanecos were strong, but even they couldn’t hang it. The holy bell has just been face down there ever since. You can’t even look at it. You go to look at it, quickly it sprays [you]. Watch out for the water!

So the holy bell was made angry there.

But it didn’t turn out well for the Chiapanecos either. Some are poor, some are assassins. Some long, in vain, to eat. The holy bell was angered, so Zinacantán grew poor and so did Chiapa, since what happened started with them. They came to steal the holy bell.

But there has been punishment ever since. The bell, then, isn’t that one anymore. It’s a small bell. The great bell, then, said my grandmother, said my father, but he died long ago—but he told what it was like, but he never saw it, either. It goes back to my grandfather who passed down the description, my father’s father. They were o—lder people, older
people—who knows how many changes of the holy earth here.

Well, he heard, he saw, it seems, where the holy bell went. It has been lost to this day. Now some snatch women, now others lie in wait, now some play loudspeakers, now others are barkeepers. How brutal! They’re not worth a whoring damn! Some Zinacantecs can’t ever accomplish anything, since things got out of order, as we say. It was because of everything they did. So it is the punishment of the holy bell to this day. The bell, then, the Chiapanecs hung it up immediately, the Hairy Hands, the Sunbeams hung it up immediately. The Chiapanecs were just Hairy Hands, just Sunbeams. Among the Zinacantecs, then, there was a Wind, there was a Rainbow. There was a Butterfly.

There was a Mo—th, but quite a moth, a big moth. When there was a dispute, when the Mexicans were being killed, then the Zinacantecs rose up.

Three men rose up. A Wind went, a Rainbow went, a Butterfly went. Thunderbolt wasn’t mustered. Just one Wind, just one Rainbow, just one Butterfly left. The war approached, since the Mexicans were dying. The Zinacantecs were mustered.

Now the three went. The [Mexican] generals came. They came to meet [the Zinacantecs] on the path. “Eh, what the fuck? What we want is a battle. We want several hundred. What help are three men?”

“Oh well, with great pleasure we can return home. We won’t offer ourselves, since you say you don’t want us. Just the three of us came.” They started to turn back.

[The generals] arrived to report that three men were no help. “How stupid. You are utterly useless!” the elders were told in Mexico City. Ooh, when they caught up with [the Zinacantecs] on the road, the Mexicans knelt. The lords knelt. They took off their hats.

[The Zinacantecs] returned. They went to see where the revolution was. They went to see where the battle was approaching.

You see [the enemy] had gotten in a ship. They were in the midst of eating. Butterfly reached them, spread—ding [its wings] alongside the ship. Spreading [its wings], it watched them. The soldiers were in the midst of their meal. But they fired their guns right away. They were ready now. Wind was ready now. Rainbow was arching over now.

Butterfly left. It came back to report. “They are in the midst of their meal,” he said.

“Well, that’s perfect!” they said. Rainbow arrived in a minute alongside the ship, like this. Wind, but it was quite a wind, Holy Mary! The ship was face down now in the ocean. Oh hell! Then it disappeared.

Bwéno, 7oy j-kot supu—l pero jun supul muk’ta supul, 7a ti k’al 7iyul peletu che7e, k’al chmille xa li mejiko che7e, ja7 tal stote li Tzinakantae.

Bwéno, 7itotz 7ox-vo7, 7ibat 7a li jun 7ik’, 7ibat jun vak-nab, 7ibat jun pepen, 7a li chauke muk’ xtotz, ja7 no 7ox jun 7ik’, ja7 no 7ox jun vak-nab, ja7 no 7ox jun pepen 7ibat, 7ital xa li peletu, kómo chcham xa li mejikoe, 7ital stotel li tzinakantae.

7Ôra, bat 7ox-vo7, 7ital li jeneraletikoe, tal snupel ta be. “Ee, ke chinga, k’usi ta jk’an, yu7un me jun krupoo yu7un me jayib syento ta jk’an, k’usi bal 7o 7ox-vo7??"

“7Aa bwéno, kon mûcho gustu, stak’ xisut, mu ta jpa7’alin jba va7i mu xak’anotokite ja7 no 7ox 7ox-vo7 litalotokito7 7un.” Sut tale 7un.

7ik’ot yal mu k’u bal 7o 7ox-vo7. “Ke sonso mu xabatz’i-tun!” x7utat ta Mejiko ti moletik 7une. Jii, ta stael ta be, 7ikeji li mejikoe, keji li ronetikoe, 7iskolk’ spixol.

Bwéno, 7isut 7un, ba sk’el li buy 7o revolusyone, ba sk’el i bu li 7a li k’ok’ ch’tale.

Bwéno, va7i 7ochem xa ta barko 7un, 7a li yolel xve7ik, k’ot sta li pepene, sk’ie—t ta ti7 barko, sk’iet ta sk’el yolel ve7el yu7un i soltaro pero yu7un xa ch7och bala, yu7un xa segido ta j-mek yu7un xa chapal, 7a li 7ik’e, chapal xa, 7a li vak-nabe yu7un xa chkoti.

Bwéno, bat tal yal li pepen 7une. “Yolel ve7el.” xi.

“Bwéno ja7 lek,,” xi. 7A li vak-nabe j’likel 7ik’ot ta ti7 barko 7un, xi, 7a li 7ik’e, pero jun 7ik’ Maria Santísima, 7a li barkoe, nujul xa ta mar. Yéva la chingadas te ch’ay 7o.
The Spook and the Chamulan

There was a Chamulan who met a Spook on the trail. "Well, friend, where are you going?" asked [the Spook].

"Sir, I'm going home," he said. The sun was about to set.

"Aha! [And] where is your home?" he asked.

"Here," said [the Chamulan].

"Forget your home, you bastard, let's fight," said [the Spook].

"Well, the filth of your mother's cock! If you mean it, hell, let's fight!" he told him. "If you are a Spook, hell, we'll see how it turns out," said the Chamulan.

"Bwéño, 7oy la jun jchamu7, 7isnup ta be i j7ik'ale. "Bwéño, 7amigo, bu chabat?" xi la 7un.

"Senyor, chibat ta jna," xi la. Ta xa 7ox xch'ay k'ak'al xch'ay jch'ul-tottike.

"7Aja!" xi. "Bu 7ana?" xi.

"Li7e," xi.

"Ke k'us7 7ana kavron, tajinkotik," xi la.

"Bwéño, yik'ubal yat ame7 ti mi ye7 7avale, kere, tajinkotik!" xutuk. "Mi ja7 to ti j7ik'alote, karájo, ti xvinaj k'uxi bat 7o kere!" xi li 7ulo7 7une.

possibly the ship battle refers to the conquest of Chiapa by the Spaniards, that is commemorated on January 20th every year with a mock battle on the Rio Grijalva.

Xun describes the Chiapanecs as "blothy" because so many are afflicted with pinta, a disease that produces pinkish white patches on the skin, that eventually become black. A similar term of opprobrium, "scabby," is used by the Zoques in referring to their ancient enemies. They relate how they tricked the Chiapanecs into donning dance costumes that had been coated on the inside with ashes, beeswax, and ground bones. As the Chiapanecs danced in the tropical heat and sweated profusely, their skin was impregnated forever with blotches and scabs (Navarrete, 1964:321–323). Xun's diatribe against the degeneracy of the Zinacantec bar-keepers was prompted by a battle he was waging in Naben Chauk against a political faction headed by barkeepers. See also T1, T11, T150, T157, their notes, and T102.
"Well, fine, if you're brave," said the Spook. "We'll, I'm brave. I'm man enough if you're man enough," said [the Chamulan]. The fight began. Hell, he didn't delay. Right away the Spook was slugged. [The Spook] didn't last ha—if an hour. The Chamulan prayed the vespers, but the sonofabitching Spook probably never prayed the vespers.

Well, it didn't take even half an hour for the Chamulan to give him a good stab. He finished pulling off his wings, the Spook's wings that were [attached to the back of] his knees.

You see, the fucking Chamulan said, "What would happen if I stuck them on my legs?" He finished sticking them on his knees, one after another. He stood up. He tried to fly. He tried to fly. The second time he didn't rise up. The third time, ooh, he went on and on. The wings carried him. He went as far as the land of the Spooks.

"Well, what are you looking for?" he was asked by the lady Spooks, by [the Spook's] brothers, fathers, and mothers. "But is it because you killed my son?" they asked.

"No, not at all, I gave him eggs to eat, because I'm feeding him. He is waiting for me to return again," he said.

"Are you telling the truth?" they asked.

"Yes," he said. He went very far, for the wings carried him. He stuck them on his knees here, one after another. The wings were of yellow metal, this long. I have seen them. I have seen them. I saw one there to the east, there probably where the red door [in a store in the main square of San Cristóbal]. Mark brought it. That Chamulan stuck them on, stuck them on here. He tried to fly. At first he just crashed. The second time [he went] this far. The third time he flew. Ooh, before he realized it he had landed in the Spooks' country. He arrived exactly at the Spook's house.

"Well, what are you looking for?" he was asked by the lady Spooks, by [the Spook's] brothers, fathers, and mothers. "But is it because you killed my son?" they asked.

"No, not at all, I gave him eggs to eat, because I'm feeding him. He is waiting for me to return again," he said.

"Are you telling the truth?" they asked.

"Yes," he said. He went very far, for the wings carried him. He stuck them on his knees here, one after another. The wings were of yellow metal, this long. I have seen them. I have seen them. I saw one there to the east, there probably where the red door is [in a store in the main square of San Cristóbal]. Mark brought it. That Chamulan stuck them on, stuck them on here. He tried to fly. At first he just crashed. The second time [he went] this far. The third time he flew. Ooh, before he realized it he had landed in the Spooks' country. He arrived exactly at the Spook's house.

You see, the wings carried him along. "What are you looking for," they asked. "Where is my child? Have you killed him?" they asked.

"I never killed him, for I am feeding him. He is waiting for me to return again," he said.

"Well, we'll go leave you," they said. I don't know what country it was where they went to leave him. He was given this much jerked meat. "Go, eat [some of] it on the way. When you arrive give [the rest] to my son. Take care of him! We want him to come [home]. I don't want you to kill him."

"No, he has always been my friend, because we travel together," said the Chamulan, so that he would be freed. God, don't believe it, the [Spook's] flesh had already dried up.

"Well, but the fucking Chamulan ... "His money?" they asked.

"Bwéno, ja7 lek mi tzotzote," xi li j7ik'ale.

"Bwéno, vo7on tzotzon, vinikun kere mi vinikote kere," xi la. 7Och la pletu, kavron 7a li j7ik'ale muk' 7onox sjok'tzaj 7un, j-likel no 7ox xi7atxbat ta 7ora mi ja7uk médió 7ora muk' xkuch yu7un---, 7a li jchamu7e che7e, sna7 7orisyon, 7a li püta j7ik'ale ja7 nan nu6a sna7 7orisyon.

Bwéno, jchamu7e che7e, mi ja7uk médió 7ora muk' xnel yu7un teee no 7ox 7istz'apbe smoton, laj la stotzanbe li xzik' 7une ta sjolov la yakan 7un li xzik' i j7ik'ale.

Bwéno, va7i 7un, 7a li jkobel jchamu7 7une, "Kere k'u nan xi, kere, 7a ti jnap'an ta koke, kere?" xi. Xi. La7 snáp'annáp'an ta sjoloval sti stotz 7une, ta la xvi—l, ta la xvi---l xcha7-lok'elal muk' la xtoy, ta yox-lok'elal 7un, keee, solel la me bat ta j-mek 7un, ja7 li 7ik'van i xzik' 7une k'ale la shumal li j7ik'aletek 7ibat 7un.

"Bwéno, k'u chasa7?" x7utat la yu7un i me7 j7ik'aletekte yu7un yermanotak yu7un stotak sme7tak 7un. "Pero ma7n me yu7un 7amil ti jch'amale?" xi.

"Mo7oj 7un bi, yu7un te kak'be ton kaxlan slo7 yu7un te jmak'lin, te chisma xtok chisut xtok," xi.

"Mi yech 7aval?" xi la.

"Yech," xi la. Bat la ta j-mek 7un, kómó ja7 7ik van i xzik' 7une li7 la snáp'annáp'an nap'an sjolov yakan, li xzik' k'anal tak'xn in xi snatikal xi toe, 70 kiloj, kiloj, kiloj jun le7 nan ta lok'ém k'ak'ale la le7e te nan yo7 7zajal ti7 na le7e, ja7 yich'oj jun li Markuxe, 7isnap'an li7 7isnap'ane ta la xvi—l ta primero batz'i yech la stuslajet ta jchamu7, ta xchibal bwelta xi la snatil xi toe, ta yoxibal bwelta chivil, keee ya7i che7e, k'alal slumal j7ik'aletek k'ot la 7un, te la tuk' k'ot tzna li j7ik'kale 7une.

Bu, 7ik'van ech'el xzik' 7une. "K'u chasa7?" xi la. "Bu ti jch'amale, ma7n me 7amil?" xi la.

"Muk' bu ta jml yu7un te jmak'lin, teee chisma la ta jna noxtok taje," xi.

"Bwéno, chba kak'ot che7e," xi. Mu nja7 bu xá lunal ti 7a yak'el 7une, xi la yepal taxauk 7abat tale. "Batan, ti7an ta be xk'ot ta 7avak'be ti jch'amale, chabanuk me, taluk me jk'antik 7un, mu me jk'an 7amil."

"717i, kamiko 7onox yu7un ko7ol chixanav jch7uk," xi la li jchamu7, yo7 7ikol 7o 7une. Dyos mi xana7 yu7un takij 7ox taq bek'et 7une.

Pwés bwéno, pero li jkobel jchamu7 7une -- "7A ti stak'ine?" xi la.
“Oh, but you can’t think I’m getting his money for him since he really has taken it with him,” he said. In the place where the Chamulan had fought, there in his tracks, he had quickly buried it in the ground. He didn’t take it, lest it be stolen. [The money] would tarnish on the way.

If you come to change it here [in San Cristóbal] right away, “Where did you find it? Where is your invoice?” [they would ask]. If you come to change it they don’t want you to deposit it. Hold it in your tunic, look at it every few minutes. Come change it that way. But if you lose it from sight it will just [turn into] black potsherds.

You see, there where [the Chamulan] had left the fucking Spook’s several thousand [pesos] buried, they were left buried. The next time he looked, the Chamulan had arrived [in the land of the Spooks]. Who knows where the Spooks’ land is. “But what are you doing?” Their child was already bones. Nothing happened to [the Chamulan]. He won. “Well, I’ll keep our child’s wings here,” they said.

“What filth of your mother’s cock! How come you are going to keep your child’s wings? How is your son to come back? I’m taking them back to him,” he said. He was allowed to come home. Now [the wings] didn’t stick on. He just carried them. Who knows how many days it took him to arrive in Chamulan country. He went to look at the money. The money was just the same, since it was buried. Some Chamulans are right smart. The Spook was well-screwed.

Xun’s telling of this tale is difficult to follow, because after describing how the Chamulan arrived in the Spook’s land, he gives further details about the wings and repeats the take-off scene. Then, after outlining how the Spooks escorted the Chamulan part of the way home, Xun backtracks to discuss the Spook’s money and then continues again with the Chamulan’s return home.

The association of potsherds with money has been clarified by Victoria Bricker’s description of a Carnival scene in Chamula, when the cavern, in which a sacred spring bubbles, is swept clean of the pebbles and potsherds that litter its floor. Once it is clean, men and women come to pay a visit, tossing an entrance fee or “tribute” of three pebbles or three potsherds to assure their safety during their visit to the dangerous cave (Bricker, 1973b:114).

Potsherds also represent coins in a Puerto Rican folktale (Mason and Espinosa, 1929:349-350).

I did not discover the identity of the “Mark” who brought the Spook’s wings to San Cristóbal. See also T125 and notes.

The Famine
T118

Long ago the famine came. Ooh, the famine, hell, it was a punishment from Our Holy Father!

It was raining then like it is now. The holy rain didn’t want to let up at all. It went on and on. The next year it stopped in May. The first year the corn grew well. The corn produced well. All the people harvested lots of corn. The next year the punishment came.

Those who had sold a lot of their corn nearly died.

Vo7ne che7e tal vi7nal, jii, vi7nale karajño kastiko, yu7un jch’ul-tottik.

7Ora, yech vo7 chak li7e, mu sk’an xlök’ i ch’ul-vo7 ta j-meke yu7un spas sekir ta j-mek, ta jun 7o jabile 7ipaj ta mayo xa, ta jun jabil to lek 7i7iximaj, lek 7i7yak’ 7ixim, lek 7islok’es skotol 7ixim ti krixchanoetike, ta jun 7o jabil tal kastiko 7un.

Bwéno, 7a li much’u lek 7ixchon i yixim 7une,
They ate [tortillas made of] banana roots and fern roots.

The poor . . . Ooh, you came here to San Cristóbal and there weren't any tortillas. They were just thi—s big! One roll for two bits. But that's if there were any, and there weren't.

But it was some chastisement!

You see, the rain didn't come, none. The lowlands were laid waste by the sun. You couldn't see anything anymore. Nothing was left. Me, in the past I had gotten . . . I had gotten a binful plus ten fanegas of flailed corn, but I hadn't sold it. If I had sold it I would have died. The 1x tapanecs went crazy, then. [They sold it for] five pesos an almud, but just solid money, not paper like it is now.

Five peso pieces, but just round silver pieces if there were any, but there weren't. Me, I sold some after the corn had lasted a while. I sold several fanegas.

As soon as the corn fields flowered with tassels the other poor people pulled them a—l off [to eat]. They paid one quart [of corn] for a week's [labor] if they had any, but they didn't. The Chamulans, if they had two ceremonial gourds or one ceremonial gourd [filled with] a ball of weed leaves, greens, amaranth, they left—wherever it was they went looking for an employer. The Chamulans who weren't given [jobs] were just stretched flat, lying on their ba—cks, dead on the road. Face up, they died. They died. It made no difference if it was an older man or a woman or a girl, still they perished. They died on the road to Zinacantán Center, of course, the Zinacantán Center road. An awful Chamulan girl passed by our house. There beneath the redberried hawthorn, in the tiny gully, she died. She passed by my house. "Eat!" she was told by my mother. But she didn't want to work, she did nothing. "Work in the corn field! Fluff wool!" she was told.

"I don't want to," she said. When she arrived, then, she had two ceremonial gourds [each filled with] a ball of amaranth greens and spider flowers.

You see she didn't want to fluff wool. She didn't wa—nt to. She just la—zed about. My parents ate banana root. Since it pleased me, and I had my own [supply], I supported them. My older brother and my father went as far as Chix-te7tik [Cherry Trees]. They found only eight ears, eight ears of dried corn. That was all!

I said to my father, "Never mind, father, I have some. Don't go again! It costs so much effort. I will support you," I told him, because I was living separately, apart already. I had a separate house already. To my older brother I gave six almuds. My father I gave nine almuds. To my older sister I gave j-set' mu cham, jol lo7bol jol tzib 7islo7 7isve7.

Bwéno, ti povre, jii, 7a li li7e xatal ta Jobele, pero mu7yuk vaj xi smuk'u—l ta chib tak'in jun kaxlan vaj pero 7oyuke mu7yuk.

Bwéno, pero li7e jun tzitzel.

Va7i 7un, ch'abal tal ti vo7e, ch'abal, 7a li 7olon 7osile che7e, laj ta k'ak'al, mu xa k'u xak'el, ch'abal xa, 7a li vo7one, jtaqo7 to 7oxi vo7one, jtaqo7 p-p'ej ten, xch'7uk lajuneb janika majbil 7ixim pero muk' jchon, 7a ti jchonuke che7e licham, 7a li jnibake che7e, 7ivo7i, vo7ob pexu ta 7almun pero naka tak'in, mu7nuk ja7 ye7ch vun chak lavie.

7Órae, naka tak'in, vo7ob pexu tak'in pero naka spechel mejikanó pero 7oyuke ch'abal, mu7yuk, 7a li vo7one 7ijchon k'alal 7ijalj i 7ixime, 7ijchon jayib janika.

Bwéno, yant povre tz'utuj 7inichin li chobtike, naka sbotz'el ta j-me—k 7un, ta jun kwarto Jun xemana tztoj, pero 7oyuk 7une mu7yuk, yant povreetike muk' xa tz'k'an stojol li jchamu7e, 7oy cha7-p'ej pisis boch, 70 j-p'ej pisis boch pich'bil yanal tz'i7el, 7itaj, tz'u7-7itaj, chbat, bu chbat ssa7 yajval mi muk' bu 7ak'e 7une naka ja7 pochajtik li jchamu7etike, ja7 te java—l, laj ta be, javal laj, 7icham, 7ak' 7o mi mol 7ak' 7o 7o 7anzt, 7ak' 7o mi nteb yu7un chlaj, chcham, bejel Jtek-lum a7a, be Jtek-lum, te 7ech' ta jnatikóitik i mu teb jchamu7e yolon tzajal k'at'ixe, yo7 7unen be-o7e, te cham, 7ech' ta jna. "Ve7an!" x7utat yu7un ti jme7e. Pero mu sk'an x7abtej, ye7ch. "Chabajan, sivujan!" x7ute.

"Mu jk'an," xi. 7A ti k'al 7ik'ote che7e, k'ot cha7-p'ej pisis boch 7a li pich'bil tz'u7-7itaj, pa7 7itaj.

Bwéno, va7i 7un, mu sk'an sivuj, mu sk'a---n te no 7ox spas ch'a---j ta j-mek 7un, 7a ti jme7e che7e, ti jto7e che7e, 7islo7 jol lo7bol, kómo pich' ko7on i vo7one che7e, vo7one 7o ku7un 7ijmak'lin 7a ti jbankile che7e, ti jto7e, 7i7ay k'al Chix-te7tik 7ista vaxak-ch'ix no 7ox ech'el, vaxak-ch'ix vojton, ja7 no 7ox 7un.

Bwéno, jikalbe li jto7e, "Yiyil, jto7e, 7o ku7un, mu xa xabat, tol chavak' 7avokol, chajmak'lin," chkut. Yu7un slekojon ch'akalon xa, slekoj xa jna, jbankil vakib 7almul kak'be, 7a li jto7 baluneb 7almul 7ikak'be, jn jvix 7oxib 7almul 7ikak'be pero yu7un 70 ku7un, te xa yijub 7un ti yunen yut jnoktik 7une,
three almuds. But that was because I had some myself. [The corn growing] in my little yard was already ripening. It grew. The holy corn was turning yellow.

“Well, give me two or three almuds of you corn and take the land here,” said my father.

“Fine, take it!” I told him. Me, what else could I do, since they were my parents?

Well, sir, I supported them. The Ixtapanecs, Ooh, they asked favors. Hell, they had the money, but what good was it? Me, I had planted irrigated fields at Vunal.

So then I went to guard my corn with a shotgun and a machete. There were two or three friends, long-panted ones [Ixtapanecs]. I was standing guard with them. The corn ripened. I carried it [still] on the cob. But the robbers were killing people. If you met Ixtapanecs on the way they killed you.

Me, I didn't want to be killed. Because I was prepared when I travelled. There were three or four of us. We got together when we travelled during the famine. Not even here [in San Cristóbal] was it [any better]. God, it was punishment!

Now the Ladinos here, they haven't taken it to heart yet. Punishment will come, you'll see when, what year, it comes again. They step on the corn. They throw it out. They eat it on the cob. You see we had grown arrogant because we came to offer them [corn] for the money we could get.

Well, you'll see, on whatever day it is, the chastisement is yet to come, you'll see!

Me, I felt the punishment. But tortillas, they weren't for sale anywhere then. “That's the end of them, some other day.” There weren't even wheat buns or rolls. Ooh, [they sold them] for two bits, but they were this big! But we couldn't get filled up with those, either. We couldn't eat tortillas anymore. You would eat them, but on the sly. You would eat secretly, yes indeed! There wasn't anybody who ate. Everybody [ate] corn tassels. The Chamulans [ate] fern root. Twice my parents ate banana root.

“Do you want to eat?” my mother asked me.

“Hand it to me, I guess I'll eat some,” I told her. “But it isn't edible. Don't eat any more, you'll just die,” I told my parents, because I had some [corn] of my own. Me, I was kind to my parents. I was kind to my older brother. I was kind to my older sister, all of them, because I had some [corn] of my own. Me, I had a lot stored away. That's why! But I wasn't punished. My father sold his. He wasn't careful. Me, I was scared. Long ago, then, it was a stiff punishment. Ooh, for everybody! Whoever had any [corn], then, pai—d one quart for a week [of work]. Who knows if a quart would give enough to eat for two days. Who knows if it would be eaten in one or two
[days] with as much as is eaten at each meal. Once it was a very stiff punishment. It will come again, you'll see, some day, some year! The holy rain isn't good like this. Some years it falls and some years it doesn't. But the price of corn will rise here, you'll see, because they spill it and step on it all the time. Ehh, the holy corn suffers so much here. I saw it. I saw it this morning. It suffers so.

The trouble is, it is offered up because the money flows out here. Here is where they keep buying things. But corn is so hard to raise. It is so much work. There is exhaustion. There are, ooh, long trips to where the holy corn is harvested. The holy corn takes so many days!

Xun's father's and brother's trip to Chix-te7tik, from whence they returned with only eight ears of corn, dramatises the extreme scarcity, for Chix-te7tik is a hamlet near Mitontic, that must have been more than a day's walk from their home.

An almud is 15 liters and a fanega is 180 liters. So ten fanegas of corn would be about 51 bushels, and an almud would be a little under half a bushel.

Xun's belief, that human carelessness and disrespect toward corn bring divine punishment, is a fundamental tenet of Chiapas Indian communities. In Chenalhó, “white hunger” is caused by men's carelessness, “black hunger” by women's, and “red hunger” by children's (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:243). Sahagún reported Aztec women praying as they picked up scattered corn, K’usi chich’ pak’alinbel porke li7 chlok’ i tak’ine, li7 tzmanulan, pero li 7ixime toj vokol chmeltzaj, toj batz’i trabájo te lubel, te, jii, nat xanbal bu 7oy chlok’ i ch’ul-7ixime, ta xjalij bu k’ak’al ch’ul-7ixime.

“Our Sustenance suffereth: it lieth weeping. If we should not gather it up, it would accuse us before Our Lord. It would say ‘O, Our Lord, this vassal picked me not up when I lay scattered upon the ground. Punish him! Or perhaps we should starve.” (J. E. Thompson, 1970:285).

A Chamulan report of this same famine, that occurred around the time of the influenza epidemic, also lays the blame on San Cristóbal Ladinos’ disrespect for corn (Gossen, T94).

Xun Vaskis points explicitly to the dilemma of traditional Indians in a money economy governed by forces beyond their control. Corn that is grown with sacred care must be delivered into grasping white hands so that an Indian can get the money to buy many of the necessities of twentieth-century life.
I have not seen Xun 7Akov for many years and have no idea how life has treated him, but in 1959, at the age of 38, he was the political leader of his hamlet, Paste7, and Secretary of the Land Distribution Board. His hatchet face seemed to match his role as right-hand man to the boss of Zinacantán.

Reviewing his past, Xun told how, after three years of local schooling, when he was 18 years old, he and one other had been sent by President Cardenas to Mexico City for two months in 1940, followed by a two year stay at a boarding school near Toluca. The Ladinos in San Cristóbal had tried to discourage him from venturing out into the world, by assuring him that in Mexico City he would be rendered into lard or fatback, but he shut his ears to them because, "you gotta do your darndest!" After returning he resumed working his father's and his own corn fields for several years, until he was appointed magistrate of Zinacantán. After completing his term, he turned his energies to the agrarian movement, where he served in three subordinate positions before becoming Secretary. Reflecting on his years of prominence as magistrate, he confided that many people had asked him to take a second term, but that he was tired of being involved in endless disputes. He said he preferred the quieter life of his hamlet. And even though he could see that storekeepers were growing rich, he was reluctant to surround himself with drunks and credit hassles. He complained that a political enemy had thwarted his plans to enter the religious hierarchy. So he spent most of his time in the temperate corn fields, working side by side with his younger brothers, avoiding the risks of large-scale farming on distant fields in the tropical lowlands.

Xun's self-image as magistrate was not shared by his political foes, who nearly impeached him for alleged mismanagement of funds. They claimed besides that he was an incompetent arbiter who would sit at home and send the plaintiffs to argue before the syndic or the justices of the peace. Or if he deigned to make his appearance at the courthouse, no sooner would he receive the defendant's bottle of cane liquor than he would give the curt command, "Off to jail!" Gossips were quick to add that Xun's wife would stroll along the paths in Zinacantán Center with a smile for any man who would give her a passing glance.

For me, Xun was a caricature of a backwoods farmer: phlegmatic, suspicious, horny-handed, a penny-pincher who preferred to keep all relations business-like and down to earth. Politically shrewd, he wielded his power matter-of-factly, as if it were a private affair. His sense of humor broke forth only on rare occasions, shyly, with embarrassment.

Xun's tales were learned from his mother. The predominance of myths describing the magical creation of wells was due to my own interest rather than Xun's. His favorites were clearly "The Buzzard Man" (T42) and "The Indian King" (T34).

The awkwardness and near incomprehensibility of Xun's tales was almost surely due to our mutual unfamiliarity with dictation (I had not yet secured a tape recorder), my poor command of Tzotzil, and our lack of close rapport. Romin Teratol, no friend of Xun 7Akov, took his versions severely to task for their repetitiveness, their obscurity, and their omission of the suffix -e that is usually attached to the last word in a phrase to give the flow of speech smooth continuity.

Despite their failings, Xun's tales give an added dimension, for I was unable to discover waterhole origin myths from the storytellers who lived in the Center or in other hamlets. Xun, unlike his wife, smiled seldom, but even he laughed as he told of the Buzzard Man.

The Donkey and the Spring

They went to look for mushrooms at the foot of a cliff. They said that there was a donkey there. Three days later they went to see if the donkey was there. It was standing there. They saw the donkey. They were going to catch the donkey. Then they realized...
that there was a corral there. They were shut up in the corral. They went into the corral. They joined the donkey there. They had friends who had stayed in the distance, so they went to tell about the donkey being there. Another man spoke. “Let’s take candles, because our friends have already entered the corral,” the man said. They took three candles. They went to offer them at the corral. They spoke; they prayed to the Earth Lord.

The Earth Lord spoke. “What are you looking for?” asked the Earth Lord.

“We’re just taking a walk,” said the man.

“What are you looking at?” asked the Earth Lord.

“If you want, come watch my donkey for me!” he said.

“I don’t want to,” said the man.

“What did you come to do here?” asked the Earth Lord.

“I was just taking a walk,” said the man.

“I won’t let you go,” said [the Earth Lord]. They offered candles. Then they were freed. The man who was dying said that there was a spring there. “There is water there. Go dig [there]!” said the man. “Don’t worry anymore, because now I am going to watch the well and the donkey,” said the man. When he died, the body was taken to be buried. It spoke. The dead man talked even when he was being buried. “He said that you can live there. The Earth Lord said that you can live there now. Me, I’m going to see everything there is under the world,” said the man.

This is one of many legends where the use of a waterhole, Koral Buro, is granted by the Earth Lord to the community, only after he has taken a man’s soul to serve him in exchange.

The concept of souls corralled in caves is related also in a Zoque tale from Copainalá (Wonderly, 1947:153-154).

The tale has been transformed into poetry by W. S. Merwin (Laughlin and Merwin, 1972).

The King and the Ring

There was a person who found a ring. It was a treasure. The ring was stolen. The ring was taken, since that person who found the ring had many friends. It was discovered. They stole it from his house. He saw that the ring was no longer there. He dug where he had found it. He cried. There was a dog, a terrier. He heard the dog talk. It said, “Don’t cry. It has been taken,”—said the dog.

“Where is it?” asked the owner of the ring.

7'Oy to 7ox jun krixchano 7ista 7ox jun 7ixtalalal, ja7 minax, 7i7elk'anbat li 7ixtalale, 7ipojbat li 7ixtalale, kómo 7ep xchi7iltak buch'u 7ista li 7ixtalale, 7ibaj, 7iyelk'an ta sna, 7isk'el ti ch'abal xa li 7ixtalale, 7isjok' ti tu staoje, 7i7ok', 7oy j-kot' tz'i7, kaxlan tz'i7, 7iya7i k'opoji li tz'i7e. 7iyal, “Mu xa7ok', te 7ich'bil,” xi li tz'i7e.

“Bu 7oy?” xi li yajval 7ixtalale.
“It’s here,” said the dog. It was [the dog] who went to get it. He looked for it. They hadn’t ever caught [the thief who] stole the ring. The ring was swallowed so that it could not be found when they were looking for it. The terrier spoke. “Let’s wait for him to fall asleep,” said the terrier. The person who had taken the ring fell asleep. A mouse came. It gnawed through his pants until the ring came out. The person who was asleep didn’t feel the ring coming out. The terrier was standing there. It arrived to take [the ring]. The robber took the ring away from the terrier, too. The robber fled. He went to the Grijalva River. The robber went to hide in the Grijalva River. “Don’t worry, I’ll go get it wherever it is,” said the terrier. It went into the water since the robber threw the ring in the water. The little terrier went into the water to get the ring. It found [the ring]. It came out of the Grijalva River. The dog was able to find it in the water. The owner took the ring, since the owner of the ring said it was his treasure.

Although the ring’s owner is not described here as a king, the theft and recovery conform quite closely to the scenes in Manvel K’obyox’s and Rey Komis’ “The King and the Ring” tales (T64, T165). See also T11, T34, T64, T113, and their notes.

How Christ Came to Church

T35

A very long time ago, there were people going to the lowlands who were passing by on the trail. They rested [in a place] where there was a cave. The people sighed. The saint sighed. They passed by. Then more people came. They sighed, too, just the same way. Three days later, they went to look. They didn’t find him. The saint was not to be found. They went on the fourth day. They found him stuck inside a hollow tree. They found him asleep there. They called to him to come out. The saint spoke. “Please cut a log for me,” he said. “Make the log into a cross, because I am going to hang on the cross.” He came out of the cave. He went with fiddles, guitars, and harps. He went with drums. They had a great celebration. He went. It was Christ they called forth. He spoke. “Thank you,” said Our Holy Father. “Thank you. I’ve found my home,” he said. “I will buy you.” [I will pay for your sins.]

He spoke. “You will celebrate my fiesta. Thank you,” he said. “I’ve found my home. Now I’m doing fine,” he said. “I’ve discovered a home among my friends.”

Although Christ is described as a santo, the translation could just as well be “god” as “saint,” for the Zinacantecs make little or no distinction between the two. The cross that was brought from the cave of Xlok’ Santo in Paste7 to the Church of St.
Lawrence in Zinacantán Center is the large cross on which Christ is hung every Good Friday. This cross apparently never talked like the Gospel Cross that also appeared in Paste7 and was brought to the church only to be “killed” with boiling water by the priest, as Xun describes in Tale 33. This detail, combined with that of the saint sleeping in a hollow tree, calls to mind Friar Francisco Ximénez’s account of the hermit of Zinacantán:

In the year 1708, when the Most Illustrious Bishop of Guatemala and Chiapa, Friar Juan Bautista de Toledo, was inspecting the town of San Juan Chamula there arrived one day around two in the afternoon the natives of the town of Santo Domingo Sinacantlan which is about half a league from Chamula. Frightened and in great confusion they reported to me that on a trail of said town there was a man inside a tree who was calling for penitence and repentance before an image of Our Lady, the Virgin, which was inside the same tree, and which gave off shafts of light. [He claimed] that She had come down from the Heavens, explaining to the natives that She had come from there to offer them favors and assistance. And when said man was talking with them he told them to advise the Church. They gave me the news in great confusion, and although I wished to postpone going to see the case until I had reported it to His Eminence who was resting, when I saw the reaction in the town of Chamula to the news being spread by those of Sinacantán, right away I set out without further delay. And arriving at said hamlet I found a large number of Indian men and women from both towns. I asked them where the subject was. To which they answered that said man had already left the tree, moving to another hamlet near said tree. I continued on and not far ahead near an oak I discovered a man. His face was covered, and he was wrapped in a cloth. I asked him to tell me who he was. He did not answer until the third time when with emotion he turned, made obeisance to me and told me, 'I am a poor sinner whom they do not allow to worship God.' This sounded strange to me so I told him that that was no way to worship God nor to serve him, that it was only a device to agitate the town and to set a bad example for the Indians whose nation is so quick to accept idolatry. To which he replied that he was not the guilty one, that it was they who followed him and [he gave] other frivolous excuses of no consequence. I went to examine the tree. It was a hollow oak that he had gotten into. The opening was covered with a board. The board had a peep hole through which the Indians fed him. The oak had a hole above said board, through which could be seen a small canvas portrait of St. Joseph. Inside the tree I found a notebook with some verses that it seems he had written addressed to penitence and to the love of God. Near said oak he had set up a cross with other verses on a piece of paper addressed to the same subject. It was a large company of Indian men and women who idolized him and offered him certain things to eat, and carried censers with copal. And although said man was not inside the tree, nevertheless they worshipped said tree and offered it incense. For this reason I immediately had said tree cut down and chopped into pieces. Right away I set out for Chamula, escorting said man with a great company of Indians who appeared all along the way, kneeling in front of him. They even came to me to ask if they should ring the church bells on entering Chamula. After we arrived in Chamula His Excellence began to examine him. And soon after [the hermit] stated he would only reply to His Excellence beneath the sign of the cross. For this reason His Lordship went inside. And when His Lordship came out he asked me what opinion I had of that man, to which I replied that from what I had observed and witnessed he was deluded and lacking in judgment. He was in Chamula three days during which time I observed that he was scarcely contrite about eating no end of morsels. At this time I was able to prevent the Indians from seeing him. On the pretext that he was a God they tried to see him and worship him so that I was even forced to correct it from the pulpit, trying to prevent the damage that could follow. Then on orders of His Eminence he went to the monastery of San Francisco in San Cristóbal where he remained and (as I learned) gave very little evidence of virtue, as they said he lacked the fundamental qualities of subjection and humility . . . . In the month of May, 1710 we knew that the hermit mentioned above was in said town [of Zinacantán] to which we were called, and having accused him of not attending Mass, and of setting a bad example for the Indians, and that it was not the proper way to serve God, nor the sure path to his salvation he replied that we could not judge his inner thoughts nor his methods and [he presented] other proposals born more out of pride than virtue. At this [discussion] there was a multitude of Indians of the town giving greater acclaim to the hermit than to the reproaches we were offering said man. And having known that he had built a hermitage in the woods we went and found it about a block and a half from the trail and hamlet where he had it the first time. The said hermitage was about eight yards long, divided into a dormitory and an oratory with an altar that had a small image of the Virgin with candles, cocoa beans, eggs, tortillas and such other things as the Indians offered in proper style. The hermitage was highly adorned and carpeted very neatly with straw mats. The woods where the hermitage was situated had been cleared, fenced, and planted with corn. The trail to it, though it had been made only three or four days before was so well frequented that it seemed it dated from long ago, and many Indians went to visit [the hermitage] with their candles and copal. Having inspected the hermitage, we tried to set fire to it. And with that in mind Fray Jorge began to reproach them for the errors and folly of their beliefs and idolatry, and then I understood that the Indians who followed us were saying in their language that we were going to burn the house of God and they started thinking of rebelling. For this reason I secretly told said Padre not to tell them anything because from what I understood of what they were saying in their language they were planning to rebel against us. We calmed them down and then I set fire to the hermitage and the Indians went into the flames to remove the mats and other furnishings that were inside. We sent the hermit back to His Eminence in San Cristóbal who held him prisoner. And because we put an end to this hermit who was the source of the other false miracles, this hermit was sent by His Lordship to the College of the Company of Jesus whose monks agreed that he was a deluded man and even somewhat devil-ridden. For this reason they sent him to New Spain where quite naturally he never arrived since he died in the town of Ocozcoautla (Ximénez, 1931, 3:262-264).

Why Its Cherries are Sour

T36

There was a man who ate cherries.
The cherry tree spoke. The cherry tree itself talked. It spoke, "Why are you eating me?" It asked, "I'm too sour," it said. "If you want we'll go together," said the cherry tree.

"I don't want to," said the man.

"How come you don't want to? You just ate me," said the cherry tree. It spoke. "All right, then, if you want, we'll go together."

7Oy te jun vinik, 7islo7 chix-te7e.

"Mu jk'an," xi li vinike.

"K'yu cha7al mu xak'an, laj 7alo7on," xi li chix-te7e. 7iylal, "Mo7oj che7e, mi mu xak'an 7une,"
don't want to," said they cherry tree, "Wait and see!" The person was stood up there. The person remained standing where the cherry tree was. The cherry tree left. The tree was no longer there. The person cried. The person cried, because he had been left standing in the cherry tree's place. The person stood there three days. The cherry tree took revenge on him for eating its fruit. On the third day the cherry tree came to talk. It spoke. "Are you having a good time standing here?" asked the cherry tree.

I can't bear it!" said the person.

"Get out then! Get out!" said the cherry tree. The cherry tree itself came to stand there. "If you want to, come step on me!" said the cherry tree. That's why its fruit is sour. "I don't want you to come stepping on me," said the cherry tree.

Although there is no mention here of a waterhole, Pajal Chix-te7e, "Sour Cherry Tree," is the name of one of the six waterholes in Paste7 that form the focus for domestic groups. For a detailed account of the settlement pattern in Paste7, see Vogt, 1969.

The Spook and the Comadre

T23

The people went into caves. There were many Spooks long ago. They say that there was [a woman] who had a comadre. They called back and forth.

"Your corn has boiled over," she told her comadre. [The other] didn't answer. The Spook spoke, the Spook answered.

"The corn is hissing, comadre." It was human blood. The comadre of the one who had been speaking died when she was grabbed inside her house. [The other woman] heard the Spook answer. That person in her house was scared. Quickly they went into their caves, they hid inside caves. That's how the people stayed alive in the olden days. Long ago there were many Spooks. [The people] knew how to save up their farts. That was how they attacked the Spooks. They stayed there until dawn.

There were many Spooks long ago. Many [of us] died long ago because of the people-eaters.

Xun 7Akov's version of "The Spook and the Comadre" adds here a bizarre detail that is reminiscent of Romin Teratol's "When the Guatemalan's Were Blown Sky-high."

Xun explained that his mother had told him this tale when he was a child to impress on him the dangers of going outside at night. In olden times she said the people lived in their houses in the daytime, but had to hide in caves at night.

Whenever the corn boils over and hisses in the fire, it is thought that the Spook is around. See also T67, T71, T122, and their notes.

Bowwow Cave

T39

A man passed by. The cave spoke. "Bowwow," it said. It wanted to bite. The people passed by. The man said that there was a spring there.
“There is water there,” he said. He also said, “The
cave talks.” He told his friend.

“Let’s go look!” the other man said.

“He said, ‘We’re going to look at the spring first. They saw that there was
water there. They went to look at the cave. The same thing was said to them as on the first
time. They saw the cave.

The cave spoke, ‘Bowwow.’ The people were
scared. They arrived home. They arrived to tell their
friends where the cave was. One man died five days
later.

He spoke. “Please don’t blame the cave,” he said.
The others realized [what to do]. They went and
prayed to the cave. They gave candles where the
spring was. They prayed to the Earth Lord.

The Earth Lord spoke. “I’m not going to let you
drink the water for nothing. You will give me a
servant,” said the Earth Lord.

“I won’t give him [to you],” said the man.

“What do you mean you won’t give him [to me]? I
already have him at home,” he said. Five days later
the man who first saw the cave [died]. They say the
cave doesn’t want to be looked at. The man died. He
died on the fifth day.

He spoke. “I am going there to Vom Ch’en
[Bowwow Cave],” he said. “Because I belong
there,” he said. “You stay here!” said the man.

“The sickness won’t pass,” he said. “All right, all right, I am going to look after our
well.”

“All right. Please don’t frighten us,” said the
man. “I’ll drink the water there,” he said.

Why We Have Toothaches

It is said that two men were travelling. They were
going on a trip. When the sun set they went to ask
for a place to sleep. There was a woman. The
woman bit people. The woman spoke. “Go to bed!”
said the woman. The two men slept. A dog spoke. It
came to tell the two men about the place where they
were spending the night.

The dog said, “Why are you sleeping here?”
[That’s what] the two men were asked. “The woman
drinks the blood of people who spend the night,” the
two men were told. [The dog] spoke. “If you know
[what’s good for you] get out of this house!” the two
men were told. The men knew what to do.

“Okay, come on, we’ll see what we can do,” said
the men. They spoke. They looked for two rocks.
They covered them with their blankets so that the rocks [looked just] like people sleeping.

Now the woman was delighted that there were people sleeping in her house, because she ate people. The woman bit people. She went to eat them. She thought it was people asleep there. Then the woman clamped down on the dumb rock until she felt the pain in her teeth. She didn't say what had happened to her. She crunched the rock. The woman thought it was a person she was going to eat. Then she realized it was a rock she held [in her teeth]. When morning came, the woman was holding her hand to her mouth. Her teeth hurt terribly. That's why we have toothaches now, today. It was that woman who left them.

Travellers in Chenalhó were once victimized by a woman who offered them shelter. At midnight, sharpening her teeth, she would steal in to feast on her unsuspecting guests. But one man volunteered his assistance. By turning to stone at the proper moment, he put a sudden end to her death-dealing teeth (INI, 1:23-25). From Soconusco in coastal Chiapas comes an intriguing version of this story—a shaman, who is the double of the great stela of Izapa, volunteers his services to the people of Soconusco. When the vampire woman bites into the shaman's stony flesh, her teeth are shattered and swallowed, causing her death (Navarrete, 1966b:424).

In neighboring Chamula the origin of toothache is associated with Christ's flight from the Jews. One tale recounts that a woman bit Christ as he lay sleeping in her house. The next morning she suffered a severe toothache. As she and her husband were taking a steambath, Christ blocked the exit until they steamed to death (Gossen, T32). Another version has Christ hiding in the steambath. When the Jews try to bite off his head, he substitutes a hearthstone (Gossen, T178).

Priest Rock

The people who were travelling on the trail saw him. They met him on the trail. They saw the priest walking along there. They spoke to him. "Where is your house?" they asked the priest.

"Don't you see where my house is?" he said. "You should pass by next to my house," said the priest. [That's what] the priest said. "See my picture there!" said the priest. "If you want, let's go!" they were told.

"We don't want to," the people said.

"You don't want to go with me? You have to go!" the people were told.

"We don't want to," they said.

"Oh no? We are, too, going," the people were told. The people did go. Their souls were taken away. They went. The people died, those who spoke to him. The priest spoke. "There is my house," said the priest. Today it is called Pale Ton [Priest Rock]. He was probably the Earth Lord.

A Bellyful

Once there was a woman. Her husband went to the lowlands. The man had told his wife, "You just stay. We'll see each other in three days." The wo-
man slept with another man. The husband came to look, near the foot of his bed.

The woman said, “All right, piss where my husband pisses.” [That's what] the woman said.

“Okay,” replied the other—since that other man had come in. He pissed. He took out his prick. His prick was cut off with a knife. The husband ran off after he cut off the prick.

He left right away. He went to the lowlands. On the third day the husband arrived [back home]. The husband spoke. He came to speak to his wife. “Are you there?” asked the husband.

“I'm here,” said the wife. “How are you?”

“I'm fine. How are you?”

“Fine,” said the wife.

“Didn't anything happen to you?” she was asked.

“No,” said the wife.

“Ahh!” said the husband. “Never mind. Cook our lunch! You eat this,” she was told. “You eat this yourself.” [It was] the penis. “Draw a jug of water. Eat your meal.” The wife ate her meal. She drank water. She finished drinking a jug of water. She wasn't even satisfied with a jug of water. She went to drink the water at the well until she died from it.

[The husband’s] dog caught three armadillos. [The husband] returned and gave them to his wife to cook. “Our children will eat them,” [he said]. The wife was happy that food had come. She didn’t know that she had received bad food, that her husband had given her a penis to eat. The prick she ate was the person’s whose prick had been cut off—who had slept with her.

And she [had] buried [her lover] in her house. They looked for him there, [but] she said nothing. “I haven't seen him,” said the woman. It wasn’t until they dug inside her house—they found the corpse, the man. The woman’s husband didn’t know what she had done. [The corpse] was discovered when the wife died. The husband was scared that something was buried inside his house. The man spoke, he asked his children.

“What is buried here?” the man asked.

“Nothing,” said the children. The man dug and then he saw it. He saw the body.

Xun’s abbreviated version of “A Bellyful,” told to him once by his father, with the second scene momentarily forgotten and tacked on after the finale, is a crude replay of a Middle American drama that is presented far more adroitly by Tonik; see T86 and notes.

A man went there to Bik’it Vo7 [Little Spring]. He went to look for soap root in the hills. And he went to look at Bik’it Vo7. He heard a band there. He

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Little Spring

T37

A man went there to Bik’it Vo7 [Little Spring]. He went to look for soap root in the hills. And he went to look at Bik’it Vo7. He heard a band there. He

American drama that is presented far more adroitly by Tonik; see T86 and notes.

Te bat jun vinik, ba ssa7 ch’upak’ ta montaynayetik, li Bik’it Vo7, 7i ba sk’el li Bik’it Vo7e, 7iya’i te jun banta musika, ba sk’el, ba sk’el bu 7oye, cha7i bu 7oy
went to look. He went to see where it was, to hear where the band was. But suddenly a rainstorm came. He didn't know it was going to rain. He stood at the foot of a tree. He waited for the rain to pass. There was a thunderbolt. The man was struck by lightning. He survived the lightning, but the tree where he was standing was destroyed. The lightning passed. Then the band played again. He heard where it was. He went to see where it was. Then he saw that there was a spring there. When he looked, the spring was very small. He returned home to tell about it. "There is a spring," he said.

"Where?" asked the others.

"Over there. Let's go look!" he said. They went to look at the spring. The spring wasn't little—the spring was big. They saw that the spring was big. They were frightened. Trumpets were blown at them. There was a cave there. They went into the depths of the earth there. [The man] returned home to say, "I'm just telling you where the spring is. As for me, I'm going to die," said the man. "My body is left in the earth, in this place," he said. Three days later the man died. Before he died the man said, "You can drink the water. I am going to guard the well, but don't give up its name, Bik'it Vo7."

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A Visit to the Earth Lord

A person entered 7Avan Ch'en [Shouting Cave]. Rain came. He took cover. The Earth Lord came out to where the person was taking cover. The Earth Lord came out. [The person] was spoken to. [The Earth Lord] revealed everything. The person turned around. He went into the cave. He arrived inside the earth. He was given sandals. "You will go when your sandals are worn out," he was told. He became a muleteer. He went to Tonala. He went with his mules. He returned from Tonala. There was a maid inside 7Avan Ch'en. She spoke to him. "But your sandals won't wear out," he was told. "Because your sandals are iron sandals," he was told. A maid said [that], "Rub your sandals!" he was told. "So that they will wear out quickly," he was told. But they lasted around three years.

The sandals weren't worn out yet. "I'm leaving," said [the person] who had entered the cave.

"You will leave when your sandals are worn out," said [the Earth Lord]. "What do you want?" [the man was asked]. "Do you want a wife?" he was asked.

"I don't," said the man.

"What do you want then? [You can't leave] until your sandals break," he was told. "You will go in the
afternoon,” he was told. “But you can take with you
whatever you want, a woman if you want,” he was
told. He was given a jug. He took it out with him. In
the beginning he had a wife who was left at home.

The wife said, “My husband is dead.” The man
sent a note to his wife [to ask] if his wife would still
accept him. The woman spoke. “My husband is
dead,” she said. The woman didn’t believe that her
husband was still alive—she didn’t love him [any-
more]. The wife said that he wasn’t her husband,
because he came out a white man. He came out. He
left. On the third day after he sent the note he
arrived home. Then the man arrived. The woman
was scared. The woman said he wasn’t her husband.
The man arrived. The man arrived and embraced
her. He arrived and kissed her. He kissed the woman
three times, and then the woman learned [to speak]
the language right away. Now the woman knew
how [to speak] Spanish. The man began to chat. He
hadn’t been accepted when he arrived.

But the man said, “My pay is coming.” [That’s
what] the husband said.

“Where?” asked the wife.

“That’s it coming!” said the husband.

“We’ll see if you’re telling the truth,” she said.
The man was telling the truth. He took [something
else] out [of the cave] together with his treasure. It
was the cross. It is called Krus 7Avajel [Gospel
Cross]. It was alive once.

Then the priest killed the cross with boiling water,
because the priest didn’t want it to make any noise.
Long ago [the man] asked it for money. That’s why
it was called Xun 7Ariax’s treasure. He left his
treasure in the church. Eight mule loads of his
money arrived. The wife was happy now. She had
arrived to look at the money. The man told her. He
told her. She looked in her house. Eight mule loads
of money, [that’s how much] money there was. It
became known. It was heard that there was a rich
man in Zinacantan Center.

It was said, “Why don’t we go, compare our-
seves, and [see] who has more money,” the people
of San Cristóbal said. The San Cristóbal people
assembled. “Let’s go!” They measured the money by
the bushel. All the people of San Cristóbal gathered
their money together. The man heard that they were
coming to count up his money. Right away he sent
for a guard. When the people of San Cristóbal came
he showed [his money]. The man let his money be
counted up. The Earth Lord spoke.

“Don’t worry. Let them count it and see,” [the
man] was told. Six buzzards went to guard it. [The
man] was named Xun. His money was counted.
They compared it [to see] if the man had as much
money as the people of San Cristóbal. His money
chavich’ ech’el k’usi chak’an, jun 7antz mi xak’an,”
x7utat. 7I7ak’bat jun botija, 7iyich’ lok’el tal, primero
7oy yajnil komem ti bu 7oy sna.

7Iyal ti 7antz, “Chamem jmalal,” xi li 7antz. Ja7
li vinike, 7istik j-lik yu7un yu7un yajnil mi ch7ik’e to
yu7un yajnil. 7Iyal li 7antz, “Chamem jmalal,” xi li
7antz. Mu xa xch’un li 7antz, mi kuxul smalal, mu
xa sk’an, 7iyal li 7antz, ti ma7uk smalale, kómo lok’
xa kómo jkaxlan lok’ xa 7ilok’ ech’el, ta yoxibal
k’ak’al 7ik’ot to sna, ti k’alal 7istik li vin 7une, k’alal
7ik’ot li vinike, 7ixi7 li 7antz, 7iyal ma7uk smalal li
7antz, 7ik’ot ti vinike, 7ik’ot smey, 7ik’ot sbutz’,
7oxib bwelta 7isbutz’ li 7antz, 7ástas ke 7ischan to
7ora li k’op, li 7antz, sna7 xa k’op li 7antz, ta
kastiya, 7ilik lo7ilajuk li vinike, sk’an to 7ox x7ik’e, ti
bu 7aye.


“Buy?” xi li 7antz.

“Le7 xtale!” xi li vinike.

“Jk’eltik kik mi yech 7aval,” xi. Yech yal li vinike,
7iyich’be lok’el xchi7uk sme7 stak’in, ja7 li krus,
Krus 7Avajel sbi, vo7ne kuxul to 7ox.

7Óra, li palee, 7ismil li kruse, ta k’ak’al vo7 yu7un
mu sk’an ti xba’k’ li pale vo7nnee xak’ to 7ox ta tak’i
yech’o 7isbiin ti sme7 stak’in Xun 7Ariax, 7iyak’
komel ta 7eklixa li smc7 stak’ine, 7ik’ot vaxakib ta
mula li tak’ine, li 7antz, xmuyibaj xa, k’ot sk’eloj li
tak’ine, 7iyal un, 7iyal 7issat7 a sna, li vinike, vaxakib
ta mula li tak’ine, kom li tak’ine, 7ivinaj 77a7yat ti
7oy jun krixchano, jk’ulej ta Jtek-lum.

7I7albat, “K’u cha7al mu xba jp’is jbatik mi 7ep
stak’i’n?” xi li jjobelal 70sile. 7Istzob sbi li Jobele.
“Battik!” Sp’isik li tak’i’n ta 7almue, 7istzob sbaik li
etak’i’n skotolik li jjobelal 70sile, 7iya7i li jin vinike ti
xtal sp’isbe li stak’tine, likel 7istik ta 7ik’el xchabi,
7iyak’ ta k’elal k’alal 7ital li jjobelal 70sile, 7iyak’
7ip’isbat stak’in li jun vinike, 7iyal li yajval balamil.

“Mu k’u xal 7avo7on 7ak’o sp’isik yil,” x7utat. Bat
ta xchabi 7un vak-kot xulem, Xun sbi, 7ip’isbat ti
stak’tine sko7oltasik mi ko7ol stak’in xchi7uk jjobelal
70sile, xchi7uk li jin vinike, 7ip’isbat stak’in, 7ikom
skotol stak’in li jjobelal 70sile, x7ok’ik xa ech’el
was counted up. [He won]. The people of San Cristóbal [had to] leave all their money. All the people of San Cristóbal left crying. The man who came out of the cave, whose name was Xun 7Ariax, won.

In Europe it was the devil who exchanged earthly riches for Doctor Faustus' soul, but in Middle America the chief contractor has changed his identity. In the Nahua area he is a "pingo," a charro (Madsen, 1969:629). In Mitla he is Lightning (Parsons, 1932a, T2). In San Luis Jilotepeque he is a dwarf (Tumin, 1946:439). Among the Achi he is "Ximón" (Simon), the Earth Lord (Shaw 1972:65). In Zinacantán he is the Earth Lord or Thunderbolt. In a tale from the Tzutujil region of Guatemala, the protagonist works for three days inside a mountain in exchange for treasure. His family is frightened by his return, because the three days actually have been three years (Rosales, 1945:835).

Our hero's iron sandals may have been made in Europe (A. M. Espinosa, 1967, T128). The maid who advises Xun 7Ariax to rub down their soles must be the same girl who figured in the Chenalhó man's escape from Hell (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:258-260).

It is still common belief that a Zinacantec can sell his own soul or another's to the Earth Lord.

Until 1970 the Gospel Cross from 7Avan Ch'en stood inconspicuously in the Church of St. Lawrence, wrapped in a straw mat. Every Fiesta of St. Lawrence the wrappings were removed. The silver cross was revealed, festooned with yards of brightly colored ribbons and strings of ancient coins. But shortly after Christmas in 1969, the church was pillared and the Gospel Cross removed. This theft was thought by many to have been engineered by American anthropologists. Nine months later a "saint" and two "bells" appeared in the rock formation of 7Avan Ch'en. The saint spoke to a Zinacantec shaman in his dreams demanding that he be moved to the church, but after much heated community discussion no such action was taken.

The contest between Xun 7Ariax and the Ladinos of San Cristóbal is reminiscent of the scene in Xun Vaskis' "The King and the Ring" (Tl 13). For a detailed, lucid analysis of the role of the Earth Lord in Zinacantán, see Thomsen, 1966. See also T9, T19, and T173.

**The Dwarfs**

T24

The rabbit is the dwarfs' mule. They load the rabbit. [The pack] slips to the side. The world will turn upside down if the rabbit's pack stays on top. [When] the sun passes over they put mud on their heads. It is a hot place. The mud is [used] for their hats. They want to come up, because they suffer from the heat down below and want us to see what their country is like. So they want to come up now where we are.

The rabbit's back, of course, is too humped for the packs to stay in place. This tale has appeared in poetic form (Laughlin and Merwin, 1972). See also T7, T80, T89, and their notes.

**When the Soldiers Were Coming**

T25

The soldiers came on up. They passed Ixtapa. They came to Burrero. They came to Tz'akav 7Uk'um [River Fork]. They came to Tierra Blanca. They arrived at Salinas. There was a market above Salinas. [Some of] the soldiers were lost there. They came to the market. They arrived at the next stage, Jolom Na [Weaving House]. At Jolom Na, a woman was weaving. The soldiers said, "Why don't we go grab the woman who is weaving there?" The soldiers went. They went to grab the woman. Then they were lost there where the woman was weaving. As there were many soldiers, the others [who hadn't looked] passed on by. The other soldiers came on up

7Imuy tal solteroetik, 7ech' tal ta Nibak, 7ital ta Burero, tal ta Tz'akav 7Uk'um, 7ital ta Sak-lum, 7iyul ta 7Atz'am, ta yak'ol 7Atz'am jun ch'ivit te yo7e, te ch'ay 7o ti soltero, 7ech' tal te ch'ivit, 7iyul j-kjox tok ta Jolom Na, ta Jolom Na ta xjalav jun 7antz. 7Iyal ti soltero, “Ku cha7al mu xba jtzaktik li 7antzte, te ta xjalav?” Bat li soltero, ba stzakik 7antz, te ch'ay ti bu 7oyi ti 7antze te ta xjalave, kómo 7ep soltero, xjalav tal yan, 7imuy tal li yan solteroetik te Tz'ajom Pik', te te x7atin jun 7antz, 7iyul li soltero, 7iyul ve7uk ta nab, kómo ta x7atin jun 7antz ta nab, sk'elojik te ch'atin li 7antzte ti soltero. 7Iyal li soltero, “Ba jtzaktik!” xi ti
to Tz'ajom Pik' [Submerged Clitoris]. A woman was bathing there. The soldiers arrived. They came to eat at the lake since a woman was bathing in the lake. The soldiers had seen the woman bathing. The soldiers said, "Let's go grab her!" [That's what] the soldiers said. Several went and grabbed the woman. The soldiers stayed there. They stayed there at Tz'ajom Pik'. All the soldiers went in there. Another group continued on. They went on to Xlok' Yo7on Ton [Rock Whose Heart Appears]. They looked at Xlok' Yo7on Ton. They passed on to Zinacantan. They came as far as San Cristóbal.

In this version, unlike Romin Teratol's (T17) and Manvel K'obyox's (T56), the army reaches Zinacantan. See T17, T56, and their notes.

The Buzzard Man
.T42

He asked the buzzard for its suit. On the third day it was given to him. The man talked to the buzzard. "Give me your clothes," said the man.

"Take them," said the buzzard. The man wasn't given the wings. The wife of the man who asked the buzzard for its clothes wasn't there. When the buzzard saw that the woman's husband wasn't there anymore it turned into a person. The woman got mad when she came, [when] she came back from the well. She got mad, because her husband wasn't there anymore. The man who had been a buzzard saw the woman come [in]. He went in to speak to the woman. And he asked if he could live with the woman, just like her husband. She said she didn't want him, that she was better off by herself, that the husband never provided for her, that he didn't work. The buzzard spoke. "I'll work," he said. "I'll bring food for you, whatever you want to eat." The next day he asked her what she wanted to eat, whether fresh meat or jerked meat.

The woman answered, "Anything, whatever you can get."

"All right, then, have the water for it boiling when I return!" [he said]. The water for the meat was boiling. He came back in just two hours. [The meat] disappeared. He went to steal it. He stole meat in Acala. He flew back in the sky. He came back to eat. He returned home to eat with the woman.

The woman spoke. "I have found a better husband," said the woman. "My stomach is fuller," said the woman, "with a man [around]." Her husband was there. Her first husband was crying there on the rubbish heap. The woman spoke. "Go once and for all. I don't want to see your face anymore. Why did solteroe. Jay-vo7 7ibat 7istzak ti 7antze, te kom ti solteroe, te kom ta Tz'ajom Pik', te 7i7och skotol li solteroe, 7jelav to tal, j-lom 7i7ech' tal ta Xlok' Yo7on Ton 7isk'elik Xlok' Yo7on Ton, 7ech' tal ta Tzinakanta, 7ital k'al Jobel.

Ta sk'anbe sk'u7 xulem, ta x7ok' li vinike kwando ta xtal j-kot xulem 7isk'anbe sk'u7 li xulem, ta yoxibal k'ak'al 7i7ak'bat li sk'u7e, 7isk'opon sbai xchi7uk li xulem li jun vinike. "7Ak'bon laku7el!" xi li jun vinike.

"7Ich'ol" xi li xuleme. Mu7yuk 7ak'bat xik' li vinike, mu7yuk te yajnil li vinik ta sk'anbe sk'u7 li xulem, k'alal 7iyil ma7uk xa smalal, li 7antze, te xa 7ipas ta xchiehano xuleme, 7ikap li 7antze, k'alal 7ital 7iyul ta vo7 li 7antze, 7ikap 7o ti ma7uk xal smalale, 7iyil 7ital li 7antze li jun vinik li xulem to 7ox, 7i7och sk'opon li 7antze, 7i tzk'an 7ik'el xchi7uk ti k'u cha7al ti smalale, li 7antze, 7iyal ti mu sk'an, mejor stuk, muk' bu stabe sve7el jun vinik, mu sna7 x7abtej. 7iyal li xulem, "Chi7abtej," xi. "Ta jsa7 tal li 7ave7ele k'usi xak'alan xalajes." Ta jun 7o k'ak'al 7isjak' k'usi sk'an sti7 mi yaxal bek'et 7o mi taxux.

7iyal li 7antze, "K'usuk no 7ox k'usi xata tal."

"Teuk che7e, lakanbo ya71el k'al xiyul tale!" Chvokan li ya71el li bek'ete, 7iyul ta chib no 7ox 7ora, 7ich'ay, 7i7ay yelk'an tal, 7iyelkan bekte ta 7Amuxton, ta xvil tal ta vinajel, 7iyul ve7uk, 7iyul ta sna ve7uk xchi7uk li 7antze.

7iyal li 7antze, "Mas to lek 7jita li jmalale," xi li 7antze. "Mas noj jch'ut," xi li 7antze. "Xchi7uk jun vinik." Te li smalale, te ch7ok' ta k'ajteiktik ta bai7yi smalal, 7ik'opo7 li 7antze. "Batan ta j-moj mu xa jk'an jk'el 7asat k'u yu7un 7ak'anbe sk'u7 li xuleme, batan no 7ox naka me kak'bot te7?" xi li 7antze.
you ask the buzzard for its clothes? Just go or I’ll hit you with a stick!” said the woman. The man cried now. On the third day, the wife beat her husband with a stick, since the woman’s husband, her first husband, wouldn’t walk. She was happy now with her husband who had been a buzzard. He turned into a man. “He gets lots of food!” said the woman.

Xun’s account of the buzzard man differs from other versions recorded here in one detail that causes critical differences in the unfolding of the story—the lazy man is not given the buzzard’s wings. This means that he could not plunge into the fire. It also puts a twist on the conventional moral of the story, for the hero, still endowed with wings, does not gain food for his new wife by working in the corn field, but rather by theft! Nevertheless Xun says that his mother told him this tale as an example of why not to be lazy. See also T43, T69, their notes, and T48.

The Bird

First the Chamulans arrived at Ya7ajvil with bows and arrows and spears. The chief was named The Bird. The war broke out there. They killed very few people. They only had bows and arrows. But the soldiers shot bullets. They killed a lot. When the battle ended at Ya7ajvil, they came on to San Cristóbal. They spent around three days in San Cristóbal. They came to San Felipe. They stopped a day there. That’s what they did. They came to Laguna Grande. They continued. They were travelling on the trails then. They came to steal clothes, and tortillas. They stole horses. After that they continued until they passed San Lucas. They went as far as Chiapilla. The people of Chiapilla assembled then. They waited for the soldiers that had come to Acala. The soldiers came on from Acala. The soldiers formed two groups. One group went to Carranza. The other group stayed in Chiapilla. They fought in Chiapilla. Then a lot of people died. They were left in piles. When all the people had died they poured kerosene on them.

Well, it was the soldiers who burnt them up. The soldiers went to Carranza. The Bird was burnt up.

In 1960, after telling me this legend, Xun dated it a hundred year's earlier “in the time of Don Porfirio” Diaz. His reckoning was 61 years too early, but the events occurred only shortly after Diaz’ fall.

His report of The Bird’s campaign coincides with Xun Vaskis in placing the first battle near Zinacantan. The final major battle was fought in Chiapilla on 10 October 1911. As Xun 7Akov relates, the followers of The Bird were routed and their bodies burned. But the survivors, including The Bird himself, were pursued to Venustiano Carranza where they scattered and fled back to the mountains. See also T28, T66, T116, T153, T154, and their notes.

When the Chamulans Marched on the Capital

With spears, with bows and arrows they went to Tuxtla. They were going to steal the staff of office. They wanted to establish the government in Chamula. The situation grew so grave that it reached Tuxtla. The Chamulans went to take away the staff.
of office. There were one hundred Chamulans who had assembled—the black-clothed ones. They were going to bring the staff of office from Tuxtla, but you see they were struck a blow on the way, in Chiapa. The soldiers were waiting in Chiapa. [The Chamulans] fled to the woods. They passed Chiapa. Around sixty people died at the bridge. Then they returned. Forty now came [back] in fear. The people returned, but they were chased through the woods. All those who escaped, hid. Those who escaped, who didn't die, returned. When they returned they said, “We can't win now. The staff of office can't be taken,” they said. “We'd better give up,” they said. “We can’t win anymore,” they said. “Let’s give up. We'd better turn ourselves in to whomever comes, to whatever government comes in [to power] in Tuxtla,” they said.

Although Xun does not identify the Chamulan force here as belonging to The Bird, a Chamulan reminiscence describes how The Bird marched on Tuxtla to recover the staff of office that had been stolen from Chamula. When they reached Jompana near Chiapa, they were met by Ladinas from Tuxtla, who offered them a free meal. Not suspecting that they were to be victims of Ladino treachery, they gladly accepted. The women quickly retired, and the unfortunate Chamulans were mowed down by the federal soldiers concealed behind the rocks (Gossen, T155).

Historical sources mention a battle for a bridge in Chiapa occurring on 8 October 1911, only two days before the final defeat of The Bird in Chiapilla (L. Espinosa, 1912:56).

The San Cristóbal historian Prudencio Moscoso believes that the Indians have confused here the shifting of the state government from San Cristóbal to Tuxtla Gutierrez, by Governor Rabasa in 1892, with the later events of the Revolution. See also T22, T66, T116, T153, T154, and their notes.

The Indian King

Once a man was summoned. They wanted him in Mexico City. A dispatch came to the magistrate, [saying] “Have the king come to Mexico City!”

He replied. “No. There is none,” said the magistrate. He ordered a search. He heard that there was someone lying on his stomach next to the church, at the market. [The man] heard that he was being sought. He went to talk to the magistrate.

“I'm going!” he said. He told the magistrate. “You won't be received. You haven't fine clothes,” he was told.

“Who says I haven't any clothes?” he said. They went to look at his house [to see] if he had anything. There were his pots. They were filled with money. But the magistrate spoke.

“But don't you go,” [the man] was told. “Stay here in our country. We'll look for somebody else to go to Mexico City,” said the magistrate. He said it would be whomever he wanted.

“No, I'll go,” [the man] until the magistrate sent him. The magistrate sent him. He left. He collected together all his money, as much as he had. He left. He left his country behind. The magistrate sent him. “All right, then,” he said. “Take care!” he ta Tuxtla li bastone, pero k’usi 7un, 7istaik majel ta be ta Soktom, ta Soktom malvanem li solteroetike, 7ijatavik ta te7tik, 7ijelav ta Soktom, ja7 to te majbil ta ba k’o ta Soktom, 7ilajik kómo 7ox-vinik krixchano ta ba k’o, te 7isut, 7ixi7 tal cha7-vinik xa, 7isut tal li krixchano, pero 7inutze ta te7tik, 7isnak’ sbaik li k’u yepal 7ikole, 7isutik tal li jay-v07 xa 7ikole, mul’ 7ichamik. 7Iyul yal “Mu jpastik kanal xa,” xi. “Mu xpoj li bastone,” xi. “Mejor kikta jbatik,” xi. “Mu xa jpastik kanal,” xi. “Kikta jbatik, mejor kak’ jbatik k’usi ta xtal, k’usi jyu7elal ta x7och tal ta Tuxtla,” xi.

7A ti vo7ne xtake ta 7ik’el jun krixchano, ta xk’ane ta Mejiko, 7ital jun 7orden yu7un li presirente, “7Ak’o taluk li reye!” xi li mejikoe. 7Iyal, “Ch’abal mu7yuk,” xi li presirente. 7Istak ta sak7el, 7iya7i ti 7oy jun xpatet ta xoxkon 7eklixa, ta ch’ivit, 7iya7i ti tzsa7ee, 7ibat sk’opon li presirente.

“Chibat vo7on,” xi. 7Iyal li presirente. “Mu xach’ame muk’ l ek 7ak’u7,” x7utat.

“K’u cha7al mu 7oyuk jak’u7?” xi. 7ibat sk’elbel sna ti 7oy k’usuk yu7un te 7oy sp’intak te noj ta tak’in, pero 7iyal li presirente.

“Pero mu xabat vo7ote,” x7utat. “Li7an no 7oxe li7 ta jumaltike, ta jsa7ik yan buch’u xbat ta Mejiko,” xi li presirente. 7Iyal li buch’u chk’ane.

“Mo7oj vo7on chibat,” xi. 7Ast a ke 7istak li presirente ech’ele, 7istak ech’el li presirente, 7ibat, 7istzob sba skotol stak’in k’u yepal 7oy, 7ibat 7un, 7iskomtzan slumal 7istak ech’el li presirente. “Teuk che7e,” xi. “Te k’el abaik!” xi komel. “Teuk mi xisut
said. "It's all right if I return or if I don't," he said. "Or if I have gone for good, take care!" The magistrate cried when the king left. "All right. We'll see each other when I come back," said [the man]. "If not, then not," he said. He left. They parted with him in Tuxtla. He left contentedly. Happily, he went. The magistrate sent him no more dispatches came from Mexico City. It was only the king himself they sent. Then he arrived happily in Mexico City. [He went] to the President of Mexico. The President of Mexico was happy that he had arrived in Mexico City. The man arrived to speak to him. "I am a king," he said on his arrival. He spoke. "If I get sick, because I am growing old, set down a jug for three days, [place me in it], and tether a black mule for three days," he said.

They didn't tether it for three days. They let the mule go, so the king died inside the jug. That's why ever since there is no more talk of kings.

The prominent role taken by the magistrate in Xun's version is unique. It seems likely that this is a reflection of Xun's past, his own career as politician and magistrate.

The strange fate of the king, who wished to be rejuvenated, is confirmed by Rey Komis (T165). It sounds like a scene from The Tales of the Arabian Nights, but I have found no model for it. See also T11, T64, T113, T165, and their notes.

Saved from the Horned Serpent
T38

There is a rock with horns. It goes out on Wednesdays and Thursdays. A man went to see why the rock had horns. He saw the rock move. There was a thunderbolt. The rock was struck. The rock's horns were knocked off. The man was not struck by lightning. He returned home. He said that the rock was called Xul Vo7. He said that there was a spring there [in] the forest, [in] the woods. He said that there was a spring. "Let's go look!" said the man. "Here is the spring." Five people came to look at the spring [to see] if it was true that there was a spring where the man said. They went to look at the rock where it was hit by lightning, [where] the man and the rock were. The rock spoke. The rock talked by itself. It said that its name was Xul Vo7 Ton. There was a horned serpent at the rock. It dug up the ground. The people came to live there. They said that the rock was called Xulub Chon [Horned Serpent]. They went to pray. They celebrated Cross Day where the rock stood. The rock spoke. "Thank you for praying to me," said the rock. It hid the horned serpent. It didn't dig up the ground. It had wanted to kill all the people who lived there. The water couldn't be drunk then. The Earth Lord didn't want us to drink it. They appeased the Earth Lord. He was contented. He
gave them permission. The people living there still drink the water. That's why the May celebration is never abandoned.

Xun describes this serpent as having two horns and being as big as a bull. It is supposed to have gouged out the ravines with its horns.

Horned serpents have inhabited the Middle American cosmos for at least a millennium. Plumed serpent columns at the entrance to the Temple of Warriors in Chichen Itza are each endowed with a pair of horns. Parsons notes the presence of horned serpents in the beliefs of the Mixe, Caddo, Mayo-Yaquis, and Pueblo Indians. They are known in Nahuatl as mazacatl or "deer snake." Their association with water persists to this day among the Zapotecs (Parsons, 1936:332-333), Totonacs (Ichon, 1969:122), Achi (Shaw, 1972:51-52), and Chorti (Fought, 1972:83–85, 110–113; Girard, 1962:95–96). Like the Zinacantecs, the Chorti give offerings to the horned serpent on May 3rd for the Holy Cross Day well ceremonies. They consider the horned serpent to be the alter ego of the god of the earth's center, the lord of water, crowned at both ends with a pair of bejeweled golden horns, with which it plowed the riverbeds. As in Xun's story, it may be smitten by the gods for causing landslides.

In 1813 a Spanish proclamation to the overseas members of the Empire, pleading for their support while Napoleon's armies rampaged through the homeland, was translated into Tzotzil by an anonymous churchman of Chiapas. Striving to reach Tzotzil hearts and purses, the couplets liken the "murderous" Napoleon to a jaguar, a whirlwind, and a horned serpent (Proclama del duque infantado presidente, 1813:2-5).

The Tree and the Spring

T29
There was a tree standing by the spring. A very long time ago they said, “There is a spring where the tree is standing.” [That’s what] the people said.

“Let’s go see,” said the others.

“Let’s go,” they said. They came to look at the spring. They saw that the tree wasn’t there now.

They saw something [that looked] like a person standing there in the place where the tree was. They saw the person standing there. They found a stump standing there where the spring was. They began to dig a well. The next day they saw that the tree was standing there where a tree had always been. They dug the well. They found water. They named it Vo7 Ta Pas Te7 [“Spring by the Stump”].

This origin tale of the major waterhole in Xun’s hamlet of Paste7 was not very clear to me, so eleven days later I asked Xun to retell it (T46). Although both accounts give the same information that a tree disappeared, was replaced by a human being, who was replaced by a stump, which vanished at the reappearance of the tree, I have retained both to show the degree of variance in two versions told within a short period of time by the same individual.

The etymology of Pas Te7 is difficult; te7 means tree, but pas apparently is derived from the root p’as, which indicates a short length of wood, in this instance referring to the stump. If Pas Te7 is translated loosely as “stump,” then Vo7 Ta Pas Te7 would be “Spring By the Stump,” and Pas Te7al Vo7 (T46) would be “Stump Spring.” See T46.

The Tree and the Spring

In the beginning it was there. The tree disappeared when they saw it—when [they saw] there was a spring there. A tree had been standing there. The next day they went to look. They saw the tree was no longer there. They saw a person standing there where the tree had stood. [That was] when the people were off in the distance. When they looked, after they had come close to where the person was standing, they saw a stump standing there. [It was] when they arrived next to where the spring was. They returned from looking at the spring. They went back to bring their tools, to dig the well. They saw that the tree was standing there again, that the stump was no longer there. They thought it over. They offered candles. They asked for permission since they wanted to dig a well. They dug the well. When they finished digging the well they celebrated Cross Day. That’s why they named it Pas Te7al Vo7 [“Stump Spring’].

Bellyache

They slept together. The woman had a husband. The woman’s husband came. [A man] spoke to his sister-in-law. They talked together. He slept with his sister-in-law. The husband didn’t know that there was someone else. The husband came. He arrived to...
find the house closed. The husband opened the door. There the two of them were, the other [man] on top of his sister-in-law.

And the husband wanted to kill them. They turned into birds. They flew away. They left by the eaves. They went outside. When they went into the woods [one] said, “Bellyache.”

The other answered, “Sister-in-law, bellyache.” They flew in the trees. The two of them went and called in the trees.

This tale explains the origin of the names of the red-billed pigeon, k'us tzukutin or k'us tzukut mut. K'ux means pain. When the x is followed by tz, its shape could change in rapid speech to s. Tsukut means belly. Mut or “bird” is very similar to mu7, “sister-in-law.” Actually the names imitate the pigeon's call.

A similar version of this tale is told in Chamula. When a man discovered his wife sleeping with his younger brother, he attacked them with a machete. They turned into birds and flew to the woods. His wife became a red-billed pigeon and his brother a white-tipped dove (Gossen, T22).

A Cakchiquel tale from Guatemala relates an illicit affair between a boy and his sister-in-law. When discovered, the girl dies and the boy turns into a roadrunner (Bucaro Moraga, 1959:47).

In Belize Thompson recorded a tale of the Sun, whose elder brother, Venus, has an affair with his wife, the Moon. The Sun feeds them a chili tamale. They drink quantities of water, until the Moon begs a buzzard to carry her off. The Sun, enlisting the aid of a blowfly, finally discovers her hideaway and brings her back (J. E. Thompson, 1930: 129-130). Although the episodes recall many Zinacantec plots, it seems doubtful that this Kekchi tale is related historically.

For a poetic rendering of “Bellyache” see Merwin, 1972. See also T62.
The doorbell rang. It was Xun 7Akov’s younger brother, Chep, accompanied by a boy from Paste7, in his early teens. Chep had come to request a loan. He produced the appropriate bottle. During the following discussion, the boy, Lol Sarate, stood with the assurance of a brilliant princeling, his feet planted well apart. He extended his hand gracefully to receive the glass of clear liquid. With courtly elegance, he bowed to Chep and to me before downing his share of cane liquor and returning the glass. Lol was the first child to accord this stranger the customary civilities of Zinacantán.

We were in the midst of the annual Easter fair of San Cristóbal. Our small apartment overlooked the main square. For hours Chep and Lol (pronounced Lól) watched the crowds of people milling below. Then the band struck up. In a flash Chep seized both Lol’s hands, and holding their arms over their heads, they twirled and waltzed around the balcony, their faces shining with smiles. Lol inspected our apartment, asking the price and purpose of every object. He slipped his feet into my wife’s high heels and clomped about. He found a shirt of mine and, unfamiliar with buttons, fastened it ridiculously askew. He switched the lights off and on. With a look of delighted omniscience, he taught the older man how to flood the room with light.

We learned later that Lol was the cupbearer of the Steward of the Holy Sacrament. He also was a drummer boy at various fiestas. Nearly the last time I saw him, though only a boy, he was the steward for his neighborhood, in charge of their autumn water-hole ceremonies. But lacking in experience, he had miscalculated the amount of cane liquor and rockets needed at each shrine, and so had to run home again and again to replenish the supplies, much to the annoyance of the women in his home. In the early hours of the morning he grew demanding and rude to his mother, just before passing out. Shortly after dawn the men offered him a glass to chase his hangover. When he refused it, they turned on him angrily to ask, “Where has your manhood gone?”

Between these two scenes Lol came to our apartment once with a young friend. I asked them to tell me a tale. They could think of none and instead intoned for the tape recorder a list of hamlet names. In desperation I recited the exploits of the rabbit in the melon patch. Then Lol exclaimed, “I know a tale!” For fifteen or twenty minutes he regaled us with his rabbit tale, while his companion darted at him black scowls of envy.

Lol was married several years ago, but I have not seen him since.

How Rabbit Won His Hat and Sandals

Once a traveller was coming along.

He picked up a dead rabbit that he found there. “What happened to the little rabbit?” he asked. He picked it up and put it in his shoulder bag. He went on.

He found a stump there. He hung up [his shoulder bag] and left it. He went hunting. He left. He hung it up and left it. When he returned, [when] he came back, he discovered that his rabbit was no longer there. When he returned it certainly wasn’t there. He tried to find it. Ooh, then he heard it tooting on its gourd. Who knows how far it had gone. It had a gourd like this. It kept going, tooting on its gourd as it went. It was the rabbit that had come back to life, of course.

Bwénó, 7a ti vo7ne lae, 7ital la jun jbeinel.

Va7i 7un, stam la 7a li j-kot t’ul te la chamem 7ista. “K’u spas i 7unen t’ul 7une?” xi la. Stam la, stik’ la ta smoral 7un, bat la.

Va7i 7un, 7o la te chuman te7 sta 7un, sjipan la komel 7un, bat la ta paxyal 7un, bat, sjipan la komel, k’alal la sut tal 7une, ch’abal xa la yul sta ti st’ul 7une, k’alal la sut tal 7une, ch’abal a7a, ya7uk la ssa7, jii, ja7 to la ya7i jna7tik xa 7ox k’u snamal 7ibat 7un, ti xpriet xa stzu 7une, j-p’ej la stzu 7un xi 7un, bat la ta j-me7 xpriet la ech’el stzu 7un, ja7 la ti t’ul 7une 7ikux la 7a.
It continued on.

Then it met a coyote. “What are you doing, little rabbit?”

“Nothing, uncle,” said [Rabbit].

“We are holding a meeting because we are going to die,” said Rabbit. “If you want to be saved I’ll tie you up, too.”

“Eh, I don’t think so,” said [Coyote].

“If you want to be saved I’ll tie you up,” said [Rabbit].

“Oh, but I don’t know. Would you tie me up?” asked [Coyote].

“I’ll tie you up for sure!” he said.

“All right, tie me up, then,” said [Coyote]. Rabbit tied up Coyote right away. I don’t know, who knows how, Rabbit had taken [the man’s] axe with him.

“Look how sharp the axe is!” It was a good axe.

“I’ll try it out [to see] if it can cut down this tree.”

Then he took a big chunk out of that coyote.

He killed Coyote, too. He pulled out his teeth.

Well, then he went off tooting on his gourd again.

He continued on.

Then he met a tiger. No, I remember! He had been tied up. “What are you doing, little rabbit?” Because he had been tied up.

“Nothing. It’s because they’re letting me marry a girl,” he said. “I don’t want to marry her.” he said.

“Ahh!” said [Tiger].

“If you marry her yourself I’ll leave you tied up.”

“Why not marry her? I’m man enough!” said Tiger. “Well, I can marry her!” he said. So that tiger was left tied up.

“Oh, all right!” he said. Tiger was left tied up. The person who had tied [Rabbit] up heard [about it and] came to look.

“What are you doing?” [Tiger] was asked.

“Nothing. It was the little rabbit who left me tied up,” he said.

“Eh, do you still believe him? He’s a liar,” he said.

“Huh, but you, what are you doing, then?” [Tiger] was asked. In a second, a red hot metal was stuck up Tiger’s ass.

Who knows if that rabbit came to watch. “Will you still forgive me?” asked Rabbit.

“I won’t forgive you now. My ass is punctured. A red hot metal went up my ass,” said [Tiger].

“If you will forgive me, I’ll make amends,” said Rabbit.

“But I won’t forgive you, since my ass is punctured,” he said.

“If you’ll calm down I’ll go and bring some mangoes for you to eat. Those ones are very ripe now,” said Rabbit.
“Eh, but I won’t calm down, it seems,” he said again.
“If you’ll calm down I’ll go pick some of those mangoes for you to eat,” he said.
“But I won’t forgive you, it seems,” said Rabbit, Tiger [that is]. “I haven’t forgiven you, it seems,” he said.
“If you’ll calm down, we’ll go get some mangoes for you to eat,” he said. “If you’ll forgive me, we’ll go get some of those mangoes for you to eat,” he said. “Well, if you’ll forgive me, open your mouth wide!”

“Are you going to climb up?”
“Sure, I’m climbing up!”
“Go and bring them, then!” So Rabbit got them. Rabbit went to get them.
“Open your mouth wide!”

Well, [Tiger] had opened his jaws very wide. “But how come the mangoes aren’t falling down?” he asked.
“They’ll fall down,” said [Rabbit].
“Ah!” said [Tiger].
“See, they fell down! They’re lying next to you. Don’t you see?” he said. “Open your mouth wide now! I’ll drop them down,” he said. They never fell down.
“But no, you’ll still climb down here. You aren’t going anywhere,” Rabbit was told.
“Sure, I’ll climb down!” said Rabbit. Rabbit climbed down. “But won’t you forgive me?” he asked.

“Huh, but I won’t, since my ass is punctured,” he said. “Eh, but I won’t forgive you,” he said.
“If you’ll calm down, drink this juice from the cheese,” he said.
“But I won’t calm down,” said Tiger. “Huh, but I won’t forgive you, it seems,” he said.
“If you calm down, drink this cheese water,” said [Rabbit].
“Well, I can do it,” [said] Tiger. He drank the cheese water, but he couldn’t hold it in. “It’s because my ass is punctured,” he said.
“Well, let’s go and plug it up!” said [Rabbit].
“Eh, please plug me up, then!” Rabbit plugged it up.

He drank lots of cheese water.

Who knows if the moon was very bright. [The water was rippling. “See, the cheese water is rippling now,” [Tiger] was told. The cheese water was rippling.
That rabbit kept stirring up the water with his paw. It was water, but it was [supposed to be] cheese juice.


Je, pero mu xraj ko7on ya7el,” xi la noxtok 7un.

“Mi xraj 7avo7one ba jtu7 tal manko 7alo7 7e7e,” xi la.
“Pero mu xraj ko7on ya7el,” xi la ti t’ul 7une, ti bolom 7une. “Mu xraj ko7on ya7el,” xi la.

“Mi xraj 7avo7one ba jtatik manko 7alo7,” xi la.
“Mi xraj 7avo7one ba jtatik manko 7alo7 7e7e,” xi.
“Bwéno, ti mi xraj 7avo7on jach’o me lave 7une!”

“Mi7n chamuy 7un?”
“Chimuy a7a!”
“Ba tao tal che7e!” Ja7 7ista tal ti t’ul 7une. Ba sta tal manko ti t’ul 7une.
Vaj la 7un. “Jach’o me lave 7une!”

“Chp’aj tal,“ xi la.
“7A!” xi la.
“K’e, p’aj tal, te pitil ta xokon 7un, mi mu xavil?” xi la. “Jach’o xa me lave ta jp’ajes tal,” xi la. Mu la bu xp’aj tal.

“Pero mo7oj, li7 7onox chayal tale, muk’ bu xabat,” x7utat la ti t’ul 7une.
“Te chiyal tal a7a!” xi la ti t’ul 7une. Yal la tal ti t’ul 7une. “Pero mu mi xraj 7avo7on?” xi la.

“Je, pero mu xraj, ja7 li x7elan vomol jchake,” xi la. “7E, pero mu xraj ti ko7one,” xi la.
“Mi xraj 7avo7one, 7uch’an ya7el kexu, 7a li7e,” xi la.
“Pero mu xraj ko7on,” xi la ti bolom 7une. “Je, pero mu xraj ya7el ko7on,” xi la.
“Mi laj 7une 7uch’an ya7el kexu li7e,” xi la.

“Bwéno, stak’ che7e,” xi la. Yuch’ xa li ya7el kexu 7une, pero mu xmak 7un. “Ja7 li vomol i jchake,” xi la.
“Bwéno, ba jsuktik!” xi la.
“7E, 7abolajan sukbon, che7e!” Ssuk la ti t’ul 7une.

Vaj la 7un, chuch’ la ta j-mek ti ya7el kexu 7une.
Vaj la 7un, ja77jik mi yu7un k’ak’al jch’ul-mee77ik 7une, xnik 7un. “K’el avil me, xniknun xa me li ya7el kexu 7une,” x7utat. Xniknun xa li ya7el kexu 7une.

Vaj la 7un, ta sk’ob la ta snikulane ba vo7 taj t’ul 7une, vo7 la 7un, pero ya7el kexu xa la 7un.

Vaj la 7un. 7iyuch’ la ta j-mek, slombe la, t’om la sch’ut, t’om la sch’ut 7une.
He died. When [Tiger] died [Rabbit] pulled out his teeth. He went on. He was tooting on his gourd again as he went. Then he met a crocodile. “What are you doing, little rabbit?” he was asked.

“Nothing, uncle!” he said again. Now you see, that rabbit was going to kill him, going to kill Crocodile.

He was scared off by that crocodile. He hurried off. [Crocodile] went to tell his friends, to gather his friends together. He went on, because that rabbit was going to be attacked, too. That’s why those friends of his came.

Rabbit was going to be attacked. He changed his clothes. It seemed as if it wasn’t him anymore. “Well, you’re the one who was going to kill me,” he said.

“No, I’m not doing anything. I’m only drawing my water,” he said. He had his gourd. He was drawing his water now, it seemed.

“A!” said [Crocodile].

“That certainly isn’t him! Who knows where he went to,” said the one who had seen him first. “Who knows where he went,” he said.

“Me, I’m not doing anything! I’m just drawing my water,” he said. He had his gourd. He was drawing his water now, it seemed.

“Let’s go search for him!” said the others. “Let’s go search for him!” said the others. They came and searched in the woods. Then one of those crocodiles stayed behind. Who knows what got into their heads. They killed each other, too. So that rabbit won. He pulled out their teeth, too. He pulled out their teeth.

He came along again, tooting his gourd again.

“Here is the money for my sandals,” he said. He told the sandal maker.

“Good,” he said. “Did you bring it?” [Rabbit] was asked.

“Of course I brought it! Will you give me my sandals?” he said—Rabbit said to the sandal maker.

“But who knows if you can walk with them,” [Rabbit] was told.

“I can walk,” said Rabbit.

“Fine,” he said. “Take them, then!” he said. [Rabbit] was dressed in his sandals and his hat. “Go on into the heavy forest here!” he was told. “I think you should go in, let’s see, I guess, if you can walk with them,” he was told. He went in. Ohh, he went, he went very far. A deer came along, a deer.

“Well, how much did you pay for your hat and your sandals?” [Rabbit] was asked.
“Ohh, lots!” he said.

“Are they comfortable?” he was asked.

“Yes, indeed!” said Rabbit.

“Do you want to make a test?” he asked. “Give them to me for a minute or so,” said Deer.

“But I won't give them to you. You'll just run away,” said Rabbit.

“Give them to me for a minute or so, I'll try them out,” said Deer over and over. [Rabbit] didn't pay any attention at all. “Give them to me for a minute or so, I'll try them out,” said [Deer].

“But I won't give them to you. You'll just run away,” he said over and over. “Heh, but I won't give them to you, it seems.”

“Give them to me for a minute or so, I'll try them out,” he said. “I think I'll jump over the gully, if I can jump over it,” he said. There was a gully there.

“Oh, take them, then! I'll take them off,” said [Rabbit]. He took them off, indeed. Deer put them on.

After he put them on, “Well, I'm jumping over the gully with them. You'll see, I guess, if I can jump it,” he said. He jumped it. Ohh, he went off. You couldn't reach him now. Rabbit's hat just went for good.

Well, that's all. That's the way it ended.

Lol's sprightly tale of Rabbit's further exploits introduces fresh elements to the standard rabbit-coyote cycle. Rabbit's musical accompaniment has not to my knowledge been heard before. The judgment day ploy, in which the dupe is tied up for “protection,” occurs also among the Mixe (Radin and Espinosa, 1917:59). Tiger's red hot poker treatment is thoroughly familiar. Lol substituted mangoes for the standard sapote or prickly pear, and perhaps he forgot how that episode should end. The cheese-as-moon reflection adds a new detail; the plugging of Tiger's ass with clothing to disguise his identity occurs in Mexico among the Mixe (Miller, 1956:29; Radin and Espinosa, 1917:59) and the Huave (Radin, 1929: T11).

Lol's account of the crocodile episode seems slightly confused, but a search for alligator or cayman teeth to pay a brideprice is a West Indian theme (Hansen, 1957:856; Mason and Espinosa, 1927:334). In Belize a Mopan version of Rabbit's adventures tells how Rabbit secured a monkey's tooth, a giant's tooth, and a crocodile's tooth, which he paid Christ so that he would grow big enough to win the princess' hand (Shaw, 1972:179-180).

The theft of Rabbit's sandals by a swift-footed deer is related by the Cora (Lumholtz, 1902, 1:514-515), and Deer's theft of Rabbit's hat is recounted also in Chamula (Gossen, T53) and Venustiano Carranza (NI, 2:16-17). See also T20, T21, T49, T50, T166, T167, and their notes.
She hoisted a huge bundle of daisies onto the truck and sat herself down complacently on the bench, giving the Ladinas a bright smile and a cheery “Buenos días.” All the bumpy way to San Cristóbal she added her worldly wisdom to the Ladinas’ excited accounts of all the ghosts and buried treasures they had known of in their short lives.

She may be sixty-two years old now, but that is only a guess, because Tonik’s confident calculations of her age at the time of personal crisis and historical events simply do not agree. Her early childhood was spent in Zinacantán Center with her mother and her younger sister. Her father was deceased. When she was seven, her mother died, too, and she was adopted for two years into a Ladino household in San Cristóbal, paying her board and keep by the performance of small chores. She returned to the Center, where she learned to weave. She attended school for three years with Romin Teratol’s late stepmother and three or four other Zinacantec girls. Tonik (pronounced Tonique) recited to me from memory the verses she had had to deliver at her graduation from third grade, and even the lines that one of her classmates had declaimed. Of her classmates she alone learned to read and write. “And what do they know now? Ha! How many tales have they told you?” During this period she became a regular helper and protegée of the resident priest. Engaged to be married, Tonik rebelled and willfully rejected her suitor—an act that obliged her to return to San Cristóbal to work as a maid to earn the money needed to repay her suitor’s courtship expenses. Tonik’s younger sister then jilted her fiancé and skipped town, forcing Tonik to return to take the marriage vows in her stead. During their twenty-eight years of marriage, she bore her husband ten children, only five of whom survived into adulthood. Restless at home, Tonik became an agent of the National Indian Institute. According to women’s gossip, she wrapped her belly in a straw mat so she would look more pleasingly plump. Her husband finally grew tired of all the rumors that were bound to stick to a woman who would leave her husband to earn a wage, consorting with Indian schoolboys and teachers from many towns. He accused her of carrying on with Chep Xantis and another, grabbed her pigtails, and laid about her shoulders with a firebrand. Not one to submit in silence, Tonik evicted her husband and marched off to complain to the director of the National Indian Institute in San Cristóbal, then to the director of the Department of Indian Affairs, and finally to Don Erasto Urbina, local defender of the Indians. She explained that if she didn’t work, her family would be dressed in rags, for her husband offered no support, that half her earnings she gave to her husband, “And since when has a wife been obliged to do that?” She had been married in the Church, had respected and obeyed her husband as she should. After listening to Tonik’s tale of woe, Don Erasto summoned her husband to San Cristóbal. Old “Black Joe,” as he was known, was ordered to provide ten pesos a week to support his children. But since then, says Tonik, he has provided “not ten cents a week.”
In recent years Tonik has carried on an adventurous flower trade, selling her products in far-off Tuxtla, the state capital. In her spare time she has taught weaving to a number of Americans, when they stayed at Na Bolom, and has been commissioned to weave exceptionally fine blankets.

Despite a never-ending series of squabbles with her children's fiancés, husbands, and wives, who never seemed to live up to her high standards or even to respectable community standards, she has managed to live so free of sickness that people ask her, “Are you a pillar of the world?”

No one denies she is a “strong-hearted” woman. Her sharp wit, whether expressed in faultless colloquial Spanish or in Tzotzil, is both feared and relished by the men whom she engages in lively banter. Intensely righteous, pretentiously Catholic, vicious in gossip, her gaiety still commands affection, her nimble mind, grudging admiration.\[^9\]

Tonik attributes her knowledge of tales to the long hours she spent alone with her mother, and to her travels in the highlands. The lore of the past was handed down by her mother’s grandfather to her mother’s grandmother, to her mother’s mother, to her mother, and finally to Tonik herself. Though Tonik’s tales betray a strong Ladino influence, still they provide a remarkably detailed, intimate view of Zinacantec family life. A series of stories which depend upon the bestowal of a magic producer of food and wealth, though not entirely unknown to the other raconteurs, has special prominence in her repertoire. Her favorite tale is transparently an account of the miraculous good fortune bestowed upon the poor Indian serving girl—Maria Cinderella!

Tonik’s powers of imagination are represented equally in her narrative style and her embroidery style. Ten years before her colleagues, Tonik was embellishing her shawls with colorful animal and floral designs. Her tales resemble lacework of filigree. Their elaborations do not consist merely of interminable repetition, but are built up by the extensive use of descriptive detail, combined with the reproduction of lengthy exchanges of conversation. Not only do Tonik’s narrations double, even quadruple the length of the men’s tales, but her vocabulary is considerably larger and her sentence structure more complicated. Only she consciously laces her narrations with flashbacks. Tonik’s tongue is as sharp and as nimble as her needle.

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**When Earth Lords Offer Flowers, Beware of Snakes!**

Once there was a boy who was hunting along the trail. He was looking for rabbits. He went out hunting.

He saw a dahlia flower there at the edge of the path.

“How would the flower look if I picked it?” he said each time he passed by there. He passed by there to look at the flower. It was the prettiest flower he had ever seen. Each time that he went by there on the path he was answered by a man. [The man] answered from inside the fence.

“If you long so for the flower try and pick it, but only if you are brave, only if you aren’t afraid, because it will be transformed into something else. The flower will turn into a snake. If you are brave, if you aren’t afraid, pick it, take it, don’t worry. But if you are scared, don’t bother to touch it, don’t bother to pick it. [Even if you think] it will bite you, it won’t bite you. It will just turn into a snake,” the hunter was told.

“I’m not afraid. There’s nothing for me to be scared of, since it’s [just] a snake, it seems. I can kill it.”

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\[^9\] This sketch of Tonik is taken from *Of Wonders Wild and New: Dreams from Zinacantan* (Laughlin, 1976:144–145).
“Oh you can’t kill it, treat it well. The snake shouldn’t be killed. The snake shouldn’t be beaten. Don’t you see, it’s a flower. It turns into a flower because it’s a human being. It turns into [a snake] just so you won’t pick it. That’s why it turns into a snake,” the boy was told.

He thought it over. Maybe two or three days went by before he arrived to hunt. He arrived to hunt. So you won’t pick it. That’s why it turns into a snake, because it’s a human being. It turns into a flower. I guess I’ll pick it. Since it won’t bite. What I’ve been told is true that it won’t bite. So what, I guess I’ll see if I can do it, if I can pick it,” he said. He went in. He jumped over the top of the fence. He went in. He picked it.

“It didn’t bite me.” It was then that he saw the hu—ge, great, thick snake lying there.

Then, “Aren’t you afraid? said the snake when it spoke.

“I’m not scared at all,” said that boy holding that flower. “I’m not scared at all.”

“Let’s go then, I’ll go with you,” said the snake. But you see it wasn’t a snake. It turned into a girl.

“If you want me to take you, I’ll take you home. We’ll go to my house. We’ll get married. Go live in my house,” the snake was told by the boy when it turned into a person.

“Well, if you love me, if you treat me well, if you don’t scold me. My father has told you already that you can’t scold me, you can’t say [bad things] to me. So if you love me, if you don’t scold me I can go,” said the snake. He took her along. You see she was a girl now, it seems. She wasn’t a snake anymore when she arrived at his house. And maybe he thought it was true what he had been told. They ate. They slept. She prepared the meals and so on. She went to the roof,” said the husband.

As for the wife, “When did I pick so much? Go see for yourself! A little net. I didn’t finish picking a row. I don’t know how many plants I picked from. It’s because your corn has done well,” said the man.
But you see, I don't know what her fault was in their bed, but he went and gave her a slap for it.

He had stuck his flower in a bottle. He had put water in it, since he didn't want the flower to die that he picked when he married the woman, the girl, it seems. He had stuck the flower in a bottle, put it in water.

When he gave her a slap, the dahlia flower had just one leaf. It looked as if it was about to wilt.

That woman got angry when she was slapped. The husband turned over and stuck out his rear at her when they were sleeping. He didn't look at his wife anymore. The woman wept. "I'm going to let my father know how he's beating me. I'm going to let him know that [my husband] thinks I'm unbearable," said the woman.

What do you think? The husband was given no time at all. When he turned over to look at his wife, it seems, then he realized it. He was planning to hug her. It was a horrible snake he got to hug. The awful man was scared. "Hell, I thought you were a girl. I thought you were a woman. [You're] a fucking snake!" he told his wife.

"Get out, you bitch!" he told her. He threw her out of his bed. The next morning the snake was in a pi—le at the foot of his bed. It had curled up there. It had coiled up. Since it was a snake it was probably used to it, since it's in the woods that they sleep, it seems.

He went to tell the snake's father, it seems, where he had come [in the beginning]. But Thunderbolt was that girl's father. He went to tell him, "But didn't I tell you, if you want to pick it, then treat the flower well. Stick it in water. Get water for it, in a bottle. Stick it in a wide-necked bottle. But be kind to her, don't hit her. If you pick it, treat it well! Didn't I say that? Now since you hit her, go look at your flower there where you stuck it in a bottle. It has [just] one little leaf. It's wilting now," he was told by the girl's father when he arrived. Then when he came back to look, the leaf of that dahlia flower was wilted. That's why he believed it was true what he had been told.

"See here, since I've already gone to settle the matter with your father, do whatever you please, since I've seen that you don't touch much corn, you don't touch many beans. They just increase by themselves in your hands. There's no one now to complain. I won't scold you, nor will I complain. If I feel irritable, if I'm not in a good mood, I'll go hunting. I'll go take my gun. I'll go have fun. When my meanness has passed I'll come join you. I'll come talk to you.

VA7I 7un, k'u xavil 7un, yu7un 7o la, mu jna7 k'usi palta ta svayebik 7un, ja7 la ba st'ax 7o ta majel j-moj 7un.
VA7I 7un, spajanoj la ta limete ti snichim 7une, yak'ojej ba ya7el 7un, yu7un la mu sk'an xtpu' ti nichim stuch'oju ech'el k'u cha7al ti yik'7o ti 7antz ya7el 7un, ti tzeb ya7el 7une, yak'oju la ta limete tz'ajal ta vo7 ti nichime.
VA7I 7un, 7a la taj k'alal 7ist'ax ta majel j-moj 7une, j-p'ej la yanal ti dalya nichim 7une, ta la xa--l 7axtakik 7un.
VA7I 7un, 7ikap la taj 7antz k'al 7it'axe ta majel 7une, joyij la ti vinik 7une, sbutanbe la xchak ti k'al chvay 7une muk' xa la sk'el ti yajnil 7une, 7a la ti 7antz 7une, 7it'ok' la 7un. "Taj x7elanan chismaje chba kalbe ya7i jtot, cbba kalbe ya7i ti 7ilbaj xiyile, xi la ti 7antz.

Bu xavil, ti vinik 7une, mu k'u no xak' tyempo 7un, k'alal 7i joyij xa sk'el ti yajnil ya7el 7une, ja7 to la cha7i ba la smey ti chale, yil chon la smeyoj 7ik'ot 7un, xil7a la ti mu vinik 7une. "Kavron, xkak' to me tzebikot xkak' to me 7antzikot me jkobel chon!" xut la ti yajnil 7un.

VA7I 7un, sakub 7osil 7une, "Lok'an che7e, kavron!" xut la 7un. Sjip la lok'el ti ta svayeb 7une, te xa la votzo--I la yok svayeb ti chon 7une, te la xotoj sba smochoj sba, ja7 nan ti nopem 7onox xa7i li chon ya7el yu7un te7ik buy buy chvay ya7el 7une.

VA7I, ti ba yalbe ti stot ti chon ya7el ti buy 7ital 7une, pero yu7un la chaunk stot taj tzeb 7une, 7a li 7i ba la yabal 7un. "Pero mi mu lakalbe, Mi xak'an xatuch'e yu7un me chak'uxubin li nichime, me chatz'aj ta vo7 chas7be ya7el la limete bu jamal st7il lalimete xatz'aje, pero yu7un chak'uxubin mu7nuk chamaj mi xatuch'e, k'uxubin! mi mu xichi, 7o ra chamaj 7une, ba k'el avil lanichime, yo7 latz'ajox la limete j-p'ej yunen 7anal ta xa xtakij, x7utat la tal yu7un ti stot ti tzeb 7une. Ja7 to la yul sk'el 7un, ta la xtakij yanal taj dalya nichim 7une, yech'o la ti xch'un ti yu7un yech taj k'u 7talbat 7une.

"7Il avil xa 7un, yal ti 7a xa jk'an parte xchi7uk latote paso ti k'u sk'an 7avo7one yavil ti kil xae, 7ixim mu 7epuk chapik, chenek' mu7 epuk chapik te nox ta 7ak'oob ta xp'o7 7avu7un 7atuk, 7a lavi 7une, mu xa buch'u k'u xayalbe mi ja7uk xakut mi ja7uk k'u xakalbe mi chopol jijol chka7ie, mi muk' lek jijol chka7ie, ba paxyajkon ba jtamen ech'el jutu' ka xux ko7on 7ech'ma ta li jpuknajle, chtal jchi7not chtal jk'oponot."
"You, you don't get angry. Me, I just have a bad temper," said the boy.

Now the boy took it seriously. He had sheep now. He had mules. He had corn. He had beans now. He no longer felt any poverty. The boy did favors for his mother now. He did favors for his father. He used to look on his mother with annoyance. He never would give her a single tortilla. He wouldn't give her a meal, nor did he even fold over a tortilla [with food inside] for her when his mother arrived. It seemed as if he hadn't seen her. It was because he hadn't had anything when he married that woman that way. They grew rich. The wife was so good-hearted. "Come on, right now, mother, we'll eat. I killed a chicken. Come, eat!" said the wife now. The wonderful meal was already bubbling. Her chicken was well-prepared with potatoes, well-prepared with rice and whatever they ate long ago.

They ate well. Her husband would pass by to bring his mother. They ate contentedly. "Get yourself [some of] our food, mother. I'm eating with your son. Dish out whatever you want to eat," she said.

"No, you serve it out, daughter, dish me up as much as you want!"

"But how would I know what you want? Whether a little ... whether it's a heart or a wing or its little neck or a drumstick or the rump. Whatever you want. I don't know how [you like it]."

"Then give me a piece of its little heart, daughter, not much, with a bit of its little wing, if you'll give me that as a present," said his mother.

They ate well. "Come and eat later today, mother. Come and eat [when] we eat. Spend the night, I guess. Then tomorrow we'll eat again. We'll eat our little meal cold then," said the man. There were just three of them together with the mother-in-law of the girl who was a snake, it seems. Because she was Thunderbolt's child, the woman was very white, very fair.

The lady went to spend the night at their house because she was all alone. She had just the one son who was used to going hunting all the time. The boy had bought a gun to go hunting with. He only had enough money for a gun to go hunting with, to have fun with. [They were poor] since the lady had only one child that grew up.

They were kind to her. The lady was fine now. She grew strong. She picked up and diverted her daughter-in-law's child. She carried her daughter-in-law's child for her, her first child, it seems, [the child] of that boy. Because the lady's husband had died. When her husband was dead she took the part of father and mother for her daughter-in-law and her son. When she died the girl was brokenhearted over...
her mother-in-law's death. "Now there is no one to hold my child. Now there is no one to bring up my little girl. My little girl is still so young," said the woman when her mother-in-law died. She was more grief-stricken when her mother-in-law died. When her [mother-in-law's] husband died she didn't miss him, but [when] her mother-in-law [died] she was heartbroken. The woman cried and cried. She went to tell her father, "I don't know what to do. There's no one to carry them for me, now there is no one to hold our children for me."

"Never mind, daughter, if there isn't anyone to carry them. There's no problem. You don't have to have [more] children. Tell your husband. See what kind of medicine you can get, I guess."

"I shouldn't have [more] children. There's no one to bring them up for me," she told her husband.

But you see the man grew angry about it. "If that's the way it is, if you don't want any children, it's better if I move away. I'll go see where I'll throw myself in a ravine!" said the man.

But the man went hunting. Then a deer passed by. He meant to shoot at it.

But he was concentrating, looking to see where the deer was, where it went. The man fell into a ravine. It was a deep ravine. He was there in the ravine where he had fallen. Then on the third day his wife went looking for him. It was hard to find him. He was stinking when they found him. He was brought to where she was.

But he just came to his funeral. The poor man died there. He hadn't a chance to speak to his wife or to his child [before] he died.

"Yiluk yil, tzeb, mi xu buch'u skuchte, 7a li mu k'usi, mu xu pwersauk xalojal, talbo lamalale, k'elo kik k'usi poxal xasa7."

"Mu xu 7altikuk xi7alaj mu xu buch'u xisz'titesbe, xut la ti smalal.
Bu tu vinik 7une, kap 7o la 7un. "7A ti mi x7elan mu xu xak'an 7avole, mas lek ta jk'ej jba ech'el vo7on, chibat jk'el bu ba jten jba ta ch'en!" xi la ti vinik 7une.
Bu tu vinik 7une, bat la ta tuk'avl77un, lajeltja7 techi la j-kot te7tikil chij, ba la stuk'a ti chal 7une.
Va7i 7un, ja7 la batem ta yo7on sk'e lel bu tye te7tikil chij bu chbat 7une, p'aj la ta ch'en ti vinik 7une, toj tuch'el la snuk' tik'ot 7un, toj k'asle la ti snuk' 7une, p'aj ta ch'en 7une, yu7un toyol ti ch'en 7une, te xa 7a li yo7 ti ch'en ya7el p'ajem 7une, ja7to la ti ta yoxibal k'ak'al ba ssa7el yu7un ti yajnil 7une, vokol xa la tae, tu xa la tae, tal ti yo7 buy 7une.
K'usi 7un, naka xa tal smukel 7un, te cham ti prove vinik 7une, muk' xa sk'opon ti yajnilte, ti xch'amal 7icham 7une.

In typical Zinacantec fashion, confusing to an English speaker, the girl addresses her mother-in-law as me7, "mother," and the boy addresses his father-in-law as tot, "father."

When Romin Teratol, listening to the tape of this tale, reached the episode of the angry husband who turned over in bed and stuck out his rear at his wife, he burst out laughing and remarked "that's just what Tonik's husband must have done to her!"

The elaborate discussion of gracious living and visiting with one's in-laws sounds like a wish-fulfillment for Tonik, whose children invariably made disastrous matches. Tonik described to me with righteous indignation her son's wife who was so stingy that, when Tonik paid her a visit, she would slaughter a chicken and serve only a few mouthfuls of chicken broth to her mother-in-law, while she served herself a huge bowful: quite unlike Tonik, who always dished out the food equally! Tonik brought up one of her grandchildren herself, until that daughter-in-law of hers reclaimed it, sending the constables to drag off her protesting granddaughter. Months later Tonik's daughter-in-law paid a visit. Tonik killed a chicken, and everyone sat around the table having a pleasant time, exchanging no harsh words. After the meal was over, her daughter-in-law stood up, said her goodbyes and left, never to return.

This serpentine tale is best taken on faith with a pinch of grass, for too serious scrutiny leads to despair. Tonik's creative sense seems unperturbed by the inconsistencies and overlapping themes that she presents here, in the notably similar Tale 78, and in a third account she related to Victoria Bricker. This last combines elements from the first two and adds a few more ingredients. In brief summary, a princess goes to the river to wash her hair. She is accompanied by her father, who discovers the flower in exchange for his daughter. The king protests that Thunderbolt must be a Ladino and will surely beat his daughter, but he relents when Thunderbolt picks the flower for him. The princess departs with Thunderbolt, and a new bud grows on the stem. Thunderbolt appears and promises him the flower in exchange for his daughter. The king protests that Thunderbolt must be a Ladino and will surely beat his daughter, but he relents when Thunderbolt picks the flower for him. The princess departs with Thunderbolt, and a new bud grows on the stem. When Princess and Thunderbolt are bathing together, Thunderbolt warns her to hide her head in the sand, because lightning is about to strike. She disobeys and is badly burned. Thunderbolt rubs her with cotton and cures her, but rebukes her
for satisfying her curiosity. Meanwhile he has dried up the river so that they can go for a walk. When they return, her parents see that her forehead is burned and ask her how it happened. Thunderbolt describes her willful ways, and her father rebukes her, too. The end. (Bricker, T78).

Adding to the exasperation provoked by the shifting of characters and plots in these three tales is the bewildering montage of elements that seem to be both European and Indian—Indian Kings, Ladino Thunderbolts, dahlia princesses, and multiplying nets. A tale from Mitla recounts the visit of two compadres to Lightning, who offers them two flower vases; one containing a blind girl and the other a beauty. After they make their choice, the man who picks the blind girl is blessed with good crops, while his compadre can grow only weeds (Parsons, 1936:328). But if this seems European, consider the departure of Jaguar and Hunter Deer in the Popol Vuh:

We’re going then, oh our grandmothers;
We’re just taking leave of you.

Mention of the net of multiplying corn will be postponed until the commentary on Tale 78 where, in combination with several elements of that tale, it will point to an interesting conclusion. See T78 and notes.
At the beginning of the war, it seems, one group of Obregonists was gathered at the graveyard. Another group was gathered at Ya7ajvil.

Now when they were eating at Ya7ajvil, they were discovered by Pineda's soldiers. [Pineda's soldiers] killed them all, of course!

Now Pineda wasn't all by himself. All his men went like this. They went and circled around Ya7am Ton. They went down. They went to attack [the others] like this, at the graveyard. They circled back around there.

[At the lower graveyard or the upper graveyard?] At 70lon Mukenal [Lower Graveyard].

They circled back around the lower graveyard. There were heaps of meat, beef, mutton, chicken left there. As for the chicken, is there anyone who would eat it like that? Cooked in lard in a frying pan! It was served out there.

It looked fine, if you didn't know fear, of course! I was little. I was probably the same size as your daughter [eleven years old]. My neighbor had some sheep. We stuck the sheep in the pen. We came back home, since the bullets were spurring now at Jol Na7Ichin [Top of Horned Owl House], as we call it. Yes, the bullets were spurring now. After that, we hadn't a chance here now.

Ooh, Pineda's soldiers came—came chasing [the Obregonists].

The ones who were fleeing were killed. As for us, we thought that all of Obregon's soldiers died—that not one had been left.

But you see, Pineda's soldiers came on up. They were coming to kill us. We hadn't a chance of going anywhere. "So forget it, let's each of us lie down at home. We can't say we don't know about the shooting," we said. That's what we said. I didn't know what was happening. I didn't know what had started. Ooh, they passed by to collect at the courthouse. They passed by to collect all the . . . there were twelve sheep, three cows. They gathered them together. Old Pineda drove them from here to San Cristobal. But the food—the cows that had already been killed were tossed up quickly on the horses. They brought them back. Yes!

Now I don't know if the authorities were there [at the courthouse] or not, or if anyone was there. All the meat was left there. They divided it up with their friends. But the food that was already served out—it didn't matter who took it. It made no difference. There is a cross here. Have you seen it there above the spring above Tz'ultzasbil Vo7 [Blessed Spring]? There by the cross we went—to stick the sheep in the pen. There were two chickens cooking. Each one in a frying pan. The owner had already left.

We came back. "Come on let's take them!" the
boy told me, my companion, my neighbor’s child.

“If he comes back, what if he kills us?” I said, myself.

“So that’s the way awful girls always are! They’re so scared. Ach, go on saying it! Keep on gabbing!” he said. He was walking off himself with one frying pan. Now I really didn’t want to take the other frying pan, myself.

“Shall I just take the piece of liver to eat?” I said to myself. Eh, I guess I’ll take it,” I said to myself. I went to take it, but I was looking around behind me like this. I was scared. Yes!

But the owner was gone! He was in one of those advance groups that was destroyed here at the Ventana. They all died. Not one was left. The [other soldiers] came back. They went to bury them. There were only three wounded ones [left] who went. Their arms were wounded [right] here. Their thighs were wounded. They came back.

[It was those Obregonists?] Yes, yes, Obregonists, of course. The three of them. The other one was wounded in the lung. I think. I don’t remember very well anymore.

They came back. They went on. As for the sheep, they were hung up. They were all skinned. They were hanging up. The women’s food was there, their tortillas. Who knows where they fled to. We never saw how they fled. They were herded off to San Cristobal. They went, herded to San Cristobal. [The women] were brought back to San Cristobal.

[The Obregonists] probably still didn’t give up or perhaps more Obregon soldiers were sent back. I don’t know.

When the time came, Pineda arrived here [in Zinacantan Center]. That was the first time I saw them. The second time I saw them—me, I was already here [in San Cristobal] as a maid. That’s the first [thing] I saw, after they came back like that, came here from San Cristobal. Then, as for us, [the next day] we opened [the pen] for those sheep. I don’t know if it was probably, ah, it was probably ten o’clock when [the fighting] broke out. We opened [the pen] for the sheep, since they were hungry.

Don’t you see it was the corn season, like now. Ripe corn fields.

We opened it up for the sheep. The sheep came. The sheep arrived where we were shepherding. “Why, why did we take our chickens back with us? Our mothers will eat them. We should have eaten them here by ourselves!” said my companion. Yes!

“Let’s go, let’s go look at the fire over there [to see] if there is any food left there,” he said. Ooh, a pot was bubbling away there. A pot of chicken. It was in—oh, I don’t know what they call the thing jun krem jchi7il xch’amal jak’-na.

“7A ti xtal mi xismilotik 7une?” xkut i yo7one.

“Yu7 nan stael mu tzeb tol xi7 7une, tz’, 7a ta to xavalulan 7i7onan to me!” xi. Xutulton xa ech’el jun xalten i stuke, ja7 xa jk’an ma jk’an jtam ti jun xalten i yo7one.

“Mi ja7 no van ta jtam i j-tuch’ sekub ta jti7e,” xichi. “Je, ta jtam kik,” xichi 7un. 7Ay to jtam pero xi xa ta jk’el ti jpate chixi7.

Bu, ch’abal yajval, ja7 la taj 7ilaj 7avansada li7 ta Ventana 7un, laj la skotol mu la junuk 7ikom, yu7n 7isut xa, ba smukel, 7ox-vo7 xa nox 7erido 7ibat, lajem i sk’ob li7i lajem i yo7e, ja7 xa sut ech’el 7un bi!

Ja7 ja7 7Ovregonista 7un bi, taj 7ox-vo7 7une, 7a li june jun chak jun spulmon lajem cha7i7i mu xa jna7 lek.

Va7i 7un, 7a ti 7isutik ech’el 7un batik 7un, 7a ti chije ti jok’ajtik ti chij nako cho7bile ti jipajtik, 7oy tey sve7elik 7oy te yotik, ti 7antzetike yu7n na7?ik k’utik xi jatav, muk’ 7onox xkiltiktok’ k’u xi jatav, makbil 7ibat ta Jobel, makbil 7ibat ta Jobel, tal ta Jobel 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a li muk’ 7onox xla7 7o nan yo7on 7un mi takbat to tal yan jsoltero li 7Ovregone ja7 mu jna7.

Va7i 7un, k’al sta yora 7iyul li Pineda li7 to 7une, 7an ja7 primerio ti kil chak taj 7une, 7a ta xcha7-lok’elal kil xa 7une li7on xa 7ox ta kriarail vo7on 7une, ta primero kil 7un taje, 7i7ilaj tal taj x7elanl tal li7 ta Jobele, vo7otiktok’ 7une ja7 7a li 7a jcha7-jamtiktok’ tal taj chije, mu jna7 mi te nan, je, te nan lajuneb 7ora, taj 7iyu7 7un taje, jjamiktok’ tal ti chij 7une k’u ti chvi7naj 7un to.

Mu xavil, 7iximaltik chak li7i, 7ajan chobitik.

Va7i 7un, 7a jjamiktok’ tal ti chij 7une, 7ital ti chij 7une 7iyul ti chij yo7 buy ta jchabitiktok’ 7une. “Ma kich’tik ech’el li kalak’tike ta to sti7 jme7tik yechuke li7 ta jti7 jtuktike,” xi ti jchi7il 7une.

Va7i 7un, “Battik kik, ba jk’eltik la le7 jun k’ok’ mi mu xa bu tey ve7elile,” xi. 7Iy, te la xba---ibon j-p’inal, j-p’inal xakilan, ta 7a li, 7ay mu jna7 k’usi sbi 7a li yav chile seráno, 7a li xi smuk’tikil latae, ja7
for mountain chili—it was a can this big. It was cooking in that. It was good food. Yes!

“Ah, did you find anything where you looked?” I asked the boy.

“Come here! Look here! See how good the food is here! Let’s eat!” he told me.

“Where will you get the tortillas for it?”

“What? The tortillas are stacked here!” he said. At the foot of a fence. That’s why they weren’t seen. So we went to open the pen for those sheep. We went to eat. We found our meal there. We ate. Whatever we couldn’t finish eating we took home. [You were lucky!] Yes, we were lucky! We ate.

We probably ate a lot of chicken at the foot of the fence. We opened [the pen] for those sheep. We ate chicken, because we discovered a pot bubbling.

There weren’t many tortillas. There were maybe just a few stacked there by the upper fence. Yes!

As for the tortillas—“Forget it, we won’t eat tortillas,” we said. We ate chicken. We ate. We drank its broth. I still took a few pieces home. We divided them up. Four pieces for me, four pieces for my companion. We eat two pieces. We took the [rest] home. We went to stick the sheep in [their pen]. I was ca—rrying [the meat] in my little old can.

My companion, the boy, wrapped his up in his tortilla. [His house] was as far away as [from here to] the corner. Yes!

The next day, it was dese—rted. The governor’s soldiers were go—ne now. “That’s probably how it will be. Old Pineda was able to take [the town],” we said. No trouble. None.

Oh, the next thing we knew, the government came in force. Who knows how many soldiers came again. Eh, but they had no mercy. They wouldn’t care if you hadn’t anything. We didn’t have many tortillas at that time.

We had there just this tiny bit of little tortillas among us. Qui—ckly . . . I think there was some watermelon squash flavored with chili. We had cut it in chunks to eat. So they scooped out the watermel—on squash. They took their tortillas and ate. It didn’t matter if you died of hunger, yourself!

[The Obregonists?] The Obregonists. The governor’s soldiers.

[It was on the next day?] No, four days later. Yes!

They probably found a lot of sheep still hanging up. They roasted them. They ate them, and so on. They surely were satisfied with that! If they hadn’t found them hanging there still, if there weren’t someone guarding them at the courthouse, who knows!

They were distracted then. They ate there.

More sheep-stealing, chicken-thieving, and so on, lakal 7o, ja7 lek ve7el.

“7Ana mi k’usi xi 7ata bu 7avil?” xkut i krem 7une.

“La7 k’el avi k’el avi slekil li ve7elil li7e ve7ikotik!” xiyut 7un.

“Bu chavich’be yotal?”

“K’usi li vaj li7 latzale!” xi 7un. Ta yibel mok 7un yech’o li muk’ x7ile 7un, yu7n ba jjamotikotik taj chij ba ve7uk ku7untikotik 7un, te jta jve7eitikotik 7un nive7otikotik, k’u yepal muk’ xlah jajale jajale to 7ikotikotik chik’tikotik ech’e7 ta jnajotikotik 7un, lek 7ikotikotik 7un nive7otikotik 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a li lek xa nan, 7a li ta jti7otikotik kaxlan ta yibel mok, ta jjamotikotik taj chij 7une, jti7otikotik kaxlan yu7n xbalbon j-p’inal jijotikotik 7une.

Va7i 7un, muk’ buy 7ep ti vaj 7une 7o na7 nunin jayibuk te latzal te ta 7a li ba mok.

Va7i 7un, 7a li ti vaj 7une. “Yiyil mu jve7tik vaj,” xichiotikotik. Jti7otikotik ti kaxlante nive7otikotik kuch’betikotik ti skaitoal 7une, 7oy to nan jay-tuch’uk kich’ ech’e7 ta jna 7un jch’akbe jbatikotik 7un, chan-tuch’ vo7on chan-tuch’ i jchi7ile, cha7cha7-tuch’ ji7jotikotik 7un, kich’tikotik ech’e7 ta jnajotikotik 7un, 7a jik’tikotik ti chij 7une, jliko—j ech’e7 vo7on ta kunin k’a7-tak’in 7un, ja7 spotz ech’e7 ta yot i jun jchi7il 7une, ja7 li krem 7une, yech to snamal chbat chak k’u cha7al 7e5kinae.

Va7i 7un, 7a li ta yok’omal 7un ch’iij-ya—n ch’aba—l xa ti yajsoltero ti goyerrno 7une. “7An yu7n xa nan yech 7ikom 7un, lek 7ipoj xa yu7un i mol Pinedae,” xichiotikotik 7un. Ch’abal k’op mu7yuk.

Je7, k’alal 7ika7itikotike tal spwersa li goyerrno, tal nan na7tik k’u yepal ti soltero noxtoke, je7, pero yu7n muk’ sperton mu ta sna7 mi mu7yuk k’usi 7oy 7avu7un, ja7 7o muk’ bu 7ep kottikotik.

Va7i 7un, 7o te xi yunin 7epal kunin 7ottikotik ta jay-vo7otikotike, j-li—kel, 7o tey 7ichil mail chka7i jijo7 jlo7tikotik, yu7n sjotz’ 7ichil mail stam yot 7ive7 muk’ ta 7alel mi chacham ta v47al ni vo7ote.

7Ovregonista 7une, yajsoltero goyerrno 7un.

7I7i, ta xchanibal 7o k’a7-ak’al.

Va7i 7un, ja7 te to jipajtik 7ista nan k’u yepal li chij 7une, 7isvoik 7isi7ik k’utukik ja7 xa nox bal 7iya7i 7un bi, 7a ti manchuk te to jipil 7istae, manchuk 7o xchabiel li kaviloe na7tik!

Va7i 7un, ja7 tey ch’ay yo7on 7un, tey ve7ik 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7o—ch yan 7elek’-chij 7elek’-kaxlan
bega—n. The governor's soldiers always ate stolen food. They'd scarcely buy it!

"God, how will we be freed from our hardship—suffering as we do? It's not possible." I had a hen turkey crouching along the foot of the fence, in the weeds, in ta—ll weeds. They made a pa—th through [the weeds] and grabbed the turkey. They grabbed the turkey and went on. Yes!

They took away two chickens and one turkey. Yes!

[No sheep?] Not my sheep. Not my sheep. Just my turkey and my chickens. They did go! Yes!

On the fourth day, my pots went, my bowls went. I had a ball of yarn this big, just wool. They stole it.

They went to sell them. There was a store, a bar. They went to sell them, to exchange them. I still saw my bowls. They were this big, huge. What good were they now? They were somebody else's now. We lost lots of our things. I had a chest. I had some books. I had some notebooks. They all went. They stole them all.

"God, My Lord, why do we have so much hardship, mother?" I asked my mother.

"Ah, you're right, daughter! Never mind, I guess. We'll see what we'll live on," said my mother.

"Yes, you're right, of course!" I said. Yes!

They returned more—more than they stole. They came back. Obregon's soldiers came. They came to ask a favor. They had stolen a mule-load of flour here at the Ventana. A mule-load of flour. "Do you want a third of the flour in exchange for making tortillas for us to eat?" said the soldiers. Three soldiers arrived.

"We do!" we said.

"I'll pay someone, then, to come and bring it," they told us. A sack of flour. "Just send [word] to us. We'll come and get [the food]," they said. "Make tortillas for us to eat!" they said. "Three days. If we find more, we'll give it to you," they said.

"Okay," I said. We made tortillas. This big a sta—ck of wheat tortillas went every day. Every day they ate them. Yes!

A little, half straw mat of flour was probably used up. That much. They ate it and we ate it. Yes!

"Never mind, then, My Lord," I said.

"If you will still be so kind as to make tortillas, we'll get some more," they said.

"Bring it!" we said. [One of them] brought it. He came to leave it. Another bag. "Well, never mind, we'll store up the rest. We'll be happy to eat it when we haven't any corn," said my mother. We put it away. The straw mat was empty now.

"What can I do with the straw mat? Take it!" he told us.

7elek'-'k'utikuk naka ta 7elek' 7onox chve7 li yajsoltero li govyernoe yu7 van tzman 7un!

Va7i 7un, "Yos k'u to xi xkol li jvokoltik la x7elan 7abol jbatike mu7 nox stak!" 7Oy j-kot sme7 jutluk, patal ta yibelyibel mok ta tz'iletik, smu--k'tikil tz'i7ele, 7a xi sp'e--v ech'ele stzak i tuluke' stzak i tuluke' bat. Ji7!

Cha7-kot kaxlan j-kot tuluk' 7iyik' ech'el. Ji7!

Mu7yuk jchij, mu7yuk jchij, ja7 nox ti jutluk'e ti kalak'e ja7 bat a7a! Ji7!

Va7i 7un, ta xchanibal 7o k'ak'al 7une, 7iba--t jpin 7ibat jboch 7ibat 7oy jpisbenal noetik xi smuk'tikile naka tzotz 7iyelk'an ech'el.

Va7i 7un, 7a la xchon 7un, 7o te jun tyenta nail trago 7un 7a xchon 7un sjelik la 7un.

Va7i 7un, kil to ti jboch xi sii 7animal muk'ule k'u xa bal 7o yan krixchano xa, 7ep 7ich'ay k'usuk ku7untikotik, 7oy j-p'ej jkaxa 7oy jlivrotak 7oy jkwadernotak te bat skotol, laj yelk'anik 7un.
“Okay,” we said. “That’s probably payment for our firewood, mother,” I said, myself.
“That’s it!” she said. Yes!
We made [them tortillas]. He came to take them. He kept coming to take them. One day he came carrying two turkeys. Probably Chamulans’ turkeys! Yes!
“Fix the turkeys for us to eat. We’re hungry,” he said. “You eat half, we’ll eat half,” he said.
“Ah!” we said. As for my mother, she fixed a whole turkey. He carried the whole potful off. It went together with my pot. Ye—s!
He had said he would stay to eat the one. That’s what he had said. Yes!
“Won’t you separate out your meal, then?” [he asked].
“No,” said [my mother].
“Oh, ma’am, why are you being like this?” he asked. “I told you, One today, one tomorrow, I told you,” he said. “Never mind, then,” he said. “Since there are just three of us eating, you’ll just have to figure it out—we’ll eat it. There will still be cold food,” he said. So then he took our pot to eat out of. [The big pot] stayed. It was a little pot that went. Six pieces [of turkey] went. Our own portion was left, it seems. We ate. He left. He came to get their tortillas. He would bring something—a chicken or a rooster. He would come to get the food for his tortillas. Our pay was half a bag of flour—half for them. We lived on it, it seems.
“The trouble is, my firewood has run out. I haven’t any firewood left,” my mother told him.
“We’ll see if there’s a way for the firewood to come. There’s a lot of firewood. Take it from the paths! You’re scared to get it from the fences!” he said. They just warmed themselves with the fences!
“Ah, but my neighbor will scold me! Don’t you see, it’s my neighbor’s fence,” I said. “Ah!” he said. “Don’t you see, we’ll pay someone for it,” my mother told him.
“I don’t see, you’ll get scared to [steal]!” he said. He had gotten this ma—ny broad beans in a bag, green broad beans.
“He said, Cook the green broad beans to eat too,” I told [my mother].
“Eh, but I don’t know how to,” said [my mother]. “Do you know how we should eat them, mother?” I said, myself. “We’ll shuck the pods and then we’ll boil them.”
“What if they don’t eat them that way? You see, they only eat them fried,” she said.
“Yes, of course!” I said myself.
I shucked the pods. Now they were we—il-
cooked. They were good now. They were good and soft, like corn. They were boiled. I gave them to him. “Do you eat them like this?” we asked.

“Ah, they’re better!” he said. Yes!

He had an awfully big bowl, this size. We filled it up for him. He took it. They ate. “Ah [there’s enough] here for supper and breakfast,” he said. He went. He took his wheat tortillas. We ate wheat tortillas for a long time. It was probably more than a month. Yes!

Now they won. It was when . . . I don’t know if it was the third time they were sent off, I think.

My mother had run out of corn. “I’m going to leave you in San Cristóbal. That’s better. Go earn something!” she said.

Pineda was chased by Obregon there by [the Church of] Guadalupe [in San Cristóbal]. Pineda left. Pineda fled. Obregon stayed now. Obregon was established. Pineda lost for good. He lost for good. One of their roosters, two legs of mutton, roasted in the oven were left at my home. There was still probably, eh, a quart of corn. That was all. That became our pay, of course! Two of their sheep, too. But they were still alive. They hadn’t slaughtered them and brought them. They brought them, of course! They were eaten here in San Cristóbal. That’s all I saw. The last time they came, it seems—the last time we fed the soldiers like that—Pineda’s soldiers came. They went this way along the top of Na Joj [Raven House]. They blew their bugles. They blew their bugles. Their bugles sounded good—d.

But the advance force was already at the cemetery. [Pineda’s soldiers] were scared now. They fled back now, like this, along the top of the mountains. They left. They ended up at [the Church of] Guadalupe. They fled. They fled to this day. They stayed away. Now it’s fine. There haven’t been any more battles. That was the last battle, indeed! Ye—s!

For Tonik, all the grand ideals, the bullets and battles of the Mexican Revolution, shrink to nothing before the contemplation of a generous stack of tortillas and a simmering pot of well-spiced chicken.

The first scene apparently opens on 19 September 1920, when the Pinedist routed the government troops of President Carranza. Tonik, like Xun Vaskis, mistakenly identifies them as the Obregónists, who arrived years later. It appears from Tonik’s closing comments that the soldiers they fed were Obregónists. Tonik’s mother’s quandary about how to prepare food for the Ladino soldiers expresses the distinctive difference between Indian cuisine and Ladino cuisine—Indians eat boiled food, Ladinos eat fried food. Tonik’s concern with food did not end with the Revolution. I recall her hunching my infant daughter in her lap and, with her eyes asparkle, reciting a litany of all the gastronomic pleasures that awaited our baby: “You will eat tortillas! You will eat beans! You will eat potatoes!” (And almost surely out of consideration for our vegetarian diet, she thoughtfully excluded chicken and beef, etc.)

tok’on 7un lek xa, juyul xa slekil chak k’u cha7al 7a li 7ixim 7un, tok’on 7un kak’be 7un. “Xana7 sti7el yech chak li7e?” xktuttik 7un.

“7A, mas lek!” xi 7un. Ji7!

7Oy jun smu mol tasa xi smuk’ule ja7 ta jnojesbeti7o7i7ech’el 7un, chich’ ech’el 7un chve7 7un. “7A li7e 7oy yu7un sena 7oy yu7 un 7elmwerso,” xi 7un. Chbat 7un chich’ ech’el ti sjarinail vaj 7une, jal 7ijeve?ti7otikotik ti sjarinail vaje, te nan mas ta jun 7u. Ji7!

K’usi xa li 7ispas kanal 7une ja7 ti k’alal taa, mu jna7 mi ta yox-lok’elal 7ay stakel ta 7ik’el chka7i 7un.

7A li ja7 ti jme7 7une laj yixim 7un. “Chba kak’ot Jobel mas lek ba paso kanal!” xi 7un.

Le7 ta Valalupa 7a snutzel yu7un 7OVregon 7une ti Pineda 7une, bat ti Pineda jatav ech’el li Pineda 7une, ja7 xa te kom i 7OVregon 7une, choti li 7OVregon 7une, ja7 ch’ay i Pineda ta j-mo7 7une, ch’ay ta j-mo7 7un, ja7 7oy 7i7om te ta jna 7a li j-kot skelem cha7-jek chij bakueb ta jorno, 7a li 7o to nan, 7eee junuk kwarcha te7 7ixim k’ajom 7un, ja7 xa jtojolti7otikotik 7i7om 7un bi, cha7-kot xchij a7a pero xkotet to muk’ milbil 7i7ik’ tal 7un, 7iyik’ tal bi li 7a li7 tal sti7ik li7 ta Jobele, ja7 yech yepal 7i 7i ta 7ikil chak taj 7une, tal xa ta slajeb xa ya7el taj k’alal slajeb taj x7elan ta jmak’antikotik i solterro 7une, 7i7i7al to yajisolta li 7a li Pineda 7une, xi bat ti xa baba Na Joj 7une, stij skorneta 7un, stij skorneta 7un le--k xa xal ti skornetae.

Buy, te li 7avansada ta mukenal xa 7une, 7i7i7 xa 7un, jatav xa tal 7un ja7 xa li xixi baba baba vitztik 7bat 7une xi k’ot ta lok’el ta Valalupa 7une jatav 7o ech’el 7un, k’al tana, kom 7o li lek xa 7un mu xa bu 7och pletu yan, ch’abal xa, slajeb pletub il! Ji7!

The entry of the Obregónist troops in Zinacantán Center in late April 1924 was described to me by another witness, Manvel K’obyox. He told how General Pineda used to disguise himself as a Chamullan charcoal maker, so that he could pass freely among the enemy. When the Obregónists arrived searching for Pineda and his troops, the townspeople had mainly fled. As a sacristan, Manvel had stayed behind to guard the church. The Obregónist commander, flourishing a pistol in his right hand and a red flag in his left, accosted the small group of defenders at the bridge: “Where is Pineda?” They swore their ignorance, though they must have guessed that his forces were sitting in foxholes in the mountain slopes above the town. A house was searched nearby, and a cache of corn and pure cane liquor was discovered. A bull was slaughtered. Each of the soldiers and each of the Zacanec defenders received a kilo of meat and a large shot of cane liquor.

The flight of Pineda’s soldiers from the hills flanking Zinacantán Center occurred on 1 May 1924. See also T14, T112, T152, T154, and their notes.
There was a man long ago. He asked the buzzard for its wings. He left. He followed close behind. “My Lord, I am going to join you because I want to go see where it is you go, as far as [the place] where you stop. I [want to] know where the world ends. I want to see it,” he told Our Lord.

“Oh, poor creature!” said Our Lord. “Let’s go and see! Do your best, you will be somebody, you will be a real man if you pass along where I’m going,” said Our Holy Father.

[The man] followed close behind. He was getting worn out. Right around three o’clock he just grew exhausted. He couldn’t go on.

He perched in a tree. When he perched in a tree, when he looked [again], Our Lord had already gone on. He flew—off again. He flew off quickly now. He caught up with Our Lord on the path. “Please don’t leave me. Please wait for me, because I feel tired,” he said.

“Ah, you want to go on because you surely are a rugged traveller, but me, I’m used to it. That’s how I watch over the young and the old,” said Our Lord. He went on. You see they reached the place where the sun sets, [where] the sun disappears. “If you want to continue on, if you really want to cross over, dunk your head three times,” he was told, at the ocean. He dunked his head. After that first dunking Our Lord had not yet crossed over [the ocean]. Nor after the second dunking. After the third time that he dunked his head, when he looked, Our Lord was on the other side of the ocean. “Cross on over! Now the ocean isn’t very deep any more,” he was told. But he was tantalized by the money. [It reached] from one side to the other. There was money here on our side. There was money on the other side.

“Why should I go now? Why should I cross over now, since I long for the money, it seems?” he said. He picked up the money. He stuck it under his sash, around his waist or something. Already it felt heavy. He couldn’t stand up anymore. He had a neckerchief. When he flew off he had tied it around his waist. He put [the money] in his neckerchief. He wrapped it tightly around him. He tied it around his waist. Then he flew.

But you see, he came back bringing the money he had found. He flew back by himself, he didn’t come back with Our Lord. He just returned to tell about how it was, what it was like that he dunked his head three times. He came home. He returned to tell his children. “Never mind, wife, I carried out my wish, I achieved my purpose. I went to see where the end of the ocean is, I came back by myself. I brought the money.”

"7Ay, 7ololl!" xi la ti kajvaltik. “Battik avil ba lok’es 7avo7on yu7un krixchanoot yu7un vinikot ti mi7n na7ech’ ti yo7 bu chibate,” xi la ti jch’ul-tottik.

Va7i 7un, tijiltijil la ech’el, ta xa xlibtzaj ti k’al lek xa nan 7oxib 7ora k’ak’ale, solel la tlzlibtzaj xa, mu xa xu7.

Va7i 7un, luchi la ta te7, 7a la ti k’alal 7iluchi ta te7 7une, k’al 7iyil i kajvaltike bat xa 70x la, vi—1 la ech’el noxtok 7un, suje—m xa la vil ech’el 7un, sta la ta be ti kajvaltik 7une. “Mu me xakomeson 7un, malaon me 7un, yu7un me chilub chaka7i,” xi la 7un.

"7Aa, chak’an chabate yu7un me tzotzot la xanbal 7un bi 7a, yan chak i vo7one yu7n nox nopem xka7i ja7 yech ta jk’el 70 bik’it muk’,” xi la ti kajvaltike. Bat la 7un, xavil 7istaik la ti yo7 bu mal ti k’ak’al ch’ay ti k’ak’al 7une. “7A li ti mi7n chak’an chajelav, mi slok’el 7avo7on cha7ech’e, tz’ajo 70x-tz’ajeluk lajole!” x7utat la ti ta nab 7une. Stz’aj la ti sjole, taj ta primero j-tz’ajele, mu to 7ox bu la jelav yu7un kajvaltik, xcha7-tz’ajele ch’abal la, ta yox-tz’ajelal 7istz’aj i sjol 7une, k’al 7iyile j-jech nab la ti kajvaltik 7une. “Jelavan talel 7un, lavi mu xa bu mas noj i nabe,” x7utat la 7un. Pero spich’ la yo7on ti tak’in ta j-jot ta jjote, 7oy la tak’in li7 ta jotjotliske 7i 7oy la tak’in xi ta jjote.

"K’usi xi chibat 7un li7i, k’usi xi chijelav 7un li7i, ti xpich’ ko7on i tak’in yilel 7une?" xi la. Stam la ti tak’ine xch’ik la ta xch’ut sjoyob spat k’usi, 7ol xa la cha7i 7un, mu xa la stak’ xva7i 7un, mu7 no la ja7uk no 7ox ta7lo ya7i la, 7o la spok’, 7a li xchukoj ech’el ta xch’ut ti k’al 7ivil ech’el 7une, 7a li 7iyak’ la ta ta spok’ 7un, 7isut’ la 7un, 7ixchuk la ta xch’ut 7un, ja7 7o la vil 7un.

Bu la xavil 7un, 7isut la tal 7un yich’oj tal ti tak’in ya7ele sta la tal stuk xa 7ivil tal 7un mu xa yu7unuk xchi7uk tal li kajvaltik 7une, ja7 no la ti yul slo7ilta ti k’utik xi ti k’utik x7elan ti stz’aj 7o 7ox-tz’ajel ti sjol 7une, tal ta sna 7une, yul yalbe ti xch’amaltak 7une. “Yiyil 7un, 7antz, 7ijlokti ti ko7one, 7ech’ ti ko7on 7a jk’el buy ti slajelal ti balamil 7une, mu k’usi 7un.
of the world was. That's all. Dunk your head three times and cross over! Our Lord told me."

"But I never saw how he crossed over. After the second dunking Our Holy Father was still there. Then after the third dunking I saw Our Lord standing now on the other side of the ocean. The money, wi—fe! But it seemed as if I wouldn't come back. I wouldn't come back, it seemed. You wouldn't be sad scooping up the money! I just scooped it up with my hands. Look how much there is! See how the money is to the touch! We just pick it up. We just bring it from the place where Our Lord disappears. But the trouble is I had a hard time returning all the way with it. I deposited some at the place where I became exhausted. There at Calvary I grew weary, you see, I dug a hole for it. I left it buried. I don't know if I'll still find it. Take this [much], because I'm coming ri—ght back!" he said.

He returned. He had come back holding the money in his teeth. He swallowed it. He didn't tell his wife about the money he swallowed. He left. He went to get his neckerchief in which he had wrapped the money tightly. Maybe it was the price [he had to pay] for his efforts, it seems. The price [paid] by his body, since he felt awful now, I think. Who knows how he found the money. He gathered it up. It was wrapped tightly in the neckerchief. He carried it back a second time. He came back. He returned home. "Look! See how much money there is! But the trouble is, I took pains [to get] it. I'm dying from it. The trouble is I went and did a bad thing. I went and scooped it up. I cupped the money in my hand. I put it in my hand. I put it in my mouth.

"But you see, I didn't think I would get thirsty on the way."

"But you see, my heart was bursting with air at Calvary. It was then that I went and swallowed all the money there. I drank some water. Who knows if I discharged it. I don't know if I'm not dying from it. My stomach feels drea—dful. I feel awful. My stomach is really bursting." He was just given refined sugar [and water] to drink. He didn't go anywhere any more. He got very sick.

He died. The man's wife went to report it at the courthouse. "See here, magistrate, I don't know what to do. It's the fourth day after my husband's return from where he went to see the end of the world, it seems, where Our Lord disappears. He found some money. He gathered it up and returned. "But the trouble is he grew thirsty on the way. He was going to drink some water.

"But you see, he swallowed the money at the same time," she told the magistrate. "I don't know what to

Tz'ajo 7ox-tz'ajel lajole jelavan tall xiyut ti kajvaltik 7une. 7ijtz'aj i 7ox-tz'ajel 7une xka7uk to xkil k'u xi chjelav i kajvaltik 7un.

"Bu, muk' 7onox kil k'u xi jelav 7un, ta xcha7-tz'ajelale te to 7ox i jch'ul-tottike, ta yox-tz'ajelal 7une ja 7 to chkil va7al xa ta j-jech nabi kajvaltik 7une, 7a ti tak'ine, 7a--ntz, pero mu xisut tal yilel mu xital yilel xu7un mu chibuk 7avo7on k'u xajop ti tak'ine, naka ta jjop ta jk'obtik, naka no 7ox ta jtam ta jk'obtik, k'e yepal, k'e x7elan ti tak'in chpipe, naka ta jtamtki naka ta xkich'tik ti yo7 buy buy chch'ay i kajvaltike, pero k'usi, vokol ta xla7 yuluk ku7un, 7oy to 7ijkuban komel yo7 li nilubtzaje taj nilubtzaj ta Kalvarioe, va7i, jk'ok be xch'enal 7un, jmuk komel, mu jna7 mi jta to 7un, 7ich'o komel xu7un chisu---t ta 7oral!" xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7isut la 7un, 7o la skatz'oj tal ti tak'ine, sbik' la 7un, ja7 la muk' xalbe komel ti yajnil ti tak'ine 7isbik' 7une, bat la 7un, bat stam tal ti spo'k ssut'oj ta tak'in 7une, ja7 nan ti stojol ti svokol ya7el stojol xa ti spat xoxkon ti chcham xa nan chkal vo7on 7une, ja7 mu jna7tik k'u x7elan k'u ti sta la ti tak'in 7une, sjop la tal 7un, te la sut'u ti ta pok' 7une, xcha7-kuch la tal 7un, tal la 7un, yul la ti la sna 7une. "K'e 7un, k'e yepal tak'in, k'usi, chkak' 7o jvokol 7une, chicham 7o 7une, k'usi, yu7un ba jpas chopolal ba jjop 7a li jk'et ti tak'ine, 7ijtik' ta ke kum tal ti chkal 7une.

"Bu, xkak' mu xtakijuk jti7 ta be 7un.

"Bu, batzi' 7animal suk sba ko7on li7 ta Kalvario 7une, ja7 te ba jib'k'an ti tak'in te yo7 7une, 7ijkuch' vo7 7une, na7tik xa mi jiza7ta lok'el 7un, mu jna7 mi mu ja7uk xa chicham 7o, 7animal ya---n x7elan ti ko7on, chicham ya7el batzi' sukoj sba ti ko7one." Naka la 7ak'bat sakil 7asuka 7iyuch', mu xa la bu bat 7un, 7i7ipaj la ta j-mek 7un.

Va7i 7un, cham la 7un, ba la yal ta kavilto ti yajnil ti vinik 7une. "K'el avi, preserente, mu7 no jna7 k'u ta jnop, 7a li xchanibal k'ak' al syulel ti jmalal ti bu 7a sk'el ti slajelal balamal ya7ele, ti bu xch'a7 i kajvaltike, sta la tal tak'in 7un, sjop la 7un, yul la tal 7un."

"K'usi, yu7un la takij st7 ta be 7un, ta 7ox la xuch' vo7 7un.

"Bu, ko7ol la sbik' xch'i7uk ti tak'ine," xut la ech'el ti preserente 7une. "7A li mu jna7 k'u ta jnop 7un,
do. Should he be operated on? Do you think he would come back to life?"

"Oh, we can cut him open, but I certainly won’t give you the money. I’ll take the money if you are telling the truth that your husband swallowed some money. I’ll take the money myself. We’ll divide it up amongst ourselves here. Since it costs me money, it seems, whatever the cost is, it seems, for the efforts of the justice of the peace who looks at him. He costs money, it seems. Oh, who knows if you are telling the truth or not. [When] will I ever see how you can go so far off in the world, loafers!" said the magistrate.

"Oh, well, if you don’t want to operate on my husband for me so that he won’t die . . . ," said the woman. He wasn’t cut open. Then the poor man, having swallowed it, died. He was buried. He was never examined to see what he had swallowed. All that happened was that his children lived on [the rest]. His children grew up with all the money he had brought back. It was just gold, just silver and so on that he had brought back from the place where he went, from the place where Our Lord disappears.

In this Zinacantec counterpart to the Icarus myth, Tonik’s artful juxtaposition of private and public greed is probably her own invention. A version from Chenalho relates how the hero is transformed into a buzzard, follows the sun, and visits the underworld, where he sees the dwarfs with their mud hats. He scoops up gold from the dry ocean bed, swallows some, and returns. But, his stomach, heavy with gold, bursts upon landing (Montes Sánchez, c. 1959:50-51).

From the coastal Chiapas region of Soconusco comes an elaborate variant of this tale. A man, seeking to reach the sun, transforms himself into a hawk, but is unable to catch up. As he nears his destination, the greedy man coughs on them, dropping them to the ground, while he hurriedly stuffs the gold in a sack and runs home. But the gold grows heavier and heavier as he shrinks, turns black, sprouts wings and a beak, grows claws and scales until he is fully a buzzard. The dwarfs take the money to his house for his wife and children, keeping some for themselves. They bury their share to the roots of their crops, and so corn shines with the golden glow of a sunbeam. The buzzard still today is searching for the gold, but all he eats is carrion and excrement (Navarrete, 1966b:426).

The Charcoal Cruncher

Once there was a man who was sleeping with his wife. His head went off at nighttime.

It went to the fireside. It covered up the woman’s fire. It left the charcoal heaped up.

But you see, the man got up to eat it. He went to the fireside.

He was gna—wing on it, gnawing at night like a rat. “Wake up, man! Wake up, man!” she tried to tell her husband. He never answered. Not once. Nobody there. The Charcoal Cruncher was—nching away. He was there at the fireside.

But you see after the awful Charcoal Cruncher had finished crunching all the charcoal he had 70y la jun vinik ti vo7ne, ta la xvay xchi7uk yajnil, yu7un la chlok’ ta 7ak’ubaltik sjole. Va7i 7un, chbat la ta ti7 k’ok’, smuk la sk’ok’ ti ti 7antze, ta sztopan komel ti 7ak’al 7une. Va7i 7un, bu xavil 7un, yu7un la chilik sk’ux ti vinik 7une, ta la xbat ta ti7 k’ok’ 7un. Va7i xjep’ep’e—t, xjep’ep’e’t ta 7ak’ubaltik k’u cha7al ch’o. “Vinik jula7an, vinik jula7ani!” ya’7a la yut ti smalale. Mu la bu xtak’av, ch’abal a7a, ch’ij-yan la, te xjup’up’e—t ti jk’ux-7ak’ale, te ya7el ta ti7 k’ok’ 7une. Bu la xavil 7un, ti mu jk’ux-7ak’al 7une, lajem la sk’ux ti k’u yepal sztopanbil komel ti 7ak’al ta ti7
heaped up at the fireside, he would brush up the charcoal with his foot, piling it up at the fireside.

"Please, wife, don't cover up the charcoal here. That's no good!"

"It's because they are glowing so. I can't get to sleep because of the fire. The coals are burning now. It doesn't burn at all now," she said.

But you see the husband got up to eat charcoal again and again. The wife wasn't aware of it. "Oh where did you put the coals you piled up here? I need them for lighting my fire. My fire is very low now. It doesn't burn at all now," she said.

"Your coals must be somewhere. I didn't see if there were any coals. You still had them banked up to warm my tortillas at bedtime. Where in the world could the coals go to?" said the awful man. He had begun doing that a long time ago. Just like that he went off each time, each time, every night. The poor woman would shake him.

But the man never answered. "What's going on? What's happening?" she said to her compadre when she went to visit her. "What do you make of it, compadre? It's terrible. I try to waken your compadre. He gets up at night. He goes off to eat charcoal." He went to that compadre's house. He went to eat charcoal.

"What disgusting thing is that, gnawing at the fireside? Have you struck a match?" [the Charcoal Cruncher's] compadre asked her husband.

"Who knows what it is. What difference does it make as long as you've picked up your tortillas, as long as you've picked up whatever odds and ends were on top of your metate or on top of your metate platform?" said the man.

"Never mind, what difference does it make? Strike a match! You see, it doesn't hear us at all, knocking around now among our pots," said the woman. He struck a match. Who knows where it went. The awful Charcoal Cruncher didn't get caught. No!

He didn't get caught until his compadre had a curing ceremony for his child. His awful head was sitting there at the fireside. His wife was asleep.

They heard the Charcoal Cruncher munching away. "You're right, you weren't just telling a story, compadre. I see you were telling the truth that my compadre eats charcoal," he said when he had a curing ceremony for his child. They had gone to spend the night there. They had arrived to spend the night. They went to bed. When the curing ceremony was over for his compadre's little child they slept, they rested, it seems. Maybe he hadn't had enough to eat. He got up to eat charcoal.

Who knows if there was charcoal from the pine torch behind the lamp stand. There was a lot of charcoal that had fallen from the lamp stand. After k'ok'e, ta la sbek' ta yok ta ti7 k'ok' ta la stzopan ti 7ak'ale. "Mu me xamuk i 7ak'al li7e, 7antz, mu me xtuhn!"

"Ja7 me li batz'i x7exeex--t xa mu x7och 7o jvayel i k'ok' ta x7an ta j-mek ti 7ak'ale," xi la 7un.

Bu xavil 7un, 7a la ti vinik 7une, yu7un la ma chlik sk'u'x batel 7un, mu la bu ta yo7on ti 7antz 7une.

"7An bu 7avak' ti 7ak'ale, li7 7atzopane, bal jnop' 7o jk'ok' batz'i j-tz'u7 u7a li jk'ok'e, mu xa xtil ta j-mek," xi la.

"Te nan bu y ta tava7'ale, muk' bu xkil, mi 7oy 7ak' al che7e, 7a la 7apot 7onox 7ak'ixna 7o kote vase7e, bu ma xu7 chbat 7ak'al?" xi la ti ma vinik 7une. Vo7ne la slike--l, ja7 yech, ja7 yech ju-kok ju-jok ju-jun 7ak'ubal ju-jun 7ak'ubal chbat ta xtit7van ti yo 7antz.

Bu xavil 7un, mu7yuk la bu xtak' av ti vinik 7une.

"7An k'u no van yu7un, kumale, k'u no van cha7al?" xut la ech'el ti skumale 7a svula7an 7une. "K'u x7elan chavil, kumale, batz'i muk' lek, ya7uk jtit7 lumpare ta xlik ta 7ak'ubaltik chba sk'u'x 7ak'al." 7Ay la tzna ta7 skumare 7a la sk'u'x 7ak'al.

Va7i 7un, "K'usi porkeriyail taj xjep' ep' et ta ti7 k'o'ke, mi 7ajoch' 7aserio?" xut la smalal ti skumale.

"Jna7tik k'usi, k'u jtu7untik, yiyil ja7 no 7ox skwenta ma tamoj 7avote, ma tamoj k'usi j-set' juteb 7oy ta sba 7acho7 ta sba 7avek'ene," xi la ti 7a li vinik 7une.

"Yiyil k'u jtu7untik joch'o laserieoe, va7i batz'i mu xa7i ta j-mek xk'o7lajet xa ta jp'intik," xi la ti 7antz 7une. Xjoch' la ti sserioe, jna7tik la bu bat 7un, mu la bu yal ta k'o'k' ti mu jk'ux-7ak'al 7une, ch'abal!

Ja7 to 7iyal ta k'o'k' yu7un la yal vokol xch'amal taj skumare 7une, te la xp'eje--t ti smu jol ta ti7 k'o'k' 7un, vayem taj yajnil 7une.

Va7i, ya7i la ti xjup'jon ti jk'ux-7ak'al 7une.

"Mu7nuk 7alo7iluk 7ava7uk, kumale, yu7un ka yech 7aval ti ta sk'u'x 7ak'al li jkumpare," xi la ti k'al 7iyal vokol xch'amal, batik ta ch'amunel te 7une, 7ik'o7ik la ya7el ti ta ch'amunel 7une, vayik 7un, laj 7aluk vokol ti yuen ch'amal taj skumare 7une, vayik 7un, skuxik ya7el 7un, mu no nan ta7luk xa7i ti k'u yepal 7ive7 7une, lik la sk'u'x 7ak'al 7une.

Va7i 7un, mu jna7tik mi 7oy la te yak'lel toj la ta pat kuxanob toj, 7a la ti kuxanob toje, 7ep la yak'lel p'ajem 7un, ja7 laj sk'u'xan ti yak'lel toj 7une, laj la
he ate all the charcoal from the pine torch, after he had gathered it all up, he was bumping around by the fireside. “I see you’re right, compadre. I see you’re right that he eats charcoal. Never mind, what difference does it make? Do you know what to do? What you should do is to lay a rock [against his neck] and put salt on his neck,” said her compadre.

The [first] comadre did what she was told. She did just that. She laid a rock [against her husband’s neck].

It was when they arrived home a few days later when they returned from spending the night. He got down [out of bed] again. She heard him munching away, eating the charcoal at the fireside. “Why is the awful man so strange? My Lord I’d like to get to sleep,” said the woman. “Oh, what’s the use!” she said. She slept. She closed her eyes. “Never mind what he’s doing. I guess I’ll hear him when he comes back later on,” she said. The man arrived. “Oh, I wonder where you go all the time. Why is that ugly face of yours so freezing cold? It’s so horrible I can’t get near you.”

“It’s because my face was uncovered. Where do you think I’d go?” said the man.

But you see his face wasn’t uncovered. It was because he went out constantly to eat charcoal. The wife spied on him. She sat up. She saw that her husband wasn’t there. He was eating charcoal at the fireside.

“Oh, why are you doing that?” she asked. She picked up one of the rocks that props up the hearthstones. She laid it down on his neck. She put salt on it when he left. But she didn’t say a word to him. She just picked up [the stone]. She knew where she had left her stone and her salt when she went to bed. She stuck her fingers in the saltcellar and carefully rubbed [the salt] on his neck. So [his head] bounced and bounced, bang around now on top of the bed. “What are you doing banging about, you nasty thing? Go to bed! As for me, I certainly don’t want anyone coming to bang around here,” said the woman.

“But you see he landed on top of his little child. ‘Oww!’ cried the baby. The baby was upset by his father’s bouncing. [The father’s head] wouldn’t stick on.

The woman just said, “What business is it of mine? What’s the use?” she said. She went to gather firewood. She went to San Cristóbal. She went to Chamula. She paid no attention to him. I guess he was starving. He died a week later. His awful eyes were popping out. He was buried in a grave. They buried him in a grave. She told
her comadre and her compadre, because that man hadn’t a mother or a father anymore. “Your compadre died. I did thus and so just the way you told me. He died. He hadn’t anything to live on at all. I did it to him a week ago,” she told her comadre.

“Oh, that’s fine, comadre! What good is a nasty man like that? He just frightens us. How can we eat and sleep comfortably?” said [her] comadre.

“That’s right. Won’t you be so kind, comadre, compadre? Let’s go together and bury him!”

“Oh we can, comadre. Let’s go! It’s time to see where his coffin will come from. It’s time to see if he has a burial or what.”

“Ugh, the awful Charcoal Cruncher died. The Charcoal Cruncher business is finished,” said each of the funeral guests when they arrived. “We are burying the awful Charcoal Cruncher. Now the Charcoal Cruncher business is over. Now no one’s left to eat our charcoal. The charcoal here will just be put in our yards, but before there used to be somebody who ate charcoal,” said the men who went to the funeral. That was the conversation of the men at the graveyard. They talked about how the Charcoal Cruncher died. “The Charcoal Cruncher’s troubles are over,” they said.

After they buried him they came back. The woman was happy now. She thought he was the only one. But you see there was another one in the same house. There was a woman still left.

But you see, it would fly to the eaves. It would bounce to the eaves. So the woman was terribly frightened by it. It ba—nged around when it left. Then the woman would wake up even if she were fast asleep. It was cr—shing about when it left. It bounced out or bounced down on the bed. It isn’t that it doesn’t make noise. Crashing about, it frightens people.

“He’ll just kill me of fright. I’m so tired of him,” she said. The end.

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After Tonik has seen the male Charcoal Cruncher to his grave, she intimates that there was a female Charcoal Cruncher, a relative of the first. But unwilling to put an end to her story, she can’t resist repeating a few of the scary details once more, before launching on the next chiller.

It is unusual for a Charcoal Cruncher to be a man, not a woman. Anyone who has spent a black winter’s night in a Zinacantec home, and heard a forest rat munching on the corn stored in burlap bags against the wall, and then minutes later heard the family cat bumping among the pots beside the hearth, can feel in his bones the eerie horror of the Charcoal Cruncher. Why charcoal is its diet is not clear to me. In Chenalho charcoal is said to have been the diet of the survivors of the deluge, before they were turned into monkeys (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:157). See also T12, T82, and their notes, T47, T60, and T175.
The Spook and the Brother-in-Law

Once there was a man who went to Chamula. On the way back he met his brother-in-law on the trail. "Let's drink, brother-in-law," he said. He and his brother-in-law got drunk. They came along drunk. They passed by Stzellej Minax [Mine Ridge]. They went on, because the man's house was in Na Chij [Deer House].

They went beyond Na Chij. A comadre of his brother-in-law had a house there. "Comadre, won't you sell me a half-pint or a pint or so?" he said, because she was a shaman [and would have leftover cane liquor].

His comadre [answered], "Take it, compadre, take it. Do you just want a pint?"

"Just one [pint], comadre," said his brother-in-law.

They took it. They drank it. The brothers-in-law walked down [the trail] just a short distance together. They would be going along for [the last] stretch of the trail.

But you see, [one of] the brothers-in-law got drunk. He had drunk a strong dose when they parted company. His brother-in-law's house was probably nearby. "Won't you sleep here in my house, brother-in-law? Will you spend the night?" asked [the second] brother-in-law.

"No, brother-in-law, because [my wife], your younger sister, is waiting up, watching the night go by. She doesn't lock the door, she just pushes the door closed for the night. Something might happen to her," said the [first] brother-in-law.

He meant to go on. He meant to arrive home.

But he never arrived home. He jumped over the stream. 'Toch' they call it, in Na Chij. He jumped.

He landed way off on his knees. He landed rolling, "Oh, hell, I guess I'll sober up," he said. Then he tried to sober up. He fell asleep. He slept soundly. He didn't wake up, not until the devil went and woke him in the evening. He didn't wake up until he felt [his head] being lifted up and jostled.

Then he felt his hair being wetted down. He felt the cold, then, it seems. Then, "How come he's burning?" said the Spook. He stood back, he moved away because [the man] was burning. The Spook was scared because he was burning. "Oh, but why did I get burnt?" said the Spook.

He fled this far away, then he returned again. "I'll put [the fire] out with water. I'm going to bring the water in my mouth. I'm going to scoop it up in my hands," said the Spook.

But it was no fire! It was because the man was burned. He never came home. He jumped over the stream. 'Toch' they call it, in Na Chij. He jumped.

Bu xavil, ti mu bolil 7une, 7iyakub la 7un, tzotz xa la yuch'oj taj 7ixch'ak sbaiik, yu7un nan nopol xa sna ti sbole. "Mi muk' chavay l7 ta jnae, bol, mi xach'amun na?" xi la ti bolil 7une.

"Mo7oj, bol, ja7 ta ja7 ti 7avixlel te ta xmalavan te xk'elk'on chbat 7ak'ubal, ja7 la mu sna7 smak snae, maka nox tsnu7p' vayuk i snae, maka me 7u k'u spas," xi la ti bolil 7une.

"7A ti vo7ne 7oy la jun vinik 7ay la ta Chamu7 sut la talel 7un, 7ista la ta be sbo7. "Kuch'tik 7a li, bol," xi la. 7iyakub la xchi7uk ti sbol 7une, jyakubelik la tal 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7i7ech'ik la ta Stzellej Minax, 7ibatik la 7un yu7un la Na Chij sna ti vinik 7une.

Va7i 7un, k'otik la ta sjelavel Na Chij 7un, 7o la te jun sna skumale taj sbol 7une. "Kumale, mi muk' bu xach'onbon junuk kwarta junuk meria mi k'u xi?" xi la 7un. Yu7un la j7ilol 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a ti skumale 7une, "7Ich'o, kumpare, 7ich'o, mi jun nox meria chak'an?"

"Jnox, kumale," xi la ti bolil 7une.

Va7i 7un, yich'ik la 7un, yuch'ik la 7un, 7a ti bolil 7une, maka xa no la jun soral li xchi7in sbaiik yalel 7un, stuk xa la bat j-tuch' be.

Bu xavil, ti mu bolil 7une, 7iyakub la 7un, tzotz xa la yuch'oj taj 7ixch'ak sbaiik, yu7un nan nopol xa sna ti sbole. "Mi muk' chavay l7 ta jnae, bol, mi xach'amun na?" xi la ti bolil 7une.

"Mo7oj, bol, ja7 ta ja7 ti 7avixlel te ta xmalavan te xk'elk'on chbat 7ak'ubal, ja7 la mu sna7 smak snae, maka nox tsnu7p' vayuk i snae, maka me 7u k'u spas," xi la ti bolil 7une.

Bu, muk' la xk'ot li ta sna 7une, sp'itu la li 7uk'um 7a li Toch' xkal tik ta Na Chij 7une, p'it la 7un.

Bu, taj to la kejel 7ik'ote xbalet to la k'o7 7un. "7Ii kavron, jkux ka7tik," xi la 7un. Lajeltza tzkux la ti chal 7une, 7och 7o la svayel, vay la ta j-mek 7un, mu la bu yul xch'ulel 7un, ja7 to la ba tiyvanuk ti pukuj ta 7ak'ubaltik 7une, ja7 to la chaj7i ti toyilanat tijulanat, mu la bu yul 7o xch'ulel.

Va7i 7un, bat la ti chal 7une, xa7uk la xk'otuk ti ta sna.

Bu, muk' la xk'ot li ta sna 7une, sp'itu la li 7uk'um 7a li Toch' xkal tik ta Na Chij 7une, p'it la 7un.

Bu, taj to la kejel 7ik'ote xbalet to la k'o7 7un. "7Ii kavron, jkux ka7tik," xi la 7un. Lajeltza tzkux la ti chal 7une, 7och 7o la svayel, vay la ta j-mek 7un, mu la bu yul xch'ulel 7un, ja7 to la ba tiyvanuk ti pukuj ta 7ak'ubaltik 7une, ja7 to la chaj7i ti toyilanat tijulanat, mu la bu yul 7o xch'ulel.

Va7i 7un, ja7 to la chaj7i ti xolel xa szebiltasat 7une, cha7i xa sik ya7el 7une. Ja7 to, "K'u van yu7un ti chtil'e?" xi la ti j7ik'al 7une. Chlok' lok' la ech'el ti chtil 7une, ta la xxi7 7un, yu7un la cha7i ti mi j7ik'al ti chtil 7une. "7A pero k'u yu7un 7a ti xik'ak'e?" xi la ti j7ik'al.

Bu, ma lu ma k'o7uk 7un, yu7un la ma jyakubel
drunk. The man came to, a little. “What’s happened to me? [Why] do I feel wet?” he said. He touched his head when the Spook left. “Eh, but this is terrible! It’s probably a terrible devil taking me off to his house or to his cave,” said the drunk.

He waited ‘til he came to a little. His hair was wetted down. He pretended not to move. He felt how cold [the Spook’s] horrible head was, how [his head] kept being touched and lifted up. He just wetted down. He pretended not to move. He felt how cold [the Spook’s] horrible hand was, how [his house] was unlocked. He arrived. “Wife, I’m not at all well. I almost died. Don’t you see, the Spook would have taken me off if your house weren’t unlocked. He was following right behind me.” Oh, the Spook knocked on the door. He knocked on the second night. The same thing happened. But so long as I’m alive, never mind!” he said. “In the end you’ll see.” At daybreak after the second night they saw a puddle of blood by the door. Who knows if it was just the dog’s blood or what. Their dog was not there at dawn.

You see, the dog had gone to the stile. The dog was curled up there asleep.

But one of its ears was hurt. You see it was because [the Spook] had cut off its ear. Who knows what use it was to him.

You see, the dog’s ear had traveled this far from the stile. The dog’s ear was lying there. “It’s clear that he’s the one who is bothering us, but he’ll go. He must have a house somewhere,” said the man. On the last night he readied his gun, he readied his stave. He looked to see if [the Spook] had arrived. [The Spook] had cut off its ear. Who knows what use it was to him.

Bu la xavil, ti kaxlan 7une, 7a li laj a viluk 7un, ta yok’omal sakub 7osil ja7 xa la ti bu patajikit i me7 kaxlane, yayijemik xa la j-lom, 7iyich’ la kwenta ti 7antz ta yok’omal 7une, mal ti k’ak’al lek nan 7orisyontik ya7el 7une, laj la stik’an ta sna ti yalak’ 7une, saa7 la na.

Buy, ya7uk la sjam ya7uk la sk’el ti na, k’ot ta xchibal 7ak’ubale, ja7 no la yech tz’i7 xa la, tzmaj noxtok tz’i7, 7o la xchitom ta la xtal snitbel ti xchitome, j-jot xa 7o la bu xba xchuk ti chitom.

“Pero bat taj jechitomtiike, vinik!”

“Mu nan xbat yu7un ja7 li porkeriyaka pukuj chiyilbajinotike ja7 to ti mi tz’aki 7oxib 7ak’ubale, mu xa7i7,” xi la ti vinik 7une. “Yi nan yil, mi chitom no 7ox a7a, ta k’ex, mi kaxlan no 7ox a7a, ta k’ex, yan ti chamikon vo7one batikon vo7one, mu xa yu7unuk 7o buch’u xtal spasbe sve7el 7avalk 7achitom bi 7a, yan li7e yal ti kuxulone, yiyl,” xi la. “Lajeltza xavil 7un.” Sakub ti 7osil xchibal 7ak’ubale 7une, ja7 to la chil 7a li 7oy la te tz’anal ch’ich’ ta ti7 na 7un, ja7 mu jna7tik mi ja7 no 7ox xchich’el ti tz’i7e ti k’usi 7une, ti j-kot stz’i7e ch’abal la sakub 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a ti jz’i7e bat la ta ti7 be, te xa la mochol vayem ti tz’i7 7une.

Buy, yayijem la jun xchikin 7un, xavale yu7un la sjo7be ech’el i xchikin 7une, jna7tik la ku7u7un 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a la ti xchikin 7un ti tz’i7 7une, bu, xi la smamal xanavem ech’el ta ti7 be 7une, te la metzon ti xchikin ti tz’i7 7une. “Xvinaj ti ja7 chiyilbajine pero yu7un li chbat 7une che7e, te bu sna,” xi la ti vinik 7une. Slajeb xa la 7ak’ubal 7un, 7ixchapa la stuk’, 7ixchapa la 7a li yak te7, sk’el la mi 7o chk’ot, k’ot la...
Spook] arrived, but there wasn't much he could do. He seemed to be looking for chickens. There was only that little hen. Their hen had one chick now. The woman hadn't remembered to collect her eggs. There were two. [The Spook sucked them], drank them up.

He left. He left when the three nights were up. “Stay there, you bastard! You don't want company, you don't want to talk [to me],” said [the Spook]. He left. The three nights were up.

“Forget it!” said [the Spook]. I don't know if it was three or four months later when he came back again. They went outside [to go to the bathroom]. [Ordinarily] we go outside late at night, it seems.

That little boy [of theirs] said, “Mother, come feel what this is! A horrible freezing hand is touching my back. Come see what it is!” he said.

“How could it be, stupid!” she said. [His] mother was carrying a torch.

But [his] mother came [back]. It wasn't anywhere. But you see, something that looked the size of a cat went inside the house.

But it was that Spook!

Then they saw him. He was big when he was inside the house. He was big. His hat was big. Only his horrible face was black. “Oh, why did you open the house and let [the Spook] come in?” asked [the man]. “Never mind, don't worry! I'll get him out. I'll send off a bullet. You'll see!” said the man. Quickly he loaded his gun. [The Spook] was going around inside the house. He loaded his gun. He fired at [the Spook]. [The Spook] was impaled on a pole at the door. He grabbed that pole by the door and stumbled out. That horrible Spook was terribly scared. He fled away.

But he frightened that little boy. “Mother, a devil caught me. I don't know what it is. A freezing cold hand is touching me,” he said.

“Listzak i pukuje, me7, mu jna7 k'usi sik-chavan sil k'ob chispik,” xi la 7un.

“Pero, pero mu k'u chaxcha7le?” xi la 7un.
in-law, brother-in-law! he said to me when he was wetting my hair.

"I thought it was you. I thought he said Brother-in-law. But then I heard he was saying Brudder-in-law, brudder-in-law! So then it became clear. I knew it. But then I heard he was saying Brudder-in-law, law.

Now we are brave if there is "chief." Whoever knows how to grind "chief." Do you know what "chief" is? It's tobacco, well-ground, well-prepared. That's "chief." "Remember 'chief,' remember to put it at your door. Let it guard your door," said his brother-in-law.

"I've already put it there," he said.

"Take care, take care of yourself."

"All right, brother-in-law."

"We'll talk together tomorrow. Take care of yourselves. We'll see how you get through the night," he said.

"Okay," he said.

You see, it was the last time [the Spook] came. He didn't come anymore when they protected themselves. Because [tobacco] is a protection, it's a protection even against assassins.

When the Spook calls out, "Bal, bal," the man knows that it cannot be his brother-in-law, because bal is Tzeltal for "brother-in-law," while in Tzotzil the word is bol.

I know of no similar version of this Spook tale. Unfortunately, the humor of the Spook's believing the drunk to be on fire is lost to an English-speaking reader. It is the logical, but absurd conclusion to the Tzotzil recognition of cane liquor's marvelous heating qualities.

The loss of the dog's ear may be an incidental detail, borne of Tonik's remarkable imagination, or it may have historic precedent. A torn dog's ear is the day glyph for Itzecinthi in the Fejervary-Mayer codex and for Oc in Mayan codices. Thompson believes that it represents a syphilitic god (J. E. Thompson, 1960:79).

Tonik's faith in the magical properties of tobacco was shared by the Aztecs who, "upon giving the royal investiture to Moctezuma, fastened around his neck a tecomatillo [tiny gourd] in which to keep piciete [tobacco] 'which is strength for the roads' " (Recinos, Goetz, and Morley, 1957:209n). Bishop Landa described Mayan boys smoking during their puberty rites (J. E. Thompson 1970:108). During the ritual of the bacabs, tobacco smoke was blown towards the sun and the cardinal points (Kell, 1965:99). In Chenalho tobacco is allied with the thunderbolt—it protects body and life (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:177). In the film Appeals to Santiago, Tenejapan religious officials on the day of their appointment partake liberally of the tobacco stored in their gourds. Most Zinacantec houses have a tobacco plant growing near the door. The Indians' mystical attitude towards tobacco was adopted by European colonists. William Byrd of Virginia described how "[W]e wear it about our clothes and about our coaches... hang bundles of it round our beds." (Kell, 1965:106).

Tobacco was a traditional cure for toothache in Yucatan (J. E. Thompson, 1970:118). One of the first observed Indian practices, it is still today a folk cure for toothache in Ontario, New England, Appalachia, South Carolina, and among the Pennsylvania Dutch (Kell, 1965:108). See also T131.
Once the men of Zinacantán Center assembled. They went, because the priest saw it. “There is a bell here that rings at midday,” he said. “If you want the bell, let’s go dig it up and bring it to the church,” said the priest.

Don’t you see, the town still didn’t know [the truth] about the priest. The men assembled. It was about to come out. They were about to dig the bell up, long ago.

But you see, they had already reached half the bell. They were just about to reach its rim. They were digging. Around sixty men had gathered to dig. A lot of dirt was dug up. It was about to come out. It reached midday. They ate. They put their hats on top of the bell to cover it, it seems. They ate. After they ate, “Now, let’s go and dig again,” they said.

They had still seen [the bell] when they put their hats on top, but now the bell had sunk deeper.

“How can it be? What shall we do? Why does it seem to me to be deeper?” said [one] of the men.

“No, we’re almost there. It’s because you aren’t looking carefully. That’s just the way we left it,” said the others.

“All right,” he said.

“Let’s put some strength into it now! We’re stronger now that we’ve eaten!” said the men.

They dug and dug—g. They didn’t reach its rim. They stuck their digging sticks in. Then that priest arrived with his mistress. They didn’t see where it went. They didn’t see where it went. The ground was even. There was nothing. They just dug now. There wasn’t anything. There was just dirt. The priest just lost it for them, because the priest had a mistress. He had taken up with his maid. His maid ate with him and slept with him there. She seemed to take the place of a wife for the priest. That’s why [the bell] disappeared long ago. She isn’t wanted now. They don’t want a priest to have a maid anymore. Just a boy is wanted, a male companion to prepare his meals. They don’t want a woman to come in. That’s how the town lost its luck. Zinacantán was left without a penny. Who knows where [the bell] went. Those men said, “It must have moved someplace else. Who knows where it went, far away. Don’t you see, if it were our present it wouldn’t leave,” said [one]. “If we hadn’t brought a priest who had a mistress the bell would be ours.
now. The trouble is, who knows where it went. If it went far away. They were told that they saw it. They dreamt. They saw it at night. They saw it go [burning] like a pine torch. Ohh, up in the sky it went! It sai—led off. Haven't you seen a balloon go up? That's the way it bo—bed [up] and away, it went like this, like this, it seems, towards the road to Comitán. It went o—ff. It disappeared in the mountains. Yes, it left.

“We won't find anything now. There's nothing there, here in our mountains. We were right, the land has become poor. We were right, there's nothing left,” said the people long ago.

The shamans [said], “God, will the holy mountain stay just like this? Will the holy pit stay hollow this way?”

“Yes, indeed! There's nothing left. It went towards the road to Comitán. It lives now on the road to Comitán,” said the mountain, it seems. The shamans were told in their dreams.

They offered candles. They prayed where the earth was, where [the bell] came out. Have you seen where it came out? God, there's nothing left there, nothing now. That's why it hasn't changed. The ground just remained hollowed out. If there were anything there then maybe it would still be there, but it left. “It moved to another place because your priest was bad. He had his mistress with him,” said the Earth Lord. The Earth Lord said that.

As for the people, all the efforts of the sixty men who dug up the ground ended like that. That's how the money was lost. That's how all their labors ended. [The bell] was lost there. [The work] was abandoned. Ever since it's been abandoned. They don't dig there anymore, since there is nothing. They saw it go. That's why it was left abandoned like that.

When Tonik describes the bell sailing into the air like a globo her image is not of a rubber balloon, but rather of a popular Mexican fiesta device, consisting of a spherical frame covered with paper and enclosing a candle. When the candle is lit, the sphere rises rapidly into the chill night air, shining like a planet as it sails out of the valley and over the mountain tops.

The distinction between the Tutelary Gods and the Earth Lords who live in the mountains is apparently not as clear-cut as I had thought originally, because it seemed perfectly appropriate to Tonik that it would be the Earth Lord who was offended by the priest's mistress, while for Xun Vaskis it was the Tutelary God, Maria Muxul.

According to Tonik this event occurred around thirty-seven years earlier, i.e., in 1923. The priest Mariano Lievano became the source of still further controversy. Tonik described how he ordered the sacristans either to take the image of St. Lawrence to the other church, and for five days and five nights to the Church of St. Sebastian or burn it. They carried St. Lawrence to the other church, and for five days and five nights the rain fell without cease. The townspeople became so frightened that the sacristans returned St. Lawrence to his rightful home. The priest fell ill. He kept asking those attending him to pull off his shirt, because his back was on fire. He was taken to San Cristóbal, where he died shortly thereafter. See also T91, T114, T157, and their notes.

The Spook and the Comadre

Once there were a great many Spooks. Because of the Spooks, it wasn't possible to walk around. You couldn't go outside until nine o'clock. You couldn't go out alone. We walked with escorts. Then the
women got smart. There was [a woman] who had a comadre. They were neighbors. “Please, comadre, wake me up [in a little while], because I'm cooking my little bit of corn,” she said.

“All right,” answered her comadre. “Comadre, comadre!” she said. [The other’s] corn was spilling suddenly in the middle of the fire. Her fire was hissing now, since the fire was going out.

But no, it wasn't corn putting out the fire. It was because the Spook went and grabbed, molested the woman. The disgusting Spook's prick was so long it killed the woman. The woman died. When the other woman woke up, it was just blood there hissing.

You see her other friends came in a group. They came to look at their comadre.

But you see she was already dead. As for that Spook he was caught on an upright stake at the door. He was impaled. That house post came out of his mouth. And then they put him over the fire. They cooked him so that he would die for good. They boiled hot water for him so that they could scald him like a chicken.

You see, you see she was already dead. For that Spook he was caught on an upright stake at the door. He was impaled. That house post came out of his mouth. And then they put him over the fire. They cooked him so that he would die for good. They boiled hot water for him so that they could scald him like a chicken.

You see that one died like that. He burned up. They gathered firewood for him. They [used] corn-cobs since the people of long ago had a lot of corn. They didn't throw out their corn-cobs. They were glad to use them as firewood it seems. One died, but that wasn't enough, since there were so very many Spooks. Hairy Hand was the name of that Spook who died that way. Hairy Hand had many many children left—other Spooks. There was a lady, that comadre. She was clever.

You see, she boiled hot water. She put the boiling water on top of the fire. The Spook entered. “Nani—ta, mi li7ote?” he said as he arrived.

“I'm here. Come in. Do you drink coffee, do you drink posol? We'll boil the water for it,” he was told.

“I do,” said the Spook. He drank the posol. He ate the posol. When he was touching it to his mouth then they scalded him with boiling water.

But you know he wasn't burned well enough until he threw down his gourd. Then she threw it. The boiling water was thrown at his head. Then he died.

That comadre won. That was the way she threw boiling water at him. She scalded him it seems.

That one died. He died because of them. They put him on the fire. He burned up. The woman's comadre, that lady's comadre said to them, “Come on, let's burn them up! That's how we'll get rid of the Spooks. They grab people so much now. It isn't right the way they molest us. It isn't right what happened to that other woman. What he did—he dragged her to his cave.”
They breed too fast.
One child a night. How could we win? Some hunters passed by behind a cave. There where the cave was. The hunters passed by. “What men are you? Take me ou—t. Come, take me awa—y!”

“We can’t take you away now because we haven’t anything to get you out with. The cave is too deep. I’ll come to hunt and I’ll bring my lasso to get you out,” answered [one of] the hunters. They went to hunt on purpose there where she was. They took their rope. They threw it down. “I’ve come. Come on out! It’s me whom you told to get you out,” said [one of] the men.

The woman came out.
Her children were li—ned up along the hem of her skirt. They grabbed the hem of her skirt. They stuck on, one after another. One of her little children came out. She had a hard time pulling off all the others. Six of that woman’s children stayed behind it seems. Now the one that came out sticking to her skirt was already walking. It was following right behind. It went to the house of that woman. [The hunters] looked for four staves when they arrived at her house, when they arrived to return that woman at the house of her father and mother, it seems. There where she went out she had been pouring out the lime water when she was stolen away a long time before.

They arrived there. They looked for those four staves. They held a curing ceremony. She had a curing ceremony. Her candles were offered [at the shrines], but they did no good. That Spook went there three nights searching. He just wanted to steal his wife back. But that child of his, the little baby Spook, they stuck in the fire so he would die. As for that old Spook, this is what they did about him—those four staves at the edge of her bed guarded her. They guard people. He never could take the woman away.

But you see, I don’t know if the woman lasted one month or three weeks. She died. The woman just peed lime water. That’s how the woman died when she returned it seems.

They buried her. The Spook kept coming all the time, frightening people. He thought his wife was still there. When he returned, it seems she had died already. She had already been buried. The woman had entered the grave. The Spook hadn’t wanted his wife to die. He thought she was still alive. He wanted to take her to his house another time.

The people were scared. They were upset about him wandering and wandering about, coming to look and look [for his wife]. They just assembled to...
get him. Four men gathered together at night. They shot at him. They just shot at him, but they never hit him. It wasn't until they went to look in that cave that the woman had been taken out of. They went to kill him with guns. He died, the old one died.

But his children were left. So then the women assembled to get them. They died of boiling water. They burned them. They would cook a turkey for them.

Now they won't finish eating their turkey. Sometimes the Spooks are scalded to death with boiling water. Or else, when the hot water is bubbling, when the water is boiling, then they scald the Spooks first. Or else when their meal is bubbling—"Wait, drink a little coffee," they would say. Then when they touched the gourd to their lips they would throw the boiling water at them and scald them. That's how they killed them. They cut them to pieces with machetes so that their flesh wouldn't stick together. [The people] called them Hairy Hands long ago. They couldn't be killed unless they were scalded with boiling water. That's how they got rid of the Spooks long ago.

You see that's how the Spooks have gotten fewer. Long ago we couldn't go outside until nine o'clock. At three o'clock you close up the house, close the door. You'd better have your water, your things [inside]. A load of firewood is put inside during the day. No more can come in. Then we draw our water. We can't go anywhere. The house is closed. Someplace inside you go to the bathroom. Look for a place to go to the bathroom. We can't go outside. We were closed up inside long ago. My mother told about it. It seems it was my mother's grandmother who saw it. But now there aren't any. God willing there aren't any Spooks now. There's nothing to scare people, because they were scalded to death with boiling water. They were burnt up. Long ago the fires were made for them.

It was her comadre who spoke to her. "Comadre, what is it, what is it, your corn boiled over. Look!"

But it wasn't her comadre who answered, it was the Spook now. "The corn's ready, coma—dre" the Spook answered.

"Here's what you look. What do you think? It was the Spook they found. The Spook fled, but he was caught on a stake by the door. His ass was impaled. It came out his mouth. They burned him up.

"Lime water" is the same as nixtamal water, that is, the water used to boil corn before it is ground.

The use of staves to protect a person from Spooks seems to be peculiar to this and the following tale. In Tenejapa a pole of the ch'ijt bush is said to be protection from Spooks, as it "will burst into flames upon seeing evil demons" (Stross, 1973:105). Ch'it in

7istzob sbai ta 7ak'ubaltik stuk'aik la 7un, naka la stuk'aik pero mu no la bu staik 7un, ja7 to la ti ba sk'elik taj yo7 buy taj ch'en lok'esbil tal taj 7antz 7une, ba smilik la ta tuk' 7un, 7icham 7icham ti mol ya7ei 7une.

K'usi ja7 tikom ti xch'amaltak 7une, ja7 to taj 7iswa7i sbai taj 7antzetzik 7une ja7 taj ta k'ak'al vo7 xa 7ixchik' la ech'el j-kot tuluk' spanbeik la.

7Ora, mu xiaj sti7 ti tuluk'e, 7o la ja7 ba7yi chlaj ta tulel ta k'ak'al vo7 taj j7ik'al, mo7oje ja7 la xbalbon i k'ak'al vo7e, chvokan ya7el ti k'ak'al vo7e, ja7 taj tzuluk ba7yi tai 7a li j7ik'ale, mo7oje ja7 la xbalbon li sve7ele. "Malao 7un 7uch'an j-tz'uujk kajve," xi. K'alal stijan ti boch ta ye 7une, ja7 7o la tzk'eebeik k'ak'al vo7 tzuluk 7un, ja7 la tzmilik 7un, 7o la 7istuch'ilanik ta machita yo7 ti mu xa stzak 7o sba ti sbek'tal 7une, ja7 la ti tzotz k'ob sbi yu7unik ti vo7ne 7une, yech'o xal ti mu la xcham ta milel naka la ta k'ak'al vo7 7itul yu7unik 7ich'ay 70 ti j7ik'al ti vo7ne 7une.

Va7i 7un, k'u xi xi bik'taj ti j7ik'aletik, 7a ti vo7ne mu la stak' xibatotikotik ta pana stama 7a li baluneb 7ora, 7oxib 7ora, yu7un xamaklan ta na mako sti7 7ana 7oyuk 7ava7al 7oyuk k'u 7oy 7avu7un, 7a ti si7e, j-chep la ch7och ta k'ak'al mu la xu7 x7och mas, ja7 7o ta jupul ka7altikotik mu xa stak' bu xibatotikotik makal na, te xa 7oyuk buy xach'ay aba ta yut na, sa7bo yav ti k'usi chach'ay 70 abae, mu xa stak' xilok'otikotik makalotikotik ta na ti vo7ne la ti slo7iltaoj ti jme7e, ti smuk'ta me7 ti jme7e ti buch'u yiloj ya7el 7une, yan lavi 7une, mu xa buy 7un, sk'anuk 7o ti kajvaltike, ch'abal xa j7ik'al 7un, mu xa k'u sbitasvan 7un, ja7 taj 7ilaj ta tulel ta k'ak'al vo7 7ilaj ta chik'el tzobbat sk'ak'al ti vo7ne 7une.

Ja7 ti skumale 7une, 7iyalbe la sbai 7un, "Kumale, k'usi ti k'usi 7imal 7avu7un taj 7aju7e, k'elo kik!"

Bu yu7un, ma7uk xa 7itak'ay ti kumaleil 7une ja7 xa la ta k'ak'al vo7 ti j7ik'al. "Jux tale kuma—le jux tale kuma—le!" xi la ta k'ak'al ti j7ik'al 7une.

Va7i 7un, la ba sk'elik 7un, k'u xa chavil 7un, j7ik'al la te 7a staik 7un, jatav lok'el taj j7ik'al 7une, ja7 taj pajal 7ista te7 taj ti7 na 7une, xo7jol 7ik'ot ta xchak 7un, lok' ta ye 7un, 7ixchik' ta k'ok' 7un.

Zinacantán is the brush cherry (Eugenia sp.), but I have never heard of such a use ascribed to it. Tonik identifies Hairy Hands as Spooks, while Xun Vaskis claims that they are rain creatures, Tutelary Gods of the Chiapanecs (T157).

This tale is paralleled by an account from Chamula. A woman...
goes outside at nighttime to rinse her corn. She is carried off by a winged devil. A month later she is found outside her house, but her body stinks horribly, and she is unable to talk. After she regains her speech, she tells how she was carried to the devils’ cave. The devils had debated, “Shall we eat her or fuck her?” They dumped the poor woman on the bed and went to work, feeding her rotten jerked meat between their assaults. In three weeks she delivered a baby boy who could fly at birth. Her son grew up immediately, pushed a rock away from the cave entrance, and took his mother home. When her devilish husband returned to find her gone, he ate their son. The poor woman never recovered. She died (Gossen, T39). see also T67, T122, T123, T145, T146, and their notes.

The Spooks
T145

Long ago, they say there used to be so many Spooks. Long ago you couldn’t go anywhere. At eight o’clock there were still Spooks. By nine o’clock we could go about. We’d go wherever we were going. Around four o’clock in the afternoon, you couldn’t go out anywhere. In the morning you couldn’t go anywhere. Just around noon you could go about. But early in the morning your couldn’t go anywhere.

Once, then, the wood gatherers went, were taken by the Spooks. When the wood gatherers came back, they didn’t all come back. Just two or three would come back. Even more so if they hadn’t any men with them, then they simply all disappeared.

Little by little the people long ago learned what to do about so many Spooks. They never saw when their friends disappeared. Then when they went, they stayed close together getting their wood. Their men would go and fell the trees. The women would get their firewood. They would crowd together around the branches. The men would cut them with axes. Then they would come back fine. But when the women went by themselves, if they separated from each other a little distance, they were caught by the Spooks. They were carried off by the Spooks.

They would be taken off. There was a woman, there where the boarding school is now. She was taken by the Spook, because she went out to draw her water, just after the sun had appeared.

She went out to draw her water. She was carrying a pot of water. Her pot was standing there, she was gone. The woman went off—carried off to the cave, to his cave. Who knows, when they went to take her out, that came out with the help of three ropes. But she had already seen the Spook’s six children.

Every week another Spook’s child [was born].

“A week after I had come to this house I had a child. I had one. The next week, another one.”

I don’t know if the Spook had six or four children or what. Some hunters passed by where she was. As for the poor woman. “Halloo, who are you, don’t you

7A ti vo7nee 7oy 7oy la toj toyol j7ik’al, ti vo7nee mu la stak’ bu xibattik, ta vaxakib 7ora k’ak’ale yu7n 7o to j7ik’al, ta baluneb 7orae ja7 stak’ xa bu xibattik, xibattik tzi7bej xibattik bu xibattik, 7a ti k’alal lek nan chanib 7ora k’ak’ale mu xa stak’ bu xalok’, so—b ja7 nox ta 7ol k’ak’—a—l, ta sobe muk’ bu stak’ bu xabat, lek 7ol k’ak’altike ja7 nox bu xu7 xabat, yan i sobe mu stak’ bu xabat.

7A ti vo7nee che7e 7oy 7oy la xbat xsi7biletik tey la chbat ta j7ik’al, tzut talel ti xsi7biletike ch’abal xa tz’akalik tal, 7o xa nox ch7-vo7 7o xa 7ox-vo7 tut talem, mas ti mi mu7yuk svnikalike yu7n solel te bat 7o skotol.

Va7i 7un, k’unk’un la 7iixchanbeik smelol ti krixchano vo7ne k’u x7elan toj tol j7ik’al 7une, mu7yuk buy xich’ 7ilel ya7el ti x7elan ta xbat 7une ja7 to chbatik 7un nopol xa la tz7a7ik ssi7ik, chbat la svnikalike sa slomesik te7 ta ssa7ik ti ssi7ik li 7antzetik szzoboj sbaiq te ta k’ob te7 7une, ja7 ti vinik 7une te tzuch’ ta 7ek’el 7un, ja7 lek tzutik tal bi 7a, yan i k’alal chbatik stuk 7antzetik ji7 ti buy snatil sk’ej sbaiq ju-jun tale te tzake 7o ta j7ik’al bat ta j7ik’al.

Va7i 7un, ta x7ik’e ech’el, 7oy jun 7antze te ta 7a li yo7 li 7internado xa tanae, 7ibat ta j7ik’al yu7n la lok’ spul ya7al li lek naka xlok’ tal k’alak.

Va7i 7un, 7ilok’ spul ya7al 7un, jun p’in slikoj ti ya7al 7une, te vuchul ti sp’ine ch’abal li stuke, bat ti 7antze, 7ik’e ech’el ta ch’en, 7a li xch’ene, 7a li na7ti—l, 7a li 7ox-p’ej la riata 7ilok’ 7o taj 7antze ti k’al 7a loko’stale pero 7isk’el xa 7ox komel ta ssat vak-vo7 xch’amal ti j7ik’al.

Ta vaxakibvaxakib la k’ak’al ju-jun xch’amal ti j7ik’al.

“Vaxakib k’ak’al ya7el li7 jtalal li7 ta nae 7o xa jun kol, jun, 7otro jun vaxakib k’ak’al 7otro jun.”

Va7i 7un, mu jna7 mi vak-vo7 mi chan-vo7 mi k’u la xi xch’amal ti j7ik’al 7une, 7ech’ la ti jpxa ylatik ti yo7 buy 7une. 7A ti prove 7antze 7une, “Ju—je,
you recognize me? It's me. I'm his wife," I don't know what that man's name was. "It's me. I live there, there by 7Olon Ravol [Lower Ranch]," she said.

"Ah!" they said. "Who is that? Lord, let's go see who it is! I think it's one of our people," said the men. They went to look.

"God, if you have a rope, to—ss it down to me, because I [want to] get out. I don't want to be here anymore. I'm tired of it, it seems," said the woman. And each of the men had brought, I don't know if it was a rope apiece. Because they had gone to look for deer, for deer.

They got their... they tied their ropes together. The woman came out with the help of three ropes. The woman got out. "Isn't your husband there? We don't want to die!" said the men. There were twelve men who got her out.

"No, if you can get me home, my [real] husband will pay you when I arrive," she said. She got out. They took her to her husband's house.

Huh, I don't know—w if the woman's husband was called Xu—n or Maryan or what. They took her to where her house was. "God, My Lord, I never thought I'd see my house, I never thought I'd reach my home!" said the woman, when she arrived. Her husband wasn't there, just his children were there.

"How much shall we pay you for bringing our mother back?" asked the boys. I don't know if the woman had four sons. As for the four boys, they borrowed some money and gave it to the hunters.

Well, that was all. They had already gotten a deer. Three of them [came with the woman]. They had left it way back in the woods, since they first came to leave that woman. They knew that she had been abducted. She was an abducted woman. As for the poor guys, they took that money with them, their pay, it seems. I don't know if it was fifteen pesos or how much for leaving that woman in her home. Then they went back. They left. They went to meet up with their food, when [their friends] came walking back. They caught up with the meat. They came back to divide it up. They divided it up at San-kixtoval [Saint Christopher]. There is a field there. There is a place there we call 7Isbontikal Vo7 [Dogwood Spring]. There in the field, they divided it up. They divided it amongst themselves there. One received his share, the next received his share. "Let's divide it up. Now our fifteen pesos' pay we'll have to divide up equally among the twelve of us. We'll get several pesos apiece since there are twelve of us," they said. They were given fifteen pesos. They figured out there how much money they would give each other, [how much] each one would get. The money was divided up. The meat was divided up.

TONIK NIBAK

buch'uoxu--k, mi mu xavojtiikmiko—n, vo7on me ti yajion. Mu jna7 k'usi la sbi taj vinik 7une. "Vo7on me 7a li te nakalon 7a li te 7a li xi ta 7Olon Ravole," xi la un.

"7Aa!" x7utat la 7un. "Buch'u 7un taje, kere, ba jk'eltik kik buch'u, jch'7ilikt chka7i," xi la ti viniketik 7une. Ba la sk'elik 7un.

"Yo7s, mi mu nox 7ok 7ach'ojon—k tenbeko—n tal yu7n chilok’ mu xa jk'an li7one chtavan ya7el," xi la ti 7antz 7une, 7i 7o la yich'oju7n me jna7 mi ju-p'ej sriati ti viniketik 7une, yu7n la sa7-chij batem 7un, te7tikil chij.

Va7i 7un, 7istaik la ti, 7istz'akik la ti sriataik 7une 7ox-tz'ok la ti riata lok' 7o tal ti 7antz 7une, lok' la tal ti 7antz 7une. "Mi muk' me te 7amalal 7un me mu jk'an xilajotikóti7ik," xi la ti viniketike. Lajcha-vo7 la ti viniketik 7ilok'esvan tal 7une.

"Mo7oj, ja7 nox chak jta jna 7avu7unike te chastojik ti jmalal mi nik'ote," xi la ti 7antz 7une. Lok' tal 7un 7ay yak'ik ti yo7 sna ti smalal 7une. Ja7 mu jna7—k Xi Xu—n mi Maryan k'usi sbi ti smalal ti 7antz 7une, 7ay yak'el ti yo7 buy ya7el ti sna 7une. "Yo7s kajval, mi xkil to ka jta jta jnae xkil to ka jta ti jk'ulebel' xi la k'otel ti 7antz 7une. Muk' la tey ti smalal 7une k'ajom no la xch'amaltak tey 7un.

"K'u yepal chastojotikóti7ik lavik'ik tal li jme7tiikotike?" xi la ti kremotik 7une. Mu jna7 mi chan-vo7 la skremotik 7oy ti 7antz 7une, 7a ti chan-vo7 kremotik 7une ja7 la 7ixch'amunik tak'7in 7un yak'beik la ti jtk'aviletik 7une.

Beno, mu k'usi ja7 la ti staojik xa 7ox j-kot te7tikil chij 7un ja7 la 7ox-vo7 jyavai 7un nat to la komem ta te7tik 7un ja7 la ba7i tal yak'ik taj 7antze ja7 la tzna7ik ti chpoj, xpojbat i 7antz 7une, 7a ti proveetik 7une yich'ik la ech'el taj tak'in stojolik ya7el 7une, mu jna7 mi vo7-lajuneb pexu k'u la xi tal yak'ik' 7o na ta taj 7antz 7une, ja7 7o sutik ech'el 7un batik 7un, ba snupik tal ti sve7elik ya7el ti buy chanav tal 7une, staik la ta nupel tal ti bek'et 7un tal 7un tal xkich'tik 7une, 7aj la ch'ak ta San-kixtoval 7une, 7a li 7oy stentejtik te yo7e, 7oy 7Isbontikal Vo7 sbi ku7untikóti7ik teyo7e, ja7 la te ta stentejtik 7un te la ch'ak 7un, te la xch'a7be sbai7 7un, yich' sparate ju7e, yich' sparate ju7e. "Jch'ak jbatik 7un, 76ra li vo7-lajuneb pexu jtojoltik 7une yu7 nox ta parejo ta jch'akbe jbatik la7i lajcha-vo7otik 7une, jayjay pexu ta xkich'tik 7un la7i lajcha-vo7otik 7une," xi la.

Vo7-lajuneb la pexu 7ak'bat 7un, te la snitbe sbai7 k'u yepal ta xak'be sbai7 ti tak'in ju-jun 7iyich'ik 7une, 7ich'ak ti tak'7in 7ich'ak ti bek'ete.
"We've each gotten our little share. Let's go, I guess! We'll see, I guess, if we aren't found out. It's bad if we're found out. God will surely save us now from being caught by our [grandfather, the Spook]!" said the men.

"Lord, don't be afraid! He won't catch us. He'll go look for his meal at her house, of course! You'll see, I guess, if we aren't found out. It's bad if we're found out. God will surely save us now from being caught by our [grandfather, the Spook]!" said the men.

"Lord, don't be afraid! He won't catch us. He'll go look for his meal at her house, of course! You'll see, I guess, he has to!" one of their companions, an old man, said now. As for the old man, he was right, it was no story! The first night [the Spook] wouldn't let the husband, the woman's husband, get to sleep. God, My Lord, he was groping about there, walking about, [trying to find a way] into the house, but the man, the woman, the boys were dying of fright. You couldn't sleep at all, not even a minute, you couldn't sleep.

It was probably around, probably just before dawn. He kept going, returning. [That awful Spook?] The Spook, since he was coming back to look for his wife.

Nine nights. When the nine nights were up, he went for good.

What difference did it make? Where her bed was, like where your cupboard is, here, they had made a good bed for that poor woman. Because they had a curing ceremony right away. She had a ceremony, since she was sick now. They say she couldn't pee properly anymore. The woman just peed lime water.

"What shall we give her to drink? What in the world will cure a woman who is sick like that?" said her sons. "Our mother is sick!" they probably said.

"I don't know what she can be given. Shouldn't we ask a shaman?" they said.

Then, "Forget it, I'm not well anymore, so—n. I'm going to die. I have no strength left," said the woman.

"What do you feel, what hurts?"

"I have no strength at all. My whole body is sick," said the poor woman.

"We'll have a curing ceremony for you, then," they said.

"Eh, it may be that you'll just be spending your money in vain, my chi—ldren. It was so terrible where I went. It's true there was chicken, of course. Every day I ate chi—cken. Every day I ate. What I think really made me sick were my six children that stayed behind," she said. There were six children by that Spook. "Every week I had another child," said the poor woman.

"That's what you got sick from, then, mother. It couldn't have been anything else that made you sick," they said.

They sent for a shaman. [Their mother] had a steam cure, she was warmed up, and so on, that poor woman. She was just a tiny bit sick, if only [the
Spook] hadn’t arrived over and over. E—very night. He wouldn’t let you sleep. After she was given a curing ceremony, she was just a li—ttle [sick].

You see, the last night that he came, he si—mply grabbed the door. He tugged and tugged at the door. The thing is, I don’t know if you know what a stave is? That’s what they got, four staves, one for each corner of her bed. Two for the door. Two behind her bed like this. Four around the woman’s bed.

Then, with that, he left. Then, with that he retired a bit. It was probably because the sticks had soul. Who knows what the wood was, since it was ancient wood.

Then, with that, he left. He left the Spook, as we call him, left. He didn’t come back again. Three months later he came back one night. “Nani—ta, little Ma—ry,” he said when he arrived. “Nani—ta, little Ma—ry, little daughter, where are you?” he said. Ooh, the boys were scared.

“Will he get in, My Lord? Will he get in, St. Lawrence?” they said. They lit the fire. They looked at their fire. They put wood on it. “God, we can’t possibly open the door now, indeed! We haven’t any wood left. What can we do?” said the boys. “Ah, we’ll take her bed, our beds, we’ll put them on. We’ll burn them in the fire,” they said. “No, we’ll never get through the night, he’ll just come in,” they said.

They looked. They put them o—n. With that, he left. The next morning around six o’clock, at dawn, it seems, he left. That was the end of it. That was the last time he came, that one time when he came after three months. He never came again. What difference did it make to the woman? She got sick. She was still sick. She never got well. She lasted just half a year in that house. When the mother died, things went wrong. One of the younger brothers went to live with his wife. The other brothers got married now, one was engaged now, two had no wives when their mother died.

Of the three, of the three boys, one was engaged to his future wife, the others didn’t have the money for it, since they grew corn with their father. The two were different [from the first].

What could you do? All four couldn’t get wives all of a sudden. Two now had wives, it seems. One was married now, one was engaged now, two had no wives when their mother died.

When the mother died, things went wrong. One of the younger brothers went to live with his wife. The j-mek, si—l la 7ak’ubal yu7n la mu xak’ vayikotik 7une, yo j-tz’u—j 7ox la ti k’al 7iyich’ vokol 7une.

K’u xavil 7un, ja7 la taj slajeb xa 7ak’ubal 7i7ay 7une, so—isol la stzak ti ti7 nac, xi la snit ta j-mek ti ti7 nac, k’usi mu jna7 mi xavojtikin 7a ti 7ak te7e, ja7 la 7issa7ik ssa7ik taj 7a li skremotik 7une, chanib la 7ak te7 7un, ju-jun la ju-jun la sti7il stem, chib la ta ti7 na, chib la xi ta spat steme chanib ta svayeb stuk 7i 7antz 7une.

Va7i 7un, ja7 ja7 to la me bat 7o 7un, ja7 to me lok’lok’ 7o 7un, bu ti ja7 o xch’ulel nan i te7e, na7tik k’usi x7elan li te7e 7antivo te7 chava7i 7un.

Va7i 7un, ja7 to la bat 7o 7un, bat ti 7a li j7ik’al skaltik 7une mu xa bu 7ay 7un, ta yoxibal to la 7u 7un jun la 7ak’ubal 7i7ay 7un. Nani—ta, Maruchi—ta!” xi la k’otel 7un. “Nani—ta, Maruchi—ta, 7ijita, buyot?” xi la 7un. Jiii, xi7ik la ti kremotike.

Va7i 7un, mi ch7och tal 7un, kajval, mi ch7och tal 7un San-torenso!” xi la. Stzoy la ti sk’ok’ike sk’el la ti sk’ok’ike yak’ la ti ssi7ike. “Yo7s mu xa yorauk ta jjamtik na li a7a ch’abal ti jsi7tik 7une k’usi ta jnopitik 7un?” xi la ti kremotik 7une. “7A jjamtik i 7a li stem 7a li jvayebtike ja7 betik, 7a li kak’tik ta k’ok’,” xiik la 7un. “Mo7oj mu7 nox sakub naka me 7ochuk tal,” xiik la 7un.

Va7i 7un, sk’elik la 7u—n yak’ik la 7u—n 7ibat 7o 7un, sakub ti 7osil lek nan vakib 7ora 7ik’-luman ya7el 7une bat la 7un ch’ab xi la 7un, slajeb la me ay7 ti ta yoxibal 7u j-7ech’el 7i7ay 7une, mu xa la bu 7ay 7un, k’u stu ti 7antz 7uneee, 7ipaj, 7ip xa 7onox 7un mu xa 7onox bu lek, 7i yo 7o7ol la xa la jabil 7ech’ ti ta sna 7une, sta 7o7ol jabil cham la 7u—n—n, ja7 la ti chopol xa ti chbat ta yut moke ja7 la muk’ lek ja7 la 7ipaj li yav jk’abtike na7tik k’usi spas mu la bu sta xa spoxil, naka la la ssa7beik spoxil mu xa la smeltzaj ti prove 7antz 7une, vakib xa 7u xch’i7in ti smalal ya7el 7une, mu xa bu jai 7ich’i7in ti kremotike, ti xch’amaltake, jun to lae yil to la nupun, 7ox-vo7 xa muk’ xil xnupun.

Va7i 7un, ta yox-va7al, ta yox-va7al kremotike, jak’bil la kom yajnil ti june, 7a li june mu to 7ox la buy stak’inal ja7 la ti yu7un chchabaj xch’i7uk ti stote, slekoj cha7-vo7.

Va7i 7un, mu k’u xacha7le ya7el ta jun tiro sa7bel yajnil xchan-va7al 7un, cha7-vo7 xa 7oy ya7el yajnil, june yik’oj xa li june k’ubul xa, cha7-vo7 7une ja7 ch’abal yajnilik 7un ti k’al 7icham i sme7ik 7une.

Va7i 7un, ja7 to sok ti k’alal ?icham ti me7il 7une, tael xa la bat ti jun 7itz’al 7une, 7a ti june lok’ to la
other one got a wife. The wife of the older brother paid [the bride-price]. Then the older brother's wife acted as her mother-in-law. [His bride] came and joined his older brother's wife. They lived together. She took the place of the mother.

They arrived. They fed the poor old man there. They gave him his meals. They looked after their father, it seems.

When the women had babies, the grandfather was kind to his little grandchildren. The poor old man stayed with the babies. The others went to get firewood, they went to San Cristóbal or Chamula or wherever they went, since the woman [the old man's wife] had gotten sick and died, it seems. The poor things were all alo-ne.

Just that the Spook wasn't around much anymore, after that time months ago. Because it used to be, long ago, that at six o'clock at dawn, it was just the Spooks' time. You couldn't go anywhere. Little by little things got better. Three months after, after that woman came back, probably he was scared or something, or who knows what, that he had stolen the woman. [But the Spooks] didn't stop coming.

Ah, it was a serious business, too. There is another part, too. They say there was a Spook who was a Hairy Hand. He couldn't be killed. It was different, it was different, indeed! But as for [the first story] that's all there is to it. The poor lady died. The babies were left all by themselves.

[Were the babies the children of the awful Spook?] No, they weren't. The children of that Spook, they turned out very badly. The children of that woman, our countrywoman, turned out badly. They turned out to be different. They couldn't be killed.

That's all there was. And those babies were left all alone, the chi—ldren of the first man.

This account of the Spooks, with incidents similar to some in the previous tale and some in “The Spook and the Saints” (T130), was told after a lapse of eleven years.

The phrase jnae . . . jk’ulebe, “my house . . . my home,” is a traditional way to refer to one’s house in ritual speech. The woman's use of ritual speech gives an indication of the intensity of her emotions arriving back home.

The term provedik, translated here as “poor guys,” connotes “kind-hearted” or “compassionate guys.”

Toniq, who always delights in providing a numerical qualifier for the most insignificant details, provided the hunters with the tricky mathematical problem of dividing fifteen pesos equally among the twelve of them. But they clearly are undaunted as they exclaim “We'll get several pesos apiece since there are twelve of us!”

Our Lady of the Salt

Long ago when Salinas was formed, the Virgin arrived there. A man saw her. As for the man, 7A ti vo7ne k'alal 7imeltzaj i 7a li Vo7-bitze yu7un la k'ot 7a li jch'ul-me7 tik teye, jun la vinik 7iyil. 7A
“What are you doing, son? What are you looking for here?” asked the Virgin.

“I’m not doing anything, ma’am. I’m taking a walk. I’m looking at my little bit of land, because I’d like to clear off my little bit of brush, since the season has arrived, it seems. I’m looking to see if the little river that goes by here, it seems, hasn’t risen too high. I’d like to do a little [work] in my tiny corn field,” he said.

“Ah!” she said. “So that’s what you’re doing!” she said. “If you wanted to, if you wanted to chat and tell your friends, those who are the wisest, who seem the manliest ... If you want to build a house for me here, build a church for me here... because I am very pleased by the holy place I’d like to live on it here. I’d like to be seated here. If you want to build a little house for me here. I’ll come [to learn] what they said. I’ll come in two weeks. I’ll come here to wait for you [to find out] what [your friends] said. Think it over, son. Think it over, if you want to talk about it with your friends, if you want to tell your friends. If you want me to I’ll come to hear [about it].”

“Oh, it’s no trouble, ma’am. It’s no trouble. I guess I’ll tell at least one family. If I’m answered favorably I’ll come back and wait for you. It doesn’t matter whether I’m answered favorably or not I’ll come and wait for you anyway, ma’am. Don’t worry. If they want [to do it] I’ll come tell you. If they don’t want [to do it] I’ll come tell you, [too].

“How could they know what we have come to do—where I have come to sit? I am coming to sit here under the avocado tree. There under the avocado tree is where I am coming to sit. But you understand if they want [to do it], then I will bring something, I want a sluice made for our salt. We will have salt. You will make our salt.

“You understand, you will earn your money with it. You will earn your pennies with it. I will help you if you build me a house. You will have salt. You will make griddles. You will crystallize my salt. There will be no problems at all. I am the second oldest sister. My older sister is in Zinacantan Center. My younger sister is in Ixtapa,” she said. [No, I was wrong.] It’s the second oldest sister in Ixtapa. It’s the youngest sister now in Salinas.

“My older sister is content now. She is settled now. She has a house. Her house has been built already, but the men there did what she said. Her house was built for her. Right away they did what my older sister said.

“Now, as for me, I’d like to have my house, too, if you’ll be so very kind, it seems, if you’ll build a house for me.”

“I’ll hear about it, too, if you come, ma’am, if you won’t deceive me, if it seems you aren’t just tricking me.”

“7A!” xi la 7un. “7Ava7i k’u chapas!” xi la. “7A ti yu7unuk no xak’an yu7un 7ak’an lo7ilajan 7avalbe 7achi?iltak 7a li buch’u mas xa 7oy xch’ulele mas xa viniketik ya7ele, mi xak’an xameltzanbekon jna xameltzanbekon jun keklixa li7 toe, yu7un batz’i lek 7ikil i ch’ul-balamile, chak naklikon 7o ka7i, chak 7a li cholchik li7 toe, mi xak’an 7un chapasbekon kunen na li7 toe, ti k’usi xi 7une, chital 7un k’al vo7-lajuneb k’ak’al chital li7 chal jmalaoat ti k’usi xi, nopo ka7titik, krem, nopo ka7titik, mi xak’an xalo7itabe li 7achi?iltake, mi xak’an xavalbe lachi?iltake, ti mi yu7un chak’an 7une, chtal ka7i 7un.”

“7An mu k’usi, me7titik, mu k’usi, ta xkalbe ka7titik j-chopuk buch’u, mi lek litak’bate, ta xtal jmalaoat 7ak’ 7o no 7ox mi lek mi lek xitak’bat, ta 7onox tal jmalaoat, me7titik, mu k’u xal 7avo7on ti mi yu7un sk’anike, xtal kalbot, mi mu sk’anike, chtal kalbot.”

“Mi7n chna7e to k’usi chtal jpas tik bu xtal chotlikone, li7 chtal chotlikon ta yolon 7une, 7a li yo7 yolon 7one, te chtal chotlikon, 7an pero va7i 7un, ti mi yu7un sk’an 7une, yu7un ta akich’ 7o tal k’usuk 7un, 7a li ta jk’an tmeltzaj 7a li sjomal katz’amik, ta x7ayan katz’amik, chameltsanik katz’amik 7un.

“Va7i 7un, ja7 xa chasa7 7o 7atak’inik, chasa 7 7o 7ameriok, chajkoltaik xa ti mi7n yu7un chameltzanik i jna 7a, ta x7ayan 7avatz’amik chapas 7asemetic, chavulesik katz’am 7un, mu xa k’usi 7un bi 7a, vo7on me li, vo7on me li 7o7ol molikone, ja7 me 7a li jvixe te ta Jtek-lume, te me li jun jmu7 te ta Nibake,” xi la 7un. Ja7 la 7o7ol molik li te ta Nikale 7une, ja7 la k’oxil mulik lavi ta Vo7-bitz 7une.

Va7i 7un, “7A ti, 7a li jvixe che7e, jun xa yo7on, nakal xa, 7oy xa sna, meltzajem xa sna, pero 7ich’un mantal 7a li viniketik te yo7e, meltzanbat sna 7ich’unbat smantal ta 7ora, 7a li jvixe.”

“7Ora, vo7on xa li kiluk ko7on jk’an jna 7uk 7une, mi xach’ul-7abolajik ya7el 7une, mi xameltzanik jnae.”

“Ta xka7i 7uk 7un, mi chatal 7un, me7titik, mi mu xalo7loom 7un, mi mu yechuk xalo7loom ya7el 7une.”
"Why wouldn't I come? I want to settle, if you want to build my little house for me, howe—ver small. We'll produce salt here, it seems. You won't have anything to worry about at all. You will have salt. You will crystallize it, then you will sell it. With that you will eat and drink. You won't have to buy your salt. You will have salt."

"Oh, I guess I'll chat about it. You will hear what I'm told in two weeks," said the boy.

The boy arrived home. She left. "Just stay there, son. Just stay there. Take care. I'll talk to you in two weeks," said the lady.

That's what he was told. The boy didn't see where the woman went.

"Oh, was it a real person? Was it a person who told me she wanted a house? Couldn't it have been something kind of dirty work? If it were something announcing my death. If I should die from it?" said the man. "Eh, I guess I'll go talk about it first with my mother and my father. [I'll find out] what they tell me, if it's a messenger of death. If they tell me it's my mother and my father. [I'll find out] what they tell me, if it's a messenger of death. If they tell me it's something bad, that will be terrible. That won't be good at all!" said the awful boy.

He had a grandfather. So he arrived there to talk about it with his grandfather. "Don't worry, son. You'd better go wait [for her]. She might be the Virgin, since you've learned that she has an older sister, you've learned she has a younger sister, [I mean] you've learned she herself is the youngest sister. But that is known since there are three of them living wherever each of them wants to have her own seat. Could it be I am not conversing properly, for that is what I saw, that is what I heard? That's what I tell myself, that's how I understand it. All the men should meet. Come on, we'll build it for her. We'll make her house, collect the money, if that's what they say. If they don't come, then we aren't good for anything at all. I can ask my grandfather, you should have told her."

"Oh I certainly didn't say that. That lady set apart a two week period. Two weeks, because she wants to come and settle down. Because she wants a little house. [She wants] to come here."

"Two weeks is still plenty of time. Decide what you want to do. Tell whomever you want to tell. I think I'll tell my compadre, Maryan," said [his grandfather]. "My compadre, Xun, too. [I'll see] what my compadre Xun tells me. I guess I'll learn if he'll say, Let's build it! Let's make a house, of whatever size, for her to live in!"

He talked about it with his compadre. "I don't know if it's true that she talked to my boy. There is a woman, he says, who wants to settle [here]."
“Oh, could it be the Virgin?” asked the compadre.

“Huh, how can you think it’s the Virgin? If it’s a lady who wants to fluff wool, to spin, to weave here in our homes are we going to turn her down? We’ll be satisfied if she covers us. We’ll be satisfied if she clothes us. She’ll make our shirts and our neckerchiefs. Lord, how can we refuse to let that poor lady live here? It’s worth it to build her a little gabled house, however small,” they said.

They built a gabled house for her. They gathered together. “What else can we do?”

But you see the house was built right away in the place where she said she wanted her house. The house was built right away.

Who knows how many years afterwards, the ground split open. There was a little stream that descended from the foot of the cliff by the door of the Virgin’s house. The ground split open and now a river appeared.

But you see, the Virgin was leaning against the avocado tree. Her house was completely flooded with water.

That’s where 7Unen 7Uk’um [Little River] is now. That’s where they call it now. A river passes by the entrance to the Virgin’s house now, it seems. Long ago when she arrived it wasn’t there. But now the town is big. As for the church, it’s a big church now.

Long ago it was that little gabled house they made for her. The house was built. The church was rebuilt. Now it’s a church, because it was seen that the ground split open, water came out, a river. The Virgin landed leaning against the foot of the avocado tree.

But when she talked, you don’t think she was a saint? She was a person. The boy she spoke to didn’t see where she went.

It became apparent that maybe she was the Virgin since she seemed to disappear there.

Then she came and sat down again. But she left her seat, it seems. She went to sit on the altar, it seems. Finally she was on the altar.

She landed, leaning against the avocado tree. The Virgin leapt out when her house was flooded, it seems. Now there is another sluice that was made. The former sluice was a big sluice. It used to be on the other side of the river, because I saw it myself. It wasn’t anybody else who saw it. The trunk used to be a good meter in length. But the well for the water was maybe ten or fifteen meters deep, where the salt used to come out, long ago. I was little. I was maybe eight years old when I arrived there beneath the feet of the Virgin.

The sluice was moved to the other side [of the river]. The new sluice was made on this side. That’s where the salt water came out. It dried up on the far
They celebrate a fiesta over it. There is a fiesta of the river. That’s the sluice that’s been there ever since. It came over to this side of the river. It is renowned, even up to the early years of the twentieth century. The very name for salt in distant Guaquitepec was maintained at the cost of constant warfare with the lowland Chiapanecs (Ximenes, 1929:360).

The importance of salt in Zinacantan dates from before the conquest, when the Zinacantecs held a monopoly on the salt trade in the highlands of Chiapas. Indeed their control of the salt wells was maintained at the cost of constant warfare with the lowland Chiapanecs (Ximenes, 1929:360).

The purvey of the salt from Ixtapa and Zinacantan was renowned, even up to the early years of the twentieth century (Zarate, 1971:27). The very name for salt in distant Guaquitepec is *sotz’leb* or “Zinacantec.” There is a place between Guaquitepec and Cancuc that is called *sotz’leb* (Zarate, 1971:27). The dramatic action unfolds in five acts: (1) In three of the seven versions date from before the conquest, when the Zinacantecs held a monopoly on the salt trade in the highlands of Chiapas. Indeed their control of the salt wells was maintained at the cost of constant warfare with the lowland Chiapanecs (Ximenes, 1929:360).

The designation RFW 1, etc., is that used by Wasserstrom for the unpublished texts in his field material.
produce salt (RFW 1), to care for the salt, and to protect it from
caves (RFW 1, 4, 5, 6). (3a) Our Lady of the Rosary asks a man to
devils (RFW 5, 6). (2) The Virgins appear mysteriously from
see her, she is silent, but still they carry out her wish (RFW 1).
(3b) Or, as fair skinned as a Ladina, but wearing a beautifully
woven shawl, she appears to a shepherdess, and promises to give
her salt and fruit trees if she will tell her father. When the
townpeople come to see her, she is standing mutely with a child
in her arms and a book at her foot. When they take the book to
the scribes in Zinacantan Center to read it for them, they are
advised to bring her to the Center. But she can't be budged, not
until they have built her a home in Salinas (RFW 5). (3c) Or, she
is taken to Tierra Blanca and given a home, but she is unhappy
there and returns to Salinas, leaving behind her a trial of
footprints (RFW 8). (3d) Our Lady of the Ascension meets a girl
with a letter and a flower, and magically the waterjugs sitting in her
home are filled. Her grandfather tells his compadre. They show
the message to the magistrate, who reads it to the townspeople.

When I Worked in San Cristóbal and the Plane Came

Ah, the true story, too, about when the plane came, indeed! It was when I was here in San Cristóbal, of course.

[That was later?] La—ter! What I just told you was earlier.

As for the airplane—[How many years ago do you think the plane was?] Ehh, it was maybe forty-eight, forty-eight years. Do you know why? Because it was when my 7Antun was little. No, it wasn't. My 7Antun is forty-eight years old.

But, I didn't have my 7Antun then. No, I didn't. Wait, I guess I'll tell . . .

[You were already married?] No, I wasn't married. No, I was a girl. It was at the end of the Obregón [period]. Since it was when there was a sergeant, a first captain. The wife of the first captain asked me a favor. His wife was named Julia. I went to grind [corn] for her tortillas every day. I made tortillas. They had sheep barbecues. They made barbecues of the scraps, too. It seems. And they ground up fine broad chili peppers, cinnamon, thyme, oregano. Then they kneaded them ca—refully. It turned out roasted, it seems. Ye—s!

I ate it like that. I didn't use to eat it. But since then I've learned to eat it now.

I would arrive to grind [corn]. That's why it was probably, ehh, one, two years, three years when I was at . . . Yes, I had a stepfather already. I was four, five years old. In my sixth year they got divorced. In my seventh he died [no] in my eighth. Ah, he had gone to grow corn. I was nine . . .

It was fifty years ago. It was fifty years old, because don't you see I was probably a ten year old they build her a home (RFW 6). (4) In Salinas the church is built of salt, in Ixtapa, of sugar, in Chamula, of wood, and in Zinacantan Center, of corn (RFW 3). Our Lady of the Ascension built a road of salt (RFW 4), but Our Lady of the Rosary in Salinas, because she was carrying her baby, could bring only a handful of salt (RFW 4, 7). Our Lady of the Rosary in Zinacantan Center has some salt, too, but will demand the lives of half the town in exchange for it (RFW 7). (5) The ritual visits are required by the saints (RFW 6). Failure to carry out ritual obligations are punished by loss of the salt and even by death (RFW 4). Times are not as good as they once were (RFW 1, 8).

Almost as if they were iconic representations of the communities, recalling Aztec tribute lists, the major products are associated with the patron saints. Two of the towns, El Zapotal and Ixtapa, whose patron saints to this day exchange visits with St. Lawrence, were once politically subordinate to Zinacantan. Chamula, too, exchanged such visits as recently as 1933. Soyaló did not, so far as I know, but it must have been an Aztec trading outpost, as Nahuatl was spoken there until very recent times. See also T63.
girl. Because first my mother was with another husband. My mother was married to him probably three years. He got a mistress. He married [that] other old woman. She was barren.

Then he went to grow corn in the lowlands for a year. He fooled [his wife]. He and his mistress married each other. My mother divorced him. She was little younger brother, this big. My little younger brother died. He got sick. I was still a girl, of course. Just that . . . .

I had come as a maid. She was here as a maid, here. It was probably my sixth, seventh, eighth . . . . [I was] ten years [old]—around forty-five or fifty years ago when Obregón passed by, it seems. The very last time we were at home. The plane came. It was around [the time] when I came as a maid—when my mother took me. The plane appeared. Ooh, we were scared. "Who knows what kind of buzzard that is roaring. Listen to the way it roars. We're going to die from it. It's going to kill us!" said my mother. We were lying face down, now, on the ground. We had hidden ourselves in the shadow of a tree, because she said it would kill us. That's what we thought. Yes!

"Why are you scared, mother? Don't be afraid!" I told my mother. I was so . . . . who knows what my heart was like. I went and stood up in the front yard, I did! I was loo—king up. Yes!

[It was] here in San Cristóbal, the second time the plane came. The police were kneeling in the park shooting at it. Since I was there on the first day that it arrived there. It passed over there. It just went on. It went like this. It came to San Cristóbal. The one that was fired at.

[Could it have been Pineda's plane?] No, it was Obregón's. I think it was Obregón's, indeed! Since . . . no . . . it was Obregón's. Do you know how [I know]? Because I know somebody . . . . ah, what was his name, Ah, I don't know what his name was. He was a captain or something, but I don't know what his name was. I can't remember it, but he was in Pineda's party. I don't know if it was Villalobos. I don't know. I don't know if it was Old Alberto [Pineda] himself or . . . . Because I think there were three leaders. Three, but yes! What I was telling you about was that his wife had taken refuge in my master's house. Secretly. That's why that plane was Obregón's. That's right. I know very well because I was a maid myself. Because the awful Ladina had taken refuge there. "They've come. They've come looking for your husband. He's being searched for. Look how he's being searched for by plane!" she was told.

"Eh, yes, you're right!" she said. But where would porke primero 7ixch'i7ün jun smalal ti jme7e, 7a ti jme7e 7iyik' ti vinike tey nan 7oxib jibil xchi7uk, yu7un 7issa7 yantz 7iyik' 7tro to jme7el mu sna7 x7alaj.

7Öra, jun jabil 7ay ta chabajej ta 7olon 7osil tey slo7lo 7o sbaik yik' 7o sbaik, 7ixch'ak jin jabil ch'akal ti jme7e, ja7 bik'it, 7i 7oy jun kunik mun krem xi smuk'ule, 7a ti kunik mun krem 7une 7i 7icham 7un 7i7ipaj 7un, tezon to 7ox 7un bi, ja7 nox ti...

Va7i 7u7un, nital ta kriarail xa 7un li7on ta kriarail li7 to 7une, tey nun svakibaluk jibil 7un, svukubal svaxakibal lajcheb nan jibil, por 7ay kómo 7unos kwarentay-sinko 7o sinkwénta 7anyos ti ti 7a li 7ech' i 7Ovregón ya7el tej, 7a li slajeb slajeb ta j-mek 7une ja7 7a li teotiktóik ta jnatiktóik 7un tal li 7ayvon 7une, jna7 te nan k'u x7elan chital ta kriarail ja7 7o chiyik' ech'el li jme7e, tal li 7ayvon 7un to, jíi, lixi7otiktóik—k. "Na7tik k'usi xulemal le7e ch7avan 7a7y ava7i x7elan ch7avan yu7n xu chichamotik li7i yu7n xa jmiletikl!" xi ti xi ti jme7e 7une. Patatiktóik xa ta malamal, jnak'oj jbatiktóik ta ta sananaih te7 yu7n ja7 la ti chismilotiktóik ti kalojiktóik 7une. Jí7!

"'K'u yu7un chaxi7e, me7, mu xaxi7i!" xkut la ti jme7, yu7 nox toj ben... na7tik k'u x7elan xkom ta j-me7 kunin muk k'ak'al ti k'al 7iyul te yo7e ti7i, yu7un ja7 la ti3 jme7e, yu7un ja7 la ti jme7e, yu7un ja7 7a li chismilotiktóik to jme7e. Jí7!

"Je, yu7n ja7 7ava7uk!" xi. Pero bu tztaik,
they find him? Tabasco . . . I don't know where he had gone to—if it was Simojovel or where. Yes!

They didn't find him now. It was just the woman, herself, who was taking refuge from house to house. Because there was a room of their house, like this one—the same width as this one. Because that master of mine sold cane liquor. They had made a bed for her there. It looked as if there was just a [front] door where you would come in, like this. She ate there. She drank there. She just came out when she went to shit. She came out when she went to pee. She would go back in. Nobody knew there was anybody there. They arrived searching for her. They arrived looking for her. It looked as if there was nothing, [no] room there, since the house looked as if it had a solid wall. She would go in as if there was a door here. How would we know that it wasn't a one-room house, if we didn't know your house, it seems? How would we know?

The thing is, I saw myself that her sleeping place was made. Because my master had hidden eighty-four jugs of old vintage [cane liquor]. Because he was a recruiter [for the fincas]. Yes! Manuel Coello Ochoa was the old man's name.

Those jugs were packed in tight there. “Please, take a good look for me, fix the jugs ca—refully! Stack them all carefully on top where you have stacked them carefully. Put them in there one by one,” I was told. “So clear a place for that lady's bed!” I was told. You see how I saw it. That's why that plane was Obregon's plane. It was his plane. [How many years do you think you were there with that old recruiter?] The recruite—r!

[Were you with him for long?] I was there for a long time. It was eight months. Eight months. I wasn't there [very] long [really]. The place where I stayed a long time was at the house of Jose H. Ruis. Yes,- indeed! I was there nine years. Nine years and nine months. Then I left. I went to get married. At that other old man's house, just eight months because he was so mean. He beat me so.

[Was that where you first came to in San Cristóbal?] No! The very first [place] I came to in San Cristóbal was the house of . . . she's still alive. The first time I came, I came when I was four years old. The house of Miss Carmen Fonseca. There in Santa Lucia. I was four years old. My mother came. She came one year. The trouble with my mother was that her mistress had sons. She got a baby. Then she left. It was my younger brother. He isn't here. He went to Nayarit. [He went far away!] Far! That's why my mother left, because it seems [her belly] wasn't empty anymore. It had something in it when she went. That's why my mother left.

Then me, I stayed. So now I became a maid for Tavasko mu jna7 bu to la me taj bat 7une, mi Simo Jobel mi bu to. Ji!

Muk’ xa stak stuk xa nox i 7antz bu chch'amun na ta naetike, yu7n 7oy 7oy 7a li j-k'ol sná yech chak li7 yech sjamlej chak li7 7une, yu7n chchon trago taj kajval 7une, ja7 tey meltzanbil stem tey 7un, ja7 nox yech 7o sti7il yilel li yu7 ch'ochotik chak li7e, te chve7 te chuch' vo7, tey ja7 nox chlok' tal k'al chba tza7nuku, chlok' tal k'al chba k'abinuke, te chcha7-7och ech'el 7un, muk' buch'u sna7 mi 7o krixchano, ch'ok't ssa7el ch'ok't sk'elel mu k'u7i 7oy yilel, xi to ta j-k'ole, ti lek pak'al yilel li na 7un, ja7 ch7och 7o chak i ti7 na li7i, yu7 van ta jna7tik mi mu7yuk j-k'ol yut na, ti mu xojojikin 7ana ya7el yu7

Va7i 7un, k'usi kil 7o vo7on 7un taj meltzanbil taj svayebe yu7n 7oy 7a li 7ochentay-kwatro garafones de 7anyeyo snak'o7i ti kajval 7une, yu7un 7enganchador, Manwel Kwéyo 7Ochóa sbi ti mole.

7A li va7i 7un, ja7 te tznii7 taj garafon 7une.

"7Abolajan k'elbon lek meltzanbon lek i garafon e--k xalatz skotol ti ta sba li li 7a li bu lek 7alatzoje, xavak' ju-p'ej ju-p'ej" xi7utat 7un. "Ja7 xokobtasbo yav stem in senyorae," xi7utat. Va7i k'u cha7al ti kiloj 7o 7une, yech'o xal ja7 ja7 yavyon 7Ovregon taj 7avyon 7une, ja7 yavyon.

7Enganchadoreee!

Jal teon, 7o vaxakib 7u, vaxakib 7u muk' bu jal teon, bu ni lijali je tzna Jose 7Ache Ruis, 7eso si te yo7e 7oy 7a li baluneb jabil, baluneb jabil xchi7uk baluneb 7u, te xa nilok' ech'el ba nupunkon, 7a li tzna li mol le7e vaxakib nox 7u yu7n toj tol pukuj, tol xmajvan.

717i, 7a ti primeri primero ta j-mek nital ta Jobele ta sna, xuxul to k'al tana, primero nitale naka ta chani7 jabil nital, sna Ninia Karmen Fonséka, taj ta Santa-Lusiae, 7a li chani7 jabil kich'oj, 7a li jme7 7ital 7i7ay jun jabil, k'usi ti jme7 7une yu7n ja7 7oy skremitok ti yajval 7une sta ech'el yol 7un, ja7 bat 7o, ja7 li ja7 ti jun jmuk muk' li7 7un taje, batem ta Nayarit, nom, 7a li ye7ch'o xal ti lok' ech'el ti jme7 7une ja7 ti muk' xa xokol ya7ele 7o xa sbel 7i7bat 7une ye7ch'o xal bat i jme7 7une.

707a, li vo7on 7une nikom 7un ja7 xa lavi nikom
good. I would keep going. I would go for half a year. I would go for four months or three months. I would go like that. Then I would come back [home]. I would go, then I would come back. Where I thought the pay was good, where I was paid well, I would go there. That Old José Ruiz was so kind to me, so I worked there a long time. If the girls went, I would go there. That Old José Ruiz was so kind to me, so I worked there a long time. If the girls went, I would go, then I would come back. Where I would go like that. Then I would come back [home].

The thing is, why wouldn't I like my master since my master was good? That's why I stayed a long time there. So I was there a long time.

Tonik’s estimate of the time the airplane first appeared over Zinacantán is off by only two years. It was fifty-two years before her reminiscences, in 1920. Romin Teratol’s mother remembers that, when the first airplane appeared in the sky over Zinacantán Center, the people ran into their houses and slammed the doors tight, believing that the end of the world was upon them. The second plane must have passed over San Cristóbal in 1924. I am unable to trace the identity of the Pineda leader whose wife was in hiding. The name Villalobos is not familiar to the historian Moscoso Pastrana.

In Zinacantán sheep are raised for wool, but never for their meat. Tonik is almost unique among Zinacantecs in eating mutton, on which there is a strong taboo. This is a measure of the nature of past Ladino-Indian relations. The curate explained that they were forced to look elsewhere for farming land because their own land was either so reduced in area or so sterile as to be quite useless. He then lashed out at the lowland ranchers who, he claimed, maintained the Indians in perpetual servitude, by paying them such low wages for their work, and by loaning them the great sums of money that they required for the food and drink, which they were obliged to provide at the constant round of fiestas in Zinacantán center. They were “forced to cheat and often to steal and they are always poor.” So great was their indebtedness that they sent their women to San Cristóbal to work as maids, only to have them “return home ravished and pregnant” (Reyes Garcia, 1962:45-46). See also T14, T112, T148, T154, and their notes.

Cinderella

Once there was an orphan.
The orphan suffered greatly. Whatever the master’s children ate, they ate first. They drank first. The poor girl was given the leftovers. Of the things that they ate she was only given the leftovers. She wasn’t given anything good.

“Why am I suffering, My Lord?” she said. Her master was a pig killer.

“Mary, come!” said [her mistress]. [Mary] went. “Go wash the tripe!” she said. [Mary] picked up her little old shawl. The child wrapped it around her and went to wash the tripe.

7A ti vo7ne 7oy la jun me7on.
Va7i 7un, 7abol la sba ta j-mek ti me7on, mi 7a la ti k’u slajes ti xch’amaltak ti 7ajvalile, ja7 la ba7yi chve7, ba7yi chuch’ik vo7, 7a ti prove tzebe, sovra la ch7ak’bat, 7a la ti k’u tzlajese, naka la sovra ch7ak’bat, mu la bu x7ak’bat k’usuk lek.
Va7i 7un, “K’u no van yu7un ti 7abol jbae, kajval?” xi la. Jmil-chitom la ti yajval 7une.
7A li “Maria la!” xi la. 7A li chbat la 7un, 7i “Chba sap i bikile!” xi la. Stam la, 7oy la yuwen k’a7-revoso 7un, ja7 la smochin ech’el chbat la ssap ti bikil ti 7olol 7une.
God,
My Lord,
Why am I suffering so as an orphan?
Why am I suffering so as a pauper?
I'm never treated well.
I'm worn out now, My Lord,
she said. For a long, long time she had done nothing but wash tripe, wash tripe, grind corn, make tortillas, fix meals. She hadn't a blanket. She hadn't any clothes. She hadn't anything. She was just an orphan. She hadn't anything, since she didn't have a mother anymore, neither a mother nor a father to be with her. She took the place of a maid. The people weren't kind to her, either, in the place where she had been taken, it seems. When they slaughtered pigs it didn't matter if she was covered with lard. [It didn't matter] how she slept. She just put on her little shawl. The poor thing slept buried in ashes. She had a hard life with the little dog and the little cat. The child slept with them.

She was tired of going to wash the tripe. E—very day she washed tripe at the river's edge.

God,
My Lord,
I am wretched,
I am miserable.
If only I had a shirt.
If only I had a blouse.
I am suffering.
I am an orphan.
I haven't a shirt.
I haven't a blouse or a blanket to sleep with.
I am wretched,
she said.

A little old man arrived. "What are you doing, daughter? What are you doing here, sitting on your haunches this way at the river's edge?" he said.

"I'm not doing anything, sir. I'm washing my little bit of tripe, because I'm a poor orphan. The people at the place where I am never take pity on me. I am suffering."

"Yes, I certainly see that. You are suffering."

"I haven't a blanket. I haven't a blouse. I haven't a shawl, just my little shawl that's in tatters now," she said.

"Ah!" she was told. "Never mind, daughter, don't worry. Are you coming tomorrow?" he asked.

"I'm coming," she said.

"Ah!" she was told. "If you come tomorrow, that's fine. Don't worry. If you fry the tripe, if you fix it when you reach [home], do it, don't be unhappy. Because of me you will rest. I will give you something to relieve your hardship. You won't suffer anymore if I give you what I'm going to give you. I didn't bring it today, that's why I haven't anything. But I won't be coming myself, somebody else will come to give it to you," he said.
She went off with the tripe. She reached [home]. The next day, too, “Mary, come here, take them!” said the awful old woman at the place where she was, it seems.

“Take them, wash the tripe!”
“Will one of your daughters go with me?” she asked.
“The girls never go. What the girls do is this, the girls go to school. As for you, go wash [the tripe]!” she was told.
“Okay!” she said. She we—nt clu—tching her little old skirt, her little old blouse, her little old shawl. She wrapped herself in her shawl, as we call it. She wrapped herself up and left. She put the washtub on her head. “God, My Lord, it’s hard for me to lower the washtub for the tripe at the river. I’m suffering so,” she said.

That’s all she said. “What are you doing, daughter?” she was asked by the little old man.
“I’m not doing anything, sir. I’m washing my little tripe.”
“You are suffering so, daughter. Never mind, now. God has had enough of your suffering. For a long time you have suffered, you have been tormented by this hardship. Never mind, God has had enough of it. Now you will rest. Now you won’t have to do what you’re doing. When the burro brays bow your head,” he said. “When the cock crows scan the sky,” he said.

Okay,” she said.
“I’ll come to see you.”
“All right,” she said. When the burro brayed she bowed her head. When the cock crowed she scanned the sky.

But you see, a star appeared on her forehead. “My Lord!” she said when she touched it. She was frightened when it alighted on her forehead. “But what can I do about it? What can I do? Eh, I’ll tear off a piece of my skirt. It’s thick,” she said. She tore off the hem of her skirt. She folded it four times.

That little man, who had told her, appeared.
“Don’t keep covering it up!” he said. “You didn’t steal it. You didn’t find it anywhere. If you want, let people see. Let them see if you’ve stolen it,” he said.
“All right, then.”
“Uncover it!” he said. “There’s nothing to be afraid of. Don’t keep tearing you skirt,” he said. When she was about to tear her skirt—“Don’t rip your skirt. You are suffering,” he said.

Okay,” she said.

Va7i 7un, 7ibat la xchi7uk ti bikil 7une, 7a li k’ot la 7un ta yok’omal noxtok. “Maria la7, 7ilo!” xi la 7a li mu me7el 7antz ti buy yae7el 7une.

“K’usi?” xi la.
“7ilo, safo li bikile!”
“Mi chba jchi7in junun latzebetike?” xi la 7un.

“Muk’ bu chbat tzebetik skwentauk tzebetik, tzebetik chbat ta chan-vun, vo7ote batan, safo!” 7utat la.

“7Eyi!” xi la. Ba—t, sjopo—j la yunen ka7-tzek, yunen ka7-k’u7, yunen ka7-revos mochinoj ech’e’l ta7 mochobe ya7el xalkalitu7ikotk 7une, mochinoj la ech’e’l 7un, sjakan la ta sjol ti jayil te7e.

“Dyos kajval, vokol la xa chiyal ti sjayil te7al ti sbikil ta 7uk’um 7une x7elan 7abol jbae,” xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, yech yepal 7iyal 7un. “K’u chapas, tzeb?” 7utat la ti 7unen mol.
“Mu k’u ta jpas, tottik, ta sjap kunen bikil.”

“Tol 7abol aba, tzeb, yil xa yil, ta7luk xa7i riox lavokole, vo7ne 7alikel, 7abol aba 7utz’7utz’ aba ta j-mek k’u x7elan lavokole, yil no 7ox yil 7un, ta7luk 7o xa7i riox 7a li7e ta xakux muk’ xa chapas k’u chapas, k’alal 7a li x7ok’ li buroe xanij,” xi la.

“K’alal x7ok’ li keleme xak’el muyel vinajel,” xi la.

“7Eyi,” xi la.

Va7i 7un, “Te chtal jk’elot 7un.”

“Yechuk,” xi la. K’al 7i7ok’ li buroe, snijan la 7a 7un, k’al 7i7ok’ li kelem 7une, ja7 7o la xi sk’el ta vinaje 7une.

Bu xavil 7un, k’ot la 7a li k’anal ta sti7 ba 7un.

“Kajval!” xi la ti k’alal 7ispik. Xi7 ti k’al ti k’ot ta sti7 ba. “Pero k’u xa ta jpas 7un?” xi la. Stam la ti yunen mochobe ya7el 7une, revosol 7une, spech’ 7o la ti sti7 ba, pero 7a la ti k’anale, solel la chjelav ta spat ti yunen revos, smit’ la ti sjol 7une. “Pero k’u ta jcha7le, k’u ta jpas, 7ei, ta jjat j-tuch’uk jtzekje, ja7 piime,” xi la. Sjat la ti sti7 stzek xchan-puxin la 7un.

Va7i 7un, tal la j7uen mol buch’u 7albil. “Mu xamakulani!” xi la. “Mu7nuk 7avelk’an mu7nuk 7o bu 7ata, 7a li mi xak’an, 7ak’ 7o mi xil krixchano 7ak’ 7o yil mi 7oy cha7elk’aj,” xi la.

“Yechuk che7e,” xi la.

“Jamo!” xi la. “Mu k’u xaxi7 7o, mu xajatan 7atzek,” xi la. Ja7 la taj k’al chtuch’ 7ox 7aj stzek 7une -- “Mu xajat latzeke 7abol aba,” xi la.

“7Eyi,” xi la.
“In addition, I’ll give you a little ring,” he said.

“Ah!” she said. “Where shall I put my ring? If my master sees it on me . . . .”

“It’s none of your master’s business. If you don’t want it, it’s better if I give you a sash to tie up, to tie up your skirt,” he said.

“Okay,” she said.

She took the sash. “Take your sash. That’s all,” he said. “Go to bed! There’s nothing to complain about. Eat! There’s nothing to complain about when you are sent to wash tripe. Wash the tripe. There’s nothing to complain about. It isn’t you who will wash it. It does the washing. The tripe washes itself. When you look, it’s well-washed.”

“Okay,” she said.

“So that sash of mine, what do you say to it, to the sash?” she asked.

“Please, sash, do my work here, because I can’t do it anymore. I’m terribly worn out. These lungs of mine are very sick now. They hurt very much here, [you should tell it],” he said.

“All right,” she said. She did it. She didn’t do anything anymore. She just went and sat down. The girl rested her head in her hand like my daughter is doing. She was sitting looking about. As soon as she set down her washtub and looked, [the tripe] was already well-rinsed. She just took it and left. She arrived [home]. “See, here it is!” she said.

“Oh, fine,” said [her mistress]. “Why, you haven’t returned covered with dirt! How come?” asked her mistress.

“Who knows, maybe it’s because I haven’t soiled my clothes yet,” she said.

“Go on, go and cook! Sweep the kitchen! Tidy up the kitchen!” She sat down again.

So she told that sash, “Sash, please, do me a favor, sweep my kitchen for me. I don’t want to work at all anymore.”

“Okay,” it said. It did it. It swept the inside of the house. It tidied up the inside of the house. It looked over the inside of the house. It took the dishes. It washed her plates, her bowls, her metate, her metate platform. It finished making the tortillas. The sash made the tortillas.

It finished frying the fatback.

Then, “Go, sell it!” she was told.

“Okay,” she said. She just went outside the door. One person came, another came, another came to buy the fatback. The fatback was finished up, right there at the door.

“Well, but what kind of god [favored you] that yours were bought up in a second?” she was asked.
"I don't know. Mine were bought up right here at the door. I didn't take them anywhere."

"How much did you get [for them]?"

"Look how much!"

"Oh, good, go and sit down a minute! Take a rest! When you are finished sitting, make [some] coffee, because we are going to drink it before leaving. They've come to take us to the king's house. We are going to the dance. The girls are going," said her mistress.

"Ah!" She said. "As you wish." The girl arrived in the other room. "Here is the coffee now. It's fixed now," she said.

"Oh, bring it!" said [her mistress]. [Mary] brought it in a little pottery pitcher. They had little cups, little clay [cups], like the ones we drank from earlier today.

"Fill them up! Bring them!" she said. "Are the toasted tortillas well-larded as I told you?" she asked.

"They're made. They are made with the fatback drippings that you told me about earlier," she said.

"Ah!" said [her mistress]. The fatback drippings were ground. She kneaded them carefully. She put in eggs. She put in sugar. She patted them carefully. She brought them in, this high in a little gourd. She went to give them to her mistress, it seems, since she took the place of a maid, it seems. She was a grown girl like this one [of mine], but she was a substitute for a maid, it seems. Because her mistress didn't act like [a mother]. She didn't treat her as her child, since she was an orphan.

"Never mind, fix the dinner, now that the girls have finished drinking their coffee. Fix the dinner! I want to find dinner well-prepared when I return. When we come back we will eat. Fix the coffee, if you have hot tortillas," she said.

"All right," said [Mary]. She was upset that they didn't take her out to have fun. It wasn't like it is with me now. I take my daughter out when I go, if I go to see a movie or if I go to have a good time at a fiesta or whatever. That's me! The poor girl stays all alone in the kitchen. She talks to the little cat, to the little dog. So then that sash spoke. It was of leather like this.

"Daughter, what do you want?" it asked.

"I don't want anything."

"If you want to, you ought to go enjoy the fiesta," she said.

"I'd like to go," she said.

"Really?" it said.

"Really!" she said. "The trouble is there is no way for the meal to be fixed, because they are coming back to eat it. And I still have to make my tortillas."

"No, don't worry. If you [want] to go, go on!" it said.

"Mu jna7, li7 no 7ox ta ti7 na 7ich'am ku7une, mu xa bu jkuch ech'el."

"7A, k'u yepal 7ata tal?"

"Vi yepall!"

"7A, bwéno, batan chotlan j-likeluk kuxo, mi laj chotlan 7une, xapas kajve yyu7un ta xkuch'tikótk ech'el, yyu7un 7a li tamek kik'el tzna 7a li rey, chibapotikótk ta 7ak'ot, chbat ti ninyaetike," xi la ti sme7el 7ajval 7une.

"7A!" xi la. "Yechuk, che7e. Ti7k'ot la ti tzeb 7une. "Li7 xa me li kajve 7une, meltzaj xa me 7un," xi la."

"7A 7ich'o tall?" xi la. Yich' la ochel ta 7unen rosa p'in, xi smuk'ul ti 7unen rosa p'in 7une, 7o la yunen bochtak 7a li 7unen lum chak k'u cha7al 7ikuch'tik 7o nax 7une.

"Vai7i 7un, "7A li nojeso, 7ak'o tall?" xi la. "Mi meltzaj ti k'oxxox tek xa ta mantikat kaloje?" xi la.

"7imeltzaj ja7 7imeltzaj 7o li stzo7 chicharon 7avalbon 7a li naxe," xi la 7un.

"7A!" xi la 7un. Xjuch' li stzo7 chicharon, 7isvotz' tek, 7iyak'be ton kaxlan, 7iyak'be 7asuka, spak'an la tek 7un.

"Vai7i 7un, 7a li yich' ochel 7un xi la spinmil ta 7unen jay 7une, ba la yak'be 7un, ti sme7el 7ajval ya7el 7une, k'u ti yyu7un sk'exol ti kriarail ya7el 7une, ja7 yech tzeb ch'iem chak li7 a7a pero sk'exol kriarail ya7el, ja7 ti mu xa yu7unuk 7ajvalil ya7el, mu7nuk tsp'is ta yol ya7el, kómó me7on.

Bwéno, va7i 7un, 7a li "Yiyil 7un meltzano me sëna lavi laj xa yuch' skajve li tzebetike, meltzano me sëna, lek me meltzajem sëna chul jta, ta me xive7otikótk k'ai mi nisutotikótki tale, meltzano kajve, mi 7o me 7ak'xin 7ot 7un," xi la.

"Yechuk," xi la. Yan la sba yo7on ti muk' ch7ik'ek ech'el ta paxyal 7une, mu7nuk ja7uk yech chak k'u cha7alavi chhik' ech'el jtzeb, chibat mi xibat jk'el mi sine, mi xibat paxyajkon ta k'in mi k'u x7elan i vo7on a7a, 7a ti prove tzeb 7une, stu--k la chkom ta kusina 7un, ja7 la tzk'opon ti 7unen katue7i7e ti 7unen tz'i7e, ja7 ja7 to la ja7 la k'opoj taj chuk c'hutil 7une, nukul la xi la.

"Vai7i 7un, 7a li "Tzeb, k'u chak'an?" xi la 7un.

"Mu k'u ta jk'an."

"Mi chak'an, chak batan ava7i li ta k'ine," xi la 7un.

"Chak batikon," xi la.

"Meel?" xi la.

"Meel!" xi. "K'usi, ja7 mu k'u cha7al smeltzaj i 7a li ve7elil yu7un chul slajesele, xchi7uk i kote, ta to xipak-'tanij."

"Mo7oj, mu k'u xal 7avo7on mi chabate, batan!" xi
said. “I’ll give you a carriage. I’ll give you fine
clothes. I’ll give you a pair of shoes. Go on, go
dance! Dance with whomever you wish to dance!” it
said.

“Fine!” she said. She went. Eh, the poor girl didn’t
even finish listening to [the sash]. She went. She
arrived at the place where her little car was
suddenly standing. At the door, like your car. It was
suddenly standing there. She stepped down.

She was seen by . . . I don’t know if it was the
king’s wife. I don’t know who it was. Oh, “Step right
ahead, Miss!” they said, since you see she arrived as
a Ladina. “Step right ahead, come in!” they said. She
was seated, of course. Eh, the prince directed his
way towards the girl who had arrived.

“Where does the beautiful girl come from?” he
asked. “I’ll certainly dance with her!” he said. He
went to dance with the girl. “Dance!” Eh, he didn’t
dance any numbers with anyone else during the
fiesta. He just danced with her alone, not with any
other girl, for she herself was the most beautiful
girl. But it was Mary Cinderella, the stupid girl, the
orphan.

He only danced with her.

When the party was over they were saying good
night to the host. “I’m going now. It’s very late now.
My maid, it seems, is at home. The little orphan is
there alone. She surely is nodding away now. She
sleeps too much,” said the mistress.

“Oh, all right, then, go along!” he said. That girl
overheard that. Then she left on the ru—n! She sli—
pped into her carriage and le—ft hurriedly. But one
of her shoes fell off and was left behind. Her shoe
that fell off was a little metal shoe.

The king, [I mean] the prince—“Well, whoever’s
foot fits this shoe,” he said, “that [person] I’ll
marry,” he said.

“But who does it fit? Who has a shoe like this?
There isn’t anyone here with such a shoe.” The shoe
was nothing less than a charm.

“No one with a shoe like this. There is
nobody. I will marry the person whose foot it fits,”
he said. He went e—very where where that girl
might be, to every house. In one house after another
there was no one whose foot fit it.

“Well, we’ll see! Since I’m to marry the prince I’ll
slice off [part of] my foot,” said that girl’s mistress.
[Mary] said no—thing. She hu—ddled there by her-
self. She didn’t make a sound.

“Come here!” the girls were told. Their feet didn’t
fit. The poor maid was summoned. “Come here,
Mary!” they said. “Haven’t you any other daugh-
ters?” [the mistress] was asked finally.

“No, I haven’t any more daughters,” she said.

“But your maid is in the kitchen,” he said, as if he
knew.
“Oh, uh, my maid is in... she's there, but, ach, she is an orphan, a little orphan. I took her in, because her mother died,” she said.

“Even so,” he said.

“If it’s her foot that fits then I’ll marry her,” he said.

“Even so,” he said.

“If it’s her foot that fits then I’ll marry her,” he said.

“How can you believe that that sooty thing’s foot will go in?” she said. Hoho, Holy Mary, when she put her foot in, it slipped right into the shoe! Haha, now she was in that prince’s hands! He left, dragging her out. Her mother wasn’t respected, the godmother, no, her mistress, it seems. Like me who is bringing up a girl, like that.

“Now even if you bawl me out, even if you get mad, get mad! I’m taking her. I’m taking the girl away. I’m marrying her. The only thing I recommend to you is that tomorrow you go to the fiesta and that’s that, no arguments.”

The awful girls were left in anger. “How, how can we believe that the shoe fits that Indian? Huh, loafer, covered with ashes. I don’t believe it. Who knows how it could be,” they said. But however it was, she was the one. The daughters didn’t make a sound now. They were angry now. “Who knows how this girl did it. If only I had had another orphan, it seems, then I’d still see how to be married. How come it wasn’t me whose foot fit? I would surely get myself a husband. I wouldn’t have any more problems. I’d get married tomorrow,” they said.

I don’t know if they published the banns, if they had all the things to do with the priest. They were married. They celebrated the fiesta for two days. That old woman and old man went. And now the fiesta turned out better because that sash asked for a fiesta. It asked for a band. It asked for whatever that girl desired. They had a fine—ne fiesta.

Now the girl was well-loved by the king, it seems, since she held the fiesta herself. So now she asked for music or she asked for food. Whatever was needed she would do. She fixed it, because she knew how. “The thing is, everything I do is my own responsibility. You’ll see what I do,” she said.

“But how do you do it?” he asked.

“I don’t do anything. I know how to look after [things],” she said.

“Fine!” they said. “Ah!” they said. “We’re hungry!” they said.

“At!” she said. She served the meal right away. They ate, when they were newlyweds. “Don’t bother! Why should we mistreat you after you have been mistreated where you used to be and now I come and mistreat you here? No!” she said.

“She is my son’s wife!” said the king.

“All right, then,” she said.

The maids were treated well. “Have you fin-
ished?” the girl asked when she arrived.

“No!” they said.

“I’ll help you,” she said. Hah, in a minute she went to wash the dishes, but it seems that it wasn’t her hands that washed them. When you looked, all the dishes were done. She just looked at them. As soon as she looked at them, if she looked at them, then they were done. Plates, bowls, tortilla gourds were suddenly face down, suddenly face down.

Well, the king had some chairs, long ago. They weren’t like the chairs of today, pure stone. Who knows how the stone was carved. And they were like these ones, but they were tall, wide, and thick. She went to wipe them off. She went to wash them, but in a minute, in a minute she dried them off. “Huh, how does that girl do it?” they said. They didn’t want to complain about her at all now. On her own she went to look at the kitchen. On her own she went to look at the girls who were fixing the meal there.

“I’m going to see if the food is cooked. I’m going to taste the food,” she said, because she was going to help them. She pitied them.

“No, don’t do that! I don’t want you to,” said her husband.

“But the poor things, I feel sorry for them. That’s the way my hardship was before.”

“Even if it’s like your suffering, for that very reason you should take a rest now,” he said. “Now that you are here today under my control you will rest,” he said. “Before, because you were under the control of poor people they were very satisfied having you go out to sell fatback or go out to sell pork, going to sell from house to house,” he said. “But when you began to be favored, it seems, then you didn’t [have to] work hard anymore. I saw that, of course, because your fatback was bought up right at the door. It was just when you got the thing on your forehead,” he said. “Then there was a wonderful star on your forehead,” he said. “With it, then you sold [things] easily. You didn’t [have to] walk anywhere.” Since it was then that her hardship began to be eased. She no longer had to carry heavy things on her head, baskets or whatever. If she had pork she would carry it on her head and go sell it. Her little shawl, that little rebozo was just covered with blood, it seems, covered with lard, but the poor girl [smelled] ra—ncid. You wouldn’t [ever] marry her, it seems.

The girl [smelled] rancid. “All right,” she said.

“Take a rest now. Don’t work any more. Don’t go wherever it is you go. Just sit down here. Rest, because your lungs are very worn out now. You are exhausted,” said [the prince].

Bwéno, ja7 la ti, 7oy la xxila ti rey vo7ne, mu7nuk ja7 yech chak k’u cha7al xila lavie, naka ton, 7a li jna7tik k’u x7elan 7anbil li tone, 7i 7a la x7elan li7i, toyolik noxtok 7un, jamalik pimik, ta la xba skus tal, ta la xba spok pero j-li7ikel, 7i ta j-li7ikel la tztaikjes 7un.

“Je7, k’u no van cha7al li tzeb le7e?” xi la. Mu xa la sk’an k’u xalbeik 7un, batz’i ta smantal xa la stuk chba sk’el ti kusinae, tzmantal la stuk ba sk’el ti muchachaetik te ta spas ve7e7il yo7e.

“Chba jk’el mi ta7aj ve7e7il, chba jpas proval ve7e7il,” xi la. Yu7un la ma chba skolta 7un, yu7un la k’ux ta yo7on 7un.

“Mo7oj, mu xapas yech, mu jk’an,” xi la ti smalal 7une.

“Pero povre k’ux ta ko7on ja7 yech jvokol ti vo7ne.”

“Aunke mi yech 7avokol, por éso chakux lavie,” xi la. “7Ora lavie li7ot xa ta jpoder vo7one, chakux,” xi. “A ti vo7ne porke yu7un ta spoder me7on krixchano batz’i bal cha7i ti chlok’ 7achon chicharone, chlok’ 7achon chitome, chba chon ta naetike,” xi. “Yan ti k’alal 7a li lik xa sk’uxubinelot ya7ele, mu xa bu cha7abtej tzotze, 7ikil bi 7a, porke ti7 na no 7ox 7ich’am 7avu7un chicharon 7une, ja7 no 7ox ti k’al7a li k’usi ta 7ati7 bae,” xi la 7un.

“Lek 7oy xa k’anal ta 7ati7 bae,” xi la. “Ja7a no 7ox 7un li7e, ja7a 7o lik 7a li chonolajen lek mu xa bu chaxanav.” K’u ti ja7 7o lik skoluk svokol, mu xa bu ta skajan ech’el ta sjol ti k’utik 7o7--lik moch ya7ele, k’utik 7oy chitom ta la skajan ech’el tzjol, ba xchon 7a ti yunen mocheb ya7el taj 7unen revosoil ya7ele, solel la balem ch’ich’, balem mantikat, pero batz’i ra---ncho xa ti povre tzebe. Mu xavajnilin yilel.

Bwéno, ráncho xa ti tzeb 7une. “Yiyil 7un,” xi la 7un.

“Kuxo xa 7un, mu xa xa7abtej 7un, mu xa xabat bu xabat, li7 xa no 7ox chotlane kuxo porke batz’i gastádo xa lapulmontake, ta xalubtzaj,” xi la.
“All right,” she said. Sometimes she would do what he said, sometimes she wouldn’t. She suffered, but it’s just because we get used to working.

She was used to it. She went quickly. She went to look again and again. She made quick trips when the prince wasn’t noticing. So she went. She came back and sat down. “Let’s sit down,” he said. He would chat and chat with her.

“Let’s have a party!” she said. “I’d like to dance the way I used to dance,” she said. “I want a fine suit, a fine dress, but really fine. I don’t want to suffer anymore,” she said.

“No, don’t worry. We’ll send for it to be made,” said the prince.

“Fine!” she said. They had a good party, a good fiesta like the fiesta that just passed. Hah, they danced and danced. The poor girl was well-loved. The end.

It is not clear whether the old man, when he told Cinderella that “somebody else” would give her her fortune, was referring to the fairy godmother, who never makes an appearance, or to some other undisclosed figure.

If Tonik does indeed take her daughter to the movies, she must be the only Zinacantec woman ever to spend her money that way. Tonik describes Cinderella’s troubles with considerable feeling, for not only was she a servant herself, but she is also the mother of an adopted orphan.

Cinderella’s sash is thoroughly unconventional, as leather sashes are not worn by Zinacantecs.

The dance, of course, being in the Ladino king’s house, is modeled after Ladino-style dances, at which men dance with female partners, unlike traditional dancing in Zinacantan.

Tonik’s rendering of this tale presents unique features that seem to spring from her own personal experiences and moral judgments. Her Cinderella is a poor Indian girl who, even as a princess, insists on helping her servants wash the dishes!

Tonik’s Cinderella contains most of the elements found in Cinderella tales from Spain (A. M. Espinosa, 1967, Till, T111, T112), Puerto Rico (Mason and Espinosa, 1925:511-515), Jalisco (Robe, 1970, T69, T70), Oaxaca (Radin, 1943:207-220), and Yucatan (M. Redfield, 1937:37-38).

This past year, when I was unequipped with a tape recorder, Tonik retold her story, adding a new episode: One of Cinderella’s stepsisters, jealous of her star, imitated Cinderella’s actions, only to have a donkey penis sprout from her forehead! This bizarre growth contrasts with a donkey’s tail in Spain, a horn in Puerto Rico, donkey manure in Jalisco, a tiny horned donkey in Oaxaca, and a horse’s rump in Yucatan.

When the Bell Was Lifted

Once the Chiapanecs came to steal. They came from Chiapa.

They knew how to be Whirlwinds, Whirlwinds. They turned into Whirlwinds. There used to be a bell in our town. The bell was really beautiful. I don’t know if Maria Teresa was its name. The bell was named Maria Teresa. It was made of gold and silver.

They stole the bell at midnight. They stole it away. [The Zinacantecs] didn’t know how the bell reached Chiapa. And it was in a whirlwind that it went.

It arrived there in Chiapa, it seems. They weren’t aware of it. The people of Zinacantán Center saw that their bell wasn’t there. At daybreak nothing was there. The people of Zinacantán Center got up. The bell tower was empty. There was nothing to be seen. Long ago the Chiapanecs were robbers, it seems. Because the Chiapanecs had a cave. In the cave they prayed for the Whirlwind to come.

When the Bell Was Lifted

T74

Ti vo7ne tal la 7elk'ajuk i jsoktome, lik tal 7a li Soktom.

Va7i 7un, yu7un la sna7ik 7a li 7a li sutum 7ik', 7a li sutum 7ik' 7une, 7ispasik la ti sutum 7ik' 7une, ja7 li 7o to 7ox kampana te ta jnatikotik 7un, 7a ti kampana melel slekil, mu jna7 mi Maria Teréza k'u la sbi 7un, Maria Teréza ti kampana sbi 7une, yu7un 7oro 7i plata 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a ti kampana 7une, 7iyelk'anik ta 7ol 7ak'ubal, 7iyelk'anik ech'el 7un, muk7 xa7i k'u xi k'ot ta Soktom ti kampana 7une, 7i ta sutum 7ik' 7ibat.

Va7i 7un, k'ot te ta Soktom ya7el 7une, muk' xa7i, 7iyil i jitek-lum 7une, ch'abal skampana mi ja7uk 7u k'u 7oy sakub 7osil, lik i jitek-lume, 7eklixia xokol, kampanario mu k'usi xavil, ja7 j7elek' i jsoktome, ti vo7ne ya7el 7une, yu7un la 7oy xch'en ti jsoktom 7une, ta ch'en 7isk'an tal ti sutum 7ik' 7une.
That's the way it was long ago. Because they were at Pulatual Vo7 [Bowl Spring] at the opening to that cave, the men who knew how to be Whirlwinds. There were fifteen men who were Whirlwinds. And between the fifteen men they carried off that bell together. That's why Zinacantán Center was left penniless. Now it has no money. Now it has nothing.

Don't you see, the Chiapanecs were cunning. They came to steal, it seems. Oh, the wealth of the town, everything [the Zinacantecs] had, it seems was stolen away. Oh, they're paupers now. They haven't anything anymore. That's because the bell left that way long ago.

The townspeople said, “How could it be? Where could our bell have gone?”

“Oh, there's no good in this, because two Chiapanecs came here yesterday,” said one of the shamans. “Two Chiapanecs came here yesterday. They were standing around here. They were walking around here looking at the church.” The church used to face Chamula. “They were walking around. What could they have been looking for? They seemed to be buying bread at the house of Old Serafina,” he said. “There where Mother Nolbertae's house is,” he said.

“Oh!” they said. “Damn, if our bell went off in a whirlwind we surely didn't hear it. It was lifted in our sleep, you know,” said the shamans. “But what can we do now, since it's gone? You don't think we can bring it back ourselves! They'd just start a fight.”

[The bell] wasn't put up in the bell tower there [in Chiapa] right away. It was hidden inside the church. That's why they didn't recognize their bell. In a week they went to look. They didn't see it anywhere. There wasn't anything. [The bell's] name was on the outside and its name was on the inside, saying that it belonged to Zinacantán Center.

Its name was surely there on the outside. It couldn't be lifted by one or two men. They looked. [They were afraid] they might suddenly get into trouble if they went to look inside the church, it seems, if the bell didn't seem to be theirs. If they were asked, “What are you looking for?” the two men would be scared, it seems. Even if many went and were asked, “What are you looking for?”

“Who knows if it is sitting inside the church like this at the east end of Calvary [Church]. That's what I've heard. It's sitting there at the east end of Calvary,” said the two men.

“Oh let's see, I guess, if we can win. It's just that we aren't as strong as the Chiapanecs, since they have their mountains,” said the shamans. Right away they offered candles. They prayed for the bell to come [back]. It never returned. It never came back. They did their best. Three times they offered
candles in the mountains. They didn’t win. Don’t you see, it was a Whirlwind [the Chiapanecs] had asked for. It was a Whirlwind the Chiapanecs had asked for in the cave. It came out of the cave for them. That’s why [the Zinacantecs] didn’t win. The bell didn’t come [back]. It has been there ever since. That’s why it was left that way very long ago. It was stolen away. It was stolen. The bell that went to Chiapa was [made of] pure gold and silver.

That’s why. That’s all there is [to say]. The end.

Unlike Xun Vaskis’ accounts of the loss of the bell (T157, T115), Tonik does not suggest that the elders were so foolish as to sell their bell to the Chiapanecs.

The cave of the Chiapanec Whirlwinds, Puluatul Vo7, is the first enticement mentioned in “When the Soldiers Were Coming” (T17, and by an alternate name in T56). It is located next to the Pan American Highway, halfway up the first ascent. See also T115, T151, T157, their notes, and T102.

**When the Bell Was Lifted**

T151

The Whirlwind, you see, this is the truth about it. I’ll tell you the whole story about the Whirlwind, indeed. We used to have a bell here in Zinacantan Center. The bell—the bell was of gold and silver.

Now as for the bell, it sounded beautiful. It sounded very loud. Now, the Chiapanecs used to come to visit. They used to come see the threshold of Saint Lawrence. They used to be walking about all the time. It wasn’t the way it is now. They never come anymore to sell fish. They were the very first to come.

Twelve of the Whirlwinds who came grew envious. As for the twelve Whirlwinds—the Chiapanecs have a cave there. They came. “Well, why is it that the Indian jerks are so lucky, the Zinacantec jerks? They are so lucky. Their bell is wonderful!” they said. Since in the place where the [bell] was hung, there was a snake. The snake’s jaws were ga—ping wide. It was all gold—the snake. The [bell] rope was all gold. Ye—s!

Those twelve Chiapanecs arrived. Four . . . six untied it and six on the ground received it. They slid it down by the church door.

Then when they had untied it—however did they do it—they lowered it. Then a terri—fic Whirlwind came. Bu—t, Holy Mary, what a Whirlwind! They never heard the bell go. It reached Chiapa. The bell is there now, to this day, in Chiapa. But it is cracked now. Cracked by lightning because they didn’t know what to use. In Zinacantan Center, they put “St. Peter the Martyr”—they put palm fronds on it. They have to be tied to the bell’s rim. It is wrapped around with palm fronds.
[The bell] went. It went with the Whirlwinds. They were able to take it. They succeeded in stealing it away. The town was left without its bell. A bell is still there [in the Church of St. Lawrence]—the one that's there now. It's the second bell. The first one was bigger.

Now, the second bell, there, it has taken the place of the first bell, now. The bell that's there now is called Maria Angelica. The other was Maria Teresa. Yes!

The [thieves] were able to get it there to Chiapa. “Now that we've won, let's see, I guess, if they come looking for it. What can they do to take it? There's no way. Even if they pay us for a cart—but a cart can't ever get it there. Don't you see, it's really heavy,” they said. Since there just used to be carts long ago. Ye—s!

They went. The poor people of Zinacantan Center went searching. They never brought it back. They never found it. They still didn't know, it seems, what Zinacantan Center was missing. They didn't know about the business. They still didn't know about the Chiapanecs’ business. They were just Whirlwinds, those dumb [Chiapanecs].

Since they were witches—the Chiapanecs a long time ago.

They stole it. It arrived. No trouble. The matter ended there—to this day. They never searched [successfully] for it. [The Chiapanecs] took possession of the bell.

Since it was stolen property, the Chiapanecs have their fine bell now. It isn't theirs. It's Zinacantan Center's. Just the way the Gospel Cross went. It disappeared. Who knows who stole it. How would you know who it was—if it was just the sacristans themselves or somebody else who stole it. We don't know.

That bell arrived [in Chiapa]. “We'll see. The Indians will have to come looking for it. They always come to sell peaches. Take ca—re, then! Don't let them see that it's here now!” said the Chiapanecs—those twelve [Chiapanecs]. They hid it. It was hidden a long time. Little by little they turned their attention to it. It went up. They got it up into the bell tower. I don't know how long they hid it. I don't know if it was a year, or longer. I don't know.

When it was hidden—when the people of Zinacantan Center saw it—it was already hung. What good did it do? We hardly could get it down ourselves! They just looked at it.

The bell was hanging there, now. That's all. It was rung there, then. They heard its tone, since they recognized it. Ye—s!

The bell is there now in Chiapa.
In the previous tale and in this version, told eleven years later, Tonik disputes Xun Vaskis' claim that the bell returned twice to Zinacantan and could never be hung by the Chiapanecs (T157, T115).

Tonik's mention of the fish that Chiapanecs used to market in Zinacantan is an historical note of which I was previously unaware, but to this day Zinacantecs sell peaches in the lowlands, sometimes transporting them as far as Arriaga, Tonala, and Juchitán. See also T74, T115, T157, their notes, and T102.

The Poor Woodcutter

There was a boy. He was an orphan. He had no mother, no father. All by himself he would get out of bed, wash, rinse his mouth, and leave. He would take his tumpline. He would take his rope. He went to get firewood. When he had carried back the wood—there was a madrone tree there—he rested. He rested again and again. Every time, every time he went for the firewood, every day, every day he did the same thing.

He suffered. "I am an orphan, God, My Lord, I have no father. I have no mother. I ache so. I'm wearing myself out getting firewood. I'm tired of selling firewood, it seems. My Lord, if only I had money I'd certainly rest. But being an orphan I haven't anything. I'm suffering so," said the poor man. He rested there again and again. He spread out his little blanket. He slept. He rested awhile. If he hadn't eaten before he left, at around ten o'clock he would rest there. It was at ten or eleven o'clock or so, who knows. For he was an orphan. He had no coffee. If he earned the money for it, he ate. If he didn't earn the money for it, then he had nothing [to eat]. He suffered.

When he arrived with the wood he went to sell the wood. He sold it. He received the money for the wood. He ate.

He slept. He rested. He slept there again. He spread out his little blanket. He slept. He rested awhile. If he hadn't eaten before he left, at around ten o'clock he would rest there. It was at ten or eleven o'clock or so, who knows. For he was an orphan. He had no coffee. If he earned the money for it, he ate. If he didn't earn the money for it, then he had nothing [to eat]. He suffered.

When he arrived with the wood he went to sell the wood. He sold it. He received the money for the wood. He ate.

[He had made] many, many trips perhaps. He had begun [doing it] long before. It was either Our Lord or something [divine] that took pity. The tree there had roots.

[The man] threw himself down there by the roots. Then the [young] man saw the roots of the tree split open and then a little old man appeared. "What happened to you, son? What happened to you? Why are you suffering so?"

"It's because I'm an orphan, sir. I have no family, no father, no mother."

"Oh," he said. "What do you wa—nt? What do you want me to give you? Shall I give you a ring, or a sash, or a little walking stick? It's good company for you," he said.

"You can give me that walking stick, sir. Give that to me. It will help me lift myself when I stand up, because I suffer so when I stand up with the wood."

"Even though you can stand up with [the wood] if I give you your walking stick—[Well], we won't say 7Oy la jun krem, me7on la, mu7yuk la sme7 mu7yuk la stot stuk la chlik la ta svayeb, ta la x7atin tzsuk ye ba7 7un, tztam spek' tztam xch'ojon chbat ta si7bej, mi skuch tal ti si7 7une, 7oy la te 7a li j-petz 7on te7 ja7 la te tzkux tzkux batel ju-koj ju-koj chbat ta si7bej sil k'ak'al sil k'ak'al yech tzpaz.

7Oy la jun krem, me7on la, mu7yuk la sme7 mu7yuk la stot stuk la chlik la ta svayeb, ta la x7atin tzsuk ye ba7 7un, tztam spek' tztam xch'ojon chbat ta si7bej, mi skuch tal ti si7 7une, 7oy la te 7a li j-petz 7on te7 ja7 la te tzkux tzkux batel ju-koj ju-koj chbat ta si7bej sil k'ak'al sil k'ak'al yech tzpaz.
you can’t stand up with it—Stop gathering firewood! Collecting wood is tiresome. You suffer too much. Don’t carry wood! Don’t sell wood! Just sit down. Take a rest or you’ll get sick from just selling firewood. You began doing it long ago. Your little walking stick will give you your food. I’d like to eat beef. Prepare it for me and bring it to me. I’d like to eat chicken. I’d like to eat whatever you need. My little walking stick I will give you your food. It will give it to you. Whatever it is, it will give it to you. The man was told. It will give it to you. Whether it’s tortillas or beef or pork or chicken or whatever else you want to eat. It will give it to you. It will give it to you. Just sit down. Collecting wood is tiresome. You suffer too much.

You see a visitor came to [the man’s] house. “Where did you get the good food you eat? Where did you bring it from?” asked the visitor.

“I didn’t bring it at all. It’s a little present they gave it to me,” he said. He lied, because he didn’t want to tell.

“Oh that’s how he does it! He’s stolen it from me!” said his neighbor. “Eh, the poor guy hasn’t stolen. But he’s an orphan, it seems. It isn’t that he’s not an orphan. He started doing it long ago. His little walking stick will give him his food. It will give it to him. Whether it’s tortillas or beef or pork or chicken or whatever else he wants to eat. It will give it to him.”

The king, there where they went to incriminate him. “Let him be seized! Let him be hung!”

They celebrated at the time of the baptism, when the babies were baptised. Then his neighbors resented it. They went to tell the king. “Let him be seized! Let him be hung!”

“No, not at all. It’s because my food comes by itself. It appears by itself. When I want whatever I want, ‘God, My Lord give me my food. Bring it here to me,’ if he says that, when he says that, the food is already served. The bowls, the chicken or beef, whatever he wants to eat comes by itself,” they said. They told the king, there where they went to incriminate him.

“Well, I guess I’ll see if you are telling the truth,”
said the king. When the man was summoned the king tested him out to see what he did. The man went to the king’s house. He left [home].

“God, My Lord, what can I do? Please don’t let me be anxious. Please don’t let me be afraid, my little walking stick. Please watch over me, defend me. Please don’t make me tell you when. . . . God, My Lord, my little walking stick, let them see whatever I ask of you. Prepare a turkey, prepare a sheep, we—done, well-prepared. Let them eat. Let them see that it comes at your command, that I don’t steal—not one thing,” he said as he left his house. He told his walking stick.

He arrived. “No, [the meal] will come. See, I myself will pray to the holy earth.” When he arrived he said to the king, “God, Jesus Christ, what is your command?”

“There’s no order, son. Why is it that now you have everything [you need]? You eat now. You had a celebration when your children were baptised. Where does your money come from? So do you steal? So that’s why your neighbors there have been ruined by robberies?” asked the king.

“No, I never steal. I just remember [to pray] to My Lord. My Lord, bring me my meal. I’d like to eat chicken. I’d like to eat that. I’d like to eat beef. If I say that, it knows how to come. My meal comes already prepared, already cooked,” said the man when he arrived.

“Well, if you are telling the truth, if you can do that, let’s go. I really want a sheep we—done prepared and a turkey well-done. We’ll eat here, sharing it with my wife and my children,” said the king. “Then I certainly will let you go!” [the man] was told.

He was given [the meal]. He asked for it this way, “My little walking stick don’t let me be anxious or afraid since Our Lord gave you [to me] for [this reason]. I have been asked for a turkey. I have been asked for a sheep. Please prepare them for me. Let them see, so that I can escape or I’ll just suffer death. My two little children will be left with my wife in hardship,” he said.

Then when he saw [the meal], “If you don’t do anything to me, if you let me go I’ll certainly give you your meal. It will come right away, just as long as you eat right away,” he told the king.

The king saw. “Bring it to me then, the meal that is already cooked now. Bring the table! Get the bowls, then. Let’s eat!” said [the king].

“No, the bowls will come. Our Lord will bring them himself. He knows how to bring them,” he said. The meal was set. They ate. The king’s place was set, the gentleman’s place was set. The man and the king [sat] next to each other. They ate, together with the king’s wife and children.
When the meal was over they didn't see where their dishes and so forth went. "Who knows what you can do. If you want to, sometime, I'll have a fiesta. You bring a band! We'll have a fi—ne fiesta. Don't think we won't have a fiesta. But you should come have a fiesta here if you're telling the truth that you know how to celebrate."

"We'll come and do whatever you want. I'll do it. I'll prepare it. Don't think I won't do it, I just have to pray to Our Lord. It's fine! If you want us to have a fiesta I'll come and celebrate it for you," he told the king.

"Well, go then, we'll celebrate a fiesta for my little child. We'll have a fiesta here in a week," he was told.

"Well, I'll come then," he said. He went home. He went free. He hadn't any more trouble. He was content now.

At the fiesta for the king's child he asked for five turkeys. He asked for six chickens, well-prepared, well-cooked. They ate. "Now you know how they are to come—what's needed. Please do just the same thing. I never told you I'd provide the dishes. And I've lost my maids. They don't want to wash them. They don't want to look at them. But whoever it is you ask knows how to wash them," [he was told].

"All right," he said. They ate. They celebrated. A marimba came. A band came. It was a goo—d fiesta! The fiesta was in full swing at the king's house.

"Who is giving the fiesta that's really swinging at the king's house? We've never heard that marimba there. We've never heard that band there. But where did they come from?" [the people] asked.

"Oh, it's nobody's. It's the band of the Indian wood carrier," they said.

"The Indian wood carrier, uh, Don . . . ." I don't know what his name is, uh, I think it's Don Juan. "It's Don Juan's marimba and Don Juan's band," said the talk.

He was summoned again and again every time the king had a fiesta. He would come then. [The king's] son got married. He went to play. They played music, played the marimba. They celebrated. When they [turned to] look, there wasn't a single plate, a single frying pan, or a pot. It was left perfect. There wasn't anything blocking the corridor where they ate, in the dining room or wherever they ate. Nothing at all. It was swept clean so they could dance merrily.

"Well, that's all, go! When I want to have a celebration please come, that's why I'll free you because I've seen that you were telling the truth that they would come on your own account. It isn't necessary for me to spend money. I'll save up my money," said the king.
That's how the poor man was saved. He wasn't punished. He was treated very well. As for the king . . . the poor [woodcutter] was sick. He got punished. He was treated very well. As for the marimba player. He is my musician, for when I want to take care of him for me, go and give that poor man his injection. They went to give him an injection. They went to give him medicine. And he nearly died. Three weeks later when he got up they went to bathe him. They went to wash him. The herb doctor went at the king's command.

He bathed. He recovered. He got up. "Walk! Try hard! I'll be happy. I'm going to have a celebration. My wife's holiday is almost here," said the king who went to talk to him.

"Well, don't you worry. I'm getting up now. I've recovered. I seem to be pretty well. I guess I'll see. I'll go inside later this afternoon. If I don't get sicker, then [my illness] will certainly pass, but if I do get sicker who knows if I won't die," said the man, Don Juan. Finally, when dusk came, Don Juan felt very co—Id when he went in.

"Well, we'll get some medicine to warm you. Warm your legs and your back with old rags! Hot ones, hot ones. Have your shirt censed and your pants censed so that you won't get sick! The trouble is you don't wash your clothes. It would do no good for you to have a laundress. You wouldn't ask her [to wash your clothes]. You ought to look for one. Please wash my shirt ca—refully for me. I want my shirt to be clean, my pants to be clean. I don't want to be naked, you should say."

"Oh, but my neighbors say ugly things. They just say I steal. They just say I do things. No, so there's nothing for anyone to hear, to criticize, to make trouble about in front of me. I'm going to ask—look here Your Highness—I'll ask for clothes, I'll ask for shirts, I'll ask for trousers. I'll ask for clothes for my children. I'll ask in front of you so that I can pray to Our Lord. You will see them come here before your eyes so that nothing can be said [against] me," said the man.

He went and asked like that. Juan recovered. He had nothing more to worry about. Strolling about happily, he carried his children. He went to the market. He went to give his children a good time. Because he never bought food to live on.

You see when he died he went in under the madrone tree. He wasn't buried. The coffin that was bought for his burial—the coffin was empty. It seemed as if he was put in the coffin.

Va7i 7un, k'u cha7al ti kol 7o ti prove vinik 7une, 7ipaj la 7un, mu jna7tik la k'usi ti 7ipaj 7une. 7A li
"7Abolajanik ba k'elbekon, ba pasbekon 7invektar ti prove le7e, naka me chamuk, porke ja7 me kajmarimpero ja7 kaj7ak'-musika, porke ti k'alal ta jk'an musika, yu7un muk' buch'u sk'in jch'amaltake, ja7 ta xich' tal marimpa, ta xich' tal k'usitik 7orkestial jk'an, batzi' lek musika 7oy yu7un," xi la. 7A la yak'beik 7inyeksyon, 7a la yak'beik pox, 7i yu7un la jutuk mu cham ti k'al ta yoxibal xemana ti k'al stam sbae, 7a la yatintasel, 7a la spokel, 7ay la ti jyerberoe, ja7 la ta smantal ti rey 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7atin 7un, kol 7un, stam sba 7un. "Xanavan 7un, 7ak'o persa 7un, bal me xka7i, xba, xba jpas k'in, po7ot xa me sk'in i kajnile," xi la ti rey ti 7a sk'oponel 7une.

"Bwéno, mu k'u xal 7avo7on a7a, ta xa jtam jba, ta xa xikol, leklekon xa ya7el, ta jk'el kikal xmalmak xa chi7o7ch ta yut na ti tanae, ti mi muk' xa xi7ipaje, yu7un xa chi7ech'i bi 7a, yan ti mi li7ipaj 7une, jna7tik mi mu xicham," xi la ti vinik ti Don Jwan 7une. Lajeltza ti Don Jwan 7une, 7ista la ti 7orasyon 7une, tol la si---k xa cha7i ochel 7un.

"Bwéno, 7a la ti jasatik pox chavich' k'ixnael, 7a li 7ak'o sk'ixnael lavave, lapat ta k'a7-pok'e, k'ok'ik k'ok'ik xa xchi7uk 7a li 7ak'o smantal, 7ak'u7 7amsetel 7avex, para ke yu7un mu xa7ipaj 7o, k'usi le7e yu7un toj tol 7a li, mu xana7 xachuk' lak'ue, 7altik, ti 7oy 7avajchuk'om mu xana7 sk'anele, yechuke chasa7. 7Abolajan chuk'bon lek jk'uj7, ta jk'an le---k i jk'u7e lek i jvexe, mu jk'an t'analon xachi ti yechuke."

"7Ayo pero ja7i li jlk'-'na yantik xale, xal no 7ox chi7elk'aj, xal no 7ox k'usi ta jnop 7un, mo7oj para ke mu7yuk k'usi 7oy ti buch' u xa7i, 7iyak' ta yak' ta 7utel,7iyak' ta k'o7e, ta jst, xba jk'an, k'el av7i 7a li senyor rey, ta jk'an jk'u7, ta jk'an jve7, ta jk'an jvex, ta jk'an jmo7okite, ta jk'an sk'u7atik i jch'amaltake, ta 7asat ta jk'an 7un, para ke ta jk'opon i kajvaltike, chak'el ti li7 ti 7asate ta xtal 7une, yo7 ti mu k'u xi7albat 7o 7une," xi la ti vinik 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7a li ja7 la yech la sk'an 7un, 7aj, kol la me ti Xun 7une, mu xa la k'u sna7 7un, xva7et la 7un, jun la yo7on 7un, xch'ip ti xch'amaltake chbat ta ch'ivit, chba skuxbe yo7on i xch'amaltake, yu7un ti tsamam sva7el xichiotike, mu la bu tsman 7un.

K'usi 7un, 7a la ti k'al 7icham 7une, ja7 la te ba 7ochuk ti ta 7on te7 7une, muk' la xnum 7un, 7a la ti kajon 7imanbat ti k'alal 7imuk ya7ele, xokol la ti kajone, te la 7och ti ta kajone.
Don’t you see, the coffin was left empty. He went there bodily where he had been provided for.

He died. The children stayed there, but he took everything with him. The children couldn’t ask [the walking stick]. They just had their belongings. His money was left, it seems. They wouldn’t go hungry. They bought four horses with it, a pair of oxen. His money was left, it seems. They wouldn’t go hungry. The children could support themselves.

The children weren’t stupid, either. When they saw they had their horses, they worked. They prepared their corn field. Their oxen plowed their land. They weeded their corn. The corn flourished. They prepared their corn field. Their oxen plowed their land. They bought more. They were left with plenty. The man went to pay in the place where his food came from.

“I told him”. I’m going there.

“Don’t bury me when I die. When I’m dead, stick me into the coffin, you see, but don’t bury me! I’m going to the place where the person who provided me came out, the place where he came from, the person who supported me for so many days. I was lucky. I didn’t do anything. Just because Our Lord took pity on me, he supported me.

“No, I won’t carry firewood. I’m going. I’m going to sit down,” [he told his mother as he left]. “God, My Lord, father, I miss you. I’d like to talk to you,” said the small boy when he arrived beneath the madrone tree.

He had been sitting there quite a while. “Son, have you come? Did you come to talk to me? I’m not dead. I’m alive, for I’ve come to pay for all that I ate, for what I ate on the surface of the holy earth. That’s why I came here,” he said. But he didn’t die. It seemed as if he died, but he didn’t die. He was certainly alive. “Don’t worry! If you want money, if you ask for whatever you want, I haven’t any problems. I have money. I have plenty of my own. Whenever you want to, come join me, if you need money, come!” he said.

That scared him. He didn’t arrive to talk anymore. Ever since he avoided it. The boy was scared. He didn’t want to talk to his father anymore, because [his father] entered between two roots, since the

Bu xavil, i kajon 7une, xokol 7ikon, sjunul 7ibat ta yo7 buy 7imak'lanon 7une.

Vai 7un, 7a li 7icham 7un, 7a ti 7unetike, te to kom, pero ja7 yich'oj 7ibat skotol 7un, mu stak' sk'an ti 7unetike, ja7 no 7ox ti 7oy ti k'u'suk yu7une, 7oy ti stak'in 7ikon ya7el 7une, mu7nik chvi7naj 7un, sman 7o no la chan-kot ska7, 7a li jun la par svakax, i chvo7 7o ti xch'amaltak 7une.

Va7i 7un, muk' o no la sonso ti 7unetik noxtok 7une, ti yil ti 7oy ti ska7 7une, 7abtej la 7un, smeltzan la xchob 7un, 7a ti svakax 7une, ja7 la tzvok 7o yosil, chak'inta 7o ti yixim 7une, 7ayan 7ixim, sman yan, 7oy k'u 7oy yu7un 7ikon 7un, 7a ti vinik 7une, ba la stoj ti yo7 ti buy lok' em tal ti sve7el, 7i skux 7o 7une, te la ba ba ta yok ti yok ti 7on te7 yo7 ti buy 7ilok' tal ti mole, te la 7och ech'el sjunul. J7 la.

“Muk7 bu muk' bu chamukikon, 7a lavi chichame, chamikon tik'ikon ta kajon avilik, pero muk' chamukikon, ta xibat yo7 ti lok' em tal li buch'u chismak'lan, yo7 li bu talem i buch'u chismak'lan, jayib no me k'ak'al lavi lek 7ikil, Muk' xi7abej mu k'u jpace, yu7un no me k'uxon ta yo?7on ti kajvaltitik nismak'lan. Ja7 lavi ti 7abol jba ti j-mek li ti kuch-si7e, ta chan-si7e, 7abol jba ti vi?7ale. Te chibat 7un, mu k'u xal 7avo7onik, ja7 te xba k'elikon, te chilok' ta ju-jun ju-jun martex,” xi la. Ju-jun la martex 7un, k'u ti martex 7i7ak'bat tal 7un taje.

Va7i 7un, “Chibat kik lavi martexe, jk'el kik mi jta ta k'oponen ti jtote, yu?7un chak jk'opon ka7i, yu?7un ta jna7 ti jtote,” xi la ti krem 7une. Bat.

“Pero mu xavich' 7apek', mu xakuch si7, naka me ma lok'uk tal!” xi la ti sme7.

“7I7i a7a muk' ta jkuch si7, chibat, chibat chotlikon.” “Dyos kajval, tot, chajna7 7un, chak jk'oponet,” xi la k'otel ti kox krem ta yolon ti 7on te7 7une.

Va7i 7un, naxnax 7ox la xchotej 7une. “Kere, mi natal, mi tal 7ak'oponon, mu me bu chamemon, kuxulon me, yu?7un me ja7 tal jtoj ti ku' yepal k'u jlajesoj, k'usi ti jlajes ti tzba ch'ul-balame, yecho me ti li7 nitale,” xi la 7un. Pero muk' la xcham 7un, spas la ti chame, pero muk' la cham 7un, kuxul la.

“Mu k'u xal 7avo7on, mi chak' an tak' in, mi chak' an k'u chak'ane, li7 toe mu k'u jna7, 7oy jtk' in, 7oy k'u 7oy ku7un, k'u 7ora sk'an 7avo7on xtal jchi7in jbatik mi chak'an tak' in xatal!” xi la 7un.

Ja7 la xi7 7o 7un, mu xa la bu xk'ot sk'o7on 7un, k'al tana yech kechel 7ikon 7o chak tak' 7une, xi7 7o ti krem 7une, mu xa la sk'an sk'o7on ti stot 7une, k'u la yu?7un cha7-p'ej yisim te7 k'u ti ja7 no 7ox 7ijam la
roots opened wide. It was hollow now. He went in there like a weasel.
That's all there is.

The woodcutter's prayer for deliverance is expressed more in prose lines of irregular length than in tight couplets, so I have not tried to force it into poetic format.

It appears from the conclusion of this tale that for Tonik there is no distinction between Our Lord and the Earth Lord, because the description of the man's death fits the model of those who have made a pact with the Earth Lord, and who at their death must therefore depart bodily to serve him until their debt is paid. This accounts for the confusing and seemingly confused discussion of the woodcutter's burial but only partial death.

Despite the European elements of this tale (a spirit appearing from between tree roots to bestow a magic cane on a poor man), I am unaware of the plot being repeated in tales from any other source.

In 1963 Tonik told this story briefly to Victoria Bricker. Again, the woodcutter rests under a madrone tree and bewails his fate. An old man appears from between the roots to give him a magic walking stick. He baptises his baby, celebrating the event with a dance. The king, who has been informed by an envious neighbor, arrives and interrogates him. Because he had buried his charm, it is never discovered, and the king is convinced of his innocence (Bricker, T67). See also T144 and notes.

The Poor Woodcutter

There was a tiny old man. He suffered. He was poor. He had nothing at all. He was alone with his wife. Begging, begging, he would arrive at his neighbor's house or whatever.

He would go, go get firewood. On the way back he would sell his little bit of wood. Then he would eat, if his firewood had arrived.

Then if his firewood arrived or was bought, then he would buy his tortillas to eat with his wife. On the way back he would rest under a madrone tree, because there was a madrone on a rise where he could set down his firewood.

God,
My Lord,
Whenever will I be freed of this, my hardship?
Whenever will I be freed of this, my suffering, My Lord?
I am wretched.
With difficulty I find the pay,
For Thy sunbeams,
Thy shade.
I cannot stand it, it seems, I cannot bear it, it seems.
I grow weary,
Faint with exhaustion,
Every afternoon, every afternoon,
Selling wood, selling wood, as I do,
My Lord,

he kept saying, every time, every time the poor old man rested there under the tree.

I don't know how many times [he had rested] when he was pitted by, who knows what he was, whether Thunderbolt or what. A little old man appeared. "What are you doing, son? Why do you sell wood?" asked the little old man.

"God, My Lord, sir, I sell wood—d because I'm so wretched. I have no money. I have nothing at all. I am all alone with my wife. I have nothing to live on," he said.
As for his children, the babies were wretched. The little boys, the little girls, both sexes, were starving. Who knows how old that man was, whether young or old or what. He had around five children, one baby, it seems.

As for the baby, I don't know if that baby was three months old. It hadn't been baptised, since he hadn't money for corn, he hadn't money for anything, it seems. He was wretched.

He went to sell firewood. "Ah, never mind, son, come back tomorrow, we'll talk together then," said [the stranger].

"All right," he said. The man was delighted now over what he had been told. He got up early on the morning after he had arrived [at the madrone]. "I spoke to a Ladino. I don't know, what do you think it means? He told me thus and so."

"Come back tomorrow, son. Right here, rest here tomorrow, we'll talk together," he told me. I don't know if I'll meet him now. I guess I'll go," he said [to his wife]. He went. He went to bring the firewood. He hurried as he got the firewood. After he had gotten the wood, he tied it in a bundle. He carried it back. He arrived right on time at the place where he rested, it seems. Quickly he set down the wood. He took off his hat. He sat down. "God, My Lord, how will I be freed of my hardship?" he said.

"What is your hardship, fool? You have no hardship. Take this if you want! Ask it for your food, if you'd like to eat, if you are hungry. If there is something you want, this charm will give it to you," said [the Ladino]. The golden charm was very beautiful. It was wide, it was a sash. "When you ask it for something you want, this charm will give it to you," he said. "Eh, it's better if I hold on to it. Otherwise it will get lost," he said. He took it out of his bag. He was holding it now. He carried his firewood back.

"Well, son, take care, you'd better sit down, you'd better rest. Rest! Rest happily! When you arrive, then your meal will arrive. When you see your meal

"Beno," xi la 7un. Xmuyster---j xa la ti vinik ti x7elan 7albat 7une, sob xa la lik ta yok'omal ti k'alal k'ot 7une. "Li7 j7ik'opon jun jkxlanke mu jna7 k'usi xal xana7, ja7 ye7ch ja7 ye7ch niyalbe chak li7e. Xatal 7ok'ob, 7ijo, li7 xa, li7 7onox chakux 7ok'obe ta jk'opon jbatik, xiyut 7un. Mu jna7 mi jta van lavi 7une chibat kik 7un, "xi la 7un. Bat la 7un ba la skuch tal ti ssi7 7une sujem la ssa7 ti ssi7 7une, laj la ssa7 ti ssi7 7une, stz'al 7un 7iskuch tale7 7un, ja7 xa no la ti7jal tal sta ti yo7 buy ta skux ya7el 7une chep xi la ti ssi7 7une slok' la spixol 7un choti la 7un. "Dio7s kajya7ti, k'u7 nox zi xkol ti jvokole?" xi la 7un.

"K'usi lavokole, sonso, mu k'usi 7avokol, 7ilo mi xak'ane, ja7 chak'ande 7ave7el, mi chak ve7an mi chavi7naj mi k'usi chak'ane ja7 chayak'be li7e, jk'opon jbatik, xiyut 7un. Mu jna7 mi jta van lavi 7une chibat kik 7un, "xi la 7un. Melel la slekil mu 7ixtalal 7oro 7un jun sincho la 7un, 7a ti k'alal mi chak'ande k'u chak'ande 7une xi ak'opon 7une," xi la. Chalok' li 7avixtol 7une.

"Sinchito sinchito por la virtud ke Dyos te a dado, ta jk'an lek chive7 ta jk'an lek chuk'h vo7 ta jk'an le--k ve7e7il, te jk'an lek k'in yu7n ta xkak' be yi7ch vo7 jch'amal," xi la taj k'alal ta sna 7une.

"Beno!" xi. Jiii, mu la me laj ya7i ti prove 7une stzak la 7un stik' la ta svorxa 7un, batz'i mu xa la xaj sk'el. "7A ti xch'ay lae?" xi la. Slok'es la ti ta svorxae. "Je, mas lek ta jmich' naka ch'ayuk," xi la 7un. Slok'es la tzvovrx 7une stomoj xa la 7un, skuch la tal ti ssi7 7une.

"Bweno, 7ii7ito, tek k'el aba 7un, tek chotlan 7un tek kuxo 7un, kuxo, kon gusto xakux, k'el xak'ote naka chk'ot 7ave7el k'al xavil 7ave7ele yu7n pechel
it will be served on the table. Whether it's chicken, or beans, or meat, or whatever you want, it will all be cooked," he was told.

"Ooh, could that be so?" he said. He hurried along. He went and tossed down his firewood for the Ladina where he had asked for money [to buy] his corn. He left the wood. He didn't even count up how much she owed. He didn't even say anything. He went on right away. He asked it. He arrived and asked his sash. "Little sash, little sash, by the power that God has given you, I want a good meal, and some tortillas, so I can eat," said the little old man.

He ate. It was given to him. When he looked, there was a pot of chicken there, a pot of beans there, ah, a deep tortilla gourd there. He was given everything, since it was a charm. It was all cooked.

"Bring your bowl over, wife! See here, the poor Ladino was telling the truth, the blessed Ladino, because you never know if [a thing like] this is good, or if it isn't that we'll go and pay for it when we die," he said. She accepted it. She sold out food for her children. Ehh, but the chi—cien—its drumsticks looked just like turkey drumsticks. The chicken's heart, its wings, its liver, and so on—they were really big, the very best. They ate with their children. Ehh, but the chi—cken—its drumsticks didn't change. How would they run out, since they were given by Our Lord?

They ate. They finished. As for the meal, she served it out. They ate, they drank the broth, it was given to him. When he looked, "Ooh, could that be so?" he said. He hurried right away. He asked it. He arrived and asked his sash. "I want some good music," he was told. "I want some good music," he said. Ooh, the next day, he sent for music. 

"Jii, mi yech van?" xi la 7un. Suj la sba ech'el 7un 7ech' la sjipbe ssi7i ti xjinulan bu sk'anoj skotol yixim 7une, skimnes si ssi7i, muk' xa 7o no la snit k'u yepal yil mu xa 7o no la k'u yal bat la ta 7ora 7un sk'an la 7un k'ot la 7un sk'anbe ti sincho 7une. "Sinchito simchito por la virtud ke dyos te a dado kyero una bwena komida i estortiyas pa ke yo kóma," xi la ti 7unen mol 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7ive7 la 7i7ak'bat la 7un, k'al 7iyile te la j-p'inal kaxlan te la j-p'inal chenek', 7a li te la j-p'ej pulum vo7 vaj, skotol la 7ak'bat 7un k'u ti 7enkantados chava7i 7un, tok'on xa la skotol 7un.

Va7i 7un, "Tamo tal 7apulatu ché7e, 7antz, k'el avil yech xa ya7uk i prove jkaxlan, bendersido jkaxlame, yu7n 7onoq na7tik mi lelik k'op li7i mi mu yu7nuk 7a li chba jtojik mi nichamotike," xi la 7un. 7iXch'am 7un sjotz'be la sve7el ti yoltake, jee pero kaxla---7animal yo7 tuluk' la yilel ti ti yo7take, ti yo7one, ti ti 7a li xxik'e, ti ssekub mi k'utikuk la kaxlan ya7el 7une, batz'i muk'tik la batz'i melel la sleekil 7un, 7ive7ik xch'i7uk ti xch'amaltake, ti yut nae k'i7il xa ti 7unetike, pechajtik xa ti pulatue, 7a ti vaj noxtoke mu la sna7 xlaj tzve7ik 7ive7 7a 7inoj xa li ch'amaletik, ja7 no la yech staoj yav, staoj yav noj ti vaje, k'u xi xi chlaj yak'oj ta kajvijkl tchava7i 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a li ve7ik la 7un laj la 7un, 7a ti ve7elile, tzjotz' chve7 chuch' kalto muk' ta 7a7el pero staoj yav ti ve7elile, ja7 no la yech mu la bu chlaj. "Pero k'u7 nox yu7un ti mu xlaj i jve7el 7une che7e?" xi la. Jii, ti yok'omal la 7un 7iyalbe la ti 7unin yunin 7ixtol noxtok 7une. "Sinchito sinchito por la virtud ke dyos te a dado, chavak'bon lek ve7elil yu7n ta xich' vo7 jch'amal, ta jk'an lek ve7elil lek k'u7ul, chba yich' vo7 li kuren kreme mu xu7 ti mu7yuk yich'oj vo7e," xi la 7un. Spa—s la k'in. "Ta jk'an lek musika," xi la 7un. Jee, xnik la musika, tza7 no la xch'amal ta musika la lok' tal ta 7eklexya, ta musika yul tza7 lek musika stak ta 7ich'el trago sman trago, 7ak'bat to tak'in yu7un ti yixtol noxtok 7une, ja7 ti xi7em nan ti xch'ay 7une solel la xchukoj ta pok', xchukoj ta xch'ut 7un.

Va7i 7un, sta smul 7un, ya7i la ti rey ti tspas k'in taj mol 7un taje take ta 7ik'el 7un, primero k'in 7ispase yu7un taj 7iyich' vo7 ch'amale ch'abal, mu
child was baptised, no, there was no trouble. On the second fiesta—he thought somebody might take [his charm]—so he had a fiesta.

On the second fiesta I don't know if it was his wife's fiesta or if it was that old man's own fiesta. I don't know the truth about it. On the second fiesta he celebrated, they ate we—11.

Ooh, the trouble was, his compadre went out and shot off his gun outside, he went out and shot off his gun outside. Then the man got in trouble over it. When his compadre fired the gun on the path, then the king's servants came. They came to arrest him. He went. That little sash of his was taken from him. There it stayed. "Where do you earn, where do you find the money?" "I don't earn any. This was given to me, like this. He gave me this. And he told me how to ask it."

"Let's go, ask it for this and ask it for that!" he was told. He asked it. It was given to him. [The king] saw it. That's why the king kept the charm.

The king kept it. [The man] was punished. He probably wasn't punished [physically], it was just a punishment that they kept the charm.

"Go on, then," said [the king]. The next day again, he took his tumpline and his ropes. He we—nt again.

"Well, now you'll pay for it!" said his wife. Now why did you have to celebrate fiestas? Didn't I tell you, Let's just eat, let's just drink! Come on, let's just eat some chicken, since the holy charm gives us our food, didn't I tell you? You deserved it. You drink so much cane liquor, you have so many fiestas," she told him. He left. He too—k his tumpline and his ropes. He left the next day. Just the same. I don't know if he spent a week selling firewood.

"But why, why are you coming to sell firewood. How come? What's happened?" asked the little old man, again.

"Nothing, it was taken from me. The king took it from me. Like this and so," he said.

"The king took it from you?" he asked. Didn't you see where he put it? he asked.

"He stuck it in his pocket," said [the man].

"Ah, well, don't worry at all!" he said. "The things that he put in his pocket will be here in my hand tomorrow," he said.

"All right," said [the man].

"Come back tomorrow to talk to me, to see me [to learn] what happened when I went to see him," said [the Ladino]. "I'm going to talk to that king. I'm going to visit him," he said.

Who knows if he went to visit him, if he went to talk to him or what. The next day [the man] arrived. Aah, "Don't worry, even though I didn't get the charm, I'll give you your little cane," he said. He was given a little cane.
"Use it as a walking stick when you go to gather firewood, [when] you go wherever you go. Ask it for your food. It will give you [your food], too. Don’t think it won’t give it to you, just as long as you treat it well," he said.

"All right!" said [the man]. He asked it for food, he asked it for clothes and so on, for corn, beans. He was given them. He ate well.

"But I don’t want to see your face anymore, coming here carrying your wood," said [the Ladinô].

"All right," he said. He did what he was told. He didn’t go carry firewood anymore. He bought his corn, now. He bought his beans, now. He ate. He drank. That was all. He never held fiestas anymore. When he felt like eating chicken, when he felt like holding a fiesta, he only . . . if he felt like drinking cane liquor he would send for a liter. He would drink—nk it, but all by himself. Then he would sleep. As for the wife, she ate, she drank. No problems. There were no quarrels. There were no fights. They were fine, no problems. That cane was his ‘til the day he died. There were no problems. None. [Another] baby was baptised. They ate plenty, they drank plenty. After they had eaten, then that comadre and compadre of his left. It was around six in the morning.

"Forget it, wife, let’s go to bed. I don’t think I can manage. I feel as if I’ve taken a lot [of liquor]. Spread out my bed for me," said the man. The man slept. The babies slept. No problems.

The next morning there was no fiesta, none. It was fine. Whatever they wanted was stored away. They asked for food. They put it away. They had a chest. The old-fashioned chests had different tops. We just closed them like this. We closed them like this. They weren’t fastened. They had no latches, just simple chests.

He had stuck [the liquor] in it. He went to look. “I think I’ll chase the hangover,” said the man. He

"K’uxa7elan lasakub, kumale?"

"Ja7 nox yechon."

"Mi chavuch’ j-p’isuk, kumpare?" xi la.

"Ja7 mu teuk noxe, kumpare, mi 7o me stojol mu me jk’an xachon abu ma me jk’an xavak’ aba ta labal 7il ta labal ya, stojol to me sk’an 7ep me kasto yich’oj la x7elan chaman kuch’tike," xi la 7un. Stak la ta 7ich’el 7a li jun litro, 7a li stak la ta manel jun moch kaxlan va—j sve7ik la yuch’ik vo7, laj 7a li yich’ vo7 ta 7unen 7une 7ibat ti skumale skumpare 7une bat ta sna 7un, ba yak’ik ti skumale skumpare 7une sut tate 7unen 7al yaviyik 7un, sakub ch’ul-7osil stak la ta manel yotik 7un ve7ik la 7unen 7un mu k’u k’op.

"Yiyil, 7antz, vayikotik mu xa xu7 chka7i, tzotz kich’oj cha7i k’ibon jvayeb!" xi la ti vinike. Vay la ti vinik 7une vay la ti jnetik 7une ch’abal k’op.

Sakub 7osil mu7yuk k’in ch’abal lek, nak’al ti k’usi chk’an, tzk’anbeik sve7el 7une svetz’ojik la 7unen 7o la j-p’ej skaxaik ta 7a li j-chop 7o sti7il ti vo7ne 7antivo kaxae, naka nox xi ta jma—kkitokite, ta jmakiktikotik xie, mu7yuk bu tzikal, mu7yuk sbisagrial yech nox sonso kaxa.

Va7i 7unen te la stik’oj 7un, ba la sk’el 7unen. “Ta jkuxbe xchamelal ka7i?” xi la ti vinik 7une, ba la sk’an
went, went and asked for a liter. It was given to him, then.

"I want a liter,"—whoever asked for it. That liter arrived. He drank it.

That's all that he did. He didn't get drunk, there wasn't any trouble. His comadre and compadre didn't come back. He was all by himself.

They ate. They drank. They had chickens. They had food. There was no trouble. It turned out well as always. He just kept [the cane]. When the time came for him to grow old, it was kept by his little boy who had been baptised. He kept it. The old man died. That little boy kept it. It was a little cane. That was what they lived on. That's how it has been ever since. Who knows where it went. That's all.

Again, in this version of the poor woodcutter told eleven years later, Tonik repeats the single identity of Our Lord and the Thunderbolt or Earth Lord—a surprising admission for as orthodox a Catholic as she.

In the interlude, the woodcutter has picked up a family even before he meets the Earth Lord. The woodcutter's first words to his sash are premature and surely should have been put in the mouth of the Earth Lord, who was advising the man what to say when he reached home.

No longer is the king defender of the woodcutter, who seems to have lost his privileged status as Don Juan, the king's musician. In this later version the charm is not simply a walking stick, but first a sash, and then its replacement, the walking stick.

What Tonik presents as an ideal situation—the man drinking alone at home and falling asleep like a baby—is an understandable feminine ideal that is directly opposed to the great value assigned by men to social drinking. At least in a man's mind only alcoholics and the old and friendless must resort to solitary tippling. Tonik apparently revised her story in midstream, so that the compadres did not go back to their home, but spent the night with the woodcutter. See also T77 and notes.

Stopping a Girl on the Rampage

Once there was a woman.

She had a boyfriend. The boy would come to her house every afternoon, every afternoon. He would start out. He would come to see when the girl came out. Sometimes the girl wasn't free. Sometimes she was free to come out and talk to the boy.

If the girl wasn't free, it seems, if the boy wasn't able to talk to his girlfriend, he would return. He would go back and get drunk.

He was stopped on the way by a cow. It gored him. One time his hand was hurt. Another time his shirt was ripped. Another time his pants were torn. His hip was hurt.

"But why is this awful cow doing this to me? But, no, wouldn't it be a good idea if I took my lasso along with me? I'll catch it. I'll tie it up," he said. "If I take my knife along, I'll kill it," he said. "Better yet, I'll punish it. I'll tie it up well. I'll leave it bound to a tree there by the barbed wire fence," he said. When it appeared he was going to catch it and tie it up. When the man started out from his house, he came to see his girlfriend. After he talked to her, he returned. Oh, maybe he had half a block to go before

7A la ti vo7ne 7oy la jun 7antz.

Va7i 7un, yu7un la 7oy slekom, ti kreme ta la xtal sil xmal sil xmal ta j-mek ta sna, xlik tale7un, chtal sk'el k'u 7ora xlok' ti tzeb 7une, 7a ti tzeb 7une, 7oy la mu xxokob, 7oy la xxokob xlok' sk'opon ti krem.

Va7i 7un, ti mi mu xxokob ya7el ti tzeb mi sta ta k'oponel slekom ti krem 7une, ta la sut 7un, ta la xyakub 7un, tzut ech'el 7un.

Va7i 7un, te la chmake ta be yu7un ti vakax 7une, ta la xko'oj, ja7 ti j-jech'ele 7iyayij sk'ob, 7a li j-jech'ele jatbat smokite, 7a li j-jech'ele, 7ijat svex 7iyayij jun yo7.

Va7i 7un, "Pero k'u no 7ox yu7un ti x7elan chixcha7le li yil vakaxe, pero mo7oj, k'usi van lek, mi chkich' van ech'el jriata ta jtzak ta jchuk," xi la. "Mi chkich' ech'el jkuchilu ta jmil," xi la. "Mas lek 7a li chchak'be jun kastiko ta jchuk komel lek ta j-mek ta jpech' komel lek ta te7 yoi7 ti te7 7alampree," xi la. Stzak la 7un, xchuk la 7un, ti k'alal 7ital ya7el, 7ilik tal ta sna ti vinike, tal la sk'el ti slekom 7une, laj la sk'opon 7un, ja7 7o la sut ech'el 7un, 7ej, 7o7iol to 7ox la kwadra sk'an sta ti yo7 buy ya7el ti mu vakax
he reached the place where the awful cow was. The horrible cow was already hurling towards him. It was a spotted cow, it seems. It had white spots.

Her braids were the horns. It ru—shed towards the man now to gore him. The lasso, the rope, it seems, went around its horns. He caught it. He tied it up. He tied up its hindlegs. He tied up its forelegs. He tied up its horns. He bound it carefully to a tree where the man went. “What do you want? Why do you keep stopping me on the trail? And what have I done to you?” said the [young] man.

The boy arrived home, “Mother, I left a cow tied up. When you see that it's grown light—it's the one that stops me on the trail—wake me up, but only if it's very early in the morning,” he said.

“Okay,” said the old woman. “Get up, son! It's already light,” said his mother. He started out. He came to look.

But there was a great blue-skirted woman. Her skirt was the same kind as ours, it seems. A blue-skirted woman. She was kneeling there, her legs tied up, her arms tied up. She couldn't do anything. Her head was bowed. She was tied up well, it seems, where he had left [the cow] tied to the fence post.

“Forgive me. I won't do it to you. Untie me! Please, don't you recognize me?” she said to the boy.

“Oh, you're a human being?” he said. “And how come last night you barred my way? You stopped me on the path here. [I mean] you stopped a boy on the path here, you know,” said the boy. He didn't say it was him. “I'll untie you if you pay [me] a fine of two hundred and fifty [pesos],” said the boy. “If you pay [me] a fine of two hundred and fifty [pesos] I'll untie you, but if not, you can die like this. You'll pay the punishment. Let the whole town see! Because you've been getting away with it. You come to bar people's way. You come to do that. I've just heard the gossip that you stop people. A friend of mine told me about it, that you keep stopping him all the time. One time his hand was hurt. One time his hip was hurt. One time his pants were ripped. One time his shirt was torn!” she was told.

“Don't do that, sire. Don't do that. Untie me. Please, sire!” said the woman because she wasn't from Zinacantán Center, it seems. The woman was
from San Felipe, it seems. That's why she said "sire."
"Do me a big favor, sire, please! Untie me! Those
two hundred and fifty [pesos] you want, I can't bring
them. I haven't any money. I'm poor."

"But what are you doing at nighttime? But why
do you have to stop people? You must be guilty of
something. That's why you're tied up like this," he
said.

"If only you would, if you would untie me, then
follow right behind me. We'll go. I'll go sell my
house and my land because I'm all alone at home. I
haven't anyone to order about," she said.

"Where is your land? Tell me all about where
your house is, your land, then I'll go ask if anyone
wants to buy them. Then I'll untie you if I've found
an owner for it, someone who will buy it," he told her.

"But then I'll still die here for sure!"
"Oh, then you'll surely die!" He took his revenge.
He didn't untie her. That man returned home.

"Oh, I will not tell you where my house is. Be
patient for me to tell you where it is. Just follow
behind me. I'd like you to untie me," she had said.

"Oh, I certainly won't untie you!" The man was
still smart. He didn't untie her. If he had untied her,
she would have fled!
He didn't untie her. He left. He went back. "Let
her die of starvation!" he said.
An old man came by, too. "What happened to
you, girl? What happened to you, woman? Why are
you tied up like this?"

"I don't know, sire. I don't know. They're making
me suffer so because I went out to amuse myself in
the dark last night, it seems. I went out to amuse
myself. I thought I was going out to have fun. What
good was it? See how I was blamed! I'm tied up
here."

"Oh, but I can't touch you. Don't you see, the
townpeople here, I don't know what the magistrate
said, but if it's on the magistrate's order, it's best if
you die," said the gentleman, too.

"Well, if that's all there is to it, then, who cares if
[I die] of starvation or what?" she said. It got to be
five or six o'clock in the evening. That awful boy
just took along his knife. It was eight or nine
o'clock at night when there weren't any more people
[around]. He just cut her throat. He killed her. He
killed her. He didn't love her any more. So that's
how that deceitful one lo—st! He killed her. She
died. Then, when she had died, he left her untied. He
abandoned her in a heap. Then he went off. The next
la ti 7antz 7une, yech'o ti "to" xut. "7Abolajan jutuk,
to, 7abolajan, titinon, 7a taj dos syentos sinkwenta
tak'in chak'an, muk' bu xkich' mu7yuk tak'in
me7onon."

"Pero k'u chasa7 ta 7ak'ubaltik pero k'u xatu7un
chamak ta be krixchano, yu7un tek k'usi 7amul,
yech'o xal la x7elan chachuke," xi la 7un.

"Ja7 xa nox mi xak'ane, mi chattitonon, 7ikta nan
7un bi 7a, tijlan ech'el ta jpat battik ta xba jchon ti
jnae, ti kosile, yu7un juktuk ta na, muk' buch'u
jtak'i," xi la 7un.

"Bu lavosile 7albon ech'el 7a li srasional buy lanae,
lavosile, 7ikta nan chba kal mi 7o buch'u sk'an sman,
ja7 chajtitin mi yu7un 7ijtaye yajval buch'u
smane," xut la 7un.

"Pero yu7un xa 7onox li7 chicham 7o 7un bi!"
"7Ay, yu7un me chacham 7o 7un a7a!" Lok' la
smanya 7un, muk' la stitin 7un, sut la ech'el tzna
taj vinik 7une.

"7Aj, mu xakalbe buy ti jna 7a, 7a ti chakalbe
buve, pasensia tijlan no 7ox ech'el ta jpat chak
7atitinone," xi la 7un.

"7Aj, mu xajtitin 7un bi 7a!" P'ij 7onox ti vinik
7une, muk' la stitin, 7a ti stitinuke, 7ijatav!

Va7i 7un, muk' la stitin 7un, bat la, sut la ech'el,
"Tek chamuk ta vi7nall" xi la.
Tal la jun mol noxtok 7un. "K'usi 7apas 7un, tzeb,
k'u7i 7apas 7un, 7antz, k'u7onox yu7un ti x7elan
chukulote?"

"Mu jna7, to, mu jna7, tol 7abol jba xixcha7lek
yu7un lok' jkux ko7on ti samel ya7el ta 7ak'ubaltike,
lok' jkux ko7on lok' paxyajkon ti chakale, k'u stu k'e
x7elan 7ijta jmul 7un, chukulon 7un li7i."

"7Aj pero mu stak' xajpik, mu xavil 7a li Jtek-lum
li7i mu jna7 ti k'u xi xi li preserente, yan ti mi
tzmantal preserente yu7un tek chaman," xi la ti
jtata7tik noxtok.

"Bwénó, muk' sk'opla7 7un che7e, yu7un yech
pasensia mi vi7nal k'usi!" xi. Sta la vo7ob mi vakib
7ora ti k'ak'al 7une, solel ta ech'el skuchilu taj
mu krem, 7ista vaxakib 7ora mi baluneb 7ora
7ak'ubal ti k'al ch'abal xa krixchano 7une, solel la
stuch'be snuk' la, smil la, smil, mu xa la sk'an, ja7 la li
ch'a--- y 7o taj manyoso x7elan, smil la, cham la 7un,
ja7 to la stitin komel k'al cham xa 7oxe, te la butul
7iyikta, ja7 to la bat, 7istak ech'el 7a li cha7-vo7
mayol ti preserente ta yok'omal lek nan lajuneb 7ora
day, maybe about ten o’clock, the magistrate sent two constables.

“There is a dead woman over there,” said the magistrate, “Because I came by, next to the barbed wire fence. A woman is lying there! She was stabbed with a knife in her throat or her chest I think,” he said. “But who killed her? Who else killed the woman? There’s something not right about that woman, I think,” said the magistrate. “But who killed her? We aren’t killed for doing nothing at all. There’s something wrong,” said the magistrate.

You see, the awful man was clever, it seems. The boy had gone to complain about it. “She barred my way like this. She did thus and so to me. Won’t you give me permission to give it to her once?” he had said.

“But can you be telling the truth about her?”

“I’m telling the truth. Go see for yourself! She transforms herself into a cow. What good does it do you if you are able to catch her?”

“How did you tie it up? You tied its horns. You tied its forelegs. You tied its hindlegs,” said the magistrate.

“I just asked her to pay me a fine of two hundred and fifty [pesos] for what she did to me. She ripped my pants.” He showed [the magistrate] his hand, how it was hurt by the horn.

“Oh you’re right, then! Never mind, then, if you can kill her, kill her!” said the magistrate. “But only on condition that you aren’t seen,” he said.

“All right,” he said. The man lost his temper. He prepared his knife well. He sharpened the blade carefully. Who knows if it was in her chest that she was finished off. There was just a bi—g ring of blood like this. He undid his lasso. He passed by the stream to rinse it off, but there was no trouble. He left, he returned home. The knife was left sticking in her chest. Oh, so that it wouldn’t be said that he was the one who gave it to her. The trouble ended. It didn’t become known. It was left like that. The tricky one who used to gore people long ago, it seems, lost.

While this tale has no close counterpart, to my knowledge, it does represent a theme that is frequent in Mesoamerican folk literature—the witch who walks abroad at night in the shape of a cow. Such nocturnal spectres cavort in Mitla (Parsons, 1936:364; Radin and Espinosa, 1917:107), Sayula (Clark, 1961:69–76), and Chan Kom (Redfield and Villa, 1934; T11, T12). In Veracruz, too, an unsuspecting man discovers that his girlfriend has transformed herself into a cow (Robe, 1971, T43).

For a Zinacantec it would be inconceivable to share the Greeks’ sentiments as they spoke of “cow-eyed Athena.” Only an enraged drunk earns the epithet “cow-eyed.” Nor would Chagall’s dreamy creations, floating in bovine splendor across the sky, stir the same emotions in a Zinacantec breast. These doughty corn farmers would never ascribe docility to a horned beast! Conspicuous figures of their dream life, cows are always creatures of unrestrained, unpredictable evil power. Seen in this light, the protagonist of this drama is not a heartless and vengeful man, but a genuine hero, who would win the acclaim of man and woman alike for ridding the world of a terrifying incarnation of overweening female power. See also T128 and notes.
The Villistas

As for Villa, he went to Acala. He went to steal horses. He went to steal sheep. He went to steal chickens. He went to steal money in Acala. After he had robbed there, he went to Chiapilla. After Chiapilla—he never continued on, he didn't continue to San Lucas. He passed through Rosario, through Totolapa. And who knows by what route he came.

You know, then, Villalobos, or whatever his name was, went there around Yerbabuena. Long ago—since the people of Zinacantán Center grow corn—they signed themselves up [with the people] on the other side of the Grijalva River. On the other side of the Grijalva lived that Villa. Ah, what was that old man's name? Ah, I don't know. I think it was Pancho. I don't remember anymore. I'm right, it was Pancho. Pancho Villa! Pancho Villa!

As for Old Pancho he was bold. If he [wanted to] steal cattle, he stole them. He slaughtered them. He skinned them. And all the corn farmers went to work their corn fields, like Romin [Teratol] was talking about today. They formed a group at whichever colony they arrived, at whichever hacienda they arrived. “You will sign up with me. If you don't sign up with me, I will strip you naked!” was the order. He would take off their clothes. He would take off their pants, their shirts. Because my stepfather went [to the lowlands] like that, my mother's husband. He wasn't my father. He was my stepfather.

The man went. God, he came back without his clothes. He simply used in place of his pants—he made his head-covering [his neckerchief] serve as pants. That's what he put on to cover himself when he came back! The poor guy came empty-handed, carrying his net. He hadn't anything, not even tortillas to bring back. The thing was, they had tossed a tiny cloth at him—that's what he had wrapped around his head when he arrived there [in Zinacantán]. We didn't even recognize him when he returned.

“Why are you that way?” my mother asked him.

“Oh, be quiet! I was left naked like this. I haven't any clothes left. My pants are gone, my shirt, my blanket, my tortillas. I didn't work a single day. Villa took them all from me,” he said. “All our things went to Villa, since the old man whose work I went to see didn't join up with Villa!”

“My Lord!” we said.

“Since you haven't any clothes, where can I get clothes for you?” said my mother.

“So, some cloth will have to be cut,” said her hus... Old Chep, it seems. They went to get some

7A li 7ay ta 7a li 7Amuxton 7ay yelk’an ka7? 7ay yelk’an chij 7ay yelk’an kaxlan 7ay yelk’an tak’in ta 7Amuxton, laj yelk’an te yo7e bat ta 7Ach’ Jtek-lum, laj ta 7Ach’ Jtek-lum ja7 li muk’ bu xjelave muk’ xjelav ta Xan-tukax, 7i7ech’ ta Rosaryo, ta Natijolom 7i mu jna7tik k’usi xi xtuch’ tale7 7un.

7A va7i che7e Biyalovos mi k’usi sbi li 7ay le7 ta Yervavwenatike, 7a li ti vo7nee che7e k’al taaa, kontal ke chchabaj i jjtek-lume, taaa ta 7a li xak’ sba ta j-jech Nab, j-jech Nab 7a li nakal taj Biya 7une, 7an k’usi li sbi li mol li7e, 7ay 7ay mu jna7, Pancho ya7el chka7i mu xa jna7, Pancho ka7uk Páncho Viya, Páncho Viya!

7A li 7a ti mol Páncho 7une yu7n 7aresgado mi xelk’an ganado yu7n chelk’an, ta smil ta xcho7, 7i skotol li jchhabajometik 7a li chba spas xchobik chak k’u cha7al lavi chlo7ilaj Romine, ta ta stzob i sgrupoe buy kolonya7i k’otem buy 7asyentoal k’oteme. “Chavak’ aba ta jtojol mi mu xavak’ aba ta jtojole yu7n chajt’anani!” xi mantal. Tzlok’be sk’u7 tzlok’be svex smokete yu7n ja7 ye7 chcha7-tot smalal ti jme7e, mu jtotuk jcha7-tot.

Va7i 7un, 7a li 7ay ti vinike, yo7s mu7yuk xa sk’u7 ta solel xa 7a ti yak’oj ta sk’exol svexe, ja7 xa spasoj tal ta svelx 7a li 7oy sut’ jolol pok’e ja7 xa yak’oj smakoj 7o sba tal, xvton tal ti provee skuchoj tal snuti7, mi yotuk mi k’usiuk yu7n mu k’u yich’oj tal, k’usi xa jipbat la komel 7un j-lik xa 7unin toaya, ja7 xa ssu’toj 7o yulel sjol 7un, 7asta mu xkojitikintikotik ti yul 7une.

“K’u yu7un la xa7elan 7une?” xut i jme7 7une.

“Oj 7an to me chan t’anal me nikom li7i mu me mu7yuk me jk’u7 nikom, bat me ti jvexe ti jmotetee ti jchije ti kote mu me bu junuk k’ak’al ni7abtej laj me spojbon Biya,” xi 7un. “Yu7n 7ibat ta Biya skotol ti k’usuk ku7untikote yu7n ja7 li muk’ stik’oj sba ta Biyail li 7a li mol 7a jk’elbe yabtele,” xi 7un.

“Kajval!” xichoitikotik 7un.

“7Ak’ 7o to ch’abuk 7ak’u7 7un le7e bu ta xkich’ 7ak’u7?” xi li jme7 7une.

“Yu7n solel chich’ tuch’el manta,” xi ti sm... ti mol Chep ya7el 7une. 7A ssa7ik manta 7un, manta svex
cloth—cloth for his pants, cloth for his shirt. They came [to San Cristóbal] to buy it.

He went to work again. Then he was told properly. "If you will join my group, then you can work! But if you don’t join my group—if you side with the governor, it seems—then you won’t have any corn. I’ll take all your corn," said [the Villista].

Ye—s!

Then the poor guy obeyed. The second time he came back, nothing had been taken from him. He had his things. He even came back with meat. He brought back salted ribs—a strip of meat ten arm spans long. But the meat was this thick! Ten arm spans.

Then one leg of beef.

Then probably one strip of liver an arm span’s length. A strip, an arm span, of lungs, as we say.

Something like that, since there was a meter or so of heart. That’s what he brought back with the leg of beef. And one side of ribs he brought back. And two iguanas, one armadillo. What’s the name of the awful animal [whose meat] came in strips, too? Deer, [no] peccary! Bu—t there was a burlap bag of meat. The meat arrived. You eat the meat—there were no tortillas!

“What happened? Is it because you took his side?” I asked. “What if they come to our house, if they come to arrest you?” Because there was a man, named Maltit Piskal. Yes!

As for Maltit Piskal he thought the same way. He stole together with Villa. That Old Pancho was strolling about by his house. They ate there. They slaughtered cattle, and so on. [Old Maltit] even came to sell jerked meat in his house. Now he had a store. He sold jerked meat in his house. Since the cattle that they cut into strips of meat was all stolen. He sold jerked meat in his house. He sold it for a peso, for five pesos—however much of his meat was bought.

Now, Maltit Piskal got into trouble. Obregón’s soldiers went and saw him.

Then Obregón’s soldiers—it was discovered that he stole in Acala, and in, I don’t know what it’s called on this side of Acala. He got into trouble, since he stole from a hacienda there. They came to arrest him. He was arrested and jailed in Chiapa. He left Chiapa and arrived in Zincantán. He left Zinacantán and was brought trussed up, by the soldiers.

[Ah, that? . . .] That Maltit Piskal. Ye—s!

Then Maltit Piskal—you see what happened—he left Zincantán Center. And since I came to San Cristóbal myself, I was returning [home] like when I return now. It used to be on foot.

There was a tree this thick there by the road. A rope was already strung up. You see, they made him manta smokete 7ital smanik 7un.

7Icha7-ba—t7o ta 7abtel noxtok 7un, ja7 taj soleh lek xa 7albat 7une. “Mi chavak’ abta ja tja pjoj vo7one, 7abtejanik yan ti mu muk’ chavak’ abta ja tja pjoj vo7one, mi chavak’ abta tztojol li lo goyeyro ya7ele 7ikta nan mu7yuk 7avixim ti pjoj komel skotol lavixime,” xi la 7un. Jii!

7Ora, 7ixch’u7n ti prove 7une, 7a sut tael7a xcha7-lok’el7a7ale mu xa k’u pojab 7oy xa k’u 7oy yu7un, 7asta bek’et 7iyul, 7ista tal 7a li jin koxtiya 7atz’meltas7bi 7a li lajun-jov bek’et sji7sel pero xi syijil ti bek’ete, 7a li lajun-jov.

7Ora, jun yok vakax.

7Ora, j-7ov nan sji7sel sekub, j-7ov sji7sel 7a li 7a li b66e xkalti7ke.

Va7i 7un, 7a li 7ay k66o66o jun jun metro mi k’usi xi yo7on, ja7 yich’oj tal 7un xchi7uk7uk taj jun yok vakax 7une, 7i jin koxtiya 7un yich’oj tal 7un, 7i xchi7uk 7a li cha7-kot 7inat6ab 7a li j-kot kapon, 7a li k’usi sbi li mu chon jisbil tal noxtoke, te7titik7el te7titik7el chij, te7titik7el chitom, pe—ro ti bek’ete j-p’ej koxtal tal ti bek’ete 7une, ti7an bek’ete cha’abal vaj!

Va7i 7un, “7A li k’u cha7a7al 7un mi7n mi 7a li yu7n 7avak’oj xa abaik tztojol 7un?” xkut. “7A ti xtal li7 ta jnati7k 7une 7a ti xtal stzakelot?” Yu7n 7oy jun vinik 7un, Maltit Piskal sbi. Jii!

7A ti Maltit Piskal 7une ko7ol sjol xchi7uk ko7ol ch7elk’aj xchi7uk ti 7a li Biya 7une, 7a taj mol Pńanco 7une ja7 xa te xva7et ta sna te chve7 tey tzmi6lik vakax k’utikuk ta j-mek 7un, 7àsta chtal xchon taxux li7 ta ta sna 7une, ta la 7o xa la styenta ta xchon taxux ta sna ja7 ti naka yelk’anel ti vakax ta sji7si6ik ta bek’et 7un, ta xa xchon taxux ta sna 7un, ta xchon xa ta pexu ta vo7ob pexu ti k’u xi xmanbat i sbek’et 7une.

7Ora, 7a ti Maltit Piskal 7une ba yaluk ta k’ok’ 7un ba yil li yajsoldero 7Ovregon 7une.

7Ora, li yajsoldero 7Ovregon 7une, 7ivinaj ti ch7elk’aj te ta 7Amuxton 7i ta mu jna7 k’usi sbi li7 ta ti7il tal 7Amuxton 7une, 7iyal la ta k’ok’ ti ta x7elk’aj te ta jun 7asystento 7une 7ay stzakel tal 7un, 7itza7ke tal 7un chuk ta Soktom 7un, lok’ tal ta Soktom 7un yul ta Tzinakánta 7un lok’ tal ta Tzinakánta 7un 7ay spech’el tal ta soltero 7un, ja7 taj Maltit Piskal 7une.

7Ora, ti Maltit Piskal 7une, 7a ti Maltit Piskal 7une 7avi xi 7une, 7ilok’ tae7ale ta Jtek-7um, 7i kó66o jjobelal7on i vo7one yu7n nisut xa ech’el chak k’u cha7al chisut lavi 7une, ta koktoki6toki7 to 7ox 7un.

7oy xi syijil te7 xi ta be 7une, jipanbil xa 7o yak’il 7un, 7avi xi skaj kejel xi ta kejel ta balamal xi to 7une.
He was kneeling, kneeling like this on the ground, like this. He was kneeling on his hat.

The rope was knotted with a knot here. "Will you tell or not?" he was asked. The poor guy was jerked up by the rope.

"You will make your declaration, as God commands, or who cares what the fuck happens!" said the soldiers. Then he was jerked up by the rope.

"Ow," said the poor man. He was probably told that three times. We were standing, then, watching.

"You—what do you want?" the soldiers asked us. "No—thing, nothing at all, sir!" we said.

"All right, keep going!" was the command.

"All right," we said. We continued on. We probably went pretty far. We stopped to watch. "Will they kill him now, My Lord?" we said to ourselves. Then, no, they took down the rope. And his neckerchief was worn by a soldier. His woolen tunic was worn now by a soldier. I think that's all. He had a leather shoulder bag. A soldier had it slung over his shoulder.

No more trouble. That's how he came. We watched him come. He came. They picked up their things.

He came to the jail here in San Cristóbal. He never confessed. He never said that he was of the same mind as Villa—that they stole together. He didn't tell a word of his thoughts. And he never confessed it. He won out like that. He left the jail. He came out ten years later, I think. It was hardly after one year! After ten years [the gates] were opened for him. He went to Zinacantán Center. He wasn't very guilty now. No! There weren't any witnesses left. "No, it wasn't true, I never stole," he said. Yes!

"All right, go on, then!" he was told. He was freed. He left. He arrived at his first wife's house. He had a daughter by his first wife. Paxku7 was his wife's name. His daughter was named Maruch.

Now, the man had older sisters and younger sisters. He arrived at the house of his first cousin—Petul, Petul Buro. You know him? He is a close relative [of theirs]. He had the same father and mother as my husband's mother. Her name was Mai Buro.

He went there to report. "I've come out of jail now. They say I'm not guilty anymore, since they said my guilt ended quickly," he said. He passed by to tell them.

"At least you weren't killed!"

"No!" he said. "I guess I'll go look. I don't know if you were so kind as to look after my corn field for me." It was around— I don't know what month that he was freed. Ye—s!

"But never mind, the corn field was looked after, of course!"
“Then I'll find out how much I owe [you].”

“Oh, you can pay us back [with work],” he was told. They had him pay back the days. He payed back the work. His corn appeared. His family ate, it seems. Since he was alive, it seems. After the corn appeared, he, himself, came to pay back the work [that had been done for him]. That was all. That was the way the affair ended. The poor guy came out of prison. But he never confessed. But Villa was like that.

What I saw myself was that he brought meat. He came to sell it here in Zinacantan Center.

[Villa himself?] No, that [Maltil Pixkal].

[Where did Pancho Villa live?] Pancho Villa—beyond Acala. On the other side of the Grijalva. Pancho Villa. That's where his house was indeed! It was probably sixty-eight or sixty-nine years ago, indeed, I think. Long ago! Long ago, because . . .

[How old were you when you saw that?] When I saw it I was seven. I was seven years old when I saw it, indeed. Seven years. I was seven years old, because that had started long ago. It was already two or three years after that had begun—when they stripped people, took off their shirts, took off their pants, searched for their money. They were just bad. Bad, there wasn't a good person. They had probably prayed to God so that they could eat. That's what they lived on. They certainly didn't believe in God [properly]. No, the poor guys were different.

Tonik's account of the Villistas provides a different perspective from Xun Vaskis' (T121), but a no less real one. The helplessness of the Indians, caught between contending forces, is the traditional plight of peasants in wars imposed from above.

Of course Pancho Villa did not even come to Chiapas in person, but his name was associated with the counterrevolutionary "mapaches" the lowlands and with Pineda in the highlands.

Maltil Pixkal's first cousin Petul Buro is the lucky musician of Tale 132. See also T121 and notes.

When the Church Rose and Saint Sebastian Was Saved

Long ago the Church of the Martyr, it wasn't built by masons or whatever. It was built by the Creator Gods long ago. It was made, it was built in four, in five nights and five days. The stones, the timbers, and so on were transported. It grew dark. There was no day and no night, just darkness. It was the Vaxakmen, as they were called long ago, who worked. It was these Creator Gods who carried the stones. It was the Creator Gods who carried the lime. It was the Creator Gods who transported the timbers. That's why the land was in darkness. [The Church of] the Martyr was built long ago.

The church was built, the church was made, in five days. Day and night it was dark. The land was in darkness. Dawn never came. “Why is the land so dark? Why doesn't dawn ever come. It's unbearable, it seems,” said the people.
“Eh, who knows why. Maybe god is punishing us for something. If we don’t live through it . . . if the things we live on run out we’ll die of starvation,” said the people.

But you see when the five days and five nights were up, the church was standing. It was standing. Its walls were up now. Its tiles were on now. The bell tower wasn’t tall. It’s low. That’s because it was built by the Creator Gods. That’s why. It was rebuilt. It was repaired. It was hard to repair it. It was hard to rebuild it because it wasn’t built by people. Oh, maybe they were people, but they were the Creator Gods who built it long, long ago. That Church wasn’t built just this morning or yesterday. It was long ago. It was Our Holy Fathers, the Creator Gods who built it long, long ago. That church was made. They went to throw stones or whatever standing at the head of the graves of the dead where the people were buried.

Stones were standing for each one, for each of the dead. They were there when we watched the fiesta, it seems. I saw them of course, but since my age is . . . I’m forty-six years old now.

Now when the church was built . . . How would you know how many centuries ago the church was built? That church is very old. There isn’t anyone who saw it built. It was the ancestors who saw the church being built. The bells weren’t big either. Its little bells were small.

Don’t you see, long ago there weren’t any big bells. There used to be just very little bells until the ancestors had their bells, but [that was] in the church of Our Holy Father, St. Lawrence. Who knows how it was built. But the Holy Martyr, Our Holy Father, was a captain. He came from deep in the woods. They went to throw him in the woods. I don’t know what Our Holy Father’s crime was. They went and they threw him in the heavy forest to be killed by mountain lions, to be killed by coyotes, to be killed by whatever animal would eat Our Holy Father long ago. They did their best where they threw him. They tried their hardest where they tossed him, but he didn’t die. Nothing happened to him. I don’t know if it was the Lacandons. I don’t know whose job it was to shoot arrows at him long ago. Just arrows. He was wounded badly. Flecha they’re called. He was wounded many times in his breast. He was wounded in his legs. He was wounded in the belly, in his thighs, in the ribs, wherever the arrows that they shot entered. They killed him, since he was an army captain. How would we know he was Our Holy Father, the Martyr? So today that [church] is built. That church was made. They went to throw it seems. I saw them of course, but since my age is . . . I’m forty-six years old now.

Now when the church was built . . . How would you know how many centuries ago the church was built? That church is very old. There isn’t anyone who saw it built. It was the ancestors who saw the church being built. The bells weren’t big either. Its little bells were small.

Don’t you see, long ago there weren’t any big bells. There used to be just very little bells until the ancestors had their bells, but [that was] in the church of Our Holy Father, St. Lawrence. Who knows how it was built. But the Holy Martyr, Our Holy Father, was a captain. He came from deep in the woods. They went to throw him in the woods. I don’t know what Our Holy Father’s crime was. They went and they threw him in the heavy forest to be killed by mountain lions, to be killed by coyotes, to be killed by whatever animal would eat Our Holy Father long ago. They did their best where they threw him. They tried their hardest where they tossed him, but he didn’t die. Nothing happened to him. I don’t know if it was the Lacandons. I don’t know whose job it was to shoot arrows at him long ago. Just arrows. He was wounded badly. Flecha they’re called. He was wounded many times in his breast. He was wounded in his legs. He was wounded in the belly, in his thighs, in the ribs, wherever the arrows that they shot entered. They killed him, since he was an army captain. How would we know he was Our Holy Father, the Martyr? So today that [church] is built. That church was made. They went to throw
him wherever they threw him, but he didn't die. Nothing happened to him. They got no further—he was like [the image of] Our Holy Father, the Martyr there.

Then he returned. He came back, it seems. He still didn't die because of them. They looked at him, it seems. "How can it be that he doesn't die? How can it be that nothing happens to him? How can he just be there, be there a long time and not die? We thought he would be killed by coyotes. We thought he would be killed by jaguars, that he would die from some animal in the woods, but he returned just the same, alive. But who knows, then. He didn't die of anything. Now, come on, let's kill him!" said the Lacandons. So they just shot him with arrows.

Now it was then that Raven came. The Spooks came. They came with their squirrels. The Spaniards came. When the Spaniards arrived they asked, "Why are you killing him? Don't kill him. Don't you see, he is our captain," said the Spaniards. "No, don't kill him. He will come here. He will come to live here in the house," they said.

That's the way it was left. It was the Spaniards who defended him long ago. The end.

Long ago the timbers didn't travel. The timbers and the stones didn't have to be carried, they came by themselves. They worked by themselves. They already knew where [to go]. Our Holy Fathers, the Creator Gods, just gave the orders. They did it. They did it. And they just gave the order, "You go in here!" When the stones heard they knew to get up. They knew how to build [the church] by themselves. The trees, too. If they were told, "Let's go!" they just went by themselves. They dragged themselves along. They travelled by themselves. They had legs long ago. That's why it didn't take long to build the church.

This tale of the origin of the Church of St. Sebastian gave us the first hints of the meaning of the highly complex ritual activity that occurs every year at the Fiesta of St. Sebastian. The ka7benal impersonates the Lacandons. The name perhaps derives from Cabnal, a seventeenth-century cacique and priest of the Lacandons (Villagutierre, 1933:223, 241). The k'uk'ul chon, "feathered serpent," is Raven who gave man corn, the j7ik'al is the Spook; the muk'ta jxinulan, "great Ladina;" the bik'it jxinulan, "petty Ladina," and bik'it j7ik'al, "petty Ladina," represent the Spaniards. These and other characters react certain aspects of the appearance and martyrdom of St. Sebastian, as well as the construction of his future home.

The date over the door of the Church of St. Sebastian is 1872.

The Vaxak-men or Creator Gods who, it is believed, built the Church of St. Sebastian are credited with making the waterholes with their staves. They are also the gods who uphold the corners of the world on their shoulders, and so are surely related to the Yucatec Cuch-caan and the ancient Mayan Bacabs (Villa Rojas, 1969:272). In the neighboring town of San Andrés the original ancestors are said to have come from a place to the east called Vaxak-men, where there was an "elegant palace of stone." (Holland, 1965:14). Perhaps this was Palenque.

A far more detailed account of St. Sebastian's travails is given in a Zinacantec version elicited by Vogt (Vogt, 1976:139-161), which clarifies the significance of the jousting ritual at the Fiesta of St. Sebastian. For refusing to marry a general's daughter St. Sebastian was thrown to the animals in a forest along the seacoast of Oaxaca. When neither the animals, nor the Indians' arrows, nor the soldiers' bullets succeeded in killing the saint, the general was told that St. Sebastian could only be slain by knocking to the ground a jousting target that was his shield and, in fact, his heart. After the general failed, too, St. Sebastian was abandoned. The following day he was brought by oxcart to Zinacantán, together with his drum and jousting paraphernalia.

Two other Zinacantec versions of St. Sebastian's travels and the raising of his church add new and sometimes conflicting details. In the first, collected by John Early (1965:27-28), St. Sebastian refused to marry the king's daughter and fled to Zinacantán, where he was shot by the soldiers' arrows. He had two drums, one of which was left in the cave of Ni'o7 (Head-spring) in the hill overlooking the church, and the other which is...
played today. He was buried where the church stands now. Five years after his death some children discovered him sitting on the top of Bolom Ton (Jaguar Rock). They reported the news to the magistrate, who sent an investigating party. St. Sebastian was nowhere to be seen, but he had left a written message requesting the magistrate, who sent an investigating party. St. Sebastian was served as architect, St. Dominic mixed the cement, Our Lady of the Rosary cut and carried the beams. The rock, the sand, and the lime were transported by insects (Vogt, 1969:357). In the second account, collected by Allen Young (1962:41, 64–66), St. Sebastian dreamt that he should not marry the daughter of the royal clerk. He fled, carrying two drums and a cornet, symbol of his captaincy. His large drum and his cornet were left in the cave of Lach-chik'in (Pricked-up Ears), while the small drum is played today. St. Sebastian, flanked by St. Dominic and St. Lawrence, who were unable to rescue him, was shot to death with arrows. Three years later Our Lady of the Rosary discovered him bathing at Ni-o7. He requested that she ask St. Lawrence, who was unable to rescue him, was shot to death with arrows. Three years later Our Lady of the Rosary discovered him bathing at Ni-o7. He requested that she ask St. Lawrence to build a home for him. St. Lawrence did not believe the Virgin and so went with St. Dominic to see for himself. They found no one at Ni-o7, but heard a whistle coming from Bolom Ton, where they discovered him sitting. He asked them to build a home for him on top of his grave, saying that in the meantime he would live under Jaguar Rock. St. Lawrence asked Our Lord for three days of darkness. St. Lawrence was the architect, St. Dominic, aided by the ants, transported the stone and sand for the walls, Our Lady of the Rosary brought the wood and tile for the roof. She cut a magic wand and struck the trees three times with it, so that they would travel to the building site on their own. Four buzzards, transformed into men, were stationed at the corners, working as the masons (Wasserstrom, 1970:212–213).

The magical creation of the church has parallels in other Mayan communities. St. John allegedly built his house in Chamula by herding the stones like sheep, chasing after those that ran off to the woods (Gossen, T46, T97, T160). The church of Panajachel was built in three days and then only under cover of darkness (Tax, 1950:2116). The church of the Achi was also built in the dark, by pre-humans who simply whistled to the stones and logs to come form the church (Shaw, 1972:61–62). See also T58, T147, and their notes.

When the Church Rose

When [the Church of] the Holy Martyr was erected, for three days, for three days it grew dark. For three days it grew dark. By the third day the sand was carried, the rocks were carried, the lime, and so on, were carried. Since the people used to burn lime in Zinacantán Center, it seems. They burned it. In three days they carried the lime, rocks, lumber, and so on.

It was Our Holy Fathers, Vaxak-men, as they were called long ago. It was them. They it was who built that church, because it wasn’t built by masons. Just Our Holy Fathers built it. That’s why for three days and three nights it grew dark. The dawn never came. Dark! In the daytime it was dark. In the night it was dark. The darkness just took hold.

We could probably call it a week. When it grew light [the church] was already standing—when the dawn came. I don’t know if it was three [days] or six. That was all. That’s all, since Our Holy Fathers, Vaxak-men built it. They built [the Church of] the Holy Martyr. It wasn’t built by masons. No—the work of Our Holy Fathers. It wasn’t the work of masons—the building of [the Church of] the Holy Martyr. That’s why [the Church of] the Holy Martyr—it’s scarcely like the big church! Have you ever seen it collapse? It’s unchanged. It’s never come apart. It’s never had anything wrong with it. Who knows, [St. Sebastian] probably is happy there. It's fine now. It has a roof. It has everything. The only thing we think is bad is that it lost the pictures of Our Holy Father, St. Lawrence, the Holy Martyr, Saint Lawrence.
Dominic. You’ve seen them there? They are in wood, in a frame. Ye—s!

They took them down. They’ve never put them [back] up [over the altar]. That’s wrong! Ye—s!

Don’t you see—look at the way the world is now! It’s wree—ked, it is! The world isn’t good any more, since the Gospel Cross was lost. Ye—s!

As for the Gospel Cross, it emerged from—ah, what’s it called?—from Tatavan Ch’en [Shouting Cave]. It emerged from there, indeed! Ye—s!

It was probably blest with luck. Look at the way it is now—the world is no longer good. What can you find now in Zinacantan Center—not peaches, not fruit! This year is very sad. It turned out badly. As for the Church of the Holy Martyr, it’s not like that. If you go ask Him for grace, for blessing, if you go and weep, Our Lord there always gives you your food. Our Lord has miracles. Our Lord is good-hearted. That’s why it was built long ago. It was built in ancient times by Our Holy Fathers, Vaxak-men. That was the name of those who built it. They built it. It’s built now. It was built [to last] to this day. It’s hardly fallen apart! No, it’s never fallen apart. It’s really fine! Fine, absolutely fine. But the Church of St. Lawrence—it’s the second time it was built. The second time. I didn’t see the first time but this other time I saw. I saw it being built. And the Church of the Holy Martyr, no! It wasn’t built [again]. That was a—ncient work.

Unlike her description, eleven years before, of the Church of St. Sebastian, Tonik now claims that the church was built in three or six days, (not five), and that it has never been repaired.

The paintings whose loss she deplores were removed during a recent refurbishing of the church. The Gospel Cross is the same whose appearance was described by Xun 7Akov (T33). See also T58, T85, and their notes.

He Saved a Snake and Won a Wife, Slapped His Wife and Lost His Life

Once there was a Chamulan who was hunting on the trail to the lowlands.

The Chamulan was hunting. He passed by there. But you see, a snake appeared. “You’ve come to block my way,” he said. Because the awful snake was stretched out in the middle of the trail. “You’ve come to block my way, you bastard!” he said to it. Quickly he slashed at it with his machete. He cut the snake into three pieces to kill it.

But you see, in a flash its head spun around, because it was still pretty long, since the snake was a long one. Its head spun around. It received another blow of the machete. He [tried to] kill it again.

It died. The snake was left there in four pieces.

7A ti vo7ne 7oy la jun 7ulo7 chpaxyaj la ta be7el 7olon 7osil.
Va7i 7un, 7a ti 7ulo7e, ta la xpaxyaj te la 7ech’ un.
Bu xavil 7un, bu la tal chon. “Chtal 7amakonuk ta be,” xi la. Yu7un la k’ilil ta 7olol be ti mu chon 7une. “Xtal 7amakon ta be, kavron!” xut la. J-li7el la szt’itbe machita 7un, 7ox-tuch’ la xch’al7e ti smil ti chon 7une.

Buy, 7i j-li7el la 7ji7op’i7 tal ti sjol 7une, yu7un la natnat to 7ikom 7un, yu7un la nat ti chon 7une, 7a li joi7’i7 tal ti sjol 7une, xch’amojbe la k’ot ta machita 7un, smil noxtok 7un.
Va7i 7un, cham 7un, te 7ox chan-tuch’ 7ikom ti chon 7une.
Then [another] person travelling to the lowlands, or somebody else, passed by there. “Please my Chamu—Ian, won’t you be so kind as to carry me away, go take me home.”

“Where is your house?”

“I’ll show you where it is if you’ll carry me away. I’ll pay you. It won’t be just for nothing. Tell my father whatever payment you want,” said the Thunderbolt [snake].

“No, I don’t want to. There isn’t anything to do it with. I haven’t anything to carry you in.”

“Carry me in your net,” it said. “Spread out your neckerchief, then put me in your net,” it said.

“Eh, who knows. Your juice will stain my net and my neckerchief.”

“I’ll give you the money for the soap to wash it with. Carry me away. Please, my father will pay you when I arrive. My father has money. He’ll pay you with it,” said [the snake].

“Oh, maybe I’ll carry you away. It’s just because I pity you, it seems, the way you are now,” he said. It was a human being who had spoken. It wouldn’t talk if it were [an ordinary] snake. It was piled up this thick on the trail. The pieces had piled themselves up. He carried them off. He went to leave them.

“If I feel very heavy to you, rest please, because I have a terribly sharp pain where my back was wounded,” said that snake.

“Oh!” he said. “I’ll set you down, then. I’ll rest, because you’re certainly right, you feel heavy!” He rested on top of a rock. A lot of its yellow juice was left there where he rested. “Shall we go now? Come on, I guess I’ll carry you,” [the snake] was told.

“Let’s go!” said [the snake]. [The man] went. He reached the place where the door was. He knocked on the door. The fog was very thick. “But I can’t see at all anymore. It’s gotten very dark,” he said.

“No, the cloud will rise. It’s just a cloud,” said [the snake].

“Ah!” he said. “Mo7oj ta xtam i toke, tok no 7ox Ie7e,” xi la 7un.

“Chakak’be stojol 7a li xxavonal chachuk’ 7o 7un, kuchen ech’el, 7aboljan chajtoj ti jtoit mi nik’ote, 7oy stak’in i jtoite, chajtoj 7o,” xi la.
And, “Wait for me, then. Sit down. I guess I’ll lay him down. I guess I’ll see what sickness he has,” said [the father]. He went to look. “God, he’s badly hurt. Never mind. When I’ve finished treating him—I’ve laid him on his bed, you see—if [his bones] mend quickly I’ll let you know,” he said.

“We’ll try it out. If he gets up. If he seems to be strong. If he can stand up, you’ll see, but only if you aren’t scared,” he said.

“Oh!” said [the man]. “So you’ll let me see how it’s done?” he asked.

The father treated his son and looked after him carefully.

“Okay,” said [the snake]. [The bones] mended. They mended. “Was it you who carried me back?” asked the snake.

“It was me. I carried you,” he said.

“God, My Lord, thank you,” he said. “Thank you for carrying me back. Take your choice. Do you want the money here? Do you want beans? Do you want corn? Or do you want mules or cows?” asked [the snake].

“I don’t want anything at all,” he said.

“What do you want, then? Do you want one of my younger sisters? My father will give her to you. I’ll tell him to do it,” he said.

“Oh, well then, if you give me one of your younger sisters, I guess so. I’ll take her home!” said the boy.

“Look, my father will give her to you. I can’t say anything myself. Don’t you see, since you did me a favor and brought me back.”

“Do you feel well now? Do you feel strong now?” he asked [the boy].

“You see it’s here, it isn’t well here in my back, it seems. It hurts ho—ribly,” said [the snake]. “But I’ll be well again in a little while. I won’t be sick for long,” he said. “It’s my father’s medicine. The medicine he gave me is so good,” he said. “You’ll see for yourself, just as long as you aren’t afraid. If I get well in a minute it will grow dark. A cloud will appear, but it will look terribly bla—ck. Do you know what to do?” he said. “Bury your head in the sand!” he said. “Don’t be afraid!” he said.

“All right,” said [the boy].

“When it comes, don’t be scared. Bury your head!” he said. First that father came out. Then right behind came the patient. When that old man hit it, the door rattled and rattled. It ba—ned. But he just [hit it] softly. [His patient] was so strong, the one who it seemed would be killed. When the fire fla—red up suddenly then you, heard the cra—ck! The ground moved this way and that. The [Chamulan] fellow had his head buried in the sand. The fool went...
and looked, like this. He nearly died. He fell over then. He couldn't get up anymore. "Why didn't you bury your head carefully? You watched me to see what I was doing. That's why that happened to you," that boy was told by that burden he had carried. "No [you think] I didn't see it?" he was asked.

"I did do it because I felt like seeing what you were doing," said [the boy].

"Oh don't do that anymore. That's bad. It's no good. You may die," [the snake] told him.

"Yes, of course!" he said. But he was left with the smell of gunpowder all over his body.

That Old Thunderbolt had medicine. "Come in!" he said. "Don't be afraid! Stupid, what good did it do you to look at what my son was doing? We can't watch. It isn't right," he said.

They had some cotton, this much, like this. [The boy's] whole face and body was rubbed with it. I think maybe it was because he was burned. His back was rubbed. He was rubbed, rubbed carefully.

"Now, today, you lived through it. You saw how we work, it seems. You saw who and where and how we did it. Now choose one of my daughters," he said. "I'll see if you want this one here," he told [the boy].

"Ah!" said [the boy]. "No, I won't scold her, but provided that she does what I say, that she prepares my meals for me, that she feeds me, that she takes care of my things. I have my little sheep, I have my little horses. She'll go tie up my horses. She'll go feed my sheep. If she remembers to take the horse's food along, if she has gotten corn stubble, she'll feed them. She will go watch my sheep in the meadow."

"Oh, don't worry. If it's a question of her going to watch the sheep, they know how to look after themselves. They know to get in [the corral] when the rain comes," said Thunderbolt's father.
"That's all, then, take your wife. Go with her! Be kind to her! Thank you, may God repay you for carrying my son back to me. Well, take your wife. Your wife is your pay, that's all, because if my son were to die I wouldn't have anyone to keep me company. Because my son is my constant travelling companion wherever I go. I walk first, my son walks right behind me," he said.

"Ahh!" said [the boy]. "All right then, I'll come tell you how things are going. I'll come and visit you. Your daughter and I will visit you," he said.

"All right, come back! If you haven't any money, if you haven't any corn, if you haven't anything to eat, come back. Come and ask for it here. You've seen now that I have money. You've seen now that I have corn. I don't go hungry here. Come and ask. Even if she comes by herself, send my daughter. It's just that my house is far away. You won't reach my house quickly," he said.

"Yes, you're right of course!" said [the boy]. "No, I'll come, even if I have to spend a night here when I come," he said.

"All right, come then," said [Thunderbolt].

He didn't return. He left on good terms. He didn't return. The poor woman had children. They grew up. Her children were big now. Her children were baptized. He had never hit her. Then he went and got drunk. He drank with his compadre. He went and hit her. She went and complained about it. I don't know what it was that caused the man to die. I don't remember very well anymore how it goes.

She left. She went. He died. He hit his wife. That woman went to complain. "Where did you go?" he asked.

"I went to our father's house. I went to spend the night. I went to sleep with our father, so you wouldn't hit me," she said.

"Oh, I hit you, but it was because I got drunk. You don't think I would hit you for nothing! But I hardly hit you at all, just once," he said. "My hand didn't hurt," he said.

"Your hand didn't hurt! It's just that now my eye is so wonderfully blue!" The poor woman was very blue here.

"Oh, but never mind, you shouldn't have gone to tell our father. Would it please our father, since he has said he would kill me if I hit you once?" he said.

"Never mind, go talk to our father! As for me, I don't know," she said.

"See here, I'm going to talk to him tomorrow, then," he said. He left. He went to talk to his father-in-law. "Father!" he said.

"Come, come in! Won't you eat?" said [his father-in-law]. "Come on, let's eat,"—I don't know if it was fish or what they ate—"Let's eat some fish," he said.

Va7i 7un, 7a li "Mu k'usi 7un che7e, 7ik'o ch'el lavajnilte batan 7achi7uk 7un, k'uxubino me 7un, 7a li jkreme, kol avel sk'extabot riox ti 7akuchbon tale, bwéno, 7ik'o ch'el lavajnil, ja7 7atojoj lavajnil 7a, mu k'usi porke 7a ti chamuk i jkreme che7e, mu xa buch'u jchi7in, yu7un ja7 jchi7il ta j-mek ta xanbal i jkreme, ti bu chixanav i vo7one, ba7yi chixanav vo7on, ja7 tijil chanav i jkreme," xi la 7un.

"7Aal" xi la. "Yechuk che7e, te chtal kal ava7i ti k'u x7elane, te xtal jvula7anot, jvula7anot jchi7uk latzеб 7une," xi la 7un.

"Teyuk, te xatal mi ch'abal 7atak'inik mi ch'abal 7aviximil, mi mu k'u chalajesike, xatal, xtal 7ak'an 7a li li7 toe, 7avil xa ti 7oy jk'at'ine, 7avil xa ti 7oy kixime, mu7nuk chivi7aj naj li7 toe, xtal 7ak'anik, 7ak' 7o mi ja7 xtal stuk xatak tal li jtebe, ja7 no 7ox ti nom i jnae, mu xataik tal ta 7ora li jnae," xi la 7un.

"Ji7 7ava7uk a7al" xi la. "Mo7oj, chital 7ak' 7o mi li xivay li7 junuk 7ak'ubal ti k'alal mi nitale," xi la 7un.

"Teyuk, te xatal," xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, ch'alab la, lek la bat ch'alab, 7ayan yol ti prove 7antzete, 7ich'i, muk' xa ti yole, yich' vo7 ti yole, mu to 7ox la bu smaj, ja7 la taj ba ya—kubuk yu7un yuch' la xchi7uk skumpare tal ba smaj 7une, ba sk'an 7o parte, ja7 mu jna7 k'usi xi bu bat ti vinik 7une, ti 7icham 7une, 7a li jun chak m7i 7olon 7osil, mu xa jna7be smelol lek 7un.

Va7i 7un, bat 7un, bat la, laj la, smaj taj yajnil 7une, ba sk'an parte taj 7antz 7une. "Bu la7ay 7un?" xi la.

"Li7ay tzna jtotitik, 7a vayikon, 7a jchi7in ta vayel jtotitike, 7ak'anuk 7a li chamajon," xi la 7un.

"7Aa, chajmaj pero yu7un ja7 ti chiyakube, yu7 van yech no 7ox chajmaj 7un, pero ti muk' 7ep xajmaj, j-moj no 7ox," xi la. "Muk' k'ux i jk'obe," xi la.

"Mu7yuk k'ux lak'obe, k'u ti toj lek vi xaxal li jstel! Yox la ta j-mek li7 li prove 7antz.

"7Aa pero yiyil 7un, muk' xba 7avalbe li jtotitk ti yechuke, mi lek cha7i li jtotitk 7une, ti yaloj yu7un ti j-7ech'el chismil ti mi yu7un lajmaj 7une?" xi la.

"Yiyil te xba 7ak'opon i jtotitke, vo7one mu jna7," xi la.

"K'el avil va7i 7un, chba jk'opon 7ok'ob che7e," xi la 7un. Bat la 7un, ba la sk'opon ti sn7-mol 7une. "Tot!" xi la.

"La7 7ochan tal, muk' chave7?" xi la 7un. 7A li, "La7 jti7itik..." mu jna7 mi choy k'usi la me tzti7ik 7un. "Jti7itik choy," xi la 7un. Xi la smuk'tikil ti
said. The piece of fish was this big, fresh fish. They ate.

“I’ve brought you a little of this folded up in a tortilla. I stuck it in my net,” said the man when he returned [home].

“I know when my father wants to eat. I’ll go eat with him. You should have eaten it. You should eat it,” she said.

“I still don’t want any because I just went yesterday,” he said.

“Ah,” she said. “Never mind, the children will eat it,” she said.

“Please don’t hit her. Please don’t scold her. Please don’t bother her,” [said the father].

“I don’t hit her, father. What’s to be done? It’s just because I went and got drunk,” said the man.

“Oh well, then,” [said the father].

[The man] went to the lowlands. He came back sick. The man died. They buried him. The people gathered. They killed chickens. She bought a coffin for her husband. He died. Yes!

After she buried her husband, then, it seems, “Father, but things aren’t right. My husband died. I don’t want to be alone there with my children. It would be better if I came back, if I came to join you, for I’m alone with . . . It’s just because you gave me away long ago. It’s just because of my older brother who got sick and was carried back, it seems. But he suffered so. I’m left with two children. My little girl and my little boy stayed home. They can be there now since that leaves an owner for the land and an owner for the house. They can grow up there now. Do you know what I do, father?” she said. “I have a little pot this big. They turn it upside down and rap on it several times. I’m hungry, mother. I’m hungry, mother, they tell their pot. Eat! it says. Their beans and their tortillas come out of it. That’s what the children live on. That’s what I taught them.”

“Ah!” he said. “That pot of your’s, where did you get it?” he asked.

“From here, I took it from home,” she said.

“Ah!” he said. “Did you ask your mother for it?” he said.

“Of course I asked my mother for it. Take it! It can be used by the children to live on, my mother told me.”

“Ahh, never mind, leave the children. You can go see them when you aren’t busy. Come!” said her father.

“Okay!” said the woman. She left. She began her work again. She was Thunderbolt again, it seems. She left.

That dead Chamulan man’s children were left by themselves.

They grew up, a girl and a boy. Oh, they were
The little boy ground the corn. So the little boy asked for the food they were to eat. They broke their pot. It broke. They hadn't anything to feed them anymore. Then they got their food by themselves. That little boy learned how to work. Now he worked in his cornfield. He prepared his cornfield. Now the little girl ground their food, too. They ate the same things.

They went to see their mother. “Mother, I don’t know what to do. I dropped my pot,” she said. “I tried to catch it, but I dropped it. It's split in two,” she said.

“No, of course not. We can sleep well,” they said. “Ah!” they were told.

They went to see their mother. “Mother, I don’t know what to do. I dropped my pot,” she said. “I tried to catch it, but I dropped it. It’s split in two,” she said.

“Oh, never mind. I’ll go and give you another one. You should ask it for your food,” they were told. “Now that you have grown up there’s nothing [to worry about]. Aren’t you afraid to sleep here [alone]?”

“No, of course not. We can sleep well,” they said.

The children grew up. They were big now. They supported each other now. They ate now. They drank now—the two children all by themselves. They had nothing to worry about. The mother left. She went with her father. She just came to see them when she wanted to. She came to see how her children were. “How are you?”

“I’m fine, mother. What did you bring, mother?” asked the little girl.

“Oh, I didn’t bring you anything much, just a little fish, if you want to eat it,” she said. “Okay!” she said.

It was a huge fish she had taken. But when her mother picked it up the fish was just this big, this long. She stuck it in the pot. It grew and grew. The fish got bigger. It grew so much.

They ate it a little at a time. The children ate well because of it.

When they grew up, you see, she saw that [her husband’s] children were big now. They had learned. “Eat and drink! This is the last time, now, that I’ve come to see you. Only if, only if you want to go and ask for money, if you need money for your clothes, if you need money for something, then I’ll come see you. See this! Take this money here! I’m leaving you a little chest where you can get [your money],” she said. The little chest was the same size as this one here. Only it wasn’t as wide. It was narrow. This wide and this long. “I’ll leave it here. I’ll put the key underneath it here,” she said. “Open it! Your money is there,” she said. The little boy sk’uxubinoj sbaik sva7lej xa ti kreme, sva7lej xa ti tzebe, te xa tk'el sbaik chjuch'un xa ti 7unen tzebe, yech ti 7unen kreme, tzk’an sve7el chve7ik, 7a ti sp'in 7une, vok' la yu7unik 7un, vok' yu7un 7un, mu xa k'u xmak'lanon 7un, te xa tsza7 sve7el stuk 7un, xchan 7abtel taj 7unen krem 7une, tpzas xa xchob, tzmelztan xchob, te xa chjuch' sve7el ti 7unen tzebuk 7une, k67olk67ol xa chve7ik 7un.

Va7i 7un, ba la sk'elel yu7un sme7. “Me7, mu jna7 k'u ta jnop, 7a li jp'ine, 7ip'aj ku7un ta jk'ob,” xi. “Ba jpete yu7un 7a li 7ip'aj ku7un 7un, cha7-joy 7un,” xi la.

“7Aa!” yiyl xtal kak'bot 7otro jun, te xak'anbe lava7ele,” x7utat la 7un. “Tal to 7o yul 7o 7ach'ulelik xa, mu xa k'usi, mi muk' bu chaxi li7 chavaye?”

“7I7i a7a, lek chivay,” xi la.

“7Aa!” x7utat 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7iyul la xch'uleli ti 7unetik 7une, muk'tik xa la 7un, tzmak'lan xa sbaik, chve7ik xa, chuch'ik xa vo7, stuk cha7-vo7 7unetik 7une, mu xa k'usi yatel yo7on, ti me7le bat 7o, ti, 7ibat xch7ikuk stote, ja7 xa no 7ox ti k'u 7ora sk'an yo7on xtal sk'el 7une, chtal sk'el ti xch'amaltak. “K'uxa7elanik?”

“Ja7 no 7ox yechon, me7, k'usi 7avich' tal, me7?" ja7 la xi ti 7unen tzeb 7une.

“Mu k'usi lakich'be tal j-kot no 7ox 7avunen choy, mi chati7?" xi la.

“7Aa!” xi la. “7Ak'bon komel li7 ta kunen lukux te7e, che7e, tek tik'o ta yut jpin',” xi la.

“7Ey!” xi la.

Va7i 7un, 7a li ti j-kot la ti choy yich'oj ech'ele, pero batz'i muk' la ta j-mek, pero ti k'al stomojbe ech'el ti sme7e, xi la yunen muk'ul ti choye, xi la yunen natil 7istik' ta p'ine, chi ta j-mek 7imuk'ib ti choye, 7ich'i la ta j-mek.

Va7i 7un, ta ju-tz'uj ta ju-set' la tzti7ik 7un, lek xve7ik 7o ti 7unetik 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7a li ti yul xch'ulel 7une, va7i, 7iyul ti muk'tik xa ti xch'amaltak 7une, chanik 7un.

“Ve7anik 7uch'anik vo7 7un, slajeb xa ta jk'eloxuk lavi 7une, ja7 xa ja7 xa no 7ox mi xak'an xba xak'anik 7atak'inik mi sk'an stojol 7ak'u7ik, sk'an k'u stojole, te to xtal jk'eloxuk, 7avi li7 7ich'o komel 7atak'in li7i, ja7 ti xataik li7 ta xak' komel ta 7unen kaxae," xi la.

Yech la smuk'ul li 7unen kaxa chak li7i, ja7 ti mu yechuk sjamej 7une, te7el xi sjameje, xi la snatil 7une. “Li7 chak' komel li7 toei, li7 ta xak' ta 7olon i yavee,” xi la. “Xajamik 7un, te latak'inike," xi la.

Chba la sjam tzta stak'in ti 7unen kreme, ti "chak'ak'ak'ak'aj," xi la ti tak'ine.
went to open it to get his money. The money jingled and jangled.

“Our money is used up. But where can we get more?” the children asked [each other] when their money was used up.

“It won’t run out. More will come,” said the little girl.

“Eh, it will run out. If it runs out we won’t have anything to live on.” [The boy] took out their money. They saw there wasn’t any left. When they looked [again] it was this deep in the chest. It just came and came and came.

They grew up. [With the help of the money] they ate, they bought their corn, they bought whatever [they wanted] to eat. They grew up.

No [problems]. The little girl acquired a husband. The boy got a wife.

That’s the way it ended. That’s the way it was left. The mother went off. She just left that one little chest of money. [The money] kept appearing and appearing. They lived on it. They grew up. That’s the way it was left. The end. It was a Thunderbolt that did that, a Thunderbolt girl.

The trail of Thunderbolt Girl, who first appeared in Tale 72, leads from the Chiapas highlands to Mitla and finally backtracks to Guatemala.

One tale from Chenalhó (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:191-192) and three from Chamula (Gossen, T6, T26, T33) provide the best leads. They will be identified as exhibits a-d.

Episode 1: A Thunderbolt is caught by a water monster. Thunderbolt asks Yusumprun, a man passing by, to bring him his drum from his home in the mountain (a).

A man catches a huge snake in his rat trap. The snake begs the Chamulan to spare its life. Then it turns into a Ladino, and asks in Tzotzil that the trapper carry him to his home in the mountain (a).

Episode 2: Thunderbolt, receiving his drum from Yusumprun, tells him to hide his head. Yusumprun can’t resist watching while lightning cracks from the drum and kills the water monster. Yusumprun also perishes, but is revived by Thunderbolt (a).

Episode 3: Thunderbolt rebukes Yusumprun for his curiosity, but offers him his daughter, the Mother of Maize. They live as husband and wife and have two children (a).

The trapper is rewarded with a fair maiden by the Ladino Earth Lord. They have two children (c).

Episode 4: When Thunderbolt’s daughter harvests the corn, she brings in so much that Yusumprun slugs her. In disgust she wipes her bloody nose on a corn cob, and that is why there is red corn (a).

The trapper strikes his wife for the same reason and with the same results (c).

A lazy man, father of two children, gives his wife the same treatment for identical reasons and with identical results (b).

A rich man, father of a boy and a girl, the same (d).

Episode 5: Thunderbolt girl returns to her father, leaving her children two clay drums that provide them with food. Hungry Yusumprun forces his children to show him their magic pots. He breaks them angrily and breaks their replacement too (a).

The trapper’s wife is carried home in a cloud. She returns with two magic pots for her children, but the trapper discovers the pots and smashes them (c).

The lazy man’s wife returns home to her parents. She gives her children a magic pot, but the father smashes it and smashes its replacement too (b).

The rich man’s wife is carried home to her parents in a cloud. She leaves her children a magic pot but their father smashes it (d).

Episode 6: Yusumprun’s children are turned into squirrels for showing their father the magic pots. He is turned into a Thunderbolt (a).

The Thunderbolt girl takes her children home with her. The trapper is left behind sad and lonely (c).

The lazy man’s children are turned into squirrels (b).

The rich man’s wife takes her children to her mountain home. He tries in vain to get his family back and dies of a broken heart. His widow distributes his corn among his friends (d).

If we tack the scene of the multiplying net in Tale 72 onto Tale 78, its plot then falls into line with the versions above.

A cursory investigation of Thunderbolt activities in Mitla suggests more than a casual resemblance. In one tale Thunderbolts battle with a water monster (Parsons, 1936:332-333) as did Yusumprun’s friend. In another, two orphans are adopted by Thunderbolts, who give them a magic pot. They are told to put a single bean in it, but they disobey, and so when the beans swell they burst the pot (Parsons, 1936:330-331). In a third tale two mountain spirits quarrel after harvesting their corn. The woman complains that all the corn is white. So her husband promptly punches her in the nose with now familiar results (Parsons, 339).

Following the trail south to the central highlands of Guatemala and searching the records of the past four hundred years turns up a fresh lead. The mother of the twin heroes of the Popol Vuh, Hunter and Jaguar Deer, bears further investigation. This woman, Blood Girl by name, presented herself, already pregnant, before her mother-in-law, who cursed her and disowned her, telling her that she would never be accepted unless she brought home a big net of corn. So Blood Girl went to the corn field.
And there was just one stalk of corn;  
There was not another stalk,  
A second stalk  
Nor a third stalk.  
It was a bearing stalk,  
With the fruit of one stalk.  
So then was finished  
The maiden's heart.  
"I am such a sinner!  
I am a whore!  
Where can I even get  
The one net of food  
That is asked?"

Blood Girl prayed for help.

And then she took the tassel,  
The tassel in the top of the ear, and tore it right out.  
She didn't cut the ear.  
Then there were abundant ears.  
The food in the net  
Filled up the big net.  
So then the maiden came back,  
But it was animals who carried the net.  
When she got back  
They went and left the rack  
She perspired as though she had carried it,  
And came in to see the grandmother.  
So when the grandmother saw the food,  
One big neatful,

"Where could the food come from for you?  
Did you fell them then?  
If you have brought our whole corn crop here . . .  
I'm going to see," said the grandmother,  
And she went;  
She went and looked at the field.  
There was still just one cornstalk,  
And there was still just as clearly the net mark under it.  
So the grandmother rushed back,  
And then she returned to the house  
And said  
To the maiden,  
"Actually there is a sign there;  
It must be true that you are my daughter-in-law . . . ."  

Only a thread of blood, a net of corn, and two as yet unborn offspring point to Thunderbolt Girl as the bearer of ancient traditions that once flourished leagues apart, but can this evidence be dismissed as purely circumstantial? The defense rests.

In a last minute communication Walter Morris reports a version of this tale from San Andrés, where, a man named Usam is offered a daughter by the Earth Lord in exchange for saving the life of a snake. The daughters are fluffing cotton in preparation for spinning. "The pile of fluffed cotton grows higher and higher and becomes clouds." Morris believes this tale establishes the religious significance of weaving, its relation to the Earth Lord, and an explanation for many of the symbols that occur in the textiles of highland Chiapas (Morris, pers. comm.).

See also T72 and notes.

The Buzzard Man

Once there was a man long ago. He was very lazy. A loafer. He didn't want to do anything. He didn't want to work. And when he went to work he asked for his tortillas [to take along.] He just went to eat the tortillas. He went to sleep. He came back. He left. And he came back and he left. And he came back and he left. And that's how the year passed. And [he said] that he had corn, and that he worked. And he just lied to his wife.

The poor woman's heart, God, My Lord! "My corn is about to be harvested," she said.

But how could her corn be harvested, sleeping is what the man did! The husband said he had corn, because he goes to clear trees, because he goes to work, goes to do whatever it is he does, it seems. He takes his tortillas with him. He takes his tortillas with him.

He goes there to sleep. He just goes to sleep there. God, in no time he spreads out his woolen tunic. He goes to sleep. He makes a pillow of his tortillas. "God, My Lord, holy buzzard, how is it that you don't do anything at all? You fly, gliding easily along. You don't work. But me, it's hard with me. I'm suffering terribly. What agony I suffer! Look at my hands! They have lots of sores already. My hands hurt, so now I can't work. My hands are worn out. I
don’t want to work at all now.” Maybe Our Lord grew tired of it. The buzzard came down.

“Well, what is it you want with me, talking that way?”

“I don’t want anything. It’s just that you seem so well off. Without a care you fly in the sky. Now me, I suffer so much at work. I suffer a lot working in my cornfield, and I haven’t any corn. I’m a pauper. My wife is scolding me. The woman asks for her corn. We have nothing to eat. What I do now is, I borrow ears of corn. Or if I borrow beans I go give them to her. My corn has been harvested. My beans have been harvested. I tell her. I arrive to tell my wife lies. But it isn’t mine. I just borrow it. I have so many debts now. That’s why I want some way to return them. That’s why if you just wanted to, you could take my clothes and I’ll go buzzarding,” he said.

“Ah!” said [the buzzard]. “Well, I’ll go first to ask permission. I’ll come, depending on what I’m told.”

“Go, then!”

“Wait for me on Tuesday.” Or was it on Thursday? Who knows whether it was Tuesday or Thursday. “I’ll come then.”

He went to wait. He arrived. He went to sit down and wait for [the buzzard]. “God, holy buzzard, why don’t you come to change with me? I can’t stand it anymore. I’m tired of working, it seems,” he said. He had taken his axe and his billhook with him to clear the land. He cleared a tiny bit. He felled two trees. Two trees he felled. Then he returned home again.

“How about it, have you nearly finished clearing your land?” he was asked by his wife.

“Oh, it seems to be nearly ready. I finished trimming all the ones I felled.” “All the ones,”—Two! The loafer!

“Ah,” she said.

“So, I’m going again today. Get up please and make me a couple of tortillas,” he said.

“Okay!” she said. He went out to walk to the poor buzzard again. He sat down right off.

“God, I’m hungry already. I feel like drinking posol now. I have too much work. There’s no way to replace the corn I’ve borrowed,” he said.

“Ah!” said [the buzzard]. That buzzard came down. It arrived.

“What, what do you say?”

[The buzzard] spoke. “Our Lord has given permission. He says you can change. He says for you to go, and me to stay.”

“But won’t my wife realize that it isn’t me anymore?”

“No, she won’t know, it’s by Our Lord’s order. It’s not by my order,” said [the buzzard].

“All right,” he said. [The buzzard] stayed. He took off his feathers. He shook off all his feathers. The kajvaltik 7une, 7iyal la tal li xulem 7une.
man took off his pants, his shirt, his wool tunic, everything. The other one put them on.

You see, the other finished putting on his wool tunic. The clothes began to stick on. The buzzard's feathers and all stuck on. "See here," [said the buzzard], "Don't do anything wrong. You'll go. Go now! Go on! Go have fun. Come back in a week or two weeks. Let me tell you how we eat, how I find food, where we eat. We see [fumes] coming up when there is a dead horse, or sheep, or whatever. Its fumes rise," said [the buzzard].

"Okay," he said.
"I'll come, I'll come to talk to you, then."
"All right," he said.

After the "man" had cleared his land for three days [the "buzzard"] arrived. "How is it?" asked [the "man"].

"God, it's true that I'm no good for anything. Already you've done a good job clearing the land. Look how much of your land you've cleared already! But me I just cut two trees in a month or in a couple of months or so when I worked. Look how much more work you have done already! My wife prefers you. Did my wife tell you I was good for nothing when you arrived!"

"She didn't tell me anything [much]. Why do you stink so? You reek!" she told me," said the "man."

"Oh yes, I certainly do stink. It's because I'm working. In the past I used to lie to you. I never used to work. I just slept all the time. But now go see for yourself, if you want, when I burn our land. Go look! Go and help me watch the fire. I told your wife," he said.

"Ah!" said [the buzzard]. "Will you take her along?"

"I'll take her," said [the "man"].
[When the time for burning came, the "man" asked his wife to accompany him.] "All right," she said.

The wife went when the burning of the trees began. He took her along. "Sit here. First, I'll clear the fire lane. I'll make a fire lane around our land," he said.

"Okay," she said. The wife sat down. She lit a fire and prepared her husband's meal. Then they ate.

They ate. They finished. Maybe the awful stupid man [who had become a buzzard] thought it was his meal. He went. The smoke came up. The smoke from the burning trees was cu—ring up. He thought . . .

When they exchanged clothes, "See here, when its fumes rise a dog has died," [the buzzard had] said.

smokite ti vinike, ti sjerkae, k'utik 7un, slap i jun 7une.

Va7i 7un, laj slap ti sjerka li jun 7une, ja7 lik la nap'lik ti sk'u7e, ti k'utikuk ti sk'uk'umal ti xulem 7une, nap'lik 7un. 7A li, "K'el avil 7un," xi la, "Mu me xapas chopopal 7un, xabat, me xapas chopopal 7un, xabat, batan lavi a7a, batan, ba paxyajan, xatal ta vaxakib k'ak'al, mi ta vo7-lajuneb k'ak'al, chkal ava7i k'u x7elan chive7otik, k'u x7elan ta jsa7 li jve7eltike, li bu chive7otik, 7a li, 7a li k'u x7elan, buy ta xkiltik buy 7a li lok' em ya7el 7a li bu chamen ka7, mi chij, mi k'u si 7une, ta me xlok' sch'ai7al 7un," xi la 7un.

"7Ey," xi la.

"Chital che7e, te chtal jk'o7onot."

"Teyuk," xi la.

Va7i 7un, yoxibal k'ak'al 7ox svel vosil ti vinik 7une, 7ik'ot la 7un. "K'u x7elan 7un?" xi la.

"Dyos yu7n 7o ka vo7on mu xitun che7e, ti lek xa 7aveloj ti bala7im vo7ot 7une, k'e xa yepal 7aveloj lavosiy ya7el, 7a li vo7on 7une, k'ajom mi cha7-petz jte7 7ilok' 7o ya7el ti jun 7ue, mi chib 7ue k'u xi ti li7a7tej 7un, k'el avil li vo7ot 7une, mas xa 7ep la7a7tej 7un, mas chask'an kajnij li vo7ot 7une, 7a li vo7one, mu xa xitun yu7un ti kajnile, ti k'u xayut ti nak'ot 7une?" xi la.

"Mu k'u xiyut. K'u yu7un ti toj tzi7ote toj yan 7avik'el xiyut 7un!" xi la ti vinik 7une.

"7A!" xi la 7un. "K'U xavut 7une?"

"7A tzi7on 7un bi, ja7 li chi7ateje, a li vo7ne che7e, yu7un yech to 7ox chajnopbe k'op, muk' to 7ox bu chi7atej, ta no xivay ta j-mek, yan lavie ba k'el avil, mi xak'an k'ul ta jchik' i kosi7ike, cbha k'el avil, ta xba koltan ta sk'ele7 7a li k'ok'e, xkat 7un, li 7avajnil 7une," xi la 7un.

"7A!" xi la. "Mi chavik' tal 7un?"

"Ta xkik' tal," xi la.

"Bwénò," xi la.

Va7i 7un, bat la ti 7antz ti k'ar 7i7och sk'ak'al li te7al 7une, yik' la ech'el 7un, "Chotlan li7 toe ta jvel ba7yuk li kayajone, ta jpolbe skayajonal kosi7ike," xi la.

"7Ey," xi la. 7ichoti la ti 7antz 7une, stzoy la sk'ok', 7i 7ismeltzabne li sve7el li smalale, te la ve7ik 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a li 7ive7ik 7un, laj 7un, ja7 xak' nan ja7uk la ti sve7el ti mu sonso vinik 7une, bat la 7un, lok' xa ch'ail stz'otote--t xa sch'ai7al ti te7al chk'ak' 7une, xak' . . .

7Ásta k'alal li sjel li sk'u7ik 7une -- "K'el avil 7un, k'alal ta xlok' li xch'ai7al k'alal xcham tz'i7," xi la,
“When a pig dies . . . ,” he said. “If a horse dies, its fumes rise. You’ll see its fumes rising in the sky,” he said. “And if you are hungry, then go and see if the fumes are rising, that’s when you should go,” he said. When the smoke came up from the trees the man was burning, when the smoke rose, that’s when that [lazy] man whooshed off. He went to look there where the trees were burning. And then he was burnt up with the trees.

Don’t you see, the “buzzard” came whoo—shing down. The fool landed right in the fire. Then he burnt up. He died from it.

“Oh, is the awful buzzard so stupid, is the awful buzzard so horrible that he came like that, came and burnt himself up a bit?” said the wife. “Hey, see the way you’ll all die! The awful buzzard died. That’s what the disgusting thing deserved,” said the wife. “That’s what he deserved, dying like that,” she said.

“The order said, that’s what the lazy buzzard deserved,” said the “husband.” “Yes, as for the buzzard, never mind! Our corn will be harvested now,” he said. “In a week we’ll come to plant it. You will plant the beans yourself,” he said.

“All right!” said the wife.

As for the wife . . . they returned. Afterwards they carried a load of firewood, one load of wood for the man and one load of wood for the woman. They left. They went home. “See, here, I’m just covered with soot. You stink horribly when I’m with you, you tell me. Hand me some clothes. I’ll change. Wash the others tomorrow,” said the “husband.”

Okay,” she said. Her husband changed. “See it’s just your clothes that stink. It’s your sweat,” said the wife.

“That’s right. It’s because I still sweat so. That’s why you say I stink,” he said. How would she know he was a buzzard? Do you know how it was discovered that her husband was a buzzard? It was when he planted and weeded. And now he had beans. He had corn. He had watermelon squash. He had summer squash, everything. He was lucky, now.

“Now that you have corn, you have beans, return to me all that your late husband used, all that he ate. Since you seem to have corn,” [a neighbor said].

“Isn’t he my husband, the one who has always been here? Do I have another husband? Have I two husbands, then?” asked the woman.

“Oh, why don’t you want to admit it? Your husband turned into a buzzard,” said the person who was asking to be repaid. They say he borrowed forty ears of fresh corn at one house, at another house a quarter-measure of beans, at another house thirty ears of dried corn, an almud of corn.
They went to recover his debts, “Come on! Get out! First I’ll harvest my corn field then you can have it if you’re telling the truth. I don’t know anything about it,” she said.

“Why wouldn’t I be telling the truth? It’s like this. Your husband was like this. When he arrived at work he didn’t [really] work. He went to sleep on the job. He didn’t care at all about his work. Just as soon as he finished eating, then the first [thing he did] was sleep. He told the buzzard, Oh, holy buzzard, give me your suit. You fly so well, just gliding in the sky. But me, my hands hurt so. I can’t stand it, it seems, said your husband,” the people asking for the corn, “I need it if you’re telling the truth. I don’t know anything about it,” she said.

“Your husband was like this. When he arrived at work he didn’t [really] work. He went to sleep on the job. He didn’t care at all about his work. Just as soon as he finished eating, then the first [thing he did] was sleep. He told the buzzard, Oh, holy buzzard, give me your suit. You fly so well, just gliding in the sky. But me, my hands hurt so. I can’t stand it, it seems, said your husband,” the people asking for the corn, “I need it if you’re telling the truth. I don’t know anything about it,” she said.

“The buzzard was more industrious, but the poor lazy man, that’s how he died. The way he used to do it, it turned out well for him. But not really. He stole fresh corn. He stole beans. He stole watermelon squash. He [arrived] contentedly to eat them with corn on the cob, but it was just the poor guy’s stolen

“Ah, you see the way she returned the corn was to do it when they harvested it. They picked it. The corn was returned. The beans were returned. Now they had corn, now they had beans. No problems.

“I was right that you aren’t my husband, that’s why you know how to work, now. You see you used to be a buzzard,” she told her husband. “I was right that you stunk so!”

“Who knows if it’s so,” said the old man. “We’ll repay them, those [people] who asked you! We went to recover his debts, “Come on! Get out! First I’ll harvest my corn field then you can have it if you’re telling the truth. I don’t know anything about it,” she said.

“7O no mu yechuk xkal xi me smelole, xi me smelol lamalale, 7a ti k'al ch'ok't 7abtejeke, mu yu7unuk ch'atatej ta me xba vayuk ta yabtel, 7a li yabtele muk' me sk'opal yu7un, naka no me mi laj ve7uke ja7 7o chvay ba7yi. Chalbe li xulem, 7A ch'u7-xulem 7ak'bon lak' u7e toj lek xavil yu7ot a7a, yech no 7ox xajayet ta vinajel, 7a li vo7one batzi 7abol sba li jk'ob 7une, batzi mu xu7 ya7el xi me lamalale,” xi la ti jk'an-7ixim, jk'an-chenek' 7une.

“7Aj va7i k'u cha7al 7isut ti 7ixim 7une, ja7 to la ti k'al 7ik'ajav 7une, 7ik'ajav 7une, 7isut ti 7ixime, 7isut ti chenek'. 7une, 7oy xya yiximik 7un, 7oy xa xchenek'ik 7un, ch'abal k'op.

“7Avi 7un, 7a li, “7Ey yu7un 7o ka mu jmalalikot yech'o ka li xana7 x7a7ate7e, va7i xulemot to 7oxe,” xut la ti smalal. “Yech'o ka li toj tzijot!”

“7An k'u xa jtu7untik taj a7a, vo7ne, k'u mu xtal yalbot ti krixchane, yo7 ti jsutesbetik 7o sk' ex taj buch'u chak'anbate, mu jna7ti7ik mi yech," xi la ti mol vinik 7une.

“7A k'u cha7al mu yechuk, yech'o ka ti tzi7 xulem, 7a li yik' xulem ya7el ta 7avik' i vo7ote, yu7un 7o no ka yech ti xulemote,” xut la sabaik.

“7Avi 7un, “Jna7ti7ik 7un che7e, muk' bu xka7i mi xulemon ja7 no 7ox yu7un ti 7a li chichik'inaj ya7e, yan kik'tik por 7eso yech'o chajk'anbe 7a li jk' u7e, 7a li jpop' ta jk'exta jbae, yo7 ti mu xavalbon 7o 'i xulemone," xi la li vinik.

“7Aj yil xa nan yil yal ti chive7 7avu7une, 7a li vo7ne tale che7e, xkak' to me yechuk xaval ti yu7un 7a li vo7ot jmalalote." "Buy ti 7ava7i 7xelane?"

“7A k'al yalbon 7a li jta7atike, va7i buch'u yiloj ti k'u x7elan chba vayuk ta yabtele," xi la 7un. 7issutes taj k'ex 7une. “K'e mu xu buch'u k'u xiyalbe lavi 7oy xo xikim jchenek'ik 7une, yiyl mi mu xa k'usi k'op yal ti noj jch'ute." J-p'ej la ten yixim jaragan vinik 7un, pero xulem vinik xu 7un, por 7eso 7es ke komem ti k'op lavi 7un li x7elan 7une.

“7Ora, ti k'alal li ch7abte7e ja x7une, 7oy xo k'u 7oy yu7unik cheve7ik xa mu xa jarakanuk 7un, ja7 mas baxbol 7ital i xulem 7une, yan ti prove jaragan vinik 7une ja7 taj x7elan bu laj 7une, ti k'alal tzapulasan to 7oxe che7e, lek to 7ox, chbat, chbat pero yu7un 7onox mo7oje, chelk'an tal 7ajan, chelk'an tal chenek', chelk'an tal mayik lek xa la chul slo7 ta 7ajan, pero naka yelek' ti prove, naka yelek', yan ti
goods, just stolen goods. Now the buzzard, he worked well. Those are the ancient words.

In her version of “The Buzzard Man,” Tonik manages to make the distinctions between appearance and reality as ambiguous for the reader as they were for the wife. The “hard-working” man becomes a lazy “buzzard” and the “lazy” buzzard becomes a hard-working “man.”

Just as Tonik was reaching the climax, her son could not resist stealing her show, breaking in and telling it himself. Unruffled, Tonik restated the climax and adds a coda of her own.

Romin Teratol was very critical of Tonik’s manner of telling this tale. He commented that she told it as if she had seen the buzzard man with her own eyes, hardly ever inserting the particle, la, which indicates that the event under discussion is only hearsay. See also T42, T43, and their notes, and T48.

The Little Bird

T153

Long ago when the Little Bird was about, he was a leader of the Indian soldiers, it seems. They went to each town. They went. They went to Acala, Chiapilla, to San Lucas, to—what’s its name?—Kakav Te7 [Kakav Tree]. To Rincó Chamula, as we call it. They went there. They went to Acala. They stole a [Christ] Child. They stole icons. They grabbed women. They grabbed little girls. As for the little girls, when they couldn’t do it, they say, when they couldn’t do anything to them, they simply grabbed them, cut them with a pocketknife. Then they assaulted them. As for the women, they would grab them. They would search for them until they had finished with the whole household where they entered. You used to get a fright long ago when just Chamulans went, it seems. They had guns, spears. They had . . . I don’t know what the name of the metal is, this big, like a dagger, but it wasn’t a dagger . . . a walking stick, a metal-[tipped] walking stick. It was round, as thick as your finger. They took them along. They would go to kill people with them. Machetes, knives, [a weapon] called a spear, because its point is long. It looked like a tiny machete, this long, like this. The point was narrow.

They would go, go startle the people. They would go into the houses, grab the women. They would grab the men, tie them up, truss their legs, make them kneel.

Then they would assault the women. After that was over, then they would steal—if there was money, if there was an icon, if there was a [Christ] Child. If you had anything there, they would steal it. They would enter each town, each town. They would enter Acala, enter Chiapilla. That’s what they did in Rosario. They went to Totolapa. They went. They went to steal. There was a Zinacantec in Totolapa who became a follower of the Little Bird. He died long ago. He was impotent. He had no children. His name was [Palas]. That man . . . [What was his last name?] Francisco Rodriguez. Mariano Rodriguez was the adopted child he raised.

But it was hard to kill him. But he died. He stole a Saint Anthony, two Christ Childs, three icons. Who knows how much money it was, because we didn’t see. But what I saw, it seems, inside, I’ll tell about. They went to Chiapilla. He got—that man got there—he got a telephone. He sold the telephone to a Chamulan, and a hot water container—a thermos. He had stolen two thermoses. He thought they were bottles, since the fool didn’t know what they were. He thought they were bottles. He sold them. He offered them for twenty cents. They were bought from him. “I’ll give you a peso. Give it to me!” he was told. He was glad to get a peso.

Then, he went to Acala. There he got that Holy Mother, Our Holy Father, St. Anthony, and a little Christ Child. They went to Rincón Chamula just to steal money, to steal domestic pigs, and so on. Because they went to Ixtapa to sell them. The pigs, they sold for a hundred and fifty. The chickens, they sold for fifteen pesos. For twenty-five pesos, the turkeys—the ones they didn’t eat up. They got sheep. Just the same way, they went to sell them. Two heifers. They split the money among themselves. As for that Old Little Bird himself, he took them home. Two, two heifers arrived. A sheep. As for that sheep, they raised it. Four turkeys. Three watches. A jug of cane liquor. It wasn’t cane liquor. It was peach cane liquor, they said, I think. Flavored cane liquor. They ju—st celebrated a party with it. They got drunk. They mixed the flavored cane liquor with chicha. They drank it. Yes!

Now, when they went to Simohovel or wherever they went, too, they got yarn, they got cloth, and so on, there. Then they returned to split—it up among themselves, too. They had a mule load of stolen goods that came back from there, too.

Then, when they were returning home, they tethered their mule. They tethered the mule on the way, three blocks from their country, but in the woods. They would come at nighttime to take [the things]. The Little Bird’s men would stay, it seems, long ago. They would go to a house to report it. Then at nighttime they would go into the house. How would it be known that all their things were stolen goods? That’s why he was a rich man, the Tall...
Old Little Bird as he was called. Old Little Bird, as he was called, didn't die easily, long ago. It was hard to kill him. He couldn't be killed. Don't you see, the old guy was very tricky.

[He was a Chamulan?] Chamu—lan. Chamulan. Very tricky. I don't know, I don't know if he was the second [Little Bird]. I don't know if you knew Juan Perez Jolote, as they called him. Yes, he was the second or third probably. I don't know what. But he was a friend of his. Yes!

As for Old Little Bird, as he was called, he was the one who always went with spears, with ... what's it called? ... metal-tipped walking sticks? metal-tipped walking sticks, with shotguns, with knives—wherever he went from house to house to steal.

[How many years ago could it have been?] Ooh, God, if it wasn't sev ... sixty or seventy-five years. If it was only that, because I don't know positively how long ago. Because, me, you see, I just figure it out from hearsay. Because when I was married, I was married at sixteen years.

Now I lived with my husband for twenty-eight years, it seems. After twenty-eight years we got divorced, since he was so jealous. I couldn't chat with anyone. I couldn't go anywhere. Since everybody, everybody was my lover, my man [said]. That's why I couldn't say anything anymore, I couldn't do anything anymore. I couldn't earn money. Because it always [caused] fights. We didn't eat. We couldn't live with him, that's why. “Ach, forget it, My Lord, I won't take pains to live with that man!” I said. It was surely seventy-four years ago! If that's all! Because it was long ago. I tell you I was little. I was little. I just saw what that old guy took, it seems. Because there was an old man next to my house, He was as far away as this house here. He lived that far away.

So we saw what came—what went in when Little Bird returned home. He was scared, too, because my mother nearly killed him. Yes, because he stole our land. I had some land—and you seen where Maryan Jolote's house is? Eh, all of it that reaches to the edge of the ranch used to be my own land. Stolen for nothing. He didn't pay a single cent. That was the tricky Little Bird [Palas]. That used to be his land.

The thing is, the old man died in the epidemic, because I was already big at the time of the epidemic. I was probably the same size as your little girl [eleven years]. I ground the corn, I patted the tortillas by myself. I came to San Cristóbal by myself.

The old man died. His old woman died. He had offspring, as we say. His offspring weren't his own children. They were the children of his younger sister's husband. Her daughter was Marta. That boy—Maryan was that boy's name. They baptised him. Supposedly he was Mariano Rodriguez, but he wasn't Mariano Rodriguez! We called him Maryan Seto.

[When Little Bird and his wife were still alive] someone arrived, a person arrived to borrow money. He went to borrow [Little Bird's] money. He went to set down for [Little Bird] two bottles of cane liquor.

They longed to enjoy the cane liquor. They drank it. [Little Bird] sent for that boy of his. They drank. They got drunk.

The poor old woman did an ugly thing. She started to pull up her skirt. “Would you be happy with this compadre?” or whatever it was she said to the person who went to borrow money. She pulled up her skirt. She slapped her legs.

So that son of hers lost his temper.

He probably lost no time. And quickly he cut off her head with an axe. God, cu—ried up tight like this, the poor old woman died. Like this, like this, her hands were like this. She was thoroughly cu—t here [on the neck]. Only the skin was attached here. As for her hair, Holy Mary! Since, like me, she hadn't much hair, it was simply stiff with blood. It was on—I don't know if it was four days later that she was buried. The house was closed, closed, closed, but how would we know she was dead? I had gone by the day after her death. I went to gather firewood. The house was shut up. I went the next day. The house was shut up. She had a comadre, wife of the late . . . he's alive, Rejino who lives in Sek'emtik. You know him! That's who it is! She saw her. The door was opened, the door was opened, then that comadre came to look. “Comadre, comadralita!” she said to her comadre, since the old woman was Spanish. Her name was Loxa—Loxa Seto. Rosa Buluch was her name.

But [her comadre] was completely dead. Her legs were simply cu—ried up like this. Dead, murdered.

You see how they died. That's what happened to the Little Bird's wife, indeed! That was the second Little Bird.

[There were two Little Birds?] Eh, three, four. The first Little Bird was the one with real Chamulan flesh. The second was that Juan Perez Jolote. The third was probably that Old Palas. The fourth was the other one [Maryan Seto]. Until they all died. But now they're gone. Go—ne! Died. Yes!

In 1960 Tonik stated firmly that she was forty-six years old. By that reckoning she would have been fifty-seven years of age when she recounted her memories of The Little Bird. But she claims here that she witnessed these events, that occurred
“seventy-four years ago,” when she was “little.” As we know that Little Bird was looting the countryside not in 1897, but in 1911, Tonik’s age must fall between her two estimates, that is, around sixty-six years.

Tonik, like Xun Vaskis, describes The Little Bird as being “tall.” Perhaps by Indian standards he was taller than average.

Although I have never heard Maryan Seto called “Little Bird,” his name is famous in Zinacantan Center. The gruesome scene described by Tonik was only his introduction to a life of violence. His legendary exploits were chronicled by Romin Teratol, who reported that Maryan Seto, known as “Split-face Man,” was the husband of many wives and the perpetrator of sixty-four murders. Three times he was killed and twice he revived. His final demise was assured only after he had been chopped to pieces and his flesh covered with garlic, salt, and tobacco (Bricker, T42). Nor did the violence end with his death, for his two adopted sons were notorious mother-beaters and murderers in 1960; one with five murders to his name, including a poor deaf and dumb Chamulan. See also T22, T28, T66, T116, T154, and their notes.

The Sweeper of the Path

Once the great star appeared, as we say. The sky grew bright from end to end. “I am the sweeper of the path. I sweep his path. I sweep Our Lord’s path for him, so that when Our Lord passes by he finds [the path] already swept.” [The star] travels. Then the sun appears. The sun sweeps forth as we say. But you know, first it’s the morning star. Venus is a Chamulan girl. She is from Chamula.

They didn’t believe the Chamulan girl when she talked about it. “We’ll see what the ugly Chamulan girl is like! She says she is a star! Could she be a star? She’s an awful, ugly, black Chamulan. Isn’t the star beautiful? It has rays of light. The star is a beautiful bright red,” said the women. They ridiculed that girl for saying she was a star.

They didn’t think she was. “Do you think I don’t know what you’re saying? You are ridiculing me. It’s me. I am the one who fixes the path. I sweep off the path. When Our Lord disappears, the ocean dries up. The fish come out when Our Lord passes by there. That’s when Our Lord disappears. That’s why there is the monkey’s sun as we call it [a red sunset]. That’s when Our Lord passes over the ocean. That’s when night falls. That’s when the rays of light can be seen in the distance. I am the sweeper of the house. I sweep—off the path. I walk just when it grows light, at dawn again. I sweep here beneath the world. The next day when dawn comes, I appear and sweep again, because that is my work. That’s what I do. I haven’t any other work. That is what my work is. That’s why I am a star. Vendras appears early in the dawn, say the people, but it’s me. I sweep the house. [I sweep] his path, Our Lord’s path. It isn’t just anyone’s path,” she said.

7A la ti vo7ne 7a li muk’ta k'anal chlok’ tal xkaltike, sak-jama---n xal tal li vinajele. “Vo7one, jmes-beon, vo7one, jmes sbe, ta jmesbe ech’el sbe li kajvatliske.” Yu7un ja7 te k’alal x7ech’i kajvatliske, mesbil xa ta sta, ja7 ti chanav ja7 to ta xlok’ tal k’ak’al tzesmuat tal li k’ak’ale, xichiotik.

Pero buy, ja7 la ba7yi li muk’ta k’anale, tzeb 7ulo7 la ti muk’ta k’anal 7une, te la likem ta Chamu7tik 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a ti, mu la xch’un ti tzlo7illta ti tzeb kulo7tik 7une.

Va7i 7un, “Xkil to k’u x7elan li yijil tzeb jchamu7, ja7 k’anal chal, mi ju7un yech k’anal sna7oj mu yil 7ik’al 7ulo7 mi mu leklekuk sba li k’anale, 7oy xxojobal, batzi’ tzo—j skelik li k’anale,” xi la ti 7antzetik. Tzlabanik ti cha ti ja7 k’anal taj tzeb 7une.

Buy 7un, xak’ikuk la ma7uk 7un. “Mi xa 7ava7uk mu chcha7i li k’u chaval chalanabikone, vo7on me, vo7on me ta jmeltzan tal li be, ta jmes ech’el li be, 7a li k’al chch’ay li kajvatliske te yo7e, ju7un me ja7 ta x7ul i nabe, ja7 7o me chlaj lok’uk li choye, k’al ch7ech’i kajvatliske te yo7e, ju7un me ja7 7o chch’ay li kajvatliske, yech’o me li 7o sk’ak’al max xichiotik, ju7un me ja7 li buy ta x7ech’ ta nab li kajvatliske, ja7 7o chmak 7une, ja7 7o xo nam xvinaj li xxojobale, li vo7one jmes-naon, ta jmes—s ech’el i bee, vo7on ba7yi xichanav k’al tzsakub tal i 7osil ta jun 7ik’-luman noxtok 7une, ju7un vo7on ta jmes i li7 ta yolon balamil sakub tal 7osil ta yok’omal noxtok 7une, vo7on ta jmes talal noxtok 7un, ju7un ja7 kabelt, ju7un ja7 ta jpas, mu k’usi yan kabelt, ju7un ja7 kabelt vo7on chak taje, yech’o li vo7on 7a li k’analon ju7un sob 7ik’-lumanme, chlok’ xa tal muk’ta k’ana---l xi ti krixchano pero vo7on vo7on ta jmes i nae, ja7 li be ju7un, sbe kajvatliske, mu7nuk 7o buch’u sbe,” xi la.
She sweeps. She sweeps it off constantly. When she disappears then she is travelling inside the earth again. So the star reappears the next day again. She sweeps it off again. She passes under us, beneath the world it seems. She goes and comes out the next day again. Just the same way she appears. That's why the star appears first, it seems. “It's me, I sweep Our Lord's path,” she said. The path of the holy sun.

We didn't believe it ourselves, that it was a Chamulan girl, it seems. “If I ever see what it is that sweeps, it seems to be a star, but a Chamulan, I don't believe it!” we said to ourselves.

But she heard it when we were ridiculing her, when the poor girl was mocked. If it weren't so—she wouldn't have heard. But she did hear, so it's true.

It is believed by many that the salt water fish, sold in the market in San Cristóbal, are simply picked up off the ocean bed when the sun sets. See also T80 and notes.

Elder and Younger Sisters
T80

Once we spoke of the elder sister, it seems. The younger sister stayed behind. She sweeps the path underneath, it seems, because the younger brothers are below, it seems. It travels. The sun travels. The younger sister sweeps and sweeps off [the path]. The elder sister goes home to rest.

Now the younger sister sweeps. When the elder sister arrives, dawn comes. The great star appears, as we say to ourselves. That's when the elder sister arrives. The younger sister goes home to rest, the whole day, it seems. Then the elder sister is working. In the evening when it grows dark then she returns home again. The younger sister comes again. She resumes work again at nighttime. The sun is too hot down below. The dwarfs' hats are just made of mud, we used to say. Who knows if maybe they are dwarfs. Who knows if they are those dwarf people. I don't know the truth of the matter. That's all I've been told.

This afterthought, revising Tonik's previous account, is difficult to follow. Quite simply, the morning star sweeps the sun's path in the daytime, while her younger sister, the evening star, works the night shift. Presumably the younger brothers are the dwarfs. See also T7, T24, T79, T89, and their notes.

The Flood
T70

Long ago, they say, when the world was flooded, [a few] people were left. Our late grandmother told
me about it, it seems. She told my mother. My mother heard it and she told me.

The world was flooded. There were just two people now. They fled away. There was a large mountain. They escaped to the top of it.

They hid there until the water drie—d up. When the water dried up they sent off a buzzard. The buzzard [in the valley].

You see, it didn’t return. The “red beak” as we call [the turkey vulture] came [down]. It came [down], too. It didn’t return. The king vulture, as we call it, came [down]. It has white wings. It came [down], too. It didn’t return. It got used to the food. There was plenty of food. It went, too. The raven came [down]. It got used to cracking corn. The . . . what animal was it? . . . came [down]—the grackle. It filled up on corn. The . . . what animal was it? . . . came [down]. It didn’t return any-

“Why is it that not a single bird returns? Why don’t they return to tell what it’s like, if there are any people still left, if there are still . . . how the world is left,” said the woman and the man who survived.

“Who knows, you’d better wait or you’ll just go and kill yourself, there,” said his wife.

You see, the man waited three or four days or so, they say. Nothing arrived. He sent one of his little dogs. It grew fond of eating horse [meat]. He sent a, who knows if it was a dove. I don’t know what kind of bird was the last to come [down]. It came [down], too. “Why don’t they ever return?”

“Eh, who knows?” she said. [The last bird] came [down]. It came [down]. “Eh, but it seems the water hasn’t dried up yet. If there is still water there, forget it, I’m not going yet, I’ll just die,” said his wife.

He waited a week, it seems, for it to dry out properly, for the earth to be quite dry.

The time was up for [the water] to dry out properly, for you to be able to walk on the ground, for you to walk if you came [down].

But you see, he got hurt. He came [down]. He came out of his house, it seems. He hurt his calf. Who knows if it was slashed with a machete. Who knows if it was with a knife. Because his leg had a long cut. He went back [up]. “Skip it. It’s still
impossible to walk on the ground. Look, my leg got hurt right at the start,” said the man. He went back up.

“Forget it, forget it! Didn’t I tell you? Don’t go yet! Didn’t I say that?” she said.

He returned. “I’ll wait now one or two days, otherwise I’d just be going off to kill myself,” he said.

“That’s better, what’s there to lose? Then we’ll go and see how it is,” she said. He came [down] when the stated time was up. The man came [down]. He opened the first house. It was filled with water. It was flooded with water. He was soaked.

But the smell, it stunk terribly where people had died. He broke in with a club or a rock or something. That’s how he opened the houses. Don’t you see, the doors had swollen from the water.

“I shouldn’t have come [down]. It wasn’t worth it. The earth stinks horribly!” he said. He saw how the water ca—me out when he opened ... I don’t know if it was three or four houses that he opened. “Never water ca—me out when he opened ... I don’t know if it was three or four houses that he opened. “Never mind, I’ll wait for the rain[y season] to end. The trees are [still] heavily foliaged,” he said. He was sitting there. He lit his little fire. He warmed up his tortillas. He ate, and after he finished eating, and finished his tortillas, he slept there. He didn’t return, because the trail was very slippery. He couldn’t go back to where he had been, it seems, since the mountain he had to climb was steep.

He slept there. [The next day he went back up the mountain.] “What did you go for? You shouldn’t have gone, you should have waited until the earth had finished drying out properly, you hear! I was right, the houses are filled with water. What good did you do by going?” [his wife said the next day].

“Ah,” he said. “How many of the houses are still up?” she said.

“Jay-p’ej to li na 7oy lekik 7une?” xi la ti vinik 7une.

“Yiyil yiyil! mi mu lakalbe che7e? Mu to chabat! Mu mu xakut che7e?” xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a li 7isut 7un. “Ta jmala xa junuk chibuk k’ak’al naka me teyuk bat chamikon,” xi la un.

“Ja7 lek mi7n 7u k’u laj 7o, ja7 to xba jk’eltik ti k’alal mi yu7un k’u x7elane,” xi la un. Tal la ti k’alal 7itz’aki ti jayib k’ak’al yaloj 7une, 7ital li vinik 7une, sjam la ti primero j-p’ej nae, noj la ta vo7, noj ta vo7 7it’uxi to li stuke.

Va7i 7un, pero ti jun yik’e batz’i tuuu la ta j-mek 7un, bu ti te ti krixchano 7un to, svok’ la ta te7 ta ton k’utik xi jam 7o ti na 7une, k’u ti mu xavil 7a li sit’em ta vo7 ti mak naetik 7une.

Va7i 7un, “?A ma to ma talikone, yiluk ma yile, batz’i 7animal yan yik’ ti j-mek li balamile!” xi la 7un. 7iyil ja7 7o la ta—1 vo7 ta x7elan 7isjam mu jnana7 mi 7ox-p’ej mi chan-p’ej k’u cha7al taj na 7isjam 7une. “Yiyil ta jmala ch7ech’ li vo7 li7 toe, ja7 pim yanal li te7 li7e,” xi la 7un. Te la tzunu—1 ti te vo7 7une, stzoy li yunen k’ok’, sk’ixna la ti yot 7une, 7ive7 la 7un, laj ve7uk 7i laj ti yot 7une, te la vay 7un, muk’ xa la sut 7un, yu7un la ja7 ti batz’i bilil ti bee, mu xa stak’ sut ech’el yo7 ti buy ya7el 7une, ja7 ti pajal ti vitz bu chmuy ech’el.

Va7i 7un, 7i te la vay 7un. “K’u 7onox ba sa7 ma to batane, 7amalsuk to 7a li takij lajuk lek balamile, va7i, noj ta j-mek ka7uk ta vo7 li naetike k’u 7onox 7atu7un labat?” xi la un.

“Ji7 7ava7uk a7a, batz’i 7animal mu stak’ xikuxiotik ya7el yik’ ti mu yut na 7animal ya—n yik’,” xi la ti vinik 7une. Xut la ti yajnile.

“Yiyil che7e, malao, takij lajuk lek li balamile, mi yu7un lek xa takin chavile, yiyil batuk 7i k’utik jtz’unubtik, k’utik chanul 7oy a7a,” xi la un. “Ta 7onox tal yik’otik i 7a li joje,” xi la un.

Va7i 7un, ja7 la bat ti joj ti k’alal lek xa k’epel ya7el ti balamil 7une, takin xa 7une, lek xaxanavuk 7une, mu xavil ja7 la tzk’el ti mu xa xkom li yav yok yo7 ti lek xa 7o takin li mut 7une, ba la yal un. “Lek xa me 7un, takin xa me 7un, 7a lavalbon komel ti xtal kik’ot 7un, tal kik’ot 7un, ba k’el avil 7un, 7a li naetike lek xa xikachajtki yot 7buy makajtike,” xi la 7un. “7A li yan 7une, k’ajom xa no 7ox i yunen jol xvinaje, mu xa buy naka matz’ajtki ta 7ach’el,” xi la 7un.

“7A!” xi la. “Jay-p’ej to li na 7oy lekik 7une?” xi la 7un.
“There are still maybe six or seven good ones,” it said. “Those that had strong walls,” it said.

“Ah,” he said. “Never mind, I’m going to look,” he said. He came [back down].

He looked at all the houses. In one house he found, I don’t know if it was seventy pesos, seventy solid pesos. The money of long ago. In another house [he found] twenty-two. In another house [he found] fifteen, in another ten.

He just found money. “But My Lord, I can’t live on this. But My Lord the amount I’ve found isn’t enough for me alone. What can I subsist on?” he said. Since he had two girls and two boys and a baby. The baby grew. I don’t know if it had reached four years [of age] or what when its mother took sick. She got sick, because she ate banana roots or fern roots or wild yam roots or whatever it was she ate. She began to swell from it. The woman swelled up. Her face was this bi—g. Her belly was horribly big like this. The poor thing was horribly bloa—ted. She died.

She died. The man was left by himself. “God, what can my children eat now? What can I do about it? I haven’t any corn. My corn has run out. I have no seed corn. I haven’t found any. What do you think I can do, holy raven? What do you think I can plant? I haven’t any corn,” he said.

“You haven’t any corn?” asked the raven.

“None at all!” he said.

“Shush up! There are two bins of corn there at Hol Na Joj [Upper Raven House],” it said. “There’s yellow there,” it said. “There’s white there,” it said. “There’s black there,” it said. “There’s red there,” it said. “I’ll go steal one ear apiece from there for your seed corn,” it said. “That’s where I eat myself when I haven’t anything at all to eat. So I’ll go take them out from there,” it said.

“Please do then, because when this runs out I won’t have anything to live on. My children won’t have anything to live on either,” he said.

“Okay,” it said. After it had taken out each ear, an ear of each kind of corn, it went to give them to him.

“Here is your seed corn,” it said each time as it went to bring the next ear. It just went to give [the corn] to him. Again it carried off [the corn in its beak] in just the same way. It came again to give [the corn] to him. It went to bring the next ear. It just went to give [the corn] to him again. When [the number] was completed, “See, here is your seed corn. See how you
can support yourself, because they won't let me in anymore at the place where I took [the corn] out. What do you keep doing with the corn? How could you have finished eating up all that? the owner of the cave asked me.

"Ah," he said. "Never mind, I understand about this. Now that I have hoed my little [plot of] land, I'll just plant it. I have nothing to worry about now. I'll be satisfied living on the little corn tassels," he said. So he began to eat the tassel. He began to eat the corn silk. It was at that time that, I don't know if it was the Spaniards or who, who came long ago. So then he joined them. He sought out a wife. The woman he married was Spanish. His time came. The man died. He died. Now his children were left. They were left with . . .

[Others] were left then. They looked, long ago. Those who were left could see Our Lord—when they were left. Several escaped to the top of a mountain. They climbed to the mountaintop when it flooded. They escaped there during the flood long ago.

Now Our Lord himself went to look. When Our Lord arrived the men were angry. All those who were saved were angry. They were mad. "Where did you get saved?" they were asked.

"Oh, we climbed to the mountaintop," they said.

"Ah!" he said. "Where, what woods!"

"Oh, wherever there were any," they said.

"And your houses?" he asked.

"Oh, who cares?" they said.

"What did you live on? Was it corn or what was it you lived on?"

"Oh, we didn't live on anything much. We lived on vine berries," they said. "We lived on nuts," they said.

"Oh, fine!" he said. "How is it? . . . Do you want to go on living?" they were asked. They talked back angrily now. "Well, look behind you then!" they were told. They loo—ked behind them like this.

Then when they did that they became into monkeys.

Now when they turned into monkeys it was then that they went into the jungle. So even now they are the ones who turned into monkeys.

Their tails appeared. Their ears appeared. Their fur, too.

Now their faces look like humans' except that they have fur. So they didn't turn into proper people. The monkeys were people. Monkeys are still the people of long ago. Haven't you seen monkeys? When you see them they have fur and long tails because they didn't obey Our Lord's command. If you don't obey the command your fur will appear! Go eat the
good corn and make a living as you did.

"7A!" xi la 7un. "Yiyil ta xka7i li7e ja7 xa no 7ox te ta jtz'un 7un, lavi 7oy xa jvok'oj li kunen 7osil a7a mu xa k'usi xal ko7on ta jtz'un, bal xkipanbe yunen tz'utujal," xi la. Ja7 la lik sve7e ti tz'utuj 7une, lik slajes ti tz'utuj 7une, ja7 7o ja7 li 7oy la tal mu jna7 mi 7espanyol k'usi la ti vo7ne 7une, ja7 xa te 7ixchi7in sba xchi7uk 7un, ?issa7 to yajnil 7un, ja7 7espanyol la ti 7antz 7i7ik' ti vinik 7une, 7ista yora 7icham ti vinik 7une, 7icham 7un, ja7 xa kom taj xch'amaltak te kom xchi7uk . . .

Te kom 7un, 7a ti vo7ne 7une, ?isk'el, stak' ta k'elel li kajvaltik jay-vo7 komem 7une, 7ikom la 7unk, 7este k'al ?ikom la 7une, jay-vo7 ?ikol ta jol vitz ?imuy ta jol vitz k'alal 7inoj ti ?este nojel ti vo7ne 7une, te kolik 7un.

7Óra, bat la sk'el stuk i kajvaltik 7une k'alal 7asta k'ot ti kajvaltik 7une, kapem la li viniketik jay-vo7 ?ikol 7une, kapem la kapem la 7un. "Bu lakolik?" x7utat la.


"7A!" xi la. "Buy buy te7tikal?"

"7A ja7 ti buye," xi la.

"Mi tana?" xi la.

"7Aj, muk' ta 7acl. " xi la.

"K'usi 7avipanik, mi 7ixim, k'usi 7avipanik?"

"7Aj, mu k'usi kipan, 7ikipan ssat 7ak'," xi la.

"7Ikipan ssat te7," xi la.

"7Aa, bwéno," xi la. "K'usi ma 7entónse k'u cha7al mi xak'an to xach'i?" x7utat la. Kapem xa la xta7k'av. "Bwéno, k'elo lavalo-pate che7e!" x7utat la. Sk'e—l 7o ti svalo-pate xi7o 7une.

7Entónse, k'alal la spas 7une, ja7 la pas ta max 7un.

7Óra, ja7 7o la k'al pas ta max 7une, ja7 7o la bat ta montanya 7un, ja7 xa lavi max pas 7o 7une.

7I7ayan sne 7i7ayan xchikin, 7a li stzatl.

7Óra, li ssate che7e, 7a li krixchano yilel, k'usi xi no 7ox ja7 li 7o li stzatl, ja7 mu spas 7o lek ta krixchano, 7a li mise, krixchano, ja7 ti 7antivo krixchano ti max 7un to, mu mi chavil li max bu 7oy xavile che7e, 7oy stzatzal, nat sne, yu7un la ja7 la ti muk' xch'unbe smantal ti kajvaltik, lavi mu xach'un mantale 7ayanuk 7atzatzal ba lo7an ti ssat te7e, ba
berries of trees and the berries of vines, live on them for the rest of your life! That's why they have turned into monkeys.

Now those who didn't talk back, those who said nothing, those who had been children, they were left as progenitors, since they didn't talk back. The man's children didn't answer a single word. They didn't talk back. They didn't say a single word, but those who talked back angrily were turned into monkeys ever since.

Then [the children] were married. He had a wife. She had a husband. So the people multiplied.

Long ago you don't think there were many who were left, who escaped. They turned into monkeys. They went into the woods. They went to live in the woods. They turned into animals to this day. They are animals to this day. Those who didn't talk back to Our Lord, who didn't speak improperly and didn't make a sound, bowing low there, they weren't guilty. But those who answered back—"Go!" was the command. They went. They went to the woods. That's why it's been like that ever since. They turned into monkeys. Those who are humans now, it's because they didn't talk back, just like us.

Tonik's description of the Flood, despite its idiosyncratic details, shares a number of elements with other Middle American myths. The biblical theme of dispatching birds to report on the firmness of the ground was adapted widely in Middle America. It has been reported among the Cora, Nahua, Popoluca, Zapotec, Yucatec, and Tzotzil of Chenalho (Lumboltz, 1902; 2:193–194; Madsen, 1960:125–126; Foster, 1945 a: 235–237; Parsons, 1936:350–352; M. Redfield, 1937:24; and Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:157).

Raven's theft of corn from the mountain for man's use is merely one of four animals in that account, Raven takes a central role in the discovery of corn in myths of the Pokomchi (Mayers, 1958b:11), Calchiquel, Isil, Mam, and Tzotzil (B. Morgan, 1959:1–7; Miles, 1960:433). In the Huichol afterworld, the famished spirits finally reach a raven happily gorging and burping. They plead for a morsel, but are rebuked. "You said I was a robber...I won't give you tortillas or anything else," explains the raven. And so they must continue hungrily on their way (Forst and Nahmad, 1972:60–61).

Although the transformation of men into monkeys is an almost universal element of Middle American creation myths, it seems only in Chiapas that this divine punishment was called down because of the rudeness of men's response to God's questions (Gossen, T166). Their complaint, "We lived on vine berries, we lived on nuts," strikes the same note as the Chilam Balam of Tizimin, when it bewails the plight of the Mayans after the Spaniards' arrival—"The people subsisted on trees, they subsisted on stones" (Makemson, 1951:47). A Chamulan account of the Flood describes how the people, when asked how they had managed to survive, answered angrily that they lived on tubers. Immediately they were turned into raccoons. And raccoons eat corn now because once they were people (Gossen, T41).

The ancestral famine food—banana roots, fern roots, wild yam roots, corn silk, and corn tassels—is the very food that Xun Vaskis recalls being eaten during the famine that occurred in his youth (T118).

Tonik's son, 7Antun, interrupted his mother's account of the descendants of the survivors of the Flood to tell of an important incident she had forgotten—the creation of monkeys. Tonik amplified his remarks and integrated the monkey story with the destiny of the man's children.

Still another Zinacantec origin myth tells how three brothers, brave as roosters, came from Mexico City. The oldest settled in Zinacantan, the second continued on to Ocósingo, and the third settled in Palenque. They built palaces and hunted deer with bows and arrows. After they had killed five deer, they held a fiesta, celebrating with pulque and palm wine. The king of Mexico was invited to the feast. In gratitude he lent each of the brothers forty thousand pesos and ten soldiers (Bricker, T1). Tonik never hints at the Zinacantecs' Mexican origin. Apparently the Zinacantecs had been long-time residents of the highlands when the Spaniards arrived, and there is no evidence of their Mexican origin. Ximénez reported that they were settled in Zinacantan "before the sun existed" (Ximénez, 1929:360). See also T7, T35, T96, T161, and their notes.
When it flooded, then, for the land flooded terribly, they say not a single person was left. Not a single person was left. The world was deserted. The houses flooded. Whatever there was, was flooded. They went to the mountaintops to see, but no one was left—deserted. Only water. I don’t know if it took months or what for the water to dry up. It receded. It receded. All the houses were stinking. All the people had died, had drowned. The chickens, the sheep, the horses—all died.

Then, I don’t know if it was one of our Tutelary Gods. I don’t know who it was. He issued a command. They went to see how it was, whether the flood had dried up. He sent off, ah, the grackle. Grackle grew fond of cracking corn.

He sent off a buzzard. Just the same. Buzzard stayed behind looking for food there, eating horses, since there were lots of dead things. It stayed there to eat. It never came back now. They went, too, they went, the little sparrow and the towhee, and so on. Just the same. They grew fond of eating worms, eating whatever little tidbits there were there.

As many days passed as it took for everything to dry out well. The hawk came. It never returned. It grew fond of eating its meals, too. The caracara, as we call it, the king vulture. Just the same. It grew used to it there, too.

It went, what’s it called? What is this animal called? My Lord!

[Was it a bird?] A bird, ah, it was the sharp-shinned hawk. It arrived. Ah, that one went. It went to report. “Ah, there isn’t a single person. They all died. They’re all dead. E—very house is stinking. It’s terrible. You can’t go in anywhere. Even if you go to see for yourself, go look for yourself, go satisfy your curiosity! Go take a trip and see, but you can’t find a place [to put] your foot. The mud—it reaches your knees,” it said, indeed.

[How many were there on the mountaintop?] On the mountaintop? They say there were two. A woman, a man, with their little girl, their little boy. So there were four. As for the little girl and the little boy, I don’t know what happened to them—if they died of fear or what happened to the little girl and the little boy. They never grew up. As for the old woman and the old man—she wasn’t very old. [In fact] both of them were around twenty-five years old, it seems. When they were both twenty-five, they had a child. Then they went to repopulate the world. They went to resettle it. Their children were born. Their children settled. They fixed up the world.

7A ti k'alal 7inoje che7e yu7n la noj ti balamil ta j-mek noj la krixchano kom, mu la junuk krixchano kom xch'i'-yan la ta j-mek ti balamile, noj ti naetike noj ti k'u noje, bat la ta jol hitzetik ti sk'e-kele pero mu la buch'u xa 7oy 7ikom, xch'i'-ya—n solel k'ajom ti vo7e, mu jna7 mi ta j7u k'u to xi 7ul ya7el li vo7 7une, 7ul ech'el 7ul ech'el, naka xa xtue---t ti naetike, ti krixhanoe laj chamuk laj jik'avuk, ti kaxlan ti chije ti ka7e laj chamuk.

Va7i 7un, ja7 to ti, ja7 mu jna7 mi ja7 ti jme7tiik jottikxe ja7 mu jna7 buch'u junukal 7un, 7istak ech'el la mantal 7un, ba la sk'e—1 k'u x7elan ti 7a li k'u x7elan takij ti nojel 7une, te la stak ech'el, 7aj, bak mut, bak mute nop ta k'ux-7ixim.

Va7i 7un, stak ech'el xulem ja7 nox yech noxtok, xulem kom ta sa7el sve7el tey, ti7-ka7 ja7 li 7oy k'utikuk chameme.

Va7i 7un, ja7 xa te kom ve7uk 7un, mu xa bu sut, bat noxtok, bat la mi 7unin chinchen mi k'ovix k'utikuk ta j-mek 7une ja7 nox ye ch te nop ta ti7-lukum ta ti7-k'utikuk j-set' juteb 7oy tey ta j-mek 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7ech' ti jayib k'ak'al ya7el ti takij lek k'utikuk 7une tal 7a li xik muk' bu sut xa nop ta ti7-ve7elil noxtok, tal 7a li vakos xkuttikotik 7a li rey xuleme, ja7 nox ye ch te no--p noxtok.

Va7i 7un, bat 7a li k'u sbo li, k'usi sbo li chon li7i, kajval?

Mut, 7a ja7 li jimich' xike, k'ot 7un, 7a 7eso si bat 7un ba yal. “7A mu junuk ti krixhanoe laj skotol naka chamemik, so--iel xtuet ju-jun na muk' smelol ta j-mek mu stak' bu xi7ochotik 7ak' 70i xibat avil ba k'el avil ba lok'es 7avo7on avil mi chba paxyajan avile pero mu jta yav koktik, 7a ti 7ach'ele ya7un ch7och k'alal sjoloval kakantik,” xi la ech'el 7un bi 7a.

Ta jol hitze cha7-vo7 la, jun 7antz jun vinik xch'7uk la jun yunin tzeb jun yunin krem, va7i chan-vo7ik 7un, 7a ti 7unin tzeb 7unin krem 7une, ja7 mu jna--7 k'usi bat 7o mi cham ta xi7el mi k'u la xi ti 7unin tzeb 7unin krem 7une, mu la bu ch'i 7un, ti me7el mol 7une, muk' bu batz'i mas me7el, naka to la lek yilel ta ta 7a li benti-sinko jabil ju-jun 7une, 7alaj to 7un, ja7 to ba cha7-vo7ik 7une ba cha7-naklikuk, 7ayan xch'amalik, naki ti xch'amalik 7une, smeltzanik ti balamil 7une choton 7un sk'e7ik 7un pero ta yoxibal to 7u ti takij ti nojel ya7el 7une, ja7 to ta k'unk'un ta k'unk'un 7och'7och' ech'el 7un ba sk'el ti balamil ti k'u x7elan 7une mi stak' xa xnaki,
They became established. They looked, but it seems it was after three months that the flood dried up. Then little by little, little by little they worked their way down. They went to see what the world was like—if they could settle now, if they could enter now, if there were any houses that were left, that were all right. There weren't any. It was three months since the flood passed. They built their house. They cut the wood for their house. After they had built their house, they plastered it. They looked at it. Their house was fine now. Then they entered it. They took their metate, their metate platform with them. They went to live there. There were ju-st two people—one woman, one man, established in the house. Then a woman and a man arrived. I don't know where they came from, whether from Chamula or where the woman and the man came from. They settled there.

The woman and the man returned home.

But you see, a Ladino and a Ladina appeared. As for the Ladino and the Ladina, “What is this place called?” the Ladina and the Ladino asked.

“Ah, it's Zinacantán,” they said.

“Ah, Zinacantán,” they said. “As for me, I'm going to live in Zinacantán,” said the Ladino.

“You are going to live [here]?” they asked.

“I'm going to live [here],” he said.

“Ah, live here, then! There's lots of land. There are lots of houses,” they said. [These] people long ago were Spaniards or something. Yes!

They settled. They lived. Their children born of woman, born of man, were born. They wore skirts and clothes like our clothes. That's how the [Indian] woman earned money, weaving skirts for the other family. The [Indian] woman earned money, too, by weaving clothes for the Ladina's husband, too. They became our brothers. The world multiplied there. It was fixed up. It was improved. Now it is established to this day. It is well-built now, it seems. It is fine now.

Now, when [the Ladino] began, when he began to break the ground, he couldn't learn how to hoe the ground. The poor Ladino's hands blistered. His hands grew sick. So he paid that man. “Come here, come here and hoe my land for me for a day, so I can plant my little bit of corn,” he said. He planted his little bit of leeks. He planted his little bit of coriander for them to eat, to live on.

His coriander grew. His greens grew. They lived on them. Little by little, “Please work for me for a day or so. I want to plant my potatoes. I want to plant my beans,” he said. They planted them. I don't know if it was the rainy season. I don't know. Eh, it was probably the rainy season since you know it mi stak’ xa x7och mi 7o bu leckle kom ti na 7une, ch’abal la 7un, yoxibal 7u 7ox yech’el ti nojeltike, smeltzan snai7 7une, slok’esbe ste7el ti snai7 7une, laj smeltzan ti snai7 7une, spak’ 7un sk’el 7une, lek xa ti snai7 7une, ja7 to 7ochik ech’el 7une, yich’ ech’el xcho7 yek’en ba naklikuk, stu—k cha7-vo7 jun 7antz jun vinik chotolik te na ta 7un, ja7 to la 7a li 7ik’ot jun 7antz jun vinik, mu jna7 bu likem tal mi Chamu7 tik buy likem tal ti jun 7antz jun vinik 7une, ja7 la te naki 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a ti 7antz ti vinik 7une 7isut ech’el ta sna 7un.

Bu xavil 7un, 7ital jun jkaxlan jun jxinulan, 7a ti jkaxlan 7a ti jxinulan, “K’usi sbi li7i?” xi la ti jxinulan 7une ti jkaxlan.

“7A, 7a li7e Tzinakanta,” xi la 7un.


“Chanaki?” xut la 7un.

“Chinaki,” xi la 7un.

“7Aa, naklan che7e, 7oy 7ep 7osil 7oy 7ep na,” xi la 7un. 7Espanyol mi k’u la me xe ti krixchano vo7ne 7une. Ji7!

7A li 7inaki la 7un, ch’i la 7un, te 7ayan yolik xnich’onik slapik la stzek sk’u7ik chak k’u cha7al jk’u7tikólik, ja7 la tzpas kanal ti 7antz 7une tzjalbe stzek ti j-chop 7une, tzpas kanal noxtok ti 7antz 7une ja7 nox tzjalbe sk’u7 ti smalal ti jxinulan ya7el noxtok 7une, 7ipas ta jchi7iltik 7une te 7ip’ol 7o ti balamil 7une, meltzaj 7un lekub 7un, lavi spasoj xa 7o 7estavleser k’al tana 7une meltzajem ya7el lek 7une lek xa komem 7une.

7Øra, ti k’alal 7ilike che7e lik svok’ ti yosil 7une, k’usi la ti mu xchan ti vok’7osile ta la xvoch ti sk’ob ta ta x7ipaj ti sk’ob ti prove jkaxlane, ja7 la tztoj taj vinik 7une. “La7, la7 vok’bon kosil junuk k’ak’al ta jtz’un kunin 7ixim,” xi la 7un. Stz’un la yunin tuix stz’un la yunin kulantu tzlajesik chve7ik 7o.

Va7i 7un, ch’i ti skulantue ch’i ti yitajike chve7ik 7o 7une. K’unk’un la 7un, “7Abolajan xa junuk k’ak’al kabtel ta jtz’un ka7i kis-ak’ ta jtz’un ka7i jehenek’;” xi la 7un. Stz’unik la 7un, ja7 mu jna7 tik mi yora vo7tik, ja7 mu jna7 tik, 7e, yu7 nan yora vo7tik 7un k’u ti vokol 7ul li vo7 chava7i to, vokol
took a long time for the water to dry up. It took a long time for the world to be set in order, whatever it was they did to the world. The greens grew, it seems. Every growing thing grew, since I'm sure it was the rainy season. It was probably during a particular month. I certainly don't remember very well.

When their things multiplied, ah, then the Ladino ate apart. Now he had companions. They learned there now. Their children born of woman, children born of man, were born. That [Indian] woman taught them weaving. As soon as [the Ladina's] daughter was nine years old she knew how to weave, she knew how to grind and pat [corn]. Now she patted their tortillas, now she made their tortillas. They ate the same now. When the first family ate chicken they would give some to our countrymen.

Now, when the Ladino came, he learned about what he was given. Just the same way, he ga—ve away [his things]. He had a hard time learning our language. The first man taught him. "Learn it, learn our language, because my wife doesn't understand Spanish. Me, I know Spanish, but me, I go to work. You are left behind alone with my wife, it seems. Talk together! My wife doesn't know Spanish, since she doesn't understand what you tell her," he said.

Well, he learned. In three months the Ladino learned Spanish, [I mean] our language.

He learned our language now, it seems. Now they talked to each other easily. They chatted now. They lacked nothing. The poor Ladino probably thought we were brothers now. Happily, they ate and drank since they had always been together. There weren't any other people, it seems. They lived as brothers, growing their corn together. [The Indian] went to hoe [the Ladino's] ground for him, our countryman hoed it. Then the other went for a day to work [for our countryman]. They hoed each other's land, they planted for each other. They planted their greens. They planted their beans. They planted their watermelon squash.

Then they had corn. They had beans. They had watermelon squash. Their children were big now. They [themselves] grew old, they aged. They grew old together with that Ladino and with that woman, too. Now they sat at home. Just the children worked. Their children built other houses now. The children of the Ladino married our countryman's daughters. The children of the man, of the Ladino, it seems, married our countryman's girls.

They married each other. Their houses were built. Gradually, gradually the world multiplied. Gradually. And there came, I don't know, I don't know if it was from Chamula, I don't know where the family
came from to settle. “My Zinacantec!” they said when they arrived. “Have you any work to be done? Because I never settle down, because I have no land. Won’t you please give me, sell me however small [a piece of] your land?” said the [stranger].

“I’ll sell some to you, but you are to work it. I’ll join you at work, we’ll work,” [our countryman] told him.

“Of course, let’s work, my Zinacantec, if you’ll give me a little bit of your tiny land,” said the old Chamulan. He was old.

“I’ll give it to you, just so long as you work,” said [our countryman]. The old man worked for a week. He simply slept—pt on the job. “But I don’t like the way you sleep. You’re just stealing money. It’s a mess. You’re not worth a whoring damn just sleeping like that. Go on!” said [our countryman]. He left, the poor old Chamulan left. He went off crying now with his wife. He returned to his country. He went, because his home wasn’t here, because they were being killed in his home [town].

He went off crying with his wife. He didn’t go very far. He came back. The man came back to cry over it. “See here, my Zinacantec, please, be so kind, may God, our Holy Lady enter your heart! Sell me a little of your land! I’ll do what you say. I won’t sleep any more, because I really don’t want to die, because the men of my town will kill me,” he said.

“So, you bastard, can’t you stand being killed? Won’t you behave and work quickly? You sleep! There is always sleep. We sleep at night. Since when do we see sleeping by day? We sleep at night. We get up at six o’clock. We begin work at dawn. We go. We go get our sheep or our mules, or our dogs or whatever we have. That’s what we do. We don’t sleep the way you do,” said the man.

“Ah, never mind, my Zinacantec, you can order me, you can tell me, because I don’t want to die, it seems. Because they will kill me in my country,” he said. He went. He was given a little land. Twelve men, just so the house could be established. The poor Chamulan got his lumber. He built his house. The house was built now. His wife was there now. Our poor Chamulan settled down. He started to do his corn field. He prepared his little corn field. “I’ll rent your land by the month, [I mean] by the year,” he said.

“Rent it, then!” said [our countryman]. He rented it. He paid by working. The poor Chamulan worked [for him] three weeks a year. He was given three weeks [of work]. So [the Chamulan] worked. He got used to it. Our Chamulan got used to it little by little. When they were very o—Id, they returned to their country. They went to get their land. They went to

“Kulo7!” xi la k’otel. “Mi mu7yuk 7avabtel yu7un muk’ bu xinaki, mu7yuk kosil, mi mu xa7abolan xavak’bon, xachonbon k’uk smuk’ul 7avosil?” xi la 7un.

“Chajchonbe pero cha7abtej 7o li7 chajchichi7in ta 7abtele yu7n chi7abtejotik,” xut la 7un.

“7Abtejkotik a7a, kulo7, pero ti mu yu7un chavab’kon j-tz’u7uk tavunin balumul,” xi la ti mol 7ulo 7une, mol xa la 7un.

“Ta xak’ ja7 nox kwen7a xi xana7 xa7abteje,” xi la 7un. 7Abtej la va7akib k’ak’al ti mole, solel la labal vaye—1 tzap ta yabet 7un. “Pero mu jk’an la x7elan chavay ye chavelk’an tak’in, ja7 joriro mu k’u7 púta xatun 7o chak le7 labal vayel chapase, ba--tan!” xi la 7un. Bat 7un, bat ti prove mol 7ulo7e x7ok’ xi la ech’el xchi7uk ti yajnil 7une bat la 7un, sult la ech’el tzlumai 7un, bat la 7un yu7un la mu li7uk snae, yu7n la chlaj ta milel ti ta sna 7une.

Va7i 7un, x7ok’ xi ech’el xchi7uk ti yajnil, muk’ 7o no la nom xbat 7un, tal la, tal la yok’ita ti vinik 7une. “K’el avi, kulo7, 7abolanaj 7avokoluk 7ochuk ti riox jch’ul-me7tik tavo7one chonbon j-tz’u7uk labalamile, ta xa jch’un lamanztal 7une, muk’ xa xavay 7un yu7un bat’i mu jk’an xicham ya7el yu7un chismil li jvinkilale,” xi.

“Yech’o, kavron, mi mu xava7i ti milel ya7el 7une, mi mu nox xavaxan abax svalu abax xa7abtej, xavay 7oy 7onox i vaye7e xivayotik ta 7ak’ubaltik, mi ja7 to kilioj7ik vayel ta k’ak’altik, k’u yu7un chavay ta k’ak’altik, 7ak’ubaltik chivayotik, chilikotik ta vakib 7ora 7ik’-luman ta jtam kabetl7ik chibattik, ba jasa7 mi jchij7ik mi jka7ti7ik mi jz7’tik k’usi 7oy ku7untike yu7 nox ta yajstik mi mu yu7nuk chivayotik chak k’u cha7al chapase,” xi la ti vinik 7une.

“7An, yiyl 7un, kulo7, te xatak’i7on 7u---n xavalbon 7u---n yu7un mu jk’an xicham ya7el yu7un chismilik i ta jlu7mule,” xi la 7un. Bat 7un, 7ak’bat j-tz’u7ij ti yosoile lajcheb la metro, ja7 nox yoy7 ti chnaki ti na 7une, slok’es ste7 ti prove 7ulo7 7une smeltzan sna 7un, meltzajem xa ti na 7une tey xa ti yajnil ya7el 7une 7itzuni ti prove kulo7oti7ik 7une, 7ilik spas yunin chob smeltzan yunin chob. “Ta jlok’ ta 7u li, ta 7a li jabil lavo7ile,” xi la 7un.

“Lok’o che7el!” xi la 7un. Slok’ la 7un, la ta stoj ta 7abtel 7un, 7o la ti, 7oxib la xemana ta jabil ch7abtej ti prove 7ulo7 7une, 7i7ak’bat ti 7oxib xemana yech 7une 7abtej 7un nop 7un, k’unk’un te nop taj kulo7oti7ik 7une, ja7 to ti k’al me7e--1 mol xa ta j-mek 7une sut ech’el tzlumai 7un, ba sta ti yosil 7une ba naklikuk 7un pero mu xa k’u x7albat ti k’al 7ik’ot 7une ch’abal
live [there]. But nothing was done to him when he arrived [there]. There was no more trouble. He returned all right. The house was left standing, because he went to live in their house [in Chamula], since his house and land were left there. [Then] he decided to sell it. It was bought. He had sold his land. He was bringing money back home now [to Zinacantan Center], because he was coming back to buy land, since that [house in Chamula] had been bought.

But you see, they were held up on the way, there at the place we call Ya7am Ton [Ya7am Rock]. They were murdered there. The poor Chamulans were murdered. They died there. The woman died, then. The man died, then. The affair was over. That was all. The business was over. They didn't reach the town. No! Just that woman and that Ladino man who had arrived before were left. They had already multiplied. There were many of them now. They lacked nothing now. They were hot and warm now, they were [prosperous]. Little by little they increased. The place was fixed up. It was improved. That man had it fixed up. The streets were built. He sent for help from Chamula or from the governor. I don't know where he sent to for help, indeed! Fifteen men arrived. They built the streets. The mud was scraped [level]. The paths were fixed, it seems. It turned out well. Then it was a fine town.

This second account of the Flood, told to me by Tonik eleven years after the first, begins also on the mountaintop, but changes slightly the kinds of birds sent to report on the state of the world. The man's accident, Raven's gift of corn, his wife's death, all are forgotten as Tonik establishes the Chamulans' relationship to their Ladino and Chamulan neighbors.

In Tonik's myth, the Chamulans are presented as lazy and rather pathetic outcasts, hardly of the same calibre as Zinacan- tecs. Chamulan subservience is a generally accepted fact of life. According to a Chamulan origin myth, St. Lawrence and St. John both raised sheep and so decided to settle together in the highlands, but God wanted the sons of St. Lawrence to grow corn, while the sons of St. John were forced to look for jobs in the lowland coffee fincas (Gossen, T85).

The mutual exchange of labor and the intermarriage of Indian girls and Ladino boys is described in ideal terms, perhaps reflecting Tonik's successful adaptation to the Ladino world. In fact, there is an almost egalitarian, harmonious relationship between native Zinacantecs and the Ladino families living in Zinacantan Center, quite unlike the situation in other Indian towns of the Chiapas highlands, where the Ladinos are notorious for their brutal, mercenary ways. Nevertheless, even in Zinacantan, as in Chenalho, Ladinos are said to be the offspring of an Indian woman and a white male dog—sufficient explanation for their shameless character (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:157).

Not all Zinacantec origin myths speak of cultural or racial equality either. Another Zinacantec version of the Flood relates how Christ turns all the survivors but Adam into monkeys. Eve is made from Adam's rib. Their Indian descendants are given a book of knowledge, but unfortunately they entrust their book to the Ladinos, who have been on top ever since (Bricker, T10). See also T7, T55, T70, T96. T142, T161, and their notes.

Still Another Spook

T146

Long ago the children of the first Spook were human children, it seems. The Spook had stolen the woman, it seems. He would go and steal chickens. He would go and steal them, because he ate chickens. He would go to steal money. He would go from house to house. He would go to steal away people. He would go and see if he could find a woman to steal away.

Buy 7un, tal smakel ta be 7un, ja7 li yo7 Ya7am Ton sbi ku7untikotik 7une, ja7 te laj ta milel ti prove 7ulo7 7une te k'alal laj 7un, tey laj 7antz te laj vinik ch'abal kom k'op mu k'usi, mu7yuk kom k'op 7un mu7yuk xa xk'ot ta Jtek-lum 7un ch'abal xa k'ajom xa stuk 7ikom taj jun 7antz jun vinik jkaxlan 7onox k'otem 7une, ja7 nox ti p'olemik xa 7ox 7epik xa 7ox 7un mu xa k'u sna7ik 7un, te xa k'ok' k'ixinik 7un k'un'k'til 7un, meltzaj 7o li bamilame lekub 7un, ja7 stak ta meltzanel taj vinik 7une, meltzaj i kayeetik 7une stak 7a li ta k'anel 7a li 7ayuda ta Chamu7 mi ta goyerno ja7 mu jna7 buy 7istak ta k'anel ti 7ayuda a7a, k'ot 7a li vo7-lajun vo7 vinik 7un smeltzan 7o ti kayeetik 7une, 7ijos ti 7ach'ele meltzaj ti soral ya7ele lek 7ikom 7un lek xa jtek-lum 7un.

7A ti vo7ne xch'amal ti ba7yi j7ik'ale, yu7n xch'amal xa krixchano ya7el, 7antz yelk'anoj ya7el ti j7ik'ale, ta la xba yelk'an kaxlan, ta la xba yelk'an yu7n la tzti7 ti kaxlaxe, ta la xba yelk'an 7a li tak'in ta la xba bat ta naetik ba yelk'an krixchano, ba ssa7 mi 7o bu sta junuk 7antz chelk'an ech'el.
Once he found that the people were clever where he went. "Nanita, won't you please do the favor of preparing my meal?" he asked, carrying a turkey with him.

"Give it to me, I guess! Come in! Sit down!" she said. She put her [pot of] water on top of the fire. The boiling water was bubbling now. She dipped the chicken [I mean turkey] in it. She put another pot on [the fire]. "Wouldn't you like to drink some posol while you wait a little while for your meal?" said the woman.

"I would!" he said.

"All right," she said. She ground [the corn] for his posol. She gave him his posol. While he was drinking his posol, she scalded him with boiling water. It didn't kill him. She scalded him with boiling water. He just rolled out. He rolled out the door. He left. He was rolling around the whole day at the door, since he was burnt by the boiling water. He was rolling around. In three days he was well again. He was walking around again. He was about to grab a little baby girl there at the door.

That's the way they were. They would grab people. They would look for girls. They would look for women, or whatever they could get. Because that's the way they were. There just weren't any good ones. They were wicked.

"Forget it, then," said the person in Zinacantán Center when she saw that it turned out badly, that the awful Spook couldn't be killed.

"But we shouldn't be scared. We should be brave now that there are several families here nearby," they said. "Now that he has seen our houses here there's no time left," they said. "All right," they said. He arrived again.

"Nanita," he said. "Nanita," he said. "You gonna make ze meal!" said the Spook, in his awful Spanish, when he arrived.

"But that's a countryman of ours. Don't you believe that's a Spook, because he's fooling us," said the wife.

"Give it to me! Where is it? Come on! We'll fix it! We'll do it! We'll cook it, if you're going to eat it. If you want to eat a meal, I haven't any tortillas. I will grind [the corn]. I will pat [the tortillas]," said the wife.

"Ah, grind it. I'll wait. I'll wait, Nanita!" said the Spook. He waited. She patted [the tortillas]. After she had patted them, she scalded [the chicken]. She fixed the chicken. He finished eating.

"If you want a little coffee, I'll make it," she said. She made his coffee for him.

He was in the midst of drinking that coffee of his. Then he was shot at. God, he didn't die from the bullets. They attacked him with a machete. He was
cut up properly with a machete. They didn't cut his body into just two pieces when they cut him up. God, his face—he didn't get just a single blow! But it seems that his face was sewn up well. It was remade again. He just revived, since he just wouldn't die.

He probably didn't even feel it, either. He went again. He went the same way again. He returned again. I don't know if it was a week or two weeks later that he returned again. He went, taking two hens along with him. "Nanita, fix ze meal. I eat!" said the Spook. He arrived.

"Ah, give it to me. Bring it to me! If you are hungry, eat! Come, we'll fix it. I'll rinse my corn. I haven't any tortillas," she told him.

"All right, I'll wait," he said. Oh, his horrible eyes, his horrible teeth. They'd give you a fright! His horrible wide eyes. His awful eyes were red, said the person who told about it.

"His awful eyes were red. You'd be scared of him, it seems. You certainly wouldn't eat with him, it seems," she said.

"Did you eat with him like that?" I asked, myself.

"I ate [with him]," she said.

"Ah!" I said. "As for me, I wouldn't eat with him," I said.

"Ah, ah, I certainly ate. I ate with him, and we ate the chicken. Eat! I'll eat, too!" we told him, because we had already decided what he should get," she said.

The tip was sharpened. It seems he finished eating. They ate. She served his meal, the woman's meal and the woman's children's meal. They ate. They finished eating.

The gentleman burped. "Ahh!" he said. Then, "Bu—rr" he burped.

"Well, Nanita, thank you for the meal. Do you still have some food? Do your children still have something to eat?" he said.

"They do!" she told him.

"Fine!" he said. "Well, spend a good night, Nanita! Spend a good night, Nanita," said the Spook.

"All right," she said. The tip of a stake was well sharpened. It was at the door.

He came upon it at the door. It impaled him, went up his ass, came out his mouth.

Then they caught him. They looked at how it came out of his mouth. He was spitted on the stake like that. "There's no problem, then, having won out like this. Now, that's all. We'll roast him on the fire," she said. They roasted him on the fire. They roasted him on the fire, like when we roast a rabbit. He was spitted on a stake.

They roasted him on the fire. Wouldn't he die of that? To this day there aren't any more Spooks.
They roasted him over the fire. He was well-done. They turned him over from side to side. They used up lots of logs for him. I don't know if it was six logs or eight logs or what that were used up so that he would be well-done. He was cooked. They set him on fire. They put kerosene on him, so that he would die. Die for good. There aren't any now. Once you were set on fire, you couldn't go anywhere. You couldn't go out, not for getting firewood nor for getting water. You could at this hour, but if it reached three o'clock, four o'clock, you couldn't go anywhere. At nine o'clock then you usually could. But just if it were nearby. If it were far away, you couldn't, since it was dark under the trees. They would just be squatting [there]. There were lots and lots of Spooks long ago.

You see how tricky the ones who were crossed with people turned out! Bad, bad, wicked. They stole so often. The things they did were so wicked. All they ate was chicken. Just chickens, just turkeys, they would go and steal from the houses. Long ago they would reach Chiapa. They would steal [things] and bring them in crates. Long ago it was different. The Chiapanecs would go selling bread in crates. I don't know if you have seen the crates. They stacked the bread in them. The whole crate. [The Spook] returned to the lady's house. He ate chicken. Yes! "I'll be back, I'm going to get food for you," he said—that lady was told.

"All right," she said.

He left. He went to get it—that crate. He returned. The poor thing didn't know he would die. "Let him get used to us. Come on, we'll get him used [to us]," they said. He got used to them. So he went to get bread. He brought a crate of that bread. Just good bread.

So they made his coffee for him. He drank his coffee. Then he stretched his legs and went out. He landed on a little sharpened stake. There he stayed! So the Spooks have disappeared to this day. Now there aren't any Spooks. You never hear of them now. There are very few left now, only where a road is being made or if something is being constructed somewhere. Then you hear tell of Spooks, highwaymen. But you don't see them much anymore like you did long ago. Long ago you couldn't even go outside. It was scary because we were killed by Spooks.

In this latter day version of how the progeny of a Spook and a Zinacantec woman were eradicated, Tonik provides many of the same details as in the opening and closing scenes of "The Spook and the Comadre" (T71), but the drama is greatly heightened. This is not a third or fourth hand story, but purportedly was a play-by-play, word-for-word description, told to Tonik by the very woman who sat with the Spook, fed, and killed him.

The heroine remarks that she thinks her visitor is only a countryman pretending to be a Spook, presumably to allay his suspicions so that he will lower his guard. While the Spook is in the midst of his meal, the tension is increased by Tonik's brief allusion, "The tip was sharpened," for everyone knows what

**TONIK NIBAK**

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that reference means. The suspense is sustained even beyond the tale's end with Tonik's admission that you still hear of Spooks existing in what we would call "hard hat zones," where, as her Zinacantec audience knows, they are reputed to be in league with the engineers, providing victims to fuel the machinery and to strengthen the cement foundations of bridges and power plants.

A similar allusion is made to bridge supports in a Tenejapan tale of the Spook, when describing the dangers of women leaving their houses alone in the morning to defecate (Stross, 1973, T1). See also T23, T67, T71, T122, T145, and their notes.

The King and the Clever Thief

T143

The king long ago, then, had children. He had sons, it seems—I think—two people who guarded the door. The two people, his children, were called Prince or Princess, something like that, I think.

There was one princess. The princess bathed with her father and the wife of the Indian king, as we say. She didn't bathe on a day—three times a day. She bathed three times a day.

Now, once at, I don't know if it was at nine o'clock or what, once at one o'clock, once at seven in the evening. She bathed. She undressed.

The clothes that she took off, her servants put on.

The servants wore them.

Now if there was somebody who committed a crime, if there was somebody who had gotten into trouble, if there was somebody who was bad—there just used to be kings, there weren't courthouses. There wasn't anything else, it seems. It was just the king who settled disputes.

Now the king meted out punishment. There was a well. There was a Lion Well, as I think it was called long ago. Lion Well. [The guilty person] would go to draw the water and bring it back. [The king] had him make three trips. If he could draw it three times, fine! But if he was killed there by lions, there he stayed. The poor thing died there.

There was a man who went. He was given three trips to go and draw it. He didn't return. He died there. Yes!

He had committed a crime, he had stolen, or something I think—that poor guy.

Just the same way another one was sent off. He went, indeed! This one was certainly clever! He went. He went to look very quietly, but his feet didn't make a sound when he stepped. He drew a gallon of water.

When it came up out from there, from the edge of the well, it seems . . . . It was probably deep since he was pulling it up like this. He was setting it down at the edge of the well. He saw that that awful beast that was lying there when he pulled up [the can] was about to move. Then he too—to his feet. Ooh, he came back quickly. He hurried back. He thought it would come [after him].

But you see, it never came.
That was the first trip. On the second it was just the same. He succeeded. He took it when [the lion was] asleep again. On the second trip. On the third trip he had a hard time now coming back. It wouldn’t sleep at all. It would lift its head. It would lie down. Lift its head, lie down. Yes!

It wouldn’t sleep. It wouldn’t sleep. As for the man, “God, My Lord what can I do about this now? It’s the last [time], now. The last [time]. Now am I to die, now am I to perish?” he said in the middle of the path. He knelt down in the middle of the path. He folded his hands. He prayed to Our Lord. He prayed to Our Lord in Heaven, it seems.

How is it,
My Lord,
Now will my skull be left here,
Will my bones be left here?
This cannot be,
This cannot happen, it seems,
Beneath Thy feet,
Beneath Thy hands, My Lord.
I do not wish to die,
I do not wish to perish, it seems.
Because I wish to step beneath Thy feet,
To step beneath Thy hands.
It seems I cannot die.
I wish to survive,
I wish to live still on the earth.
It isn’t as if I were old now.
If I were old now,
Never mind, I would surely die.
But as it is, I still long to enjoy
The place beneath Thy feet,
Beneath Thy hands.
I do not wish to die, it seems.
I like it, it seems,
The way I walk,
I journey.
I still long to enjoy my back.
I long to enjoy my side,
Wherever I walk,
Wherever I journey,
[Where] I go down,
[Where] I go up.
I still search for Thy cross,
I still search for Thy reflection,
For a way to eat,
For a way to drink.
May my skull not [remain] here,
May my bones not [remain] here,
With one of Thy beasts
One of Thy tigers.

Ooh, he spoke on and on, how it was where he was, kneeling there in the middle of the path, his hands folded. Yes!

He faced East, he faced West. He faced to the East, it seems, to the West, it seems, as we say. He prayed to Our Lord. He prayed to Our Lord in all four directions, it seems.

Va7i 7un, primer biaje 7un bi, ta segundo 7un ja7 nox yech lek 7ispas kanal yich’be svayel noxtok, segundo biaje 7un, ta terser biaje 7un ja7 xa me vokol 7ilok’ tal 7un mu la xvay ta j-mek, tztoy ti sjole, chpuch’i tztoy ti sjole, chpuch’i tztoy ti sjole, chpuch’i. Ji7!

Mu la xvay, mu la xvay, ja7 la li 7a li vinik 7une.
“Yos kajval, k’usi ta jnop 7un li7i slajeb xa, slajeb xa 7un mi ja7 to chilaj 7un mi ja7 to chicham 7un?” xi la ta 7o7lol be 7un. Kej xi la ta 7o7lol be 7un, snup’ la ti sk’ob 7une sk’opon la ti kajvaltik ta vinajel ya7el 7une.

K’u xi 7un,
Kajval,
Mi ja7 to li7 chkom ti jjole,
Mi li7 chkom ti jbakele?
Mu me xu7,
Mu me xkom ya7el,
Ti yolon 7avoke,
Ti yolon 7ak’obe, kajval.
Mu me jk’an xicham,
Mu me jk’an xilaj ya7el 7un,
Yu7 me ta jk’an ta jtek’ ti yolon 7avoke,
Ta jtek’ ti yolon 7ak’obe.
Mu xu7 ya7el ti chichame,
Mu x7 ya7el ti chilaje,
Ta jk’an chikuxi,
Ta jk’an chich’i to ta balamil,
Mu7nik molikon xa,
Molikon xae,
Pasensya chamikon bi 7a,
Yan li7i ta to jk’upin,
Ti yolon 7avoke,
Ti yolon 7ak’obe,
Mu jk’an xicham ya7el 7un,
Ta jk’an ya7el,
Ti k’u x7elan ya7el chixanav,
Chibein,
Ta to jk’upin jpat,
Ta jk’upin xjokon,
Ti bu chixanave,
Ti bu chibeine,
Chiyal,
Chimuy,
Ta to jsa7 takrusile,
Ta to ja7 tanak’obale,
K’usi xi xive7,
K’usi xi xkuh’ vo7,
Mu li7uk ti jjole,
Mu li7uk ti jbakele,
Ti ta jun 7achon,
Ta jun 7abolom.

Jii, yal la ta j-mek ti k’utik x7elan ti buy, buy 7une kejel taj ta 7o7lol be 7une snup’oj la ti sk’ob 7une.
Ji7!

Sk’el la lok’eb k’ak’al, sk’el la maleb k’ak’al, sk’el la xi xi ta 7oriente ya7el ponyente ya7el xkalik7 7une, 7a li sk’opon la ti kajvaltik 7une, ta krus ya7el 7isk’opon ti kajvaltik 7une.
Then, after he had prayed to Our Lord, he stood up. He prayed to one side and the other, however he did it.

Divine four holy fathers,
Divine four holy mothers,
Wilt Thou stand erect,
Wilt Thou stand firm?
Wilt Thou defend my back,
Wilt Thou defend my side?
Shall my clay [remain] here,
Shall my earth [remain] here?
Wilt Thou deliver me to the feet,
Wilt Thou deliver me into the hands,
Of Thy beast,
Of Thy tiger?
May it not be left behind,
It seems,
The place beneath Thy feet,
Beneath Thy hands,
Holy reverend St. Lawrence,
Holy reverend St. Dominic.
I still long to eat,
Beneath Thy feet,
I still long to eat,
Beneath Thy hands,
he told our Lord. He prayed to Our Lord, on and on, as best he was able, as best he could. The poor man prayed and prayed.

Who knows, it seems, it was when he had finished praying to Our Lord, it seems—the way he prayed to the West and East, in all four directions it seems, he prayed to Our Lord. Then [the lion] turned its head, it seems. It turned around. The beast turned around. It fa—ced the West, it seems. That sleeping animal faced away. That man passed by its feet, it seems. It slept. It was lying down. The beast stretched out well and slept. He went to look. Ooh, then he went in [towards the well]. He waited, he waited for a quarter of an hour. He waited for it to sleep. After he had waited for it to sleep, then he went in. He went to draw the water quickly. He came out.

But you see, he went and knocked that awful tin can against the edge of the well. It went "Clunk!"
The beast never stirred.

[The can] came out. He set it down nearby again.

God, My Lord,
Wilt Thou deliver me,
Into the hands,
The feet,
Of the beast,
The tiger,
My Lord?

he said there at the edge of the well, it seems. He was muttering along the whole way. He thought it would come and get him.

It was standing fa—r off. That man had walked half a block. The eyes of the horrible great coyote [I mean lion] were like this-s-s, it was trying to look...
from side to side [to see] if there was anyone. None!

He arrived there [at the palace]. “Ah, what do you know, son? How is it? How is it that you won out? The other man died there, the other man perished. son? How is it? How is it that you won out? He, himself, had already come back.

“I didn’t find anything. I thought he wouldn’t be eaten, either,” said the king.

“None! The other man died there, the other man perished. Son? How is it? How is it that you won out? He, himself, had already come back.”

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my clothes. I have no worries. I'll wear these clothes now, of course. The clothes he gave me were brand new clothes," he said when he arrived. He returned to tell his wife about it.

Then, as for his wife, "Oh, but as for me, I'll go as a maid, if you're going there as a servant. I certainly won't stay behind! You eat well. You think it's fine eating chicken. You eat well, you eat potatoes. As for me, here, I just eat tortillas rubbed with salt."

"That's why I saved some and brought it, because I want you to eat some. Take a taste of the king's food! It's wonderfully seasoned," said the man. As for the woman, she opened up the tortilla bag all in a rush. She looked at the food. She ate it. She consumed it.

"God, My Lord, the poor king, thanks to him I'm tasting it, too, I'm eating, too. The king's food is delicious. How come you didn't do something so you could bring back a mouthful of the broth?" she asked. "I'd love to eat it. It's wonderful, the delicious chicken," she said. The woman ate a lot.

"Oh, don't worry, we'll go visit him sometime," he said.

It turned out that well for that poor man. He went. He got into trouble, but nothing happened. It turned out well. But the first one, he died there. Of the three, the first [was] a robber, the second, a rapist, the third, stole sheep. The fourth was supposed to have stolen money, the one whom they went to give his present. He was given a chicken. [They had said] he stole the money.

It turned out well. There was no trouble. There was no fuss. It turned out well, like that. It was fine, there wasn't any more trouble. It ended well for him.

But those others, —one went, he died there. Another went, he died there. Another went, he died there. And that one was the only one who succeeded.

Then the time came when that man got into trouble again. He was accused of stealing horses.

"I'll go tell the king if you don't stop stealing horses," he was told.

"Go on, go tell the king! What will the king do to me? The king is my friend, the king is! The king can't do anything to me, of course! We're on good terms. If he wants me to go and draw water for his daughter to bathe with, I'll go and draw it. I'm not afraid of that. It's my home if it's the king's home," said the man.

"Ah, you've turned bad, then, because you're on good terms with the king. I'll go dream up your crime," said [his neighbor]. He went and invented another crime for him. It was just the same.

"You will be punished. You will go to such and such a place," [the king] told him. He wasn't sent to k'u7ul liyak'bee," xi la k'otel yul slo7iltabe ti yajnil 7une.

7Óra, ti yajnile, "7lí, pero chibat ta kriara vo7on ti mi7n chabat ta moso te 7une, mu xikom vo7on a7a, lek chave7, lek chavil chati7 kaxlan chave7 lek chalo7 7is-ak', 7a li vo7on li7 to 7une 7unin jax-7atz'am chive7 7un."

"Yech'o me ti jnak'o7j tal 7une, yu7 me ta jk'an chati7 7un pas ava7i proval sve7el ti reye batz'i lek poptimizer," xi la ti vinik 7une. 7A la ti 7antz 7une svox xa la sjam ti chu7il pak'al vaj 7une sk'el ti sve7el 7une, ve7 la 7un slajes la 7un.

"Yo7s kajva71, povre rey kol iyal ta to jpas proval 7uk ta to xive7 7uk, lek mu sve7el ti reye, k'u nox cha7al ti mu k' u xacha7le xavum tael j-7umuk ti skaltoale?" xi la. "Chak jti7 ya7el ta j-mek batzi lek ta j-mek i mu kaxlane," xi la 7un. Lek la ve7 ti 7antz 7une.

"7Oj, mu k'u xal 7avo7on xb a jyvula7antik k'u 7ora," xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, yech yepal 7un lek 7ikom ta jprove vinik 7une, bat 7ista smul pero mu k'usi palta lek 7ik'ot, yan ti primeroe ja7 taj te laje, yo ta yox-va7al, primero j7elek', segundo 7a li jtzak-7antz, 7a li tersero 7a li yu7n la yelk'an 7a li chij, 7a li kwarto 7une ja7 7a li yelk'an tak'in ta 7alel 7un taj x7elan ba yak'bel 7a li smoto7 7une, 7i7ak'bat yalak' 7une, ja7 yelk'an tak'in 7une.

Va7i 7un, lek 7ik'ot 7un mu k'u k'op 7un mu k'usi palta 7un, lek 7ik'ot yech 7un, lek mu k'usi xa mas ya7el palta 7une lek 7itutzut yu7un 7une.

Yan taj yane, xbat jun te chcham, xbat jun te chcham 7i stuk ta xkuch yu7un 7un taje.

Va7i 7un, 7a li k'alal 7ista yora ta jvinik 7un taje sta la smul xto7 7un, chpak'taat la ta 7elek'-ka7e. Va7i 7un, "Chba kalbe rey ti mi mu xavikta ta j-mek i 7elek'-ka7e, " x7utat la 7un.

"Batan, ba 7albeik i reye, k' u chixcha7le li reye kamigo li rey a7a, mu k'usi xu7 xiyalbe li rey a7a lek xkil jba jchi7uk, mi sk'an xba jpu7be ya7al stzzeb yu7un ch7atin 7oe chba jpu7be mu7 no xii77 7o ja7 jna mi ja7 sna li reye," xi la ti vinik 7une.

"7A, xakom ta manya che7e, yu7n lek xavil rey, ta xba jnop 7amul," xi la. Ba la sno--pbel mul 7otro j-ten, ja7 no la yech.

"Ta xa7och ta kastiko chabat li7 toe," xut la 7un. Mu xa la teuk 7itakat ech'el 7un, ta 7a li ya7al xa la,
the same place now. It was to the well, the well of the beasts now. Snakes, beasts stretched out on the ground. Snakes.

Rattlesnakes, gopher snakes. I don't know what the other kind was called, if it was called a boa constrictor. I wasn't told.

They were going to bite him, they were going to do something to him.


"I never stole. What would I steal? No!" he said.

"But that's what he came to tell you—that you stole, that you stole a sheep, that you stole a horse. You stole that man's things," said [the king].

"I never stole. Even if you go look in my house. I thought I was coming to be your servant. I didn't think he would come to get me in trouble. Because I arrived [home] to give her the present you gave me when I went to draw the water for your daughter. I arrived to give it to my wife. I'm going to be a servant of His Majesty, the King. I'm going to be his servant. You go and be a maid, yourself, we said to each other. We came."

"Ah, if you have come, come here, because you won out at the Lion's Well. Of those who went to draw [water] for my daughter to bathe with, not one succeeded. I have killed a lot of men here. It isn't just a single one I've killed. A great many have died there. I just keep going to pick up their bones. I go by myself to look," said the king. "Ah, now you'll go to this [other] place. If you can draw [water] and bring it, then you're a man! I won't inflict any punishments on you. You'll just go once to draw it, if you can draw it. Because there are so many snakes there. There are five snakes," he said. Five of those snakes—one was that gopher snake, one that boa constrictor, one that rattlesnake. I don't know what kinds the others were.

"There are five snakes there. You might just die there. I won't give you any more punishment, because I don't believe what he's come to tell me. I've seen that you know how to behave, you do!" he was told.

"I'm going, I'm going to draw it and bring it," he said. He left.

God, My Lord, it looked as if you couldn't go in there by the edge of the well. The awful well was hu—ge, wi—de. I don't know if that well was twelve meters across or what. There was one of those snakes at each corner. He, himself, was clever. He opened up a path in between. There was a snake to this side and a snake to that side. And he cleared [a ya7al xa la chon etik 7un, chon, chon kiletel ta balamil, jkiletel chon.

Va7i 7un, 7aja-chon la, 7a li chij-chon la, ja7 mu jna7 k'usi sbi li j-tose mi bolera k'usi sbi taj muk' ch'aje 7une.

Va7i 7un, ja7 la te xa ti7van ja7 la tey k'u chcha7levan 7un.

Va7i 7un, "K'usi k'usi 7apas 7un, 7ijjo, mi yech ti 7a li na7elk'aje, mi yech ti 7avelk'an ka7e mi yech ti 7avelk'an chije bu 7avak' 7un?" xi la 7un.

"Muk' bu xkelk'an k'u xkelk'an ch'abal," xi la 7un. Jii7!

"Pero yu7n ja7 yech tal yalbelon 7un ni na7elk'aj 7une, ti 7avelk'an la j-kot chije, ti 7avelk'an la j-kot ka7, 7avelk'an la 7a li k'usitik yu7un taj 7a li vinik 7une," xi.

"Muk' bu xkelk'an 7ak' 7o mi xba k'el li jnae, yu7n kaloj ti chital ta tamoseu mu7nuk chkal ta xtal sa7el jmul noxtok, yu7n k'ot kab'ke, 7a ti jmonot 7avak'bon 7a ti k'alal 7a jpushle tal ya7al 7atzebe k'ot kak'be li kajnile. Chiba--t si smoso 7a li jiotiek reye, chibat ta smoso, chabat ta kriara vo7ot, xkut jbatikotik chitalotikotik."

"7A mi chatale la7 porke vo7ot 7onox xkuch 7avu7un i yo7 Ya7al Leon ta ta 7a li x7atin 7o li jtebe xba pul talele, muk' buch'u xkuch yu7un, 7e--p xa viniketik lajem ku7un li7 toe, mu xa jun junuk lajem ku7un 7ep ta j-mek cham xa tey, tey naka sbakel chba jtam tal batel chba jk'el jtuke," xi la ti rey 7une. "7A 7ora chabat ta 7a li li7 toe, ti mi pul tal 7avu7un e yu7n vinikot muk' chajpas chakak'be kastiko 7ep, j-7ech'el nox chba pul tal, ti mi pul tal 7avu7un, yu7n toj 7ep i chon te yo7e, 7oy vo7-kot i chone," xi la 7un. Vo7-kot la taj chon 7une, ja7 taj j-kot la chij-chon, j-kot la taj bolerae, j-kot la taj 7a li 7aja-chone, ja7 mu jna7 k'usi j-tosukal taj yan 7une.

7A li va7i 7un, "Vo7-kot to chon te yo7 7une, naka teuk lajan, muk' bu chakak'be kastiko porke mu jch'un i k'utik chtal yalbelone kiloj xa ti yu7n xach'un mantal li vo7ote," x7utat la 7un.


Yo7s kajva7l, mu la me xi7ochotik yilel yo7 taj st7il taj vo7 7une, 7animal mu--k' la ti mu vo7 ta j-mek 7une ja---mal la 7un, mu jna7 mi lajcheb metro sjamlej mi k'utik la xi taj vo7 7une, ju-kot la ju-jun 7eskina taj taj chon 7une, 7a li stuk 7une bivo 7o no la 7un, te la sjam yunin be ta 7o7ol ya7el 7un, xi li chone xi li chone, 7i ta 7o7ol la tpzol, 7o7ol la i
path] in between. In between the snakes, he squeezed in. He went to draw the water. He drew it. The water got to [the king's house]. "I wasn't killed by them," he said.

"You still have to go draw more," said [the king]. "I'll go!" he said.

"All right," he was told. He went. "Well, we'll be friends now, we won't be enemies. You already let me know that you want to come and be my servant. Now, you'll come for good. You'll stay here. I'll give you that house. You will live there with your wife. Settle down! I'll go draw my water when there isn't anyone else to draw it. But when there is somebody whom I'll punish, I'll punish him," he said. He was given a place [there] by the king.

Oh, the man became rich, of course. His money appeared, all his things appeared.

Don't you see, he received all the king's clothing. It was given to him. Since he was his servant. Servant, maid. It turned out well for them. They were well-loved there. But it had been said that he was a wicked thief and so on. When there was money or when they brought [the king] something, [the servant] saw it.

Don't you see, they would go and give [the servant] the fines from Zinacantan Center. They would go give him the money. [The king's] servant would receive it.

Now, his servant would go leave it all with [the king].

Now, "Take this, buy your corn with it!" he was told by the king. That's why the king was good. He never . . ., and the other one never did steal. That's why [the king] didn't believe he was a thief. It turned out well for him, to this day. And it turned out well for him. There was no trouble. He became [the king's] servant.

When I asked Tonik to tell me the story about the Indian king, I expected she would recite her version of "The King and the Ring"; instead she provided one more proof of the size of her repertoire.

There is little consistency in the identity of the fearful beasts that guard the well—they are referred to as lions (or mountain lions), tigers (or jaguars), and even as coyotes. Their title matters much less than their bite. The word chon is a general term, equivalent to our word "animal" or "beast," but it is also a euphemism for the two most fearful classes of animal—felines and reptiles. It is this second use that occurs in the prayers.

It is curious that the man's wife considers potatoes a luxury item, but "tortillas rubbed with salt" are traditionally poor man's fare.

Although envy and false accusation are subjects of endless concern and gossip in Zinacantan, though they dominate courthouse disputes, they take special prominence in Tonik's tales. Resentment over another's wealth, expressed in nearly the same terms, is also a focal point in the plots of both versions of "The Poor Woodcutter" (T77, T144).

That the king would send the man off to the well again and again, even after protesting his faith in the man's innocence, may have been a simple narrative device to heighten the dramatic effect. Perhaps the king was motivated by his desire to adhere to the letter of the law, or perhaps it is just another example of the inscrutability of authority figures.

Although the elements of this story have a strong European cast, I have been unable to discover a prototype for it. Indeed, Tonik's own telling of it, nine years earlier, is dramatic proof of her inventiveness. In the first version, a man is ordered by the king to draw two gallons of water from Jaguar Well. A Ladino finds him weeping at the foot of a tree and offers him a magic sash that puts the jaguars to sleep while a genie draws his water. The clanking of the cans then frightens the jaguars away. When the man delivers the water to the palace, the king, in a rage, has the unfortunate man stripped and beaten. He is sent back for more water. Before delivering it to the palace, he hides his sash.
in a chest and buries the key in a corner of his house. Again he is stripped and beaten. He protests his innocence, swearing that he has stolen nothing. The king laughs and orders him to squat in public for two hours in all his nakedness. “The king didn’t care because he was king. That’s why he was happy.” (Bricker, T76). But in the interim the poor man’s nakedness has been covered with royal attire. From tragedy to comedy in nine years!

**Fallen Flesh**

T73

Once there was a woman who wouldn’t eat anything. She was very hungry. She [just] endured it. She wouldn’t eat anything at all. She had meals with her husband. “Please eat, wife!” said [her] husband.

“I’m eating, you please eat.” She just ate a tiny bit. They slept. They ate. They had no problems. She would wait quietly for her husband to fall asleep. She waited until her husband slept, then she would leave. She went. She went behind the door. She took off her skirt. She took off her blouse. She took off whatever bound her waist.

She was kneeling there. After she undressed, “Come down meat! Come down, meat!” she told her flesh. As soon as she was just bones she would open the door and go out. She went to the graveyard. She went to eat the dead. She returned. She came with her stomach full from eating the dead bodies. Then she came, she came.

She returned home, opened the door, and went in. “Climb up, meat! Climb up, meat!” she told her flesh. The meat climbed up and stuck on. She was fine now. She went to join her husband for the night.

“Oh, why are you so cold?” asked the man.

“Oh, it’s because my arm was uncovered. It was out, like this. Just now I put it in [under the covers],” said [his] wife. She told her husband.

“Oh please go to sleep. I’m sleeping,” she said. [Her] husband hadn’t seen [what she was doing]. Then, “But why is it that she doesn’t eat at all?” he said [to himself]. Who knows how many months that his wife wouldn’t eat, wouldn’t eat, wouldn’t eat at all. All she ate if they were eating chicken, all she ate was the little . . . oh, what’s it called, oh, the chicken’s little tail. That’s all she’d eat, nothing else. She’d just eat fatty things.

“But how can it be that my wife won’t eat. But it seems she isn’t getting thin, except for her face that’s gotten ugly,” he said. Her face was just like this! Her face had shrunk like this!

He watched her. He spied on her. The wife left. He heard her get up. “Where could she be going?” he said. She went and went. She went a little faster. [His] wife came back. She returned from wherever she had gone. “Where could she have gone?” he said [to himself].
Then that, “Climb up, meat! Climb up, meat!” she told her flesh again. Then she went to look at her child. Her child was soaked now from wetting itself. She went to change it.

“What are you doing sitting up?” asked [her] husband.

“I’m changing my baby,” she said.

“Oh, come to bed, then, after you’ve changed it,” said her husband.

“Okay!” she said. She changed her child, and lay her child down after she had returned from wherever she went to eat the things she ate, it seems.

The husband went to make confession. “I just don’t know what to do, father. My wife arrives at the cemetery. She reaches the cemetery. She arrives to eat the dead. She isn’t a good woman. I don’t know why she leaves her flesh behind. She leaves her flesh behind the door.

“Then she returns. Only the bones fly off,” he said. “When the bones have come back, it seems, then she has her flesh climb up.”

“Oh never mind the poor thing. Don’t complain to her. It’s not the right thing to do. Endure it! She won’t do anything. The demon will leave your house, since you’ve made your confession now,” said the priest. The husband thought maybe it was true. He grabbed the woman. He thought maybe she would obey him.

But you see she went, she still went. Just the same. She did just the same [thing]. The man lost his temper. He spied on her. He saw that she was going to the cemetery, and he went to watch her. The man returned. The woman came flying. When the man saw what she was eating in the graveyard, then he came back.

The man returned home. He spied on her behind the door to see what she would do. “Climb up, meat! Climb up, meat!” she told her flesh.

Then he went. That man went out through another door. He went to bed. He pretended he was asleep. He went to bed. He slept. He said nothing. She realized her husband was there. No problem. He didn’t say anything now. “Never mind, since I saw her. No trouble. And when she goes off again I’ll put salt on her flesh,” he said [to himself].

She went off again. She let her flesh down. Then the man decided to grind up well a quarter-measure of salt that was there. He kneaded the meat well. He finished kneading the meat properly, but he hadn’t enough [salt] for the whole face. There is flesh on the face, but he hadn’t any for the face. The flesh was just left dangling over her heart.

And he woke up the priest when she was already crying, “Oh My God, what’s wrong with my flesh.

Ja7 taj “Muyan bek’et, muyan bek’et!” xut la noxtok ti sbek’tal 7une. Ja7 la ba sk’el ti yol 7une, t’uxul xa la, k’abinem ti yol, ba sk’exta la 7un.

“K’u chapas ta chotlej?” xi la ti vinik.

“Ta jk’exta kunen,” xi la.

“7Aj vayan me che7e, ti mi laj 7ak’exta,” xi la ti vinik 7une.

“7Ey!” xi la 7un. 7Isk’exta la ti yol 7une, spuch’an la ti yol 7une, sut xa 7ox tal ti bu 7ay slajes k’u slajes ya7el.

7A spas la kompixyon ti vinik 7une. “Mu no jna7 k’u ta jnop, 7aj senyor kúra, 7i chk’ot ti kajnile ta mukenal chk’ot k’ot sti7 7anima mu yu7unuk 7a li lekil 7antz 7un, mu jna7 k’u yu7un slok’es komel li sbek’tal 7une, 7a li sbek’tale ta skomes ta 7a li pat mak na.”

Va7i 7un, 7a li, “Ja7 to k’al sut tazel 7une, naka bak chvil ech’el 7un,” xi la. “7A ti bak sut tazel ya7el 7une, ja7 7o chtal smuyes sbek’tal 7une.”

“7Aj, yiyl povre mu k’u xavalbe, mu xtun, tek tz’iko mu k’usi spas, ta xlok’ i demonyo te ta 7ana yavil lapas xa kompixyone,” xi la ti pale. Xa7uk nan yechuk ti vinik 7une, 7istzak la ti 7antz 7une, xak’ nan xch’unuk yech 7un.

Buy chbat chbat to 7onox, ja7 no 7ox yech, ja7 no 7ox yech spas, kap la sjol ti vinik 7une, spa7-muk’ta la, yil la, ti bat ta mukenal 7une, 7i ba la sk’el 7un, sut la ti vinik 7une, ja7 vil tal ti 7antz 7une, yolel yil 7a ti k’u tzlajes ta mukenal, ja7 7o la sut tal ti vinik 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7iyul ta na ti vinik 7une, spa7-muk’taoj la ta pat mak na k’u tpaz 7un. “Muyan bek’et, muyan bek’et!” xut la ti sbek’tale.

Va7i 7un, ja7 7o la bat 7un, bat ta j-ch’oj sti7 sná 7och ech’el taj vinik 7une, vay 7un vayem xa xcha7e sba, k’ot yavuk 7un, vay 7un, mu k’u xal, 7a li 7iya7i ti te ti smalal ch’abal k’op muk’ xa k’u yal 7un. “Te yiyl yal ti kile, mu k’usi k’op, 7i ti k’al mi bat noxtoke, ta xkak’be yatz’mel ti sbek’tale,” xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, bat la noxtok 7un, syales taj sbek’tal 7une, ja7 7o la 7iyal ti vinik 7une, sjach’ la lek, 7oy la 7a li jun kwarto 7atz’am 7une, svo—tz’ la lek ti bek’et 7une, laj la svotz’ lek ti bek’et 7une, k’usi ja7 la muk’ stabe skotol i ssat 7une, ja7 ti 7oy sbek’tal li ssate, ja7 ch’abal sbek’tal, yech xa xviton 7ikom ti bek’et tzt1 yo7on 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7i ja7 to la stij ti pale k’alal ch7ok’ xa. “7Ay kajval k’u to la cha7al li jbek’tal 7une, ti mu xa
that it won't climb up? Why has it died? What's happened to my flesh?” she said.

She touched her hand now. It was just bone. She touched the other one, just bone. [Her flesh] wouldn't climb up either side of her hand. Just her face was human. If her face was just bone we'd be scared by it, it seems. The priest arrived. He put holy water on her. She was alive for three days. When the three days were up, she died. She said nothing. She did nothing, except cry, cry, and cry. She was heartbroken because the children couldn't nurse.

“Oh, never mind, let her die! She deserves it, going to eat corpses. There's no need for me to have a corpse-eater to sleep with,” said the man. “Never mind, what business is it of ours?” he told his mother. “I'm going to eat corpses. There's no need for me to have a corpse-eater to sleep with,” said the man. “Never mind, what business is it of ours?” he told his mother.

He slept in the daytime so that he could spy on her; so that he wouldn't fall asleep. He would return to his mother's house. He had told his mother, “I'm going to spy on [my] wife. I'm going to watch [my] wife [to see] why she acts the way she does. She won't eat. She won't eat at all. I'm sick and tired of it. They'll just be saying that [my] wife is getting thin on account of me, because I haven't food for her, but I do have food for her,” he said.

“Never mind, son, why do you have to [scold her]?” said the poor old woman, because she thought well of her daughter-in-law. [Her] daughter-in-law [seemed] to have no evil. She [seemed] to be a very good person.

“Mother, won't you eat? Come in!” she'd say when her mother-in-law came to visit. [Her mother-in-law] would go in. They'd eat.

“That's all, stay here daughter, I guess I'll go. I'll chat with you sometime,” [her mother-in-law] would say, because her mother-in-law lived far from her.

[The man] returned. That was the end of it. She died. The man bought a coffin. He buried her. Happily he buried her. That was the end of it. She died.

For a Zinacantec there is something suspect about a person who has a small appetite. This would be particularly so of women, who always seem to be nibbling leftovers. Because it is the duty of the man of the house to see to it that his wife is provided for, a married woman who grows skinny is living proof of her husband's incompetence, his unmanliness.

After the husband's confession, Tonik adds, “He grabbed the woman.” This literal translation does not seem to follow logically, but I have been unable to devise a plausible alternative.

The poor woman's death is scarcely mourned, but it is not characteristic of Zinacantec sentiment to squander sympathy on demons. Even so, Tonik, more than other storytellers, introduces evidence favorable to the culprits—Fallen Flesh seemed “to be a very good” person by day, when not indulging her ghoulish taste. The psychological complexity of Tonik's devils endows them with a three-dimensional quality often lacking in the other storytellers' accounts.

Although witches who leave their skin behind and fly off are common figures in folk demonology, the particular attributes of Fallen Flesh seem to be peculiar to the Chiapas highlands, where it has been reported also in Chamula, Chenalhó, Huistan, Huitupan, Larrainzar, Pantelhó, and Simojovel (Laughlin, *Los diables de la muerte*). Also known as *k'itzil bak*, Squeaking Bones, it usually leaves its flesh at the foot of the cross, as in Tale 176. Fallen Flesh is the transformation of an evil person who wishes to cause illness by flying about with rattling, squeaking bones, dripping blood. Death is the sure result of contact with its blood.

My belief that Fallen Flesh does not venture out of the Chiapas mountains has just been shaken by the discovery of a
text from Yucatan that must be the first Mayan folktale to be published both in Mayan and English. Recorded by Berendt, it was passed on to Daniel Brinton, who included it in an essay published in 1890. It tells how a woman leaves her bed at night. She is followed by her husband, who watches her standing in the moonlight under a ceiba tree. She strips to the bone and flies off. Her husband, suspicious about her nocturnal trips, had asked her to give him two kilos of salt, which he applies to her flesh. And so, on her return, her flesh remains inert (Brinton, 1890:170–171).

A tale told by a Zinacantec to a Chamulan has Fallen Flesh remove her clothes in the cemetery, sprint around it three times, bury her breasts and fundamental parts, call down the rest of her flesh, and rattle off through the night air. But a man, who was spying upon her nefarious deeds, rubs salt on her flesh. When she returns, her flesh is numb to her frantic pleas (Gossen, T47).

Fallen Flesh is not a pale figure of the remote past, but can be seen and heard by travellers on ghostly nights. Even those who lie snugly at home under their woolen blankets may be visited by Fallen Flesh in their dreams (D98, D227). See also T176.

A Bellyful
T86

There was a woman long ago. Dogs used to talk. Dogs used to say whatever they said. Today they don't talk anymore.

It's because the [dog] told its master about her sin. Its master went alone to the lowlands. He went. He went to prepare his corn field, to work in his corn field. The poor man doesn't know [about his wife] when he goes.

But he went and he learned about it. "Let's go, my dog, let's go to the lowlands, let's go look for deer!" he told his dog. He went. He didn't get any deer. Even if he hunted one or two days, he saw them, he saw the deer, but they fled. He never was able to shoot them. He let fly one or two shots from his gun, but he never hit them. They fled. [One] tricked the man. It was moaning now because it landed on its back, thrashing. But no, when the poor man tried—d to get it, then the deer got up and ran off.

"Why is this happening to me?" he said each time, each time it kept happening to the poor [young] man.

But you see the boy said to his dog, "But why are you so utterly useless? You don't track them. You don't round up the deer. It's your fault, you bastard. Don't talk anymore. Dogs used to say whatever they said. Today they don't talk anymore.

"No, don't scold me! It's not me who's at fault. If you want to, see for yourself! It's because my mistress is not good. My mistress is bad. There's something I'll tell you about. When you come here she eats chicken. She fixes a chicken. She eats with your substitute. As for you, you come to the lowlands. The other man stays to eat, stays to eat chicken with her. I wouldn't have told you if she had given me the bones to eat. She buries the bones in the ground. They dig a hole for them. She doesn't let me eat them," said the dog.

You see, as for the dog—"That's why I'm telling you," it said. "If she had given them to me to eat, if she had let me take the bones, I certainly wouldn't have told you!" it said. So today the dog is dumb. It
doesn't talk anymore. Because it told him about its mistress's sin.

"But are you telling the truth? Are you telling the truth that there is another man who goes to eat and drink with her, [who goes] to sleep with my wife? If you aren't telling the truth, hell, I'll cut off your head!" he told the dog.

"No, I'm telling the truth."

"Well, if you are telling the truth, then I'll sharpen up my knife carefully. I'll see what I'll plan for her, what I'll do," said the man.

He went. "We are going. We are going to the lowlands, for we're going, my little dog," he said to his dog. They went.

But you see, they went to the edge of the woods to wait for night to come. [They sat] under a tree. He looked for a very ta—\[11\] tree to hang up his tortillas, the bag with his tortillas. "But don't you bark, for if you bark, we'll surely get into trouble. Please don't bark, even if you see something suddenly land with a thud, something fall. It's none of your business. Don't bark! Keep your mouth shut!" the dog was told.

"Okay," said the dog. They went.

But you see, the woman was talking away with her other "husband". When the woman was talking with her other "husband", "Aren't you hungry now? I'll put chili in our meal," she said. They had chicken to eat.

"I'm hungry. Won't you eat, now? Haven't you finished fixing the tortillas?"

"Of course I'm finished!"

"Then put the chili in your meal. We'll eat together," the woman's other husband told her.

She lifted off the griddle and put their tortillas in the gourd. She dished out their meal. They ate together. She gave a drumstick to each of the children. She had two little children. She gave a drumstick to each of them.

But the little baby, it seems, it was asleep. Maybe because it had nursed, it seems. It was asleep. It was the two big ones who were given a drumstick apiece to eat. "There's nothing to worry about now. There's no way for us to be found out. When the dog is here it wants to chew the bones. Now there's no problem. Go and throw my chicken's bones in the gully!" said the woman.

They ate. They themselves ate the heart. After they finished, the chicken pot was turned face down. They ate a lot. "We've eaten plenty today. There's no problem. Do you want more broth?" asked the woman.

"I do," he said. They ate together. Each drank his broth. They ate together. They finished.
“Ooh, we ate so much our tortillas are finished.”

“I certainly haven’t any tortillas [of my own], but I’m going early tomorrow, of course, or else somebody might see us,” said the man.

“Oh, maybe you’re right that you won’t eat before you leave. If you don’t eat here tomorrow then I won’t save a little of our broth then. Let it be finished up! We’ll drink all of it before we go to bed. I’ll just turn the pot face down if you are leaving early,” said the woman.

“Of course I’m leaving early, or else somebody might come, somebody might see us. The principal might just come by,” said the man.

“Ahl!” she said. They ate. They finished eating.

“I’m going to bed, mother,” said her little children.

Then the woman’s “husband” joined her in bed.

Then they slept. They shut the door. “Did you see them? Didn’t I tell the truth? Do you think I was lying when I told you about them? See for yourself! I’m right, they’re eating,” said [the dog].

“Go to bed! We’ll spread out your cloth,” she said.

“Of course I’m leaving early, or else somebody might come, somebody might see us. The principal might just come by,” said the man.

“Ah!” she said. They ate. They finished eating.

“Go to bed! We’ll spread out your cloth,” she said.

“Of course I’m leaving early, or else somebody might come, somebody might see us. The principal might just come by,” said the man.

“Ah!” she said. They ate. They finished eating.

“Go to bed! We’ll spread out your cloth,” she said.

Then the little children finished going to bed next to the wall.

Then the woman’s “husband” joined her in bed.

Then they slept. They shut the door. “Did you see them? Didn’t I tell the truth? Do you think I was lying when I told you about them? See for yourself! I’m right, they’re eating,” said [the dog].

“What can we do? The man won’t come out now,” he said. The man, the real husband, told his dog.

“Ah!” she said. They ate. They finished eating.

“Go to bed! We’ll spread out your cloth,” she said.

Then the little children finished going to bed next to the wall.

Then the woman’s “husband” joined her in bed.

Then they slept. They shut the door. “Did you see them? Didn’t I tell the truth? Do you think I was lying when I told you about them? See for yourself! I’m right, they’re eating,” said [the dog].

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Then the woman’s “husband” joined her in bed.

Then they slept. They shut the door. “Did you see them? Didn’t I tell the truth? Do you think I was lying when I told you about them? See for yourself! I’m right, they’re eating,” said [the dog].

What can we do? The man won’t come out now,” he said. The man, the real husband, told his dog.

“Oh, but what can we do? He may just get up. He might get up in the night.

“I’m going to take a piss, the man may tell my mistress. No, don’t go outside. There is a little opening in the wall where my husband pisses, she says.”

“Never mind, then, if that’s what you have seen we’ll win out later on,” said the husband. He told his dog. “Later on you’ll see for yourself. We’ll crouch down and not move. You’ll see,” he said. It was no story. Two hours, three hours or so passed.

Then, “Woman, I’m going to piss.”

“Don’t go outside. Here is an opening in the wall where there is a little window where my husband always pisses,” she said.

The man poked his prick out. Then when he poked out his prick then the other man grabbed it and cut it off with a knife.

Then that man fell on the bed. “What happened to you? What did you do?” she asked. God, the poor man was too far gone. He died. His penis was cut off. Her blanket and her straw mat were covered with blood—d. “Oh what can I do? What can I do about this? My children will wake up later on. They’ll tell me lek live7otik 7un, laj me li kottik 7une.”

“7A ti mu7yuk kot a7a, pero sob xa chibat ti 7ok'ob a7a, naka 7ok buch'u yilotik,” xi la ti vinik.

“7A ja7 nan lek 7ava7uk, muk' xa chave7 ech'el, 7a ti mi yu7un muk' li7 xa chave7 ti 7ok'obe muk' xa me ta jnak' j-tz'ujuk li jkalotitoke che7e, lajuk me, kuch'tik yavuk skotol, solel ta jnujanbe sp'inal 7a ti mi sob chabate,” xi la ti 7antz 7un.

“Sob xa chibat bi 7a, naka 7ok buch'u taluk, 7ok buch'u yilotik, naka 7ech'uk krinsupal,” xi la ti vinik.

“7A!” xi la. Ve7ik la 7un, laj la ve7ikuk 7un.

“Chivay, me7,” xi la ti yunen ch'amaltak 7une.

“Vayan, jk'iti7ak 7atas,” xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, ja7 7o la laj vayuk ta 7a li yibel na ti 7unen 7unetik 7une.

Va7i 7un, ja7 la xchi7in ta vayel ti smalal ti 7antz 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7a li te la chhavayik 7un, smak li ti snak 7une. Ja7 la “Mi 7avil mi mu yechuk xkal, yu7 van yech ta jnop i k'u chakalbe, k'el avil 7un chve7ik ka7uk 7un,” xi la 7un.

“K'u ta jnop7ik 7un, mu 7onox xlok' tana li vinike,” xi la ti, xut la ti stz'i7 ti vinik ti malalil ya7el 7une.

“7An, pero k'usi ta jnop7ik, ta 7o no me xlik 7un, ta me xlik ta 7ak'ubaltik, ta me Chibat ta k'abnel xut me li kajval 7a li vinik 7une. Mo7oj, muk' bu chalok' ta pana 7oy li7 7unen vomolil na yo7 xk'abin li jmalale, xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a li “Viyil che7e, mi yu7un no 7ox yech 7aviloje, ja7 to te ta jpastik ta kanal tana,” xi la ti 7a li malalil 7une, xut la ti stz'i7 7une. 7A li “Ja7 to 7onox tana 7a xak'el avi tzunikotik mu xibak'otik avil,” xi la 7un. Mu la lo7iluk 7un, bat la chibuk 7ora mi 7oxibuk 7ora k'u xi 7un.

Ja7 to la, “7Antz, ta me xibat ta k'abnel ya7el 7une.”

“Muk' bu chalok' ta pana li7 no me li vomol na yo7 7onox 7unen ventana 7onox xk'abin i jmalale,” xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7a li 7isbech la lok'el ti yat ti vinik 7une, ja7 7o la k'alal 7isbech lok'el ti yat 7une, ja7 7o la stza--kbe ti jun vinik 7une, stu--ch'be la ta kuchilu 7un.

Va7i, ja7 7o la ja--ch' ta tem taj vinik 7une. “K'u 7apas, k'u 7apas?” xi la. Dyos 7a la ti prove vinike toj batel la, cham la, ja7 ti tuch'bat ti yat ya7el 7un to, ya7uk xla ku' k'u spas ti 7antz, stam la ti vinik, 7a la ti xchije, ti spope, balem ch'i--ch' la ta j-mek. “7An k'u ta jnop k'u ta jcha7e li7i, ta xjulav tana li
She just took the old straw mats from where the old straw mats weren't needed. She wrapped them around him where his blood was coming out. The man didn't talk anymore. He was just groaning there when his spirit departed.

She dragged him out like a dead dog. She went to bury him in the gully. She buried him in the gully. She buried him under the rocks. She caused a rock slide in the gully where she went to toss the man. She buried him under the rocks. She buried him under the earth. She knocked down the earth with a hoe. The children were asleep. She finished burying him in the night. She finished burying him. The next day, by daylight, she went to scrub her blanket. She went to scrub her straw mat. She swept her house carefully. She scraped the floor. She scraped it wherever the ground was stained with blood. She finished scraping it, finished looking where her pillows were. She scrubbed them. She washed them. She scrubbed the pillow cases.

She spread them out in the sun. They dried. As soon as she arrived home she stuck them inside right away. “If for some reason he returns, since he just went to look at his corn field it seems. ... If for some reason he didn't do any hunting . . . . If he got a deer right off, then there's no time left at all. There will be no way of knowing how I was involved with what happened to the man,” she said.

She finished scrubbing. She turned the clothes over. Her blanket dried out, since it was a good, hot sun.

The dog said to the man, when he finished cutting off what he had cut off, “Never mind, don't say anything. Let's go! You'll see later when we get a deer. Did you wrap it up carefully?”

“Of course I wrapped it up. I've put it in my shoulder bag,” said the man. He told his dog.

“Let's go! You'll see, when I find the deer you won't say that it dodges the shots from your gun. You'll shoot the deer. We'll be lucky if we hit just one, if we don't hit two,” said the dog.

Well, the dog ru—shed off then. The little dog went ahead. It played and played. They arrived at the corn field.

He hung up his tortillas.

“Well, the dog went ahead. It played and played. They arrived at the corn field. He hung his tortillas over his shoulder. He went this far into the grass there by his corn field. In a minute a deer started up. The man didn't lose any time. Quickly he aimed [his] jch'amaltak 7une, ta xa7i tana.” Solel la 7istam k'a7-popetik ti bu mu xtun k'a7-popetik 7une, 7isvol la ti yo7 bu chlok’ ti xch'ich’el 7une, mu xa la bu k'opoj ti vinike, solel la yech xa te x7akaket 7ilok’ la xch’ulel 7un.

Va7i, skil la ech’el chak k’u cha7al chame-tz’i7 7un, ba la stenu ta be-o7 7un, stenu la ta ton, sjemes la yalel ti be-o7 ti 7a sjip ti vinik 7une, 7istenu la ta ton, 7istenu la ta lum, sjemes la ta 7asaluna ti lum 7une, ja7 la vayem ti 7unetik 7ak’ubaltik laj la smuk 7un, laj la smuk 7un, ta yok’omal ta k’ak’altik 7une, ba la xchuk’ xchij, ba la xchuk’ spop, smes la lek sna, sjos la yut sna sjos la butiuku ti balamil yatinanoj ch’ich’ 7une, ja7 la laj sjosan 7un, laj sk’elan 7un ti k’utik x7elan ti yut na 7un bu yatinanoj ch’ich’ 7une, 7isk’el la ti bu xxon-joltake, 7ischuk’ la 7ispok la, 7i ja7 la 7ischuk’ ti 7a li spak’al 7a li xon-jolile.

Va7i 7un, sk’i la ta k’ak’al 7un, takij la 7un, batz’i k’otbaj xa stik’el ta 7ora 7un. “7A ti 7o k’u cha7al xule, k’u ti sk’elet no 7ox xchobtik betam ya7el 7une, mi 7u k’u cha7al muk’ xpaxayaj 7une, mi sta 7onox ta 7ora ti te7tikil chije, pero mu no 7ox yorauk 7un bi, laj k’op k’u yu7un ti x7elan k’usi spas ti vinik ku7une,” xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, laj la xchuk’ 7un, svalk’un la 7un, takij la ti xchij 7une, ja7 ti lek k’ux ti k’ak’al 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7a ti vinik 7un, ti k’alal laj ssep’ komel ti k’u ssep’ 7une, “Yiyil 7un, mu me k’u xaval 7un, battik, xak’el avil tana 7un, ja7 to me ta jtatik li te7tikil chije, pero mu no 7ox yorauk 7un bi, laj k’op k’u yu7un ti x7elan k’usi spas ti vinik ku7une,” xi la ti vinik 7une. Xut la ti stz’i7 7un.

“Battik avil 7un, ja7 to ta jta ti te7tikil chije, 7a lavie mu xaval ti yu7un ta szelp’uj tiro yu7un latuk’, chatuk’a te7tikil chije, lek 7ikiltik mi j-kot no 7ox 7ijtajte, mi mu jtatik cha7-kotuke,” xi la ti tz’i7 7une.

Bweno, xviloma---j xa la ech’el ti tz’i7e, xtajintajin xa la ech’el, ba7yi ech’el ti 7unen tz’i7 7une, k’ot ti te ta yav chobtik 7une.

Va7i 7un, sjipan la ti yote. Va7i 7un, “K’usij ba7yi ta jk’eltik, ti yut jchobtike mi ba7yi ta xba jsa7i7ik i te7tikil chije?”

“Ba7yuk battik ta paxyal jti7tik to j-tuch’uk tana ta 7a li 7ik’-lumantik ya7el 7a li bek’tet mi jtatik tale,” xi la.

“Battik che7el!” xi la ti 7ajvalile, sjelp’un la ech’el stuk’ 7un, 7o xi la snati7 7toch ta yut ti jobeltik ti yo7 bu ti xchobe, j-likel la te tik ti te7tikil chij yu7un la mu 7o no la bu xch’ay tyempo ti vinik 7une, j-likel
The awful stag landed way off on its back. He went to look.

But it was stone dead. The deer had taken five balls of shot. "See! Was I lying to you? Look, now we got one!" said [the dog]. [The man] took the deer's penis. He skinned it. He looked at it. He cut the deer's penis off carefully. He skewered it and roasted it. As for the penis of the woman's lover, it was roasted separately. It was well-browned. He recognized it.

He roasted it. It was cooked. He brought it separately. The deer's penis came back separately and the penis of the woman's boyfriend came back separately.

He returned to give the deer penis to the children to eat. "Won't you eat [this], my baby?"

"This is too tough, father. I don't want to eat it. I'd like to eat a little liver." But he had brought the deer's liver, the lungs, the spleen and so forth all skinned. They themselves [the man and his dog] just ate them, fresh, cooked right away. They ate a lot.

[But I'm ahead of my story.] After he looked over his corn field—which was after he skinned his deer—after he looked over his corn field, then he left his deer hung up. He set the two legs crosswide, one after another, on top of the poles by his fire. "Eh, it's all right, what can come, what can take our meat? Let's go now, I guess. We'll see if we can get anything, if we can get an iguana, an armadillo or something up there," the man told his dog.

"Let's go then!" it said. They went as far as from here to the door, then they got an armadillo.

They went a little half a block, then they found another deer. Quickly he gave it to her. The deer had a little fawn.

The deer came back, doubled back to where its little fawn was. The little fawn was blea—ting now. Quickly he shot [the doe]. Two of their deer died and then there was the little fawn. He caught the fawn in his hands. He returned home, carrying it.

He tied it up. He got a little cord for the baby deer. The baby deer was tied—d up there, while he skinned its mother. After he skinned it and after the stag that they had gotten first, it seems, was dried and roasted, then he roasted just a little [more]. Two legs. He roasted one haunch and one foreleg of the last [deer] he got. Now the rest of it he carried back. He stuck it in a burlap bag.

There was a fellow corn farmer there. "Let me
have, let me have your mule. I'll pay you for it, because I just got my little bit of food," he said.

"If you give me a haunch of your food for it, I'll give you my mule. My compadre is still coming down tomorrow, so give [my mule] to him to bring. Give me [the venison] I'll enjoy eating it with my tortillas," he said.

"Take it if you'll let me have your mule, because my food won't get there it seems. I got [the deer] and I also brought a lot of [toasted] tortillas because I thought my corn field had been knocked down by the wind. I was going to lift [the plants], but, no, my corn field is fine. And then I got my little meal, because I'm taking my little fawn alive with me.

"You see, I'm carrying it in my arms. That's why I don't want a burden," said the man.

"Eh, have you seen for yourself that we would never have gotten it, since my mistress has evil thoughts?" said the dog. "She hasn't good thoughts, they're not good. I kept telling you she had a man, she had a lover. And it was you who didn't believe it. If you had believed it, if you had spied on her long ago, we would have begun eating venison long ago. But the way it was, it seems you didn't believe what I was telling you. You thought I was just lying to you about it. You see for yourself, I was right!"

"But where do you think she put him?"

"Oh, she must have gone and thrown him somewhere."

"Or will we arrive to find him lying there face up? So we'll go see. Don't you admit anything!" he told his dog.

"Forget it, what's it to me? Watch out what you say about it! Don't you admit anything!" he told the dog.

"Who cares, now you can gorge on the deer's guts. There is tripe, there is whatever you want to eat now. Eat up!" said the man to his dog.

"Oh, of course I'll eat today. It isn't as if I won't eat! But what good is it, because who knows, who knows what you're going to do to that mistress of

"7Ak'bon 7ak'bon ech'el laka7e, ta jtoj ech'el yu7un 7ijta no 7ox kunen ve7el," xi la 7un.

"Mi chavak'bon 7o j-jekuk lave7ele chak'ak'be li jka7e, ta 7onox xtal xyal tal jkumpare ti 7ok'obe, ja7 xavak'be ta, 7a li 7ak'bon bal jve7 7o kot," xi la.

"Ik'o ti mi chavak'bon laka7a yu7un mu xk'ot ya7el li jve7ele, yu7un 7ijta, ya7un xchiki7uk k'usuk 7ep kich'oj tal kot yu7un xak'uk valemuk ti 7ik' i jchobe, ta jtam 7ox ti kaloje, pero mo7oj, lek i jchob 7une, 7i y07 to nan 7ijta li kunen ve7el 7une, yu7un 7o kuxul kunen yol te7tikil chij ta xkik' ech'el 7un."

"7Ey, mi laj avil 7un, ti ja7 7onox mu jtitak 7o lavie muk' lek sjol li jkainile, 7a li jkajvale, mu7yuk bu lek sjole, chopole, 7o svinike, 7oy yajmul xakut 7onox yu7un no 7ox vo7ot mu xach'un, 7a ti yu7unuk 7ach'unuk 7onox, vo7ne 7onox 7apa7-muk'tae, vo7ne lik jve7ikotik ta chi, yan chak li7e ja7 ti mu xach'un ya7el ti k'u chakalbe, xava7uk yech no 7ox chajnopbe, k'el avil ka7uk 7un!"

"Pero bu van 7iyak' xana7 7un le7e?"

"7Aj, te nan bu 7a sten."

"Mo mi te van javal chk'ot ta jtitak, ja7 chk'ot ta jk'eltik 7un, mu me xjam 7ave li vo7ot 7une!" xut la ti stz'i7 7une.

"Yiyil vo7on a7a, k'u jkwenta 7o, 7il avil k'u chavalbe li vo7ote, 7il avil k'u chanopbe li vo7ote, yan i vo7on a7a, k'usi li k'ux ta ko7one ju-ten sti7 yalak'ik ti k'al chatal ta 7olon 7osil chakomesone, mi sbakeluk mu xak' jtit, 7i 7a li sbuch'uk mu xak' jtit, mi ja7uk i ye li kaxlane mu xak' jtit, batz'i 7ilba--j xiyil ta j-mek, tzjok'be nat xch'enal, ya7uk jjok' lok'el ti bu chba smuke, mu jta ta jok'el 7un, te lek tztenu komel ta ton, va7i k'u cha7al ti mu jta ta ti7el, yech'o xal ti 7ijjam ke a7a, yech'o xal ti ja7 7ijta 7o jmul, lavie nakalbe a7a, pero yiyil," xi la ti tz'i7 7une.

"Lavie, 7aj yiyl 7un, yech'o xal 7et'es 7avo7on lavi ta sbel xch'utak i te7tikil chije, te bikil te k'u sk'an 7avo7on xati7 lavi a7a, ti7an 7une!" xut la ti stz'i7 ti vinik 7une.

"7Aj, ta jtit lavi a7a, mu7nuk mu ta jtit pero k'u xa bal 7o 7un ti yu7un xa jna7tik jna7tik k'u chanopbe li kajval 7un le7e, jna7tik mi mu chamil li
mine? Who knows if you aren’t going to kill that mistress of mine?” said the little dog.

“Why would I kill her? I won’t kill her. We’ll arrive to sustain her, when we arrive to give her the deer penis to eat. The children will eat it and the mistress will eat it, too.

“You see there’s nothing more we can do. We can’t kill her. We’ll just look her in the eye. Our Lord will punish her when He wishes to. But me, I can’t kill people. I can’t beat people. I’m grateful for what he has done for me. He has treated me well. He gives me what I eat. He gives me what I need. There is venison when we return from corn farming. But the trouble was I couldn’t get any [deer] because of what the poor woman was doing to me. Never mind now. Only Our Lord [knows]. As for us, we don’t know. We only know that we eat,” said the man.

The man came back. He brought his burden [on horseback]. He carried his little deer back.

He reached home, it seems. He returned home, on the second day, it seems. “Nothing happened, wife, are you there?” she was asked.

“I’m here,” she said. Her house was carefully swept. Her house was tidied up well. Her pots were sitting face down in order. [The floor] was well-scraped.

“How come the house is suddenly swept up so?” asked the man.

“Who knows, maybe it’s because I’ve suddenly become industrious, that’s why you think it is well-swept,” said the woman.

“Ah!” he said.

“Ohh, did you pay for your mule?”

“Of course I paid for it, because our compadre was there. I gave him his meal. So I paid him for his mule. That’s why he let me have it. If you give me a haunch of your food, compadre, take my mule, he told me. I gave it to him since I got some it seems. Thanks to Our Lord, I got some,” he told his wife when he returned.

“Oh did you get some?”

“Of course I got some. I want a tortilla. I’m hungry,” he said.

“Eat!” said the woman. She gave him his meal.

“Aren’t you hungry? Won’t you eat your tortillas? I have brought some roasted deer penis. I’ve brought some roasted liver. What do you want to eat? Try eating the penis. It’s wo—nderfully tender,” said the man.

“I’ll eat it,” said the woman. She didn’t know what she was given to eat. First he gave it to the children. He gave a piece to each of the children. It was the deer penis. What the woman was given to eat was a haunch of venison.

“7An k’u yu7un ta jmi—1, mu jmi—1, chk’ot jmak’tantik mi k’ot kak’betik sti7 ya7el 7a li yat te7tikil chije, tzti7 7unetik tzti7 li yajval 7uke.

“Va7i 7un, mu 7onox k’usi xu7 jpasik, mu 7onox xu7 jmitik, jk’elbetik no ssat te chak’kastiko kajvaltik ti k’u 7ora sk’an yo7one, yan chak i vo7one mu xu7 ximilvan mu xu7 ximajvan kol iyal li x7elan chixcha7ele, lek la x7elan chisapase, chak’ ti k’u ji7te, chak’ ti k’u ju7une, 7oy ti te7tikil chije li c’hiyulotik ta chabajele, pero k’usi mu jta ja7 la x7elan chisapase ti prove7antze, yil nan yil, sna7 stuk kajval, vo7otike mu jna7tik, k’ajom jna7tik xive7otik,” xi la ti vinik.

Va7i 7un, tal la ti vinik 7une, skajtzan la tal ti yikatze, spet la tal ti yu7en te7tikil chije.

Va7i 7un, sta la tal ya7el ti sna 7une, yul la ta sna 7un, ta xchibal k’ak’al ya7el 7une. “Mu k’usi, 7antz, mi li7ote?” x7utat la.

“Li7one,” xi la. Lek xa la mesbil sna, lek xa la ch’ubabil sna, lek xa la nujul sp’in, lek xa la josbil.

“K’usi van cha7al ti batz’i yo7 to lek mesbil ti nae?” xi la ti vinik 7une.

“Jna7tik 7un a7a, yu7 nan yo7 to talem jba5bolal, yech’o xal ti lek mesbil chavile,” xi la ti 7antz.

“7Aji!” xi la.

“7Iij, mi7n 7atoj tal 7aka7?”

“7Ijoj la 7a, yu7un ja7 te li jkumparetike, ja7 liyak’be 7a li ska7, ja7 te 7ijtojbe tal ska7 7un, yech’o xal ti ja7 niyak’be. Mi chavak’bon j-jejuk lave7ele, kumpa, 7ik’o li jka7e, xiyut 7un. Kak’be 7un, k’u ti 7ijta ya7el 7une, kol nan yal ti kajvaltik 7ijtae,” xut la yulel ti yajnil 7une.

“7Aj, mi 7ata?” xi la.

“7Ija7a, ta jk’an junuk vaj, chivi7naj,” xi la.

“Ve7an!” xi la ti 7antz 7une. 7Iyak’be la sve7el 7un.

“Muk’ chave7, muk’ chave7 7avot, 7o me jvooj tal 7a li 7a li yat te7tikil chije, 7o me jvooj tal ssekub, k’u xak’an xati7e, xati7 ava7i li yate, batz’i lek k’u—n ta j-mek,” xi la ti vinik 7une.

“Ta jti7,” xi la ti 7antz 7une. Mu la sna7 k’usi ti ch7ak’bat sti7 7une, ba’yi la yak’be ti 7unetik, ju-tuch’ ti 7unetik 7iyak’be sti7 7une, ja7 la yat te7tikil chije 7un, 7a la ti, 7a ti 7ak’bat sti7 ti 7antz
eat, what that woman was given to eat was her lover's prick. She ate a lot. She ate well. What do you think? Maybe it was a good two or three hours after she ate, after they finished eating, "Don't you want some water, now that you've finished eating?" she asked her husband.

"Let's have a little!" said the man.

At that time the wife hadn't drunk any water yet, of course. "Oh, why do I feel as if I ate so much? I feel like [a drink of] water," said the woman. She drank a gourdful of water. So she drank a gourdful. She had craving for more. Every few minutes another gourdful, another gourdful. The woman's belly, My Lord, her belly became so bloated. A water jug. It was finished, too, the second water jug. God, the woman's belly was bursting now. "Oh, why is it, husband? What did you give me to eat? Why am I doing this so much? It seems as if my belly is bursting terribly now. I can't sit down anymore. It seems as if my skin will rip apart, the skin of my belly. I just don't know why I drank so much water."

"Oh, don't drink any more, for heaven's sakes! Why do you need to drink more? You feel so good drinking the water. You obstinately keep on drinking, too. But it seems as if it's your madness. You shouldn't drink [more] water. You should endure it a little. As for me, I want to drink that water over there badly. I'm hungry now. I'd eat if our food is cooked. If the chili is ground," said the man.

"Our meal certainly is about cooked, but the trouble is that that full [stomach] of mine can't be lifted on top of the metate, it seems. My belly feels as if it's about to rip open," she said.

"Never mind, then I'll mash them in a little. ... Or if you grind them yourself," she told her husband.

"I'll grind them, I guess I'll see what it's like to grind on the metate. Why do you drink so much? You're awful. Hand them over! I guess I'll grind them. How many chilis shall I put in? How many chilis for our meal?"

"Put in four," she told her husband. The man ground the four chilis. He poured the chilis in. He put coriander in the meal. It was fine. It was cooked now.

"Won't you eat?" [he asked].

"God, it seems I'd certainly like to eat. I long so for it. The awful food is good," she said.

"Oh, eat the meat, I guess. You don't have to drink the broth, now, if your belly has no more room for it," he said. They ate. She dished out their meal. God, My Lord, then no sooner had she drunk a bowl of broth of their food when "Boo—m!" went her belly. That woman burst.
“Oh My Lord, Jesus Christ why did your belly burst, wife?” he said.

“Ah!” she said. “Ah!” she said now, since her belly burst. She was going to speak, of course, but the trouble was her belly had burst. It was just a minute or two before her soul departed. She died from her lover’s pri—ck, it seems. So the dog is dumb now, since the poor dog told clearly why [his master] didn’t hit the deer. It was his mistress’s fault. She had a lover. And the man, how would he have known what the trouble was? Her lover was carefully buried. How would he know that she had buried her lover, that the woman had scrubbed up what the trouble was? Her lover was carefully buried it seems. The inside of her house was tidied up carefully. How would he know that she had buried her lover, that the woman had scrubbed up his mess? It seemed as if there was nothing dishonest. The man, how would he have known his mess? It seemed as if there was nothing dishonest.

So, their neighbor passed by the place in the gully where the woman had buried her lover. It was the husband now who was going to be thrown in jail. “You just hold up [people] or kill people. Why would the bones be stuck inside the pants and the sash? You buried him. Who knows who you killed,” they said.

“I never killed anyone. I wasn’t at home. Me, I’m not an assassin. What were people looking for there? They searched. They dug. They looked. Who do you know is still missing? Who is lost if it was me who killed him? But me I never killed anyone,” said the man at the courthouse. “If anyone was killed by me, there must be someone who watched me. But the way this is, I don’t know. Only if there is someone who is resentful of me, who went and buried him there [to incriminate] me. Then maybe I can bear [the blame] for sure, since my house is nearby, it seems. As for me, I never killed anyone. Is there a witness who saw me?” asked the man.

As for the magistrate—“Never mind, since it isn’t as if, it isn’t as if anyone had come to tell me. It isn’t as if there was anyone whom we know about who died, it seems. No one is known about, it seems, for we haven’t heard any talk about it, except what is being said [now], but who knows maybe someone, the woman was hurt by it. The end.

That’s how the story ended long ago. Today the dog is dumb. It doesn’t talk anymore. It can’t talk anymore. Long ago it is said that the dog was your companion. Wherever you went with it, you talked to your dog. You conversed with your dog, because it still was guiltless. But now the mouth of God’s animal is closed, because it seems the dog told him about his mistress’s sin. The man was delighted, but the mouth of God’s animal is closed, because it seems the dog told him about his mistress’s sin. The man was delighted, but the man at the courthouse. “If anyone was killed by me, there must be someone who watched me. But the way this is, I don’t know. Only if there is someone who is resentful of me, who went and buried him there [to incriminate] me. Then maybe I can bear [the blame] for sure, since my house is nearby, it seems. As for me, I never killed anyone. Is there a witness who saw me?” asked the man.

As for the magistrate—“Never mind, since it isn’t as if, it isn’t as if anyone had come to tell me. It isn’t as if there was anyone whom we know about who died, it seems. No one is known about, it seems, for we haven’t heard any talk about it, except what is being said [now], but who knows maybe someone,
someone disappeared from his house and was washed down by the water, fell in the flooded gully.

"You see, the gully flooded, maybe a person fell in the gully. We can't make him take the blame. It seems the man didn't have anyone, his father or his mother [who said], My son has disappeared, my son was killed. Who knows where he died. He was killed by an assassin. [There was no one] who said that, the man's mother or wife or someone, it seems. That's why I can't jail our countryman here. Forget it, who knows who killed him. Who knows if he went off in the river, if the poor dead thing was swept down there. If someone comes to make an accusation, then we'll seize our countryman, but we can't seize him [for nothing]. Don't you see, we never saw it. We didn't hear about it, it seems. There wasn't anyone who saw it. There wasn't anyone who said, You killed him! There isn't any proof, it seems, we can say. But if we had seen it, there wouldn't be any difficulty. Forget it, son, go home, you aren't guilty of anything. There is no one who came to make an accusation, it seems, that you were seen. Not until something is discovered will you be called, if you were seen, if you were discovered, if someone makes an accusation because it was seen that it was you who killed someone. Forget it, go on, forget it, son, but if there were somebody who saw you, if there were somebody who watched you kill him then you could certainly be punished. As it is, there isn't anybody who saw you. It seems as if it's just a bunch of lies. It's just that the clothes, the sash, the hat and so on were seen where he was buried. We don't know if he was washed along the gully. We don't know if some person fell in the gully. We don't know if some person fell in the gully, but maybe, maybe it isn't our concern where we die, it seems. It makes no difference anymore how the people died long ago. Not unless someone goes and makes an accusation. Yes! As it is, it makes no difference if it was in a flooded gully that he died. No fuss. The man was lost. He disappeared. And maybe he had no wife or something, or he had no mother, or the man had no woman at all. There wasn't anybody to complain. So he died. The man died. No fuss. None." That's the way it was left. The end.

Tonik's measurement of distance by blocks and half-blocks, even in the woods, emphasizes her "civilized" outlook!

Upon first encounter, this tale seems to be quite simply a story of (1) the consequences of infidelity and (2) the consequences of tattling. Despite the real worries of Zinacantec men, who must labor in their lowland corn fields for weeks at a time, while their wives are left to their own devices in their mountain homes, there is a surrealist quality to this drama—presenting an outspoken dog, a peculiar hole in the wall, an extraordinary abundance of game, a bizarre pièce de résistance, and a wildly thirsty wife. The major plot, revealed in excruciatingly fine detail, offers a series of dramatic contrasts. Lover is like husband. Lover is like dead dog. Wife seems honest and hardworking, but is unfaithful. Lover's penis is like deer's penis. Husband assumes wife's role; he grinds the chilis and serves the meal. Husband appears guilty, but is "proved" innocent.
This same plot, considerably abbreviated—substituting agouti meat for venison and lacking the elaborate cooking scene and final exoneration of the husband, was recorded in Chenalhó (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:261). A similar drama is described in Tenejapa (Stross, 1973, T8). But the story is not restricted to Chiapas. The Ixil recount the sad fate of a dog who tattles on his mistress and pays with his life, while his disillusioned master abandons his home (Shaw, 1972:118-119). In Panajachel is told the following: A merchant, advised by his friends of his wife's infidelity, spies on the two lovers. When the man feels nature's call, his mistress advises him to take advantage of a hole in the wall that her husband always uses. Her canny husband wields his blade and then has two sausages made; one of pork and the other, of course. The woman complains that she is too sick to cook, and so her husband prepares the meal. She tastes the delicacy and is driven by thirst, gulping the water till her belly bursts. Under their bed is found a body, but after a brief investigation, the husband is found quite innocent (Tax, 1950, T49). Two slightly varying Chorti tales stress the husband's lack of manliness. In the first, a hunchbacked salesman is counseled by his neighbors. He lies in wait by the door, while the couple feasts and makes love. Then he lops off the lover's protruding penis. As in Tonik's account, the wife drags her lover's body "like a dog" to a ravine, where she dumps it (Fought, 1972:235-240). In the second narrative the travelling man even makes the tortillas and sleeps on the floor, while his wife cavorts in bed with her lover. Following his neighbor's advice, he waits until they are asleep, slips in, does the deed, and slips out with the trophy. His wife buries the corpse under the hearth. Two weeks later her husband returns and offers her some salted "venison." After she has praised its flavor, her husband reveals his trick and puts her to shame (Fought, 249-254).

The subplot to Tonik's tale explains why today's dogs are dumb beasts. The Totonacs also believe that dogs once spoke (Ichon, 1969:57). In a tale from Chamula the dog was struck dumb for revealing to his master's father his master's illicit affair (Gossen, T2). Again, in Panajachel, it is said that dogs used to tattle on their mistresses, and so had their heads and tails changed around (Tax, 1950:2674). In the stories from Chenalhó and Tenejapa, mentioned above, the dog's mouth is turned into an anus (Guiteras-Holmes, loc. cit.; Stross, loc. cit.).

But lurking behind the cheating wife and tattling dog is the mischievous deer that plays dead only to rush away at the hunter's approach. The man's failure as a hunter is mysteriously linked to his failure as a husband. Following the deer into the folk literature of Middle America, the pursuer soon becomes caught in a thicket of murderous themes. Recall the poor man who goes hunting in a desperate attempt to rid himself of his Charcoal Cruncher wife's head, stuck tight to his shoulder. When a deer passes by, her head leaps onto its back and is carried off to its eventual demise. From the Popoloca comes a tale of children killing their father and feeding his flesh to their mother, who thinks it is deer liver (Johnson and Johnson, 1939:221). And the Mixe tell of two children who murder their grandfather and feed his testicles to their grandmother, saying that they are deer liver. The children later become sun and moon (Miller, 1956; T3, T4). Mixtecs recount the adventures of two boys who, when told by their mother to take their father's food, shoot him down. Their father, in fact a deer, is skinned by them and his flesh is fed to their mother. They, too, become sun and moon (Dyk, 1959:10-12). Also suggestive is a Kekchi tale from Belize in which three boys are brought up by their grandmother, who secretly has a tapir for a lover. She gives all their food to her lover, dropping the bones beneath their hammocks—tricking them into believing that they have eaten the meat themselves. But a trogon tells them the truth, and so they trap and kill the tapir. They feed the tapir's penis to their grandmother. She suspects a plot and goes to get water. Eventually two of the boys turn their brother into a monkey and kill their grandmother. Later they become the sun and Venus (J. E. Thompson, 1930:120-121).

So what first seemed to be a story chronicling the infidelity of a humble corn farmer's wife and the tale-telling of his dog was, at least at one time, part of a cosmic epic that must have rivalled the tale of the three brothers and the honey tree! Unfortunately we cannot even guess the religious significance that this tale might have had. See also T26 and notes.

A Ring and a Drink

There used to be a boy once. He was an orphan. He didn't know how to work. With [the help of] a little burden he grew up. With [the help of] a little burden he reached manhood. It was wherever he found someone who wanted their ba—sket carried, [who wanted] their co—rn gruel carried when they sold their corn gruel, or whatever is sold by the Ladinas. That was how he supported himself. That's how the little porter reached manhood. So he didn't know how to work. He didn't know how to hoe. He didn't know how to clear the land. He didn't know how to do the work, because he grew up as an orphan. Maybe ten years passed like that in the place where he was brought up, where he ate. [Ten years] had passed when the owner of the house where he grew up died. It was there where he a—te and drank and reached manhood.

7Oy to 7ox la jun krem ti vo7ne me7on la, mu la sna7 x7abtej, 7unen 7ikatzil la te xch'i 7o, 7unen 7ikatzil la sta 7o vinikal, ti bu la sta ti jun buch'u sk'an kuchbel ech'el smo—ch, kuchbel ech'el yu—1 ti k'al chchon yule, k'u chchon ti xjixulanetike, ja7 la yech 7ive7 7o, ja7 la yech ti 7unen 7ikatznom ti k'utikuk sta vinikal, ja7 la ti mu sna7 ti x7abtej, mu sna7 ti svok' 7osil, mu sna7 sboj 7osil, mu sna7 k'u chchane ti yabtele, yu7un la mc7on ch'i, lok' nan lajunej abal ti k'usi xi bu tz'itesat, ti k'usi xi bu ve7, lok' la ti cham la ti yajyal na ti bu ch'i 7une, ja7 xa la ti bu xe7—7 xuch' vo7 sta vinikal.
There was a pine tree where he went for a walk. He went to take a rest. He went to sit down.

God, My Lord,
Jesus Christ,
If there were only some way,
If there were only somehow,
For me to eat,
And drink,
[For me] to discover Thy cross,
To discover Thy reflection, My Lord.
I am suffering, I have no money.
I am suffering, I have no pennies.
If they want to, I am given a tortilla or so.
If they don't want to, there is no one who will give me [a tortilla] when I can't find burdens [to carry].
How am I to eat, My Lord?
How am I to drink, My Lord?
Don't you see, I have no money,
I have no pennies,
said the boy. He we—nt to take a rest there when he couldn't get a—ny burdens. He arrived there and sa—t down. He arrived and sle—pt. He arrived and tossed about beneath the pine tree.

Maybe because the earth was alive or because Our Lord took pity on him, a man came out. “What are you doing, son? Why are you suffering so? Why are you tossing about here? Every day, every day you cry here! Why is it? Didn't you learn to work at your mother's and father's?”

“I didn't learn, sir, because I was left when I was little. I was left when I was just two years old. The lady who raised me, died when I was ten years old. There was no one who showed me how to work, no one who showed me how to clear the land, how to break the ground. I just ate and drank with the help of the little burdens, by carrying the little baskets,” said the poor boy.

“See here, son, your suffering, your wretchedness, began long ago. It's true you don't know [how to work]. If you wa—nt I'll do you a favor. If you want to, do what I say. I'll give you a ring. So you ask it for your food. So you ask it for what is needed to eat and to drink. Take the ring, it seems, but only if you don't get drunk. But if you ask for money for your cane liquor it will surely vanish from your hand. I'm not giving it to you so you can go drink cane liquor with it. It will give you money. It will give you your food. It will give you whatever you ask it for. Everything you want, it will give, except for [money] to go get drunk, except for something [like that]. I am doing you a favor, because I don't want you to suffer. Since you are an orphan, a pauper. You have no mother, you have no father.

"Now say to this ring which I am giving you . . . But wear it sleeping, wear it waking, where you walk, where you travel. If you get hungry on the road, ask it for posol or ask it for tortillas, or ask xi la ti krem. Te ch'ko—t skux ti k'alal ch'aba—a 1 ti bu tzt'a ti 7iakatzile, te la ch'kok't chotlu k k'o't vayu k k'o't baletuk vo7 ti yolon ti toj 7un.

Va7i 7un, yu7 nan kuxul ti balamile mo mi yu7 van k'uxubaj ta yo7on ti kajvallike, lok' la tal jun vinik. “K'u chapas, kere, k'u yu7un toj 7abol abae, k'u yu7un ti li7 xabalet, ju-jun k'ak'al ju-jun k'ak'al li7 chaj7ok'e, k'u no 7ox yu7un, mi muk' xachan komel 7abtel yu7un tame7e tatote?”

“Muk' jchan, tottik, ja7 ti bi7kit nikome, naka yech mu yechuk kich'oj, jtamojbe chib jabil ti k'alal nikome, 7a ti jmeme7tik buy nistz'itese, naka lajuneb jabil kich'oj, 7icham 7un, muk' buch'u niyak'be kil ti 7abtele, muk' buch'u niyak' kil ti boj-7osile, ti vok'-7osile, solel yech 7unen 7iakatzil, 7unen lik-moch chive7 7o chkuch' 7o vo7,” xi la ti prove krem 7une.

“K'el avi, kere, vo7ne talikele, 7abol aba, 7utz'7utz' aba, mu xana7? 7ava7uk, mi xak'a—a—n xa7k'uxubin, mi xak'an xach'un i jmantale, chak'be jemuk 7avi7tol, ja7 chak'anbe 7ave7el ja7 chak'anbe k'u xi chave7, k'u xi chavuch'7 vo7, chach'am ya7el ti 7ixtalale, pero yu7un muk' chayakub, yan ti mi yu7un chak'anbe stojol 7atragoe, yane ta me sak-ch'ay tak'ob 7un bi 7a, yan ti yu7un chak'be yu7un chha 7avuch'7o trago, chayak'be tak'in, chayak'be 7ave7el chayak'be k'usi xak'anbe, skotol ti k'u xak'anbe chak', pero menos ke yu7un chha yakuban, menos ke yu7un 7u k'usi, yu7un chajk'uxubin yu7un mu jk'an ti 7abol aba, ja7 ti me7onote mu7natote mu7yuk 7ame7 mu7yuk 7atat.

"7Óra chavalbe li 7ixtalal chak'be ech'el li7e, pero yu7un 7avich'oj chhay 7avich'oj 7a li sakub, bu xaxanav bu xabein, mi7n 7avi7naj ta be, chak'anbe mi 7uch'im07, chak'anbe mi vaj, chak'anbe mi k'usi,
it for anything. It will give it to you, but it’s a favor to you. It isn’t anyone else we are favoring. It is you yourself I am favoring. If you get drunk, if you drink, if you keep misbehaving, if you say to yourself, I have mo—ney! I’m a ma—ni! I’m going to the cantinas to buy something to drink! God, then you might as well forget it! Your money will disappear. Your pennies will disappear. But if you do as I say, ask it for your laborers. You will clear your land. You will plant more corn. You will have corn. You will have beans. You will be kind to an orphan, a pauper who comes to your house, Sir, won’t you treat me to a quarter measure of corn. We’ll reimburse you. We’ll pay you, if you are told that, don’t accept payment. You will give them a box or two boxes. You’ll give them to whomever arrives at your house, because you will be kind to orphans, you will be kind to paupers, on the surface of the holy earth. No longer will you be wretched, no longer will you be miserable. You will get corn. You will get beans. Because of a favor, you, too, will get them. In the same way you, yourself, will do favors to orphans, to paupers,” said the gentleman. The man did what he said. He reached manhood. He planted his corn. He planted his beans. His corn was harvested. His beans were harvested. The corn [filled] one side of the house. A bin of beans was harvested.

“Now I have corn. Now I have beans. I don’t need anything else,” he said.

The second year he asked [his ring] for laborers. Even more corn was harvested. A houseful of corn. His beans [filled] half the house. He felt confident now. “I can’t sell either. Even if I sell it I’ll just give it to my workers, if someone comes to my house looking for work,” he said. Oh, his workers weren’t paid with corn. He had the ring do the work. “Ring, I want lots of workers because the weeds are ruining my corn field,” he told his ring.

The workers went. Eight workers went out. The laborers worked two weeks [doing] that. They went out to weed his corn field.

He bought oxen. He bought sheep. He bought mules. His mules were for transporting firewood, because his workers cut wood. The oxen were for plowing his land.

There was nothing wanting. He had sheep. He had mules. He went and looked after his sheep. The sheep manure was useful to him. He fertilized his soil, it seems. He had corn. He had beans. He had pumpkins and so on. As for his pumpkins, “Sir, won’t you sell me one of your pumpkins because I long to eat some,” said the people when they arrived, when they went to ask for pumpkins.

“Shucks, I won’t sell them. Just eat them! That’s not many pumpkins. Come back whenever you want
to eat some, just so long as you tell me," said the gentleman.

He started to talk with is companion while watching the sheep. He started to chat with her. "If only you wanted us to get married, if only you wanted us to be together. I'll build our house. We'll settle down. I have a house, but it's just the house for my corn, the lady's house where I grew up," said the boy.

"Ah, but I'd like you to go petition for me. I'd like you to go talk to my mother. I'd like you to go talk to my father. But if I accept all by myself, on my own, that's not the right way to do it. I have a father. I have a mother," said his friend while watching the sheep.

He told his workers. They had a meeting. "I know it. I long to ask for a wife. It seems I can't stand it being all alone. It's true, I have corn. It's true, I have beans. I don't fix my meals. They come on their own. So my ring gives me my food. It gives me my clothing. It gives me my garments. It's just that . . . it's only that I want a woman to be with me, it seems, someone to talk to, it seems. My sheep I watch after myself. My mules I look after myself. My oxen I just let loose in the yard where they go to eat. They go to the woods.

"You see, they can eat contentedly. I have been given open land too, where my oxen can eat," said the man.

"Well, never mind, we'll go and ask for her. We'll go together. It's no problem. We'll go talk to them straightforwardly so that the girl is given to you. I'll give you corn, I'll give you beans, we'll tell the girl's parents. We'll give corn. We'll give beans. There won't be any drunkenness. There won't be any drinking of cane liquor. You will sell your corn, you will sell your beans so that she will become your very own. I will marry your daughter. we'll tell them. But if we get drunk . . . your little treasure doesn't like drunkenness, forget it!" said his workers.

Well, that's the way it was. He married her. He gave [the brideprice] to them. The woman received six fanegas of corn and two fanegas of beans. It was the girl's mother and father. So he sold the corn there. Their daughter was no concern of their's anymore. He married her. He took her. They held a fiesta. The man gave a banquet. The man showed respect for their godmother and their godfather, it seems. He gave a fine banquet. He offered chicken, beef, pork, whatever they ate when they got married. But cane liquor, the thing we like to drink, there wasn't even a shot glassful of cane liquor! "For it was said by that gentleman who gave me his ring, it seems, that he doesn't want [me to drink]." He did

Va7i 7un, 7a la ti xchi7il ta chabi-chij 7une lik la sk'o7on 7un, lik la slo7ilta 7un. "7Ak'anuk no 7ox kik' jbatike, 7ak'anuk no 7ox jchi7in jbatike, jmeltzar jnatik, xinakiotik, 7a la jnayj 7o7e, pero 7a? no 7ox li snail kixim, snai ti jmeme7ti7ik ti yo7 ti nich'ie," xi la ti krem 7une.

"7Aa, pero yu7un chak ba jak'one chak ba k'opon jme7 chak ba k'opon jtut, yon chak la vo7on jtkut ta jch'7un mantal ta jtkute mu yechuk smelol, 7oy jtut 7oy jme7," xi la ti xchi7il ta chabi-chij 7une.

Va7i 7un, yalbe la ti yaj7abteltak 7une, stzob la sba 7un. "Jna7, yu7un kiluk ko7on ta jk'an kajnil ti chkale mu x7 yaitel i jtkut, melel 7oy jve7el, melel 7oy kixim, melel 7oy jchenek', mu xu7 yaitel i jtkut, melel 7oy jve7el, melel 7oy kixim, melel 7oy jchenek', mu7nuk ti jas i jve7el a7a, snai7o jta xtal stuk, ja7 chiyak'be jve7el, chiyak'be jk'utu7 chiyak'be jpok' i kixtote, yu7un xa no 7ox 7a7 no 7ox ti ta jk'an 7anz jyayel ta jchi7ine, 7oy buchu7a ta jk'opon ya7ele, 7a li jchije ta jchabi jtkut, 7a li jake7a ta jk'el jtkut, 7a li jvakaxe naka ta jkoltok ta yut moktit ta xba ve7uk, chbat ta te77ik.

"Va7i 7un, jun yo7on chve7, 7oy jama7 7osil noxtok, buy 7ak'bilon, buy yo7 chve7 7o7 li jvakaxe," xi la ti vinik.

"7An yiyil, ba jjak'7ik jzob jbatik ech'el mu k'usi, tuk' chba jk'opontik yu7 ma xa7ak'bat ti tzebe, Chakak'be 7i7ixim, chakak'be chenek', kutbetik stot sme7 ti tzeb 7une. Xkak'7ik 7ixim 7un, xkak'7ik chenek' 7un, mu7nuk mu k'usi yakubel, mu k'usi 7uch'-posx, xachen lavixime, xachon lachenek'e yu7 ma 7och tak' obe, Chhik' i Tatzebe, xkuttik 7un, yan ti ta xiya7akotiboke ja7 li mu sk'an yakubel lavunen cha7omale, yiyil," xi la ti yaj7abteltak 7une.

Bwéno, ja7 la ye7h 7un, 7i7ik' la, 7i7ik' la yevik ja7ika 7a7 li 7ixim, chib la ja7ika chenek' 7iyik' la 7a ta j7antx 7une, ja7 xa la ti sme7 stot ti tzeb 7une, ja7 xa la te xchon ti 7ixe7e, mu xa la k'u skwenta 7o li stzob 7une, nupun 7un, 7i7ik' 7un, spas k'in, yak' ve7el jisp'is ta vinik ti xchul-me7 ti xchul-tot yaj7el ti vinik 7une, 7a ti lek ve7el 7i7ik', lek 7a li kaxlan bek'et chitom, k'u sti7ik yu7el ti ta7l 7inupunep, pero ti tragoe pero ti k'usi ja7an chkuch'tike, mu7yuk la j-p'isuk ti trago a7a! "K'u ti yu7un la mu sk'an ta7lalbe yu7un ti jata7tik ti buch'u 7ak'bon ya7el ti yixtol 7une." Ch'un la mantal 7un, 7ayan la k'usuk yu7un 7oy la yixim 7oy la xchenek' 7oy la xchij 7oy la ska7 7oy la svakax, 7ayan xch'amal 7un, spas k'in,
had beans. He had sheep. He had mules. He had oxen. His children were born. He gave a dinner, and so forth, for his compadres to eat. He asked for bread. He asked for corn gruel. He asked for beef or chicken, and so on when his children were baptised. He never... he obeyed what he was told, that he couldn't drink cane liquor. He obeyed it, or chicken, and so on when his children were baptised. He asked for bread. He asked for corn gruel. He asked for beef or chicken, and so on when his children were baptised.

His oldest child was a boy. [The boy] was around fifteen years old when [his father] died. “See here, son, you never learned to work since I don’t work. I was never told that. It’s just that I am kind to orphans. I’m kind to paupers, and drink. You will feed your brothers and sisters,” the father said. “So you see for this reason do as I say, son. You will bring up your brothers and sisters, the littlest one is six years old now, it seems. As for your brothers and sisters, the littlest one is six years old now, it seems. “So you see they will grow up now in your care,” he said.

That littlest child was just seven or eight years old when his father died, it seems. For two years that boy lived honorably. He worked in his corn field. He prepared his corn field. His corn was harvested. His beans were harvested. Visitors arrived at his house. “Sir, won’t you sell me a box of your corn?” they asked when they arrived. “Take it, son! Take it!” he said. He scooped out an almund or a quarter measure or however much he had been asked for.

If he was told, “Here’s the money, sir!”—“I was never told to do that, son. I was never told that. It’s just that I am kind to orphans. I’m kind to paupers, just that I am kind to orphans. I’m kind to paupers, and drink. You will feed your brothers and sisters,” the father said. “So you see for this reason do as I say, son. You will bring up your brothers and sisters, the littlest one is six years old now, it seems. As for your brothers and sisters, the littlest one is six years old now, it seems. “So you see they will grow up now in your care,” he said.

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whoever comes and asks me. Whether it's squash or beans or corn do them the favor, just as I am doing you a favor, said the gentleman who gave it to me, who gave me what I needed to make a living. I wasn't told to sell the little bit I have of my own. So I am simply doing favors to people on the surface of the holy world.

"Now for as many days as I am alive, I will do favors to the young and the old, the orphans, and the paupers," said his father.

But you see, the boy... it was two or three years later, it seems. It was on the Fiesta of St. Lawrence, as we say. He felt good that the fiesta had arrived, knowing that he had corn, that he had beans. "Forget it, hell! I think I'll ask for money. I'll come and celebrate. I'll come and celebrate. If I die... I'll die—drink. I'll get drunk, so I'll ask for more of whatever I want. I'll take out the thing I've brought with me," he said. He pu—led out his purse.

But you see, there wasn't a thing there. He didn't have anything there. Nothing at all. "Where did my treasure go? Ring, where did you go? Ring, where did you go? You used to be here. I tied you to the cord of my sash," he said. He tried to search for it. Where would you find it now? "Hell, wait for me! Where would you find it now? My little treasure that I took with me, is lost. Now I have nothing left." He may have to sell my mules. And whose fault is it? See for yourself. As for my oxen, kere, mu xavuch', krem, mi mu yalojuk komel tatote, spasoj komel tatote, Mu me xayakub, kere, mu me xavuch', kere! 711 avil 7un, 7a la ti krem 7une, ch'abal a7a. "Bu bat ti kich'omal 7une, 7ixtalal, bu labat, 7ixtalal, bu labat, li7ot to 7ox, jchukojot ta yak'il jxinchae," xi la. Ya7uk xa la ssa7, bu xa la xata? "Kere malakton to, ba jja—tzin tal junuk 7a li limete trago kuch'tik," xut la ti xchi7il. Ba la yalbe ti sme7 7une, "Me7, ch'ay me ti kunen cha7omal kich'oj 7une, mu xa me yu7unuk 7oy ku7un 7un."
o—ther died. Another went. He had eight mules. They all died. One he gave as a favor to the younger brother. He gave it corn to eat. He paid his workers.

"Give me your mule for one trip. I'm going to carry firewood with it. I am [going to] work with it," said his little younger brother.

"Take it!" he said.

"How much do I owe?"

"You don't owe anything. I am satisfied having you look after my work here, because I can't look after it myself," he told his little kid brother. The younger brother was clever.

But the stupid drunk went out to get drunker. But you see, he went to the cantina, choked on cane liquor and died.

The thing is, Our Lord took pity on the little younger brother. He just lived off his mule, his sheep. His sheep multiplied. He worked in his corn field. That paid for his needs, ever since. Just so, I sell... we shear the sheep. We sell [the wool]. We pay our workers with [the money]. As for the corn, too, the corn and beans go to the workers.

That's how he lived and grew up and reached manhood. It's been that way ever since. We pay our workers with corn and beans.

You see how it was. The boy's mother died. The little boy was left by himself. He was satisfied that his little sheep were left. He had two little horses, it seems, because his little horse was a mare. His one horse gave birth to a colt. So that's the way the little younger brother was left. If [the older brother] had done as he was told, if he had left to the younger brother what had been left to him to live on, of course it wouldn't have disappeared. Unlike him, the little younger brother didn't drik—nk. The little younger brother reached fifteen years of age. "God, if only my older brother had done this, done corn-farming, given his corn, given his beans to the workers, he certainly wouldn't have had anything to worry about now. But look how he choked on cane liquor, the disgusting cane liquor drinker! God, what's the difference, so long as Our Lord knows how I eat and how I drink, since I never get drunk myself," he said. It turned out well for the poor creature. It's been that way ever since. We pay those who do our work, with wool, with corn, with beans. That's how we farm the corn. It comes back, it returns. [It pays for itself.] There isn't very much. So the little boy wasn't rich. He reached manhood. He got a wife. That's the way it's been ever since.

[I forgot to tell you about when] the father grew old. And maybe because of the constant burdens and things he did long ago, his legs just twisted. He was pushed now. On a little do—ll he would go to lie on his back. Another went. He had eight mules. They all died. One he gave as a favor to the younger brother. He gave it corn to eat. He paid his workers.

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7A la ti totile 7iyijub la, 7i ja7 nan i labal 7ikatzil k'utik tpaz ti vo7ne 7une, solel ta tz'ot'pij yok, xujbil xa ta 7unen karo---s ta xba spuch'anel, xujbil xa la li ta 7unen karos, chha ve7uk, pechanbil xa sve7el,
down. Pushed now on a little dolly, he would go to eat. His meal already served out. He was lifted into his bed when he died. He was buried. His wife buried him, it seems. He died. The poor old man died. That boy, too, was left. After his father died, it seems, he buried his father, it seems. That boy choked on the never-ending cane liquor. He got drunk in the cantina. They went to get the boy and bring him back from the place where it seems he choked on the cane liquor. He was carried back on a board. He was carried by four people from the cantina where they had gone to pick him up. They came back to bury him.

What's the use, son,
You got what you deserved!
You wanted to get drunk.
So you asked to die the way you did.
So you asked to perish the way you did.
If you had done as your father told you,
If you had done as your late father told you,
We would have had what we needed,
But now, because of you, I am wretched,
I am miserable, the way you died where you did.
What's the use,
We'll get your coffin.
After I bury you,
It will all be over,
said his mother. The end.

This tale, very reminiscent of "The Poor Woodcutter" (T77, T144), similarly shows Tonik's failure to distinguish clearly between Our Lord and the Earth Lord, as man's benefactor. The phrase "the earth was alive" means that the man's resting place was a place where the Earth Lord's presence was manifest. Much of the dialogue in this story slips in and out of couplet form, but is so irregular that I have placed the bulk of it in prose format, allowing the punctuation to convey the phrasing.

The moral to this story is a rather peculiar one for Zinacantan, where there is a high value placed on social drinking, a tolerance for drunkenness, and a strict idea of reciprocity in gift-giving. It is true, Zinacantec women scoff at men's tendency to assign a sacred quality to cane liquor, and men themselves are highly critical of habitual drinkers, but to petition the bride without a jug in hand and then celebrate a dry wedding is almost inconceivable. Another foreign element is the man's possession of sheep and his care for them in the meadow, elements always in the women's realm. Oxen, too, are not normal Zinacantec possessions.

I have translated ch'um as "pumpkin"; actually these are not pumpkins but cushaws, large dull orange squashes that take various shapes. Though this squash is not familiar to most Americans, it was once an important crop in Appalachia. Although workers were paid with corn and beans in the past, this is no longer standard practice.

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**When Saint Christopher Came**

Once there was a hill. They came upon Our Holy Father there, St. Christopher is his name. He is living there now, it seems, here on the hill [in San Cristóbal].

He was carrying his little child up on his shoulder. He came holding his little walking stick. He came nearer and nearer. He passed by, walking closer and closer.

But you see the awful path he found just went
through [tall] grass, along the awful edge of the lake. He started to tread on the lake shore there inside through [tall] grass, along the awful edge of the lake. He came in nearer, holding his staff, carrying his little child on his shoulder. Our Holy Father came stepping in the water, nearer and nearer. The lake receded and receded. Our Holy Father came long ago with only the calves of his legs under water.

He reached the top of the hill. It was hard for Our Holy Father to climb it. He continued the whole way. He came to the place where St. Raymond is. But it was just fields of grass, fields of weeds. The lake dried up. It was shallow now.

Our Holy Father reached the hilltop, it seems, where he wanted to live. “Build me a house, make me a house here!” he said. Now he had come down. He had come down at the time of the soldiers long ago. His church was left there. He is still living there. Our Holy Father’s church was built there, since he crossed the lake. He made the grass. Since it used to be fields of grass long ago, that’s why San Cristóbal, here, is called Grass. [The town] was built.

It became San Cristóbal. The Ladinas’ houses were built. The town of Zinacantan, as we call it, it was there that the Spaniards arrived first. Then they multiplied. The Spaniards lived there. The people multiplied. San Cristóbal was built long ago.

The church of Our Holy Father was built there. Who knows if it was built by masons, because we don’t know the truth about what the work was like there. I’ve just heard, I was told that Our Holy Father crossed the lake, dried up the lake.

Now that’s why he wanted his church on the hilltop. And he wanted his house to be high up. The church there deteriorated. [So] Our Holy Father there, was taken to the cathedral. Pineda’s, the awful Carranza’s barracks and so forth used to be there [in the Church of St. Christopher] long ago. Their munitions depot was there. They used to have their barracks there long ago because it was high up, it seems. Now he went and recovered his house, since there is no longer a war there. That’s why Our Holy Father, St. Christopher, just returned there. He has been living there ever since. They hold a good fiesta for him, since he is the patron saint of San Cristóbal.

A Chamulan variant of this legend describes how Saint Christopher carried a Ladino merchant across the water, but the Ladino, who had forgotten his crate of goods and left it on the other side, died soon after. St. Christopher baptised himself in the river. A church was built for him. This church was burnt down by the revolutionary forces of Carranza, but the saint had been hidden safely elsewhere in the town (Gossen, T11).

Because of the strategic position of this church on the hill overlooking the town, it has been destroyed and rebuilt many times. As early as 1837, when civil war erupted in San Cristóbal, the church was converted into a fort and demolished by gunfire.
Once there were peanut sellers [from Tenejapa] who [tried to] get to Simojovel, but they couldn’t continue on if they reached that bend in those deep woods where those Long Hairs held up people long ago. Because they ate people. If they couldn’t get anything else for themselves, they ate people. If they found beans, if they found wheat, if they found anything at all, they seem to have been very discriminate about what they ate. If they couldn’t get anything else for themselves, they ate people. If they found beans, if they found wheat, if they found anything at all, they seem to have been very discriminate about what they ate. If they couldn’t get anything else for themselves, they ate people. If they found beans, if they found wheat, if they found anything at all, they seem to have been very discriminate about what they ate. If they couldn’t get anything else for themselves, they ate people. 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will be able to get your clothes. You will be able to get your material. You will be able to travel wherever your hearts desire. You will be able to enter Guatemala. Don't say you won't enter. You will be able to enter there. You will get your money. You will look for your pennies the way I do when I come to your country, it seems. Just so long as you pay the twenty-five pesos for a gourdful of the remedy. That medicine that I will bring you is fine powder," he said.

"What is it, what kind of medicine could it be? What is it called?" they asked.

"It isn't called anything at all. I'll let you know what its name is when I have prepared it and brought it. We'll talk together then."

"Twenty-five is its price, but give it to me on credit, because I haven't that much money."

"Ah no, if it's bought it is twenty-five, but if it's on credit it's fifty," said the medicine-seller.

"Well, when are you coming?"

"I'm coming in a week," he said. "You'll take your medicine and go in this direction. Get your load ready! When I arrive [I expect] to find your load ready. You'll see. You'll try it out. You'll see if you don't win. I'll teach you what to do. I'll prepare twenty-five staves for you, too!" said the salt merchant. The salt merchant prepared them. He cut the twenty-five staves and brought them. He brought a gourdful of that medicine. "You do it like this! You fix it like this! You hold it in your fist like this! You wrap it up like this! You slip it in your waist like this!"

Now when you see them approaching, Let them come to kill me, [let them] do whatever their hearts desire! you say to [the remedy], if the highwaymen have come out," he said to [one of them].

"Fine!" said the [Tenejapan] gentleman. He took it. He wrapped it up. He slipped it in his waist. When he was about to have that machete whishing at him, then he tossed that remedy at him. "I'll give it to you, too!" [the Tenejapan] just told him, it seems.

But you see [at first] he didn't menace him with those staves. Then he scattered that medicine at him. But you see the awful murderer was thrashing about now. He landed way off on his back. He picked himself up. He was rolling about, trying to get on his knees. He couldn't stand up. [Then] he simply got a terrific beating with the staves. That's what he was given.

That man traveled again. He traveled maybe half a league, or not as much as half a league. Then he met up with another who came out in a fury, rushing out, menacing him with his awful bow and arrow as he came out. He was about to shoot him quickly when that [Tenejapan] man grabbed away [the bow].

"K'usi, k'usi mas poxil, k'usi mas sbi?" xi la 7un.

"Mu k'usi sbi a7a, chkaltik aval7i k'usi sbi ja7 to ti mi jmeltzan tale, te jk'opon jbatik."
But you see, the poor man wasn't hit in the leg. Then that man grabbed [the medicine], held it and tossed it at him, too. Ooh, he landed way off, on his knees. He couldn't do anything now. He had no strength left in his arm. He was helpless. One of his arrows landed way off. Another of his arrows landed way off. [The Long Hair] didn't move now. He intended to shoot his bow twice, of course, but he didn't win. Then that second [Long Hair] died, too. [The man] just attacked him with those staves. That awful Tenejapan arrived there in Simohovel from whatever was the name of that land where he went.

“How did you do it, merchant? How did you enter? How were you able to clear the road by yourself? How did you get past all the highwaymen? How did you win? One of my customers, a gentleman like you, died. How come you were able to clear the road? What medicine [did you use]? What kind of medicine did you have to win, because there are so many highwaymen here on our roads?” asked the Simojovel man.

“It's not much. It's because we have some medicine. I paid a hundred and fifty for it, but just this much was given to me for a hundred and fifty. But see how many staves I was given, and so I win with my staves,” said the gentleman. The Tenejapan sold it then. He gave the one wad of his medicine for a hundred and fifty. When he returned he had no more worries.

You see, then he asked the owner of the remedy—he asked him for another twenty-five staves. The man from Zinacantan Center who gave them, sold them for ten pesos. He asked ten pesos for them. The other [man] asked a higher price when he sold them. He cleared the road. He went, it seems. It was long ago that the highwaymen died. But the highwaymen weren't afraid, no they weren't because if someone came, they grabbed their hair and covered their faces with it. They covered their faces like this so they wouldn't be recognized. No one recognized who they were, or where the highwaymen came from.

The highwaymen, too . . . we had clever eyes, too. We were the first to scatter that “chief,” as we called it, at them.

Now the “chief,” they didn't know what it was. “What does the plant look like? What does the remedy look like? How does it grow? Does it have a trunk? Do you add anything to it?” [the Tenejapan] was asked by a Ladina.

“I don't know. I bought it, too. It was prepared for me, too. A salt merchant there in the town of Zinacantan sells it,” he said.

“Ooh, but I'll buy some from him, too. I'll pay him whatever you say. Buy [me] some! I'll take any amount,” said the Ladina.
You see, that's how the road was opened up. The people were able to enter now. But [before] we couldn't travel. Even if you went just this distance, you were sure to be wounded. Either you were just wounded or you died there.

Now one man came with an arrow sticking in his back or his ribs, I don't know where. He came back that way, but the blood was pouring out of the poor guy now. That's why, when that remedy was found, there weren't any more problems. So the one who opened up the road won. The remedy was found, there weren't any more problems that have not been entirely resolved, but I believe.

The monetary situation in the Chiapas highlands persisted into the Revolution when Guatemalan currency was still much in evidence. The Cabrera was a Guatemalan peso minted from silver, as it still is very occasionally, and from Tenejapa in the jungle area of Chiapas. The first expedition in 1559 was manned by order of the royal Audience six hundred Indians were summoned from Chiapa and two hundred from Cinacantlan, and Gonzalo Dovalle, nobleman of that city and one of the first and principal founders of Santiago de Guatemala [Guatemala City] was named captain of the Spanish forces. The Sjpaniards were a noble, splendid people such as that city was accustomed to. And a great number of Indians were necessary to carry the equipment, including a mountain of every kind of provision, such things. It is sufficient to say that neither they nor their sons could afford it, since even now there are many houses taxed for their engagement in this expedition. There were so many Indian porters that the places where they passed suffered considerable damage. They also brought from Guatemala a thousand Indian warriors. They were sturdy, bold people, though not very showy or polished. The Spaniards who brought them were not a little discomfited to see those from Chiapa so polished and well dressed. And Captain Gonzalo Dovalle was greatly encouraged by the incomparability and gallantry of his soldiers.

Those from Cinacantlan arrived in perfect order at the camp of the

wheat, meat, jerked beef, corn and other vegetables. Chiapa and Cinacantlan named their captains and mustered their people. They fashioned elegant banners and drums and finely embellished trumpets. With their scarlet suits and headdresses they showed to good advantage indeed. They made weapons for all the soldiers; lances, bows and arrows, bucklers and padded armor, or coats of mail, and hoods, all at the expense of their people. And they comported themselves with such authority that they appeared in reviews like veteran soldiers from Italy. And shortly before Lent all those from Chiapa came by way of Cinacantlan—captains and soldiers and three Indian youths, sons of chiefs, with arquebuses. And every soldier was equipped with a big gourd for transporting water across uninhabited areas and through the woods. [The gourds served] as well for floats to help them swim across lakes and rivers. They passed muster in Cinacantlan before the monks, and together with the people from there they marched as an army to the city [San Cristobal] where they provided a spectacular parade.

From there they all went to Comitan. Gonzalo Dovalle and the Spaniards, accompanied them until they reached that town where Judge Ramirez was waiting with the Spanish people from Guatemala. Never before had they seemed so elegant or splendid. One could not believe what they had spent for this expedition on suits, crests, pavilions and such things. It is sufficient to say that neither they nor their sons could afford it, since even now there are many houses taxed for their engagement in this expedition. There were so many Indian porters that the places where they passed suffered considerable damage. They also brought from Guatemala a thousand Indian warriors. They were sturdy, bold people, though not very showy or polished. The Spaniards who brought them were not a little discomfited to see those from Chiapa so polished and well dressed. And Captain Gonzalo Dovalle was greatly encouraged by the incomparability and gallantry of his soldiers.

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Spaniards, and as they came neatly and elegantly they made a good impression. The Judge came forth with all the Spaniards to receive them and all rejoiced to see them (Remesal, 1932:396-397).

The trappings for two barges were carried into the jungle and one barge was actually launched on the Laguna de Lacandon. After putting several towns to the torch, the expedition continued downstream from Pochutla. The Spaniards on rafts were guided by Indians on reed mats who shot their arrows as they maneuvered the rafts, diving underwater to defend themselves from enemy arrows. Some were said to have swum a whole league. A hundred and fifty captives were taken to Guatemala City, including the chief and high priest, but the chief escaped immediately, and he was followed soon after by all the rest!

In fact, the victorious Indians gained very little for their efforts:

There was an Indian who rather than enter the town empty-handed, which would have been a disgrace returning from war, stuffed a small basket, called chicubite [chiquihuite], with stones. The weight made him sweat profusely. And in this manner he entered as proudly as if he had triumphed in Rome. His enjoyment did not last long. His wife, being greedy for the riches which she thought her husband had brought from battle, opened the chicubite, and as she hurried after him she also harled the stones at the man who had brought home such gems. The people of Cincancitlan remained rather complaining because they were given no rewards. A few years later they were joined by those of Chiapa because a judge confiscated the halfberds saying that these were no weapons for Indians, that they belonged to the King. Accordingly he sent them to Guatemala (Remesal, 399-400).

Zinacanteces accompanied the missionary expedition of Feliciano Bravo in 1573 from Tenosique into the Petén (Scholes and Roys, 1948:492). As late as 1693 a final expedition against the Lacandons was led by the President of Guatemala himself.

The Lacandons’ skill with bow and arrow, their long hair, and their “wild” ways cast them into a demonic role in folk memory. Even in Panajachel, far from the Lacandon homeland, they live on as black, horned, cannibals of the underworld (Tax, 1950, T126, T150). Their cannibal nature is known in Santa Eulalia, where they are credited with the power of flight “like buzzards.” (La Farge, 1931:65-68). The Uspectee, too, are familiar with Lacandon cannibals (Shaw, 1972:233). Chamulans speak of their long hair and their shapeless dress which completely conceals their identity as man or woman. But beneath those dresses, according to the Chamulans, the Lacandon men boast virile members of gargantuan proportions. Mountain lions are their dogs and jaguars their cats. According to one account, their name Lakanton [Boil Stone] is derived from their reputed custom of cooking stones as if they were eggs (Gossen, T168).

The use of tobacco as a protector on the roads was widespread in Chiapas and Guatemala. A tale from Panajachel tells of a priest who was released from the coils of a boa constrictor by the timely application of tobacco (Tax, 1950, T14). See also T127 and notes.

Another Charcoal Cruncher

T82

Once there was a man who was probably a relative of the one I finished talking about [in T81]. I said that there was a woman. That woman turned into a Charcoal Cruncher. She would get up every [night]. She would get up every [night]. "Oh why do you do that so much, wife? What do you get up to look for so often? Why do you do this?" he asked. Every time that man got up, her head stuck on again. "Where are you going?" Her awful head wouldn't answer. The man would just hear her gna—wing their charcoal at the fireside. She was crunching it or else you could hear her bumping around now behind the house if there wasn't any charcoal at the fireside. At whatever house she went to crunch charcoal she would arrive bumping about, scaring people outside the house, next to the house, or wherever she arrived. She would look for houses where she was known. She went there to crunch charcoal because she thought maybe she wouldn't be killed there.

But you see the awful man was sick and tired of it.

"I don't know what to do. I'm terribly tired of it, it seems," the man told his mother. "I'm not pleased with the awful woman. I'm just sick and tired of her. I'm dying of fright, mother. I'm scared to death, mother. In the night you feel the awful woman, just her shorn off ugly butt, nothing to talk to. You think you'll rest her head on your arm. Where would you
find it? The woman has no head. She's a shorn-off ugly butt of a woman, so who knows where her head is sitting."

"But spy on her, son!" said his mother. The man spied on her [to see if] she went out to eat charcoal, if she was thudding around outside, or if she had gone to another house to scare people.

When she came back . . . she had a child. When she had a child she didn't go out often. When she didn't have a child, it seems, when her baby was big now and didn't nurse anymore, [when] it ate a lot, it seems, then the husband was left hugging his child. He didn't hear his wife leave when the awful woman went, went out to eat charcoal.

But you see then that man protected himself by magic. He put salt on her, since his mother had told him what to do, because the man was dying of fright. He was just sick and tired of it at dusk and at dawn, at dusk and at dawn. The woman was hardly good company, not even when he sat down to chat with her. She would just keep no—dding off. All she did was nod [her head]. You never saw good talk and laughter, she only no—dded [off]. Or if they went to bed she would leave [and go] from yard to yard, outside, next to her neighbors' houses, it seems. She entered the houses bumping around, bumping up and in at the eaves, because it is open under the eaves of our houses, it seems. If there was a big space under the eaves her head would go in, arriving with a sudden thud at the fireside. Then the house owner would hear her. How could [the house owner] not hear her! Now she heard her gna—wing away, as she crunched the charcoal. "Oh, could it be a Charcoal Cruncher? Listen! It seems to be eating charcoal at the fireside. Husband, wake up!" her neighbor said to her husband.

"Eh, I don't know if that's what it is."

"Eh, it certainly sounds like it! Listen to the charcoal being crunched."

So, after they struck their matches, they looked. The ugly head was lying there.

But you see, the ugly woman's head was bru—shing about at the fireside.

"What are you doing there you disgusting thing? Who are you?" asked the man. He got up. He looked. Ooh, with a sudden thud it left. It bounced out under the eaves. When it was outside it regained its strength and left. They just went searching for it, but they never found it.

"But come on, let's spy on it for a night or so. Who could it be? Who could that be?" they asked. "Could there still be Charcoal Crunchers, since the Charcoal Cruncher was buried?" they said, the men said.

But you see, then she had her comedown at her neighbor's house, like this.

"7Ey, mu jna7 mi ja7."

"7Ey, yu7un ja7 ya7el a7a, 7a7y ava7i chk'uk'i 7ak'al."

K'usi 7un, laj la xjoch'beik serio 7un, 7isk'elik la 7un, te la banal li mu jolol 7une. K'u la xavil 7un, smese---t la sjol ti mu 7antz ta ti7 k'ok'e 7une. Va7i 7un, "K'usi chapas le7e, porkeriya, buch'uot me?" xi la ti vinik 7une. Lik la 7un, sk'el la 7un, 7ijj, xp'ulij la lok' p'it la lok'el taj ta nak' na 7une, k'alal to la pana ya?i sba 7un, bat la 7un, naka xa la ba ssa7ik 7un, mu xa la bu staik.

"Pero la7 jpa7-muk'tatik junuk 7ak'ubal buch'u van, buch'u van le7e?" xiik la. "Mi 7oy to jk'ux-7ak'al ti mukem xa ti jk'ux-7ak'al?" xiike. Xi la ti, 7a ti viniketike.

Bu yu7un, te yal la ta k'ok' ta sna la slak'-na 7un, taj x7elan 7un.
Don't you see, [her] husband had gone to bed. She was caught by surprise when he did his best to spy on her. He rubbed salt on her neck. He put salt on it. She was caught by surprise when he did his best to spy on her. He rubbed salt on her neck. He put salt on it. The man had two heads. Whenever he went it followed behind. "Why do you have that thing, son, are you so pleased to have two heads? Are you two-sexed with your long hair?"

Whenever he went it followed behind. "Why do you have that thing, son, are you so pleased to have two heads? Are you two-sexed with your long hair?"

She was bumping around now, she was bouncing up and landed on her head. She was eating it.

"Chibat kik ta paxyal ba jk’el kik bu jlo7lo komel k’usi ssat te7al slo7 ta te7tik mi 7o k’u jtabe ssat te7al slo7e, me7, ta xtavan xka7i chlub i jon jnekebe batz’i yu7un mu xa7i 7a7bel. Lok’an chlub jnekebe! ya7uk kut."

"Batz’i xikom ya7el, vinik, mu xikom, batz’i chiti7olaje li7 chakomesone,” xi la ti mu 7antz 7une. Bat la 7un, ba la xchi7in ta paxyal.

"Chibat kik ta paxyal ba jk’el kik bu jlo7lo komel k’usi ssat te7al slo7 ta te7tik mi 7o k’u jtabe ssat te7al slo7e, me7, ta xtavan xka7i chlub i jon jnekebe batz’i yu7un mu xa7i 7a7bel. Lok’an chlub jnekebe! ya7uk kut."

"Batz’i xikom ya7el, vinik, mu xikom, batz’i chiti7olaje li7 chakomesone,” xi la ti mu 7antz 7une. Bat la 7un, ba la xchi7in ta paxyal.

But you see, "Look how good they are! Won’t you eat those fruits?" she was asked. "I think I’ll climb up and pick some for sure. Eat some! They’re wonderful. See how yellow the [pine rust] is!" he said. He climbed up. She ate them as fast as she could. The poor man hadn’t walked very far. Quickly she bounced up into a pine tree, too. She landed, perching on his shoulder.

He came back with her again.

Then that poor man was taught by his mother and father what to do. "What’s the use, but you can’t survive such suffering. Who knows what we can do about her. The best thing is to trick her now, I think. I think you should leave," said the man’s[...]

"It’s best if I take my gun along, then. I think I’ll see if I can get a deer. If I can find a deer or something I’ll shoot, but then I’ll win that way," said the man. The man left. There was an awful tea bush.

"Won’t you eat some? Won’t you feast on some? See how thick that one is with fruit. See how heavy with fruit the tea bush is, [see] the fruit on the tea bush!"

She became absorbed with the fruit of the tea bush. She was eating it.

But you see, there was nothing the man could do because he had been asleep. When he got up from his sleeping place [her head] bou—needed up and landed perching on his neck. The man had two heads. The woman had long hair, but her hair was horribly snarled, as it had been a long time since she had left her body. Maybe it was a week or ten days. Maybe that’s how many days it was that the awful woman’s head was stuck there, it seems, on the man’s shoulder, it seems. He left. The man was sick and tired of it.

"I think I’ll go for a walk. I think I’ll see if there’s a place I can lure her to and leave her, if there is some kind of berry for her to eat in the woods, if I can find berries for her to eat, mother. I’m sick and tired of it. She won’t pay any attention. I try to tell her.”

"I won’t stay behind, it seems, husband. I won’t stay behind. I’ll be terribly unhappy if you leave me here,” said the awful woman. She left. She went with him on his walk.

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The poor man was asked wherever he went. He had a two heads? Are you two-sexed with your long hair?"

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The poor man was asked wherever he went. He had a two heads? Are you two-sexed with your long hair?"
But you see, then a deer came rushing towards them. Then it paused in a flash. [Her head] landed on the deer. “Why are you leaving me behind?” she said to him.

But you see, [her head] landed on the middle of [the deer's] spine. It landed and perched on that deer. It left. The deer left. It went into a cave. It was stuck in the cave.

The deer went in.

[The deer] bounded into the cave. A squirrel arrived.

She thought it would take her away. The squirrel didn't want to. It jumped. It was leaping from tree to tree now.

You see, the squirrel wouldn't take her away. Then the husband arrived who had lured her up to the tea bush berries. “Climb up, climb on up. Eat some! Let's see if you can do it. All of those ones are good. They're little, like cherries,” he [had] said.

She had gone to eat the berries. Then she was distracted.

But you see, the man, her husband, it seems, had taken his gun, because he had said that he was going hunting. He went, it seems. Then it passed by. Then the deer passed by. It went off. His wife saw what was happening. “Husband, wait for me. Wait for me. Why are you leaving me behind?” she [had] said to him.

But you see, the deer knew all along that a coyote was coming.

The coyote arrived at nighttime. It was around eleven or twelve o'clock, about that time of night, that it arrived. “Oo,” went the coyote. “Oo,” went the coyote.

“Oh, husband, come, get me! I'm going to be killed by a coyote now. You hear that coyote calling?”

“Wait, I'm coming now,” he said. Then that coyote arrived when it heard where she was talking. Quickly her head was dragged off, caught, eaten. That was the end of that poor woman. She was eaten. [The coyote] put a quick end to her. The man was perched in a tree waiting. The deer came out. Then the man was waiting there for it. He shot the deer. The man went off with his deer, one deer. It
was an old stag he killed. That man killed the one that had carried off his wife. The poor woman was killed by the coyote. That's the way she ended. The man got his deer. He went to eat it with his children. He had nothing to worry about. He went to the woods to dispose of his wife, it seems.

That was the end of the trouble. So then they went to bury her body. Then she was buried, it seems. The venison was eaten at the burial. That's how the woman was buried. They didn't eat any chicken. She didn't have anything. They didn't buy a coffin for her when they dug her grave.

You see that's how the Charcoal Crunchers disappeared long ago. To this day there aren't any. We never hear of Charcoal Crunchers now. The end.

K'oxox te7 or tea bush (Ternstroemia tepezapote) has no definite associations in current Zinacantec life. Except for the elaborate description of the Charcoal Cruncher's death and her unceremonious burial, this version of Tonik's follows the standard Zinacantec plot.

From the Kekchi of Belize comes a tale with elements suggestive of a more than casual resemblance. After making sure that her husband is asleep, a woman removes her head and turns into a mule. She joins the company of other mules with whom she cavorts before returning to bed. But her husband keeps watch and, after her head has left, rubs ashes on her neck. Unable to attach her head back on her human body, she reverts to her mule shape and, carrying her head, follows her husband everywhere. In desperation he goes deep into the jungle, where her head returns and is unable to reattach itself to her body. They are transformed into owls (J. E. Thompson, 1930:158).

In the absence of any other tale from Mexico, Guatemala, or Belize that showed close similarities to the Charcoal Cruncher story, I had concluded that the Charcoal Cruncher's habitat must be restricted to highland Chiapas. But recently I discovered evidence to the contrary.

Exhibit A: A woman has a lover. Her head departs at night. Her husband, following a neighbor's advice, puts ashes on her neck. When her head returns and is unable to attach itself to her body, it sticks onto her husband's shoulder. In desperation, her husband climbs a sapote tree and tooses mameys down, with the same result as cited above. Her head, pierced with spines as the deer rushes through the thickets, falls off and dies. Her husband asks a priest's advice. The priest instructs him to bury her head and to advise him what happens (Schultze-Jena, 1958, 2:22-28).

These two adventures occurred not in Mexico, not in Guatemala, nor in Belize, but among the Pipil or Aztecs of Salvador! In both instances, a calabash tree sprouts from the grave of the woman's head, and from the fruit appear many, many boys. These boys bring to mind the four hundred sons who emerge in the second creation of the Popol Vuh. Their birth from the gourd recalls Blood Girl looking at the gourd tree on which hang fruits that were once the skulls of 1 Hunter and 7 Hunter. As Blood Girl inspects the gourds, a skull spits on her hand.

And immediately she conceived a child in her womb just from the spit.

And they were created

Hunter

And Jaguar Deer (Edmonson, 1971:77)

Hunter and Jaguar Deer are the two heroes referred to in the commentary on Tale 78. The combination of elements from the Aztecs of Salvador and the Quiché of Guatemala is not surprising, since, in the Popol Vuh, “Aztec ideas are given in Quiché words and Quiché ideas in Aztec words,” reflecting the strong Aztec influence on Guatemala in the fifteenth century (Edmonson, xv). Despite the extremely low number of Aztec loan words in Zinacantec Tzotzil, Zinacantan was known to have been in frequent contact with the Aztecs shortly before the Spanish Conquest (Blom, 1959:27). Still, there is no way of telling whether the Charcoal Cruncher is an Aztec concept, a Mayan concept, or both. See also T12, T81, and their notes, T47, T60, and T175.

A Strange Affair in Totolapa

Once, not terribly long ago—the man is maybe fifty or fifty-five years old—he went to Totolapa. In Totolapa the man, who was [almost] a boy then, was maybe thirty years old. He went to talk. He went to work in his corn field. He went to prepare his corn field there.

7A ti vo7ne mu bat'zi vo7neuk ta j-mek, 7o nan te sinkwentauk mi sinkwentay-sinkouk sjabila li vinike, 7a li 7iay ta Natijolom, 7a ti ta Natijolome, k'u ti krem to 7ox ya7el ti vinik 7une, yichi'o7 to 7ox nan trentauk sjabila 7un, 7ay k'opoju7 ay spas xchob 7ay smeltzan xchob te y07e.
When he prepared his corn field he went to amuse himself in the town. He met a girl on the trail.

How are you, girl?
I long to enjoy your company.
I long to talk to you.
I see you are beautiful.
The girls in my home aren't like you.
The women in my home aren't like you.
Your back seems different.
Your side seems different.
I long to enjoy your company.
What does your heart feel?
Do you want us to get married?

that man told the girl.

What do you think? "Ah, you want to talk to me, but are you a real man? Are your pants well-fastened? Are you brave? Are you telling the truth that you will speak to me sincerely? Only with the understanding that you have thought it out well, that you have planned it very well, that you want to marry me, go wait for me in the meadow where we talk to our fiancés. For that is the place where we talk together, those of us who have fiancés here," said that girl.

But you see, "If you are telling the truth, if you respond to my reasoning, to what I have been telling you, if it is for sure, I'll go and wait for you. I can go and wait for you," said that man.

The girl left. "Be sure to wait for me there, because I have to go in a hurry now, because I'm going home," she said.

"All right, then, I'll wait for you there."
"I'm going to wait for you where the meadow is.
Have you seen it there by the little path leading out of town, here where our houses are?" she said.

"Okay, I'm going to wait for you there," he said. He left. He went, sat down, and waited, looking up and down. It reached ten o'clock in the morning, it seems. He was still sitting there.

He was sick and tired of waiting for her now.

He thought it would just be a person who would arrive. He thought it would be a girl, the girl, who would arrive.

But you see he didn't know that that girl would come [transformed into] a cow. Then he saw it. The black cow arrived, glistening beautifully. It's horns were terribly long. Because the girl had long hair, its horns were long.

What do you think? The cow was tossing its head from side to side and raising it again and again wonderfully. It was maybe a half block from that man, tossing its head again and again. Before that man knew it, he was lifted up into the sky. He landed way off with a thud. The awful man was very scared.

But you see, "I thought that the girl who was
coming was a good [person], My Lord!" he said. He picked himself up. The cow went back. That man never was able to talk to her. It went back. It went home. So the man was disabled.

You see the man picked himself up. Now he was a woman. He wasn’t a man any longer. The awful cow went back. It turned into a man. It left [transformed into] a man. “But how can it be?” said the man. He went to his corn field. He went. He ate. He felt sick at heart when he arrived to eat, it seems—in his corn field where he was working. “What can I do now, My Lord!” he said in his heart. “Why is it? I shouldn’t have gone to talk to the awful woman, I shouldn’t have gone to talk to the awful girl. I wouldn’t be feeling so disgusting, My Lord. What can I do about it? I think I’d better tie up one or two almuds of corn. I think I’ll get it ready and carry it back. I’ll make a pretense of taking my corn. I’ll go home and admit it. I don’t know what to do. If only there were somebody I could ask about it. But I can’t ask my friend at work about it, or he’ll just go and rub it in. I’m ruined. I’ve turned into a woman forever,” said the awful man.

But you see he came back home carrying two almuds of corn. He was spoken to by his wife. "Are you there?" he asked his wife.

"I’m here," she said.

"Ah!" he said.

"Have you come back? You weren’t supposed to come back yet. You were supposed to return on Thursday," said [his] wife.

"I’ve come back, of course. I’ve come to leave two almuds of corn for you," he said. "I’m a bit hungry," he said.

"Eat!" he was told. He was given his meal. He finished eating.

"I’ll be back. I’m going to talk to our compadre there on the other side," he said. He went to talk to his compadre. It wasn’t just his compadres, because in the end he went to look for whomever he could converse with so that he could ask them, "Hasn’t it ever happened to you? Haven’t you ever talked to a woman. Haven’t you ever gone crazy from it? Because I myself went crazy in Totolapa.

"What do you think? The awful girl arrived. I spoke to her. She arrived. It wasn’t a human being who arrived, it was a great big cow that arrived. It came and lifted my ass up, but I landed way off," said the man.

"But that wasn’t at all smart of you! Why did you do that? What business was it of yours to do such a stupid thing? The Totolapa people are very bad. It isn’t as if they are good [people]. You can’t talk to them. Figure it out! See where that girl’s house is. That’s all I can say. Who knows how it stands, it xtale, kajval!" xi la 7un. Stam la sba 7un, 7a la ti vinik 7une, 7a la ti vakaxe, sut la ech’el 7un, mu xa la yu7unuk 7o bu sta ta k’oponel taj vinik 7une, sut la ech’el 7un, bat la ta sna, ja7 no la ti sok ti vinik 7une.

K’u xavil, ti vinik 7une, stam la sba 7un, 7antz xa la 7un, mu xa la vinikuk 7un, 7a ti mu me7 baka 7une, ja7 la sut ech’el 7un, ja7 la pas ta vinik 7un, ja7 la vinik 7ibat 7un. “Pero k’u no van yu7un 7un?" xi la ti vinik 7une. Bat la ti ta yav xchob 7un, bat la 7un, ve7 la 7un, yan xa la sba ti yo7on ti k’ot ve7uk ya7el ti ta xchob yo? ti xchabaj 7une. “K’usi ta jnop 7un li7e, kajval?" xi la ti yo7on 7une. “K’u no 70x yu7un ma xa ma ba jk’opon i mu 7antze, ma xa ma ba jk’opon li mu tzebo, 7o ma yan x7elan, kajval, k’usi ta jnop li7e, mas lek ta jpech’ kik junuk chibuk 7almul i kixim jk’un-kuch kik ech’el jpak’ta ech’el, ba kal jba ta jna, mu jna7 k’u ta jnop, li 70x no 70x buch’ u jak’be pero li jchi7il ta chabajele mu stak’ jak’be naka ba stik’be k’op, batzi sok 7ikom pasikon 7o ta 7antz ta batzi’ j-mek," xi la ti mu vinike.

Bu xavil 7un, 7a li tal la ta sna 7un, skuchoj la tal chib 7almul yixim 7un, 7i7albat la yu7un ti yajnil 7une. 7A li, “Mi li7oteg’ xut la ti yajnil. “Li7one,” xi la. “7Aal” xi la 7un. “Mi natal che7e, 7a li muk’ bu trate chatale, trate to ta jweves chayule," xi la ti 7antz 7une.


“Ve7an!" x7utat la 7un, 7ak’bat la ti sve7el 7une, laj la ve7uk 7un. “Te chital, yu7un chba jk’opon 7a li jkumparetik le7 ta j-jeche," xi la. Ba la sk’opon ti skumpare 7une, lajeltza mu la la ma skumpareuk 7un yu7un la ma ba ssa7 buch’u ba lo7ilajuk xchi7uk 7un yo7 ti sjak’be, “Mi muk’ bu xapasik yech, kere, mi muk’ bu xak’oponik 7antz, mi muk’ bu xapasik yo7 vovil yu7un ba jpas vovil ta Natijolom i vo7one.

“K’u xavil 7un, k’ot ti mu tzeb 7ijk’opon 7une, k’ot 7un, mu krixchanouk 7ik’ot 7un, yijil me7 baka k’ot 7un, tal ti nistoybe muyel li jchake pero taj to lik’ote," xi la ti vinik 7une.

“Pero mu7nuk muk’ 7o no me lekot 7un taje, kere, k’u no ma yu7un ti x7elan 7apase, k’u no 7ox 7atun7un chapas bolile, chopol me sjol li Natijolomal krixchano a7a, mu me yu7unuk lekuk, mu me stak’ k’oponel, 7a taje sa7bo smelol k’elbo bu sna taj tzebe, ja7 no 7ox ye7ch chkal vo7on 7une, mu jna7tik k’u
seems. Go on, I guess. Talk to her, I guess. [Say to her]. Why did you do this to me, child? If only you had told me that you didn’t want to be spoken to in good form. I wouldn’t have. I wouldn’t have said anything to you at all. I feel awful the way you have changed me. Now I am a poor woman. How can I respond to a greeting since I’m supposed to have my poor pants on? But don’t you see, I’ll be tormented. I can’t reply to anything that is said to me, but tell her that!” they said to him.

“Hah! Do you think so?” he said.

“Yes, indeed. That’s right. Go talk to her, I guess. Go see her, I guess,” they said.

“Eh, make me a couple of toasted tortillas for the night, wife! I’m coming back tomorrow, because it seems,” he told her. He left a lie for his wife.

“Oh, why are you so disgusting? Is there a [reason] for your never staying home anymore? You are so strange! Maybe it’s because you have an awful mistress there,” she said.

“Hell, don’t come telling me things like that, that I have a mistress. I, too, want a master now. I’m a poor woman now,” said the gentleman. His old woman was named Matal. She stayed behind.

“Oh, where did your man go?” she was asked by her neighbors.

“He went to the lowlands. I see he doesn’t stay [here] at all anymore. I don’t know why it is. I don’t know if the disgusting thing has an awful mistress there. Maybe he’s turned queer. Have you ever seen him come and spend a single night? Do you think you can join the awful man [in bed]? Can he do anything now? Just nothing!” said the woman, conversing about her husband, since she didn’t know what the trouble was.

He never told his wife. He left [home]. He stayed only three days there in Totolapa again in the place where he raised corn—three days. The first day when he arrived, he went, he went to the town. He bought a head of cabbage. He went to visit that fiancee of his, it seems. He bought it for her. “How are you, my friend? How are you? I have come now to talk to you. How is it? Will my crime be forgotten? Will my crime cool off?” he said. “I just thought it was all right if I talked to you. I just thought it was all right if I spoke to you. Because I thought you would respond to plain speech. I thought you would answer me honestly,” he told the girl.

“Aha, how does it feel? What’s wrong with you? Would you feel badly if you wore a skirt? Wouldn’t you be glad to wear a skirt? It would be better if you just had taken your old woman’s skirt,” said the awful girl.

“Eh, but I don’t want to, it seems. It’s known that I’m a man, they’ve seen that I’m a man. What would x7elan ya7ele, batan kik k’oponel kik. K’u no van yu7un ti x7elan 7acha7leone, ch’amal, 7avuluk 7onox ti mi yu7un mu xak’an k’oponel ta lekik k’ope, mu k’usi, mu k’usi nakalbe bi 7a, ja7 chopol chka7i la x7elan 7ajeltoan 7une, vo7on xa yo 7antzon 7une yu7 van vo7on ta jtk’ k’oponel ti 7oy yo jvex ya7el ti k’op 7une, pero mu xavil, ja7 7ibajine7un, mu jtk’ k’usi 7abel ya7el li vo7on 7une, pero 7uto ech’el 7un!” xut la sbaik.

“Je, mi yech xana7?" xi la 7un.

“Yech a7a, ja7 yech ba k’oponel kik ba k’elo kik,” xi la.

“7Ee, paso me chibuk kot vayuk, 7antz, chisut 7ok’ob yu7un yu7un la 7a li 7och ya7el vakax," xut la. Xnopbe komel ti yajnil 7une.

“7Ana mi 7o toj yan xa7elan mi 7o batz’i mu xa jaxok’tzaj i tanae, ma7n xa me yu7un chasok ta j-mek, yu7un nan 7oy 7amu 7antz tey," xi la.

“Kere, mu xtal 7aval yech chak taje, 7oy kantze, kajval, xa, ta jk’an 7uk li7i yo 7antzon 7uk li7e," xi la ti mo7 7une. 7A ti sme71al, Mal bi ya7el 7une, ja7 la kom 7un.

“7Aa, bu bat 7avinikale?" x7utat la yu7un ti slak’-na.

“Bat me ta 7olon 7osil batz’i mu xa me jxok’tzaj chkil, mu me jna7 k’u yu7un, mu jna7 mi 7oy smu 7antz i porkeriya te yo7e, yu7un nan sokem mi 7oy xavil jun 7ak’ubal ti tal vayuke, pero mi yu7un chaval stak’ xa chi7nel ti mu vinike, mi 7u k’usi sna7 xa, solel ch’abal," xi la ti 7antz. Slo7ilta ti smalale, k’u ti mu7nuk sna7 k’usi ti palta 7un.

Va7i 7un, mu la bu yalbe ti yajnil, bat la 7un, 7oxib no la k’ak’al 7ijok’tzaj ta ta ta 7a li Natijolom noxtok yo7 ti xchabaj 7une, yoxibal k’ak’al 7un, primero k’ak’al ti k’al 7ik’ote, bat la 7un, bat la ta jtek-lum 7isman la ech’el j-pe’ ej sjol yitaj, ba la svula7an taj slekom ya7el 7une, smanbe ech’el 7un. "7A li k’u xa7elan 7a li, kulo7, k’u xa7elan, li7 tal jk’oponote, k’u xi, mi xjai ti jmule li sirkub li jmu7e?" xi la. “Xkak’ no 7ox lekuk ti najk’opone, xkak’ no 7ox lekuk ti najti7ine, yu7un xkak’ to xata7uk k’oponel, xkak’ tuk’uk no 7ox chatak’bon," xut la ech’el ti tzeb 7une.

“7Aa, k’u cha7al ya7el 7un, k’usi ti palta chava7i ya7el 7une, mi chopol chava7i ti chalap 7atzkeze, mi7n muk’ lek chava7i ti chalap 7atzkeze, pero ja7 me lek ti soleluk 7avich’be stzek lamen7ale," xi la ti mu tzeb 7une.

“7Ey, pero mu jk’an ya7el 7un, vinajemon ya7el ti vinikon 7une, vinajemon ya7el ti 7a li vinikon ya7el
they say now if I put on a skirt, since I don’t have [long] hair? It’s just not possible! I would be embarrassed, it seems. I am a woman, it seems, yet my head is round like a man’s, it seems. But it’s awful. It’s not a bit good if my crime isn’t forgotten, if my crime doesn’t cool. I say, sir, please talk to your poor daughter for me. Forgive me for this little bit!” he said. He poked a pint of cane liquor towards that gentleman. The head of cabbage was thrust at that fiancée of his, it seems.

“Eh, I don’t know. Talk to my daughter yourself! I didn’t see it. I wasn’t watching when you talked to her. Perhaps it’s because she was upset by what happened, if she was embarrassed, if she was mortified, when you spoke to her. That’s why she did this to you. Maybe she is working off her anger. Speak to her, I suppose. [See] if she will forgive you. But me, of course I don’t know. Thank you, may God repay you. If my daughter forgives you, we will drink,” he said. “But if my daughter doesn’t forgive you, then think it over, whatever it is, whatever it is, my daughter tells you, but me, I don’t know,” he said.

“Ohh, [said the girl] that was indeed why I did it to you. Don’t come and play that on me. It’s useless for you to talk to me as you did. It isn’t as if I said to myself, Where could the awful short-rumped men come from? Where could the horrible short-seated men come from? Our country is different. You have your girls in your country the same way I have my boys here in my country. It’s the first time we’ve seen someone the likes of you talking to [our] girls,” said the girl.

“So I say, pardon me, girl, pardon me, woman! I just can’t go on like this, walking as a poor woman, it seems. I have pants, it seems, but I am a woman. I am ashamed to walk. They used to address me as Sir now maybe they ought to say Ma’am!” said the man.

“Eh, but who knows, Sir. Who knows if you will take it to heart, if you will stop doing what you did to me. If you won’t do that to me anymore, then, of course, I will forgive you, but if you just keep doing it to me. . . . But it shows in your face that that’s what you always do, bothering everyone, talking to everyone. I know that’s what you’re like at home. I know that’s what you’re like in your country. Because that’s what I was told in my dream yesterday in the night. You hear, he goes to get women in their beds. You hear, he goes to talk to them, to get women in their beds. You hear, even if the woman has a husband he goes to get her in her bed, that’s why I don’t want [to forgive you]. Thank you, may God repay you! My heart should say. I will forgive you, but I’ll roll you over and over with a terrific beating,” said the girl.

“Never mind if you attack me, if you beat me, just so long as, just so long as you return [my virility] to me, k’u xa xi ta jlap jtzek 7une ti ch’abal stzatzal jjol ya?el 7une, mu7 no stak’ 7une, ch’ek’exav ya?el 7une, li 7antzon ya?el 7une, volvol jjol chak vinik ya?el 7une, pero chopol ya?el, muk’ 7onox lek ya?el, mi mu xlaj mi mu sikub ti jmule chkale, tottik, 7abolajan 7albon ka?7ik li yo latzebe, 7ak’o pertonal j-tz’ujuk!” xi la. Jun la meria trago sbechbe taj jtata?7ik 7une, ja7 la j-p’ej jol 7itaj yich’oj bechel taj 7a li slekom ya?el 7une.

“Eh, I don’t know. Talk to my daughter yourself! I didn’t see it. I wasn’t watching when you talked to her. Perhaps it’s because she was upset by what happened, if she was embarrassed, if she was mortified, when you spoke to her. That’s why she did this to you. Maybe she is working off her anger. Speak to her, I suppose. [See] if she will forgive you. But me, of course I don’t know. Thank you, may God repay you. If my daughter forgives you, we will drink,” he said. “But if my daughter doesn’t forgive you, then think it over, whatever it is, whatever it is, my daughter tells you, but me, I don’t know,” he said.

“Ohh, [said the girl] that was indeed why I did it to you. Don’t come and play that on me. It’s useless for you to talk to me as you did. It isn’t as if I said to myself, Where could the awful short-rumped men come from? Where could the horrible short-seated men come from? Our country is different. You have your girls in your country the same way I have my boys here in my country. It’s the first time we’ve seen someone the likes of you talking to [our] girls,” said the girl.

“So I say, pardon me, girl, pardon me, woman! I just can’t go on like this, walking as a poor woman, it seems. I have pants, it seems, but I am a woman. I am ashamed to walk. They used to address me as Sir now maybe they ought to say Ma’am!” said the man.

“Eh, but who knows, Sir. Who knows if you will take it to heart, if you will stop doing what you did to me. If you won’t do that to me anymore, then, of course, I will forgive you, but if you just keep doing it to me. . . . But it shows in your face that that’s what you always do, bothering everyone, talking to everyone. I know that’s what you’re like at home. I know that’s what you’re like in your country. Because that’s what I was told in my dream yesterday in the night. You hear, he goes to get women in their beds. You hear, he goes to talk to them, to get women in their beds. You hear, even if the woman has a husband he goes to get her in her bed, that’s why I don’t want [to forgive you]. Thank you, may God repay you! My heart should say. I will forgive you, but I’ll roll you over and over with a terrific beating,” said the girl.

“Never mind if you attack me, if you beat me, just so long as, just so long as you return [my virility] to me, k’u xa xi ta jlap jtzek 7une ti ch’abal stzatzal jjol ya?el 7une, mu7 no stak’ 7une, ch’ek’exav ya?el 7une, li 7antzon ya?el 7une, volvol jjol chak vinik ya?el 7une, pero chopol ya?el, muk’ 7onox lek ya?el, mi mu xlaj mi mu sikub ti jmule chkale, tottik, 7abolajan 7albon ka?7ik li yo latzebe, 7ak’o pertonal j-tz’ujuk!” xi la. Jun la meria trago sbechbe taj jtata?7ik 7une, ja7 la j-p’ej jol 7itaj yich’oj bechel taj 7a li slekom ya?el 7une.
me as I tell you. Never mind, patience, I can bear it if you beat me, if you reproach me. So what! I can survive. I'm up to it, just so long as you don't kill me. If it's just a beating you give me, it's only a punishment you give me, I'll take it to heart. The next time I won't say anything to anyone here, since I've seen, it seems, I've witnessed, it seems, what the Totolapa people are like," he said.

"See here, sir," she said. "See here, if you are telling the truth that you don't know, that you have never seen, what it is like in our home here, go on!" she said. "Go wait for me. Sit down there just as you waited for me the first time. Wait for me the very next time I won't say anything to anyone here, since I've seen, it seems, I've witnessed, it seems, what the Totolapa people are like," she said. 

"Ah!" said that gentleman. "Ah, I guess I understand. I don't know. It's just that I'm nervous, daughter. I'm nervous. I'm so scared," he said.

He arrived. He went to wait for her in the meadow where he had waited for her before. That gentleman accepted his head of cabbage. He drank the present, it seems—a pint. "You see, that daughter of mine will forgive you. You heard what she told you. Thank you. May God repay you. Will you accept a little, son?" said the girl's father. They drank the pint of cane liquor. The one who went to give it drank one shot glassful. That girl accepted that cabbage head of his. He went to pay her with that cabbage head of his. He went to pay her with that cabbage head of his in the afternoon. It was exactly three o'clock in the afternoon when he arrived in the place where they went to wait for each other. But the awful cow arrived furiously now. She was snorting at the ground now. Ooh, from way off she terrified the awful man. He was quaking and quaking now. He was terribly scared when he saw the cow.

"I thought it would just be the same girl who was coming. My Lord, I see it's just the same cow coming again!" he said. "God, My Lord, watch over me, St. Dennis, watch over me! Look upon me! Don't let me return, a mere woman, to beneath the feet of St. Lawrence!" he said when the cow came thundering at him. He would have landed way off with a thud, but no, the lucky guy, he was able to grab one horn. The other one, with great difficulty, he grabbed now. If it weren't for that, he would have landed way off. He would have landed way off, rolling, just as had been done to him [before]. Now he succeeded in grabbing the other horn with his hand. So he turned back into a man. If it weren't for that, he would have been a woman ever since, if it weren't for that.

7asutesbon i k'u x7elan chakalbe, yu7un yech pasénzia stak', ti mi yu7un chamajone mi xavutone te k'alal, yu7un ta xkuh ku7un ta xu7 ku7un, ja7 no 7ox kwenta mi mu 7amilonle, mi majel no 7ox chavak'bone, mi kastiko no 7ox chavak'bone, chich'k 7o ko7on yan k'ak'al mu xa buch'u k'u xkalbe li7 to 7unc, yal ti mi yu7un 7ikil ya7el, 7ijk'el ya7el, ti k'u x7elan k'u xchilel ya7el li jnatijolomal krixchano ya7el 7une," xi la 7un.

"K'el avi, tottik," xi. "K'el avi, mi ti yu7un yech 7aval ti yu7un mu xana7, mum' bu xavil ya7el k'u x7elan ya7el li jnatikötki li7 toe, batan!" xi la. "Te xba malaon 7un, te xachoti chak k'u cha7al 7amalaon li ta primero, ja7 no 7ox yech chamalaon, pero ja7 no me kwenta mi mu naxi7 7une, yan ti mi naxi7e, naxbo te riox mi chak'anbe sk'exol k'usu7 7avu7un 7un bi 7a, yu7un me kom 7o ta j-moj," xi la 7un. "Ja7 to me ti mi 7atabe yipal tojib balmin," xi la.

"7Aal!" xi la taj mol 7un, "7Aa, yu7un te te xa7i ka7itik, yu7un mu jna7, yu7un ja7 no 7ox i yu7un no 7ox buit ko7on, yay, buit ko7on toj tol chixi7," xi la 7un.

Va7i 7un, k'o7 la, ba la smala ti ta stentejitik bu 7o no smala 7une, 7ischi7am la ti sjol yitaje yech taj jtata7ik 7une, yuch' li ti matanal ya7el 7une, jun meria 7une. "Va7i 7un laj yo7on taj jtzebe che7e, te 7ava7i ti k'u nayalbe, koal sjal s'xatbe riox, mi chavich' j'zt'ujuk, kere?" xi la ti stot ti tzeb 7une. 7ilyuch'ik la ti jun meria trago, j-p'is la yuch' taj buch'u buch'u 7a yak' 7une, 7a taj tzeb 7une ja7 la xch'am taj sjol yitaj 7une, ba la stoj taj sjol yitaj ta smalel 7o 7une, lek la 7oxib 7ora k'ak'al 7ik'ote taj yo7 bu ba smala saib 7une, pero kapem xa la k'otel ti mu me7 bakae, svuch'ta xa la balamit, jii, nom no la yak' ti xxi7elal cha7i ti mu vinik 7une, batzi xt'e lelet xa la ta j-mek, 7ixi7 ta jmek k'alal 7iyil ti vakaxe.

"Mu7nuk ka ja7 no 7ox yech tzeb ta xtal 7un, kajval, yu7un 7o ka ja7 no 7ox yech vakax ta xtal noxtok!" xi la. "Dyox kajval, k'elon me senyor Santo Nixyo, k'elon me 7un, 7ilon me 7un, mi ja7 no 7ox yech 7antz chisut ta yolon yok ti San-torensoe," xi la ti k'alal ti xjomal xa tal li me7 baka 7une, taj to la xpuliji7 k'kote, mo7oj la li sil 7une, jun la xxulub taj 7istabe ta tzakel 7une, 7a taj jun 7une, vokol xa la stabe ta tzakel, 7a ti yechuke taj to la k'ot, xbalet to la k'ot chak k'u cha7al 7ica7leat 7une, jun la xxulub taj 7itojib ta sk'ob taj sta ta tzakel 7une, yech'o la ti pas ta to vinik, 7a ti yechuk 7une, 7antz la k'al tana ti yechuk 7une."
As Tonik finished this remarkable tale, she paused to catch her breath, then turned to me with a wicked gleam in her eye and asked, “Do you know who the man was?” Then triumphantly, “He is my next-door neighbor!” I shrink from contemplating the take refuge in folkloristic and ethnographic footnotes.

These details, which would seem of minor significance to the reader unfamiliar with Chiapas Indian culture, have special import to a Zinacantec. They involve clothing, greeting, and gift-giving. When Tonik related this tale thirteen years ago, nearly all Zinacantec men were still wearing their gleaming white short shorts. These were such a distinctive piece of their clothing that the Totolapa girl appropriately stressed their foreignness by referring to Zinacantec males as “short-rumped men... short-seated men.”

For anyone from a culture so casual about greetings as is ours, it is difficult to appreciate the anguish of a Zinacantec man who suddenly discovers that, if the truth were known, he should properly be addressed as “ma’am” not as “sir.”

For a Zinacantec to present his girlfriend with so lowly a gift as a head of cabbage, particularly when the stakes are so high, is almost unthinkable. It provokes a retreat into symbolic analysis, but what could a head of cabbage symbolize? At Carnival time in Chamula, cabbage heads are equated with fetuses (Bricker, 1973b:118). Perhaps he is requesting the restoration of his fertility in this way. In Zinacantan a man’s head may be contrasted with a woman’s by its roundness and its braidless sphericity. So with a cabbage head, the unfortunate man may also be reminding his lover of his lost identity.

A saga, involving a man from the Zinacantec hamlet of Vo7-bitz, who fell in love with a girl, not from Totolapa but from nearby San Bartolo (Venustiano Carranza), and who suffered identical results, was related by a shaman from Vo7-bitz (Wasserstrom, RFW 2). From Hueyapan, Morelos, and Panajachel come stories of the dangers of sharing the comforts of a foreign girl’s pallet. In both cases the boy lost his masculinity, suffered extreme humiliation before his peers, and, only with the greatest difficulty, persuaded his paramour to restore him to manhood (Barrios, 1949:60–63; Tax, 1950, T44).

Witches, who assume the form of cows, are reported from Mita (Parsons, 1936:64; Radin and Espinosa, 1917:107), and Chan Kom (Redfield and Villa, 1934, T11, T12). In neighboring Chenalhó, the soul of a male witch can charge through one’s dreams in the shape of a bull—“A man’s kercfief is its horns; his belt is the tail” (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:180). Tonik’s own daughter was once the target of a dream cow, whose attacks were foiled after she scrambled onto the roof of her house and, with the expertise of a toreador, waved her mother’s shawl at the enraged beast. After a short family deliberation at the breakfast hour, this animal was determined to be a neighbor as well (Laughlin, 1976, D174). See also T75 and notes.

Birth in Totolapa

When babies are born in Totolapa, they go... they have caves. When they are born, as soon as they are bathed, [the midwives] cut their cords. When they have finished cutting them, the [babies] are changed. Their blouses are put on. Their skirts are put on. They are wrapped up carefully. They aren't given anything to eat. They aren't given anything to drink. [The people] just go to lay them down that way. Three days they lie in their caves. When the three days are up, if they are alive the people] take them away. They go to nurse them. They give them the breast.

Two weeks after the baby’s birth, it seems, they hold a fiesta. They baptise it, but that’s because the baby survived all those days when they went to leave it.

Now when it has survived, it seems, it is baptised. They celebrate. They find a godmother and a godfather for it.

It’s fine now. Happily, the baby is baptised. They know that the baby appears strong. It is fine. That’s why that girl [from Totolapa I just told you about whom my neighbor] went to talk to, did what she did. In the same way she was strong enough to survive those three days and three nights where they went to leave her in the cave.

7A la li 7unen k’al ch7ayan ta Natijolome ta la xba, 7oy la xch’eni, 7a li ti k’al ch7ayane naka no la ch7atin, stuch’ ti smixik’e, mi laj stuch’bel 7une, chk’extraat chlapat sk’u7 chlapat sztek chvole ech’el lek, mu7nuk 7o k’u chak’beik slajes, mu7nuk 7o k’u chak’beik yuch’, yu7un yech chba spuch’an ech 7un, 7oxib la k’ak’al ta spuch’ taj ta xch’enik 7une, mi tz’aki 7oxib k’ak’al mi kuxul 7isakub ta 7oxib k’ak’al ta xik’ik ech’el, chba xchu7untsak chak’beik xchu7.

Va7i 7un, ti mi sta vo7-lajuneb k’ak’al ya7el yayanel 7a li 7unene, tpasik k’in, chak’beik yich’-vo7, 7a li pero yu7un 7ikuch la yu7un ti 7unen ti jayib k’ak’al bu 7a yakele.

7Ora, k’al kuchem xa yu7un ya7el 7une, chich’ vo7 7une, tpasik k’in 7un, tssad7ebik xch’ul-me7 xch’ul-tot.

Va7i 7un, lek xa 7un, jun xa yo7on chich’ vo7 ti 7unen 7une, snajojik ti tzotz ya7el chlok’ ti 7unen 7une, lek 7un, yech’o xal ti ja7 yech 7ispas taj tzeb 7a sk’oponel 7une, 7i yu7un ja7 yech tzotz 7ikuch yu7un taj 7oxib k’ak’al 7oxib 7ak’ubal 7a yake’ el ta ch’en 7une.
When it doesn't survive, when it is dead on the morning after those three days, they simply take it out of there and go bury it. When they have finished burying it, they return home. They haven't a child, it seems. But when they survive, then they are baptised. They celebrate. They eat and drink with their godmother and their godfather.

A similar account of Totolapa birth practices was given me by Romin Teratol, who added that their witches were powerful enough to kill all the chili and banana thieves who raided their crops.

The Spook and the Saints

Once there was a Spook who asked for permission from one, asked for permission from another. He went to the Church of the Holy Martyr [St. Sebastian]. “Marty, give me one or two of your children as presents, for I long to take them off to my house. They'll be company for me. I'll be happy [having someone] to talk to,” said the man who arrived. But it wasn't a real man, it was a Spook.

“Ah, I don't know. I don't know what my younger brother Larry [St. Lawrence] would think. Go talk to Larry! Who knows what Larry will tell you. If Larry tells you, Take them! then what else could I say?” said Marty. [The Spook] went to talk to Larry.

“Larry, won't you please give me one or two of your children, because you have many now. It isn't as if you hadn't any children, it seems. You have many children, it seems,” said the Spook. [That's what] he told Larry.

“Me, I'll never give away my children. I'll never give my children. I'm content with my children. They remember to bring me my flowers. They remember to bring me my candles, at dusk and at dawn. Even if it isn't every one of them, but when it occurs to them, when they remember to come, then I'm satisfied. I won't give my children. And you, what have you brought me? What is it? You, what will you give me? Step aside, nuisance! Please don't get me angry or I'll hit you,” said St. Lawrence.

Oh, [the Spook] waited awhile. Then he went to talk to the Holy Martyr. “Marty, favor me with one or two of your offspring, because I want them for company. I want to talk to them,” he said.

“Oh, but you are certainly telling a lie! It isn't because you'll befriend them. It isn't because you'll talk to them. You'll go stick them somewhere in the mountains, in the caves. It isn't because you know how to talk. But me, I'm satisfied that they sweep my house, tidy my house, that they come to look after my house. They always come to see me.
flowers. They always come to give me my candles. They always come to give me my incense. I'm happy with my children. It's true not all of them do that. Not all of them come to give me things like that. But whoever it is, they each take turns. One day, one. Another day, another. Or another day, none. But I'm satisfied with my children. You, what do you bring me? You, what do you offer me? You are just pester and pestering me at dusk and at dawn. What do you come bringing me? Oh, Marty, give me one of your children! Oh, Marty, give me one of your sons, give me one of your daughters! Even if it's a girl, that's good enough for me!" You say, you tell me. But as for me, I won't give away my children. I've been sick of this right from the start. Go, go to Johnny's House [St. John's]. Maybe it won't take long if you want to talk to him."

"Oh, I don't remember where Johnny's house is."

"Well, go talk to my younger brother, Larry! See what he tells you. Try him out! But as for me, I've said that I certainly won't give them away. I won't give them away, because I'm happy with them," he said. [The Spook] went. He just chattered away.

"Larry, give me one of your children, because I want one, I need one. I want company, I want someone to talk to. I'm happy if I have someone to talk to there where I live," said the horrible Spook at Larry's place.

You see, as for the awful Spook—"Oh, if you want one I'll give you one because I'm just sick and tired of this. You keep pestering me so. Go, go look! One's coming over there. Go look at that one! Go meet that one on the trail there! He's coming there on the path," said [Larry].

But it was a great big mule he went to hug. It was a good kicking he got. He landed way off, face up. I don't know if it was the back of his head that he struck. For a long time he felt the pain, while he stayed there in his house. The horrible Spook had returned home. He was sick. His head had been aching. I don't know if it was for one week or two, or how long it was until it got well. "You did that, Larry, you did that to me! Was it a human being? It was a great big mule!"

"It's because you can't see well, you're blind. You know you don't know how to look. A person was coming and he had a good laugh when you landed over there on your back," said Larry.

But you know, "If only you weren't so mean-hearted. Come on, I guess I'll talk to Marty. [I'll see] if he gives me [one]. If Marty says to me, Take him, then I'll take him for sure!" he said. [The Spook] went. He arrived there at Marty's. "Marty, favor me with one of your children, because I want company."

"7Aj, mi jna7be bu sna li Xune."

"7An, ba k'opo no 7a li kitzi'n Lol che7e, k'u xayute, mi yi yu7un layak'be proval kik, yan li vo7one yu7un kal ti mu xk'ak'a7a, yu7un mu xkak', yu7un bal xka7i," xi la. Bat la 7un, 7aj, te no 7ox x7i7on.

"7Lol, 7ak'bon junuk 7ach'amal yu7un ta jk'an ta xtun ku7un ta jk'anjul, ta jk'opon, bal no 7ox xka7i jk'opon i te yo7 bu nakalone," xi la ech'el ti ta Lol ti mu 7ik'alk 7une.

K'u la xavil ti mu j7ik'al 7une, 7a li "7Aj, chak'an junuk chakak'be, yu7un batz'i tavan xa xka7i te no 7ox xasa7son ta j-meke, batan 7avi taj xtal one, ba k'elo le7e nupo le7 ta be7e le7 xtal 7e7a ta jun sorale," xi la.

Bu, j-kot la yil ka7 smeyoj 7ik'ot 7un, lek la like ta tek'el 7un, taj to la javajitik 7ik'o7e.

Va7i 7un, mu jna7 mi spat sjol bu taj 7itijbat 7une, jal to la ya ya7ibe sk'u7ul taj ta sna 7une, 7isut la ech'el tzna ti mu j7ik'al 7une, te la 7ip 7un, 7ip to 7ox la ti sjol 7une, mu jna7 mi vacakib mi vo7-lajuneb k'ak'al k'u la xi bat 7un, ja7 to la te lekub 7une.

"Xapas ka ye7 7un, Lol, la x7elan 7acha7eleon 7une, mi krixchano 7un, mu krixchanouk lavak'bon 7une, yijil ka7 7une."

"Yu7un mu xk'ot 7asat, yu7un ma7-satot, mu xavil mu xana7 sk'e7e7e k'el avil te xtal ti krixchanoe, lek 7isk'el 7e7av ni k'al taj to javal lak'o7e," xi la ti Lole.

Bu xavil 7un, "7A, manchuk vo7ot no 7ox i toj pukui 7avo7one, la7 jk'opon kik i Maltile mi ja7 xiyak'be 7ik'ol mi xiyut i Maltile pero chba kik' 7un bil?" xi la 7un. Bat 7un, k'ot taj ta Maltile. "Maltile, k'uxubinon junuk lach'amalakte, yu7un ta jk'an ta jch7in, jk'an ta jk'opon bal no 7ox ka7i smeltzan"
I want [someone] to talk to. I’m content if they fix my meal when I go someplace.”

“Where in the world do you go?”

“Oh, I go to the churches, I go visiting at the houses. I go wherever I can find bread to eat. Because I only eat bread. I don’t eat tortillas,” he said.

“Where in the world is your bread? Where in the world do you get money to pay for the bread? It’s just stolen by you. Stupid loafer, step aside!” said the Holy Martyr.

“That’s why I’m asking you.”

“Oh, go, go take one! I’ve been sick and tired of this from the start. Go take one! There’s one coming on the Chamula trail,” he said. [The Spook] quickly went to look. As it turned out, he went and hugged a horrible hawthorn tree, too.

“But Marty, I’ve hurt myself badly. Thorns stuck in my mouth, thorns stuck in my face. You just tricked me. It certainly was a horrible hawthorn I hugged.”

“It’s because you can’t see! There he is walking away. It’s because you can’t see. Go look! There he is,” [Marty] told him again.

“I guess I’ll go look,” he said. So then he landed in the river, submerged [in the river], pushed off the bridge by the kick of a mule that was crossing over. He landed in the river, submerged in the river. God, at that time the river was full. He was carried off by the river as far as Pum-lajan 7Uk’um [Roaring River] or wherever it was the Spook was able to get out.

You see, he got out. He was tossed out by the flooding river. Probably he didn’t drown. Maybe nothing happened to him. So he came again to talk the same way. “You know, I fell in the river.”

“Don’t fall in the river! It’s because you walk on the edge of the bridge. The mule pushed you off, but mules walk on one side, people on the upper side. You can’t succeed the way you are. Don’t keep coming and making me lose my temper! You haven’t anything to say to me anymore. Go look for someone else to give you others. [See] if there is someone who will offer them to you, but me, I won’t give away my children. My children please me. My children are sick and tired of being frightened. You scare them so often. One came to complain yesterday. You see, you nearly dragged her out of her house. You see, you scared her. You see, you caught her chickens. You see, you killed her chicks. You see, you drank a water gourd full of eggs.

“Now, they were useful to my children to pay for my candles, to pay for my flowers. What happened to the poor [people’s] eggs? You broke all of them. You sucked all of them. Are you a weasel that you drank my children’s things? That’s why I won’t give jve7el la k’al bu chibate.”

“Bu ma xana7 xak’ot?”

“7An, chik’ot ta 7eklixaetik, yu7un chik’ot ta vula7al ta naetik, ja7 ti bu xba jsa7 yo7 kaxlan vaj jve7e, yu7un naka kaxlan vaj jna7 sve7el, mu jna7 sve7el vaj,” xi la.

Va7i 7un, “Bu ma lakaxlan vaj bu ma chatabe stojol li kaxlan vaj, naka 7avelek’ sonso jaragan k’ej aba!” xi la ti jch’ul-maltile.

“Yech’o me ti chiak’anbe 7une.”

“7An, batan, ba 7ik’o, batz’i ta xa xtavan xka7i, vo7ne ta likele, ba 7ik’o, 7a le7 xtal jun ta belel Chamu7e,” xi la. Ba la sk’el ta 7anil 7un, lajeltza yil ch’ix la smeyoj 7ik’ot noxtok 7un.

“Pero Maltiil, batz’i lilaj ta j-mek, 7i7och ch’ix ta ke, 7i7och ch’ix ta jsay, batz’i ye7ch 7alo7lo7on 7un, yil ch’ix jmeeyoj 7ik’ot a7a,”

“Yu7un mu xk’ot tasat, 7a la le7 xva7von ech’ele che7e yu7un mu xk’ot tasat, batan avil 7a le7 xlok’e,” xut la noxtok.

“Ba jk’el kik che7e,” xi la 7un. Ja7 la taj tz’ajal la k’ot ta 7uk’um, puje ta tek’el yu7un mu ka7 ch7ech’ ta ba k’o, tz’ajal la k’ot ta 7uk’um 7un, dyox, ja7 7a noj ti 7uk’um 7une, bat ta 7uk’um 7un, ta 7a li ta Pum-lajan 7Uk’um, bat ta 7uk’um 7un, 7a la li ta Pum-lajan 7Uk’um mi bu to la k’ot ta lok’el ti ti j7ik’al 7une.

Va7i 7un, lok’ la 7un, jipe lok’el ta nojel 7uk’um 7une, muk’ nan xjik’av 7un, muk’ nan k’u’ spase, ja7 la ye7ch tal yal noxtok. “Buy 7un, lip’aj ta 7uk’um.”

“Mu xap’aj ta 7uk’um yu7un ti7il ba k’o chaxanav ye7ch’o xal ti chap’aj ta 7uk’ume, 7a ti manchuk ti7il ba k’o laxanave che7e, 7a li nastixp’un ni ka7e, pero yu7un ka7 ch7ech’i ta j-jote, xi li krixchano ta 7ak’ole, yu7un mu xatojob chak li7e, mu xa xtal 7asokilan jjol, mu xa k’u’ xtal 7avalbon, ba xak’el 7o buch’u xayak’be yan, mi 7o buch’u xask’elanbee, yan i vo7one mu jk’elan jch’ama7tak bal xka7i jch’ama7tak tavan xa7i li jch’ama7tak ta sbi7ase, toj tol no la chasibtas, li7 7a sk’an parte jun voljee, va7i jutuk mu 7akil lok’el ta snae, va7i 7asibtase va7i 7atzakbe yalak’e, va7i 7amilbe svivichtake, va7i 7avuch’ j-p’ej pulum vo7 ton kaxlane.”

“7Ora, bal cha7i li jch’ama7tak 7une mi stojol jkantela mi stojol jnichim, k’usi ti ston yalak’ proveetik 7une, 7avok’anbe skotol, 7avuch’anbe skotol, mi sabenot chavuch’anbe k’usuk yu7un i jch’ama7tak, ye7ch’o mu xa k’u’ xakak’be, k’ej aba
you anything. Step aside! Go on! Go to Johnny's country! Try it! He has lots. He has lots of children. But me, mine can be counted. I just have a few little children. Take a look [and see] if Johnny will give his to you,” said [Marty].

[The Spook] arrived in his land, Johnny's land. “But what can I think up? What can I do? Would it be a good idea if I bought a candle? Would he be pleased with a candle? Or should I buy him cane liquor, maybe? If I tell him Let's drink! would he drink?” said the Spook. “Eh, but if he doesn't drink [my liquor]! It's better if I buy a candle,” he said. He planted his candle at the church door so that the saint would hear him out, so that the saint would come out. Maybe he thought he would come out to talk. He rang the bell. “Bong!” went the bell at midnight. Oh, the poor Chamulans were scared. The Chamulans went. They went, went to look at their church.

“The robber has already entered the church. There's no time left. Our saints will die. Let's go look! Let's go take care of our church!” they said. The Chamulans blew their horns. They assembled. They swarmed out. The horrible Spook was scared. He fled, too, because the Chamulans gathered like that.

“But can't I find even one church that will be kind to me? Look, Johnny didn't give me even one of his children. His children gathered together. Their guns were cracking, just to kill me.”

“You see, I fled. I was scared. That's why I came,” he told his Spook friend. He went to tell him at his cave.

“But go! It's you who have always gone out. Do your best now that your face has been seen already, it seems. Go talk to him, but talk to Johnny alone! Johnny, give me one of your children. You have too many. You can't be happy letting them eat fish, letting them eat June bug grubs, letting them eat maggots. That isn't what you should give them. Give me one! Me, I won't eat him, not me! I want him for company,” you tell him!” the other one said.

[The first Spook] arrived there. He went to tell him that. “Give me one!”

“Go take her! That's it! I'm sick and tired of this now,” said [Johnny].

But you know the woman given to him was a little old lady. But the little old lady wasn't good for anything! She couldn't even see. Quickly at vespers he went to catch the little old lady. The little old lady just fainted with fear when the horrible Spook carried her off. “Where are you taking me, son? Where are you taking me, son? Where are you going to leave me, son?” she cried when she was carried off.
"Wait, Nanita! Wait, Nanita! Wait, Nanita!" answered the horrible Spook.

"Where are you going to leave me, son? But I know my house has been left far behind already. I know my house is far away. Where are you leaving me?" That's what the little old lady was screaming.

"This is how you shocked me. The little old lady gave me is dead already. The old woman you gave me. She wasn't alive. I just arrived and threw her in the cave when he arrived. She stood there. The little old lady slept.

It was just "Darling, let's sleep together! Darling, eat!" the Spook was trying to say to her. God, the little old lady didn't move now. She was just speechless. At daybreak the next day the little old lady was dead.

That horrible Spook went to offer candles. "This is how you tricked me. The little old lady you gave me is dead already. The old woman you gave me. She's not alive. I just arrived to lay her down in my house. She only said to me, Where are you going to leave me? I told her, Wait, Nanita, I'm going to take you home! Wait, Nanita, I'm going to take you home! I thought she was fine. The little old lady you gave me is dead already. I thought she was alive," said the horrible Spook. He went to Johnny. The little old lady he was given was very, very old. The little old lady he was given was very, very old. The little old lady hadn't the strength to speak anymore. She died of fright.

You see how it was, what it is that happened long ago. The way the Spooks asked and asked permission of the saints, it seems. It was just one little old lady that he had given to appease him. Not many were given. The last time he went to ask for one he was given a boy. But the boy was riding a horse. [The Spook] endured the horse's kicking. The boy fell. Then [the Spook] grabbed him and carried him off. The horse was left standing there. That was surely the first time he won. He just went and stuck the boy in a cave.

You know another time at the place where clay is dug [for making pottery] an old Chamulan lady was digging clay, it seems. She had a little girl. Her little girl was maybe twelve or fifteen years old or so.

"Take your clay, daughter! Go take it home!" an old lady that he was given to appease him. Not many were given. The last time he went to ask for one he was given a boy. But the boy was riding a horse. [The Spook] endured the horse's kicking. The boy fell. Then [the Spook] grabbed him and carried him off. The horse was left standing there. That was surely the first time he won. He just went and stuck the boy in a cave.

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"Where are you going to leave me, son? But I know my house has been left far behind already. I know my house is far away. Where are you leaving me?" That's what the little old lady was screaming.
to eat the barred one? See which one! Kill it! Then put aside my share for me. I'll come back to eat. As for me, I'm going to bring food for us," said the horrible Spook.

"All right," answered the girl. But she was upset, stuck in a deep cave. She cooked her meal. She had pots, bowls, gourds, whatever [she needed] to prepare her meal. She prepared it. She ate.

But you know [the Spook] just ate meat, not tortillas, not the things we eat. He just had meat.

They ate. They ate the meat. The Spook arrived. He had carried off a crate of bread. "Here is the bread for your meal. Cook your meal! Eat! You have nothing to worry about. Please don't be sad!" he said.

But you see, on the third night after her arrival the girl had a child. A little baby Spook was born. As for the baby Spook, the woman took sick [because of him]. The woman told how her child was born, the little baby Spook, it seems. "Nanita! Nanita!" that's how the baby Spook talked. Who knows if it grew up in one night. Hm!

Who knows how the Spook grew up to talk that way. The girl was frightened by it. "Why does my child talk like this? Why does it say Nanita, Nanita, but can it be some kind of dirty business? Could his father be a devil?" she said. For the poor girl didn't know what it was that had carried her off.

You see when hunters passed by on the trail, "Hoo heigh, come take me out! Look at me, because I'm helpless. I'm sick now. I don't want to be here anymore. The cold is terrible. I'm suffering terribly from the cold where I am. I hadn't any [warm] clothes when I was brought here. Who are you?" she asked. "Is it you, uncle?"

"It's me, niece. What do you want, for I've come looking for you?" asked the gentleman. "What do you have to tell me, niece?"

"I came here. I'm sick. I have a child now. It's the child of the man I came with. Take me out, uncle!"

"Wait, I'll get my lasso, I'll get it. I'll get you out on condition, niece, that your husband isn't there. He'd kill us. [We'll get you out on condition] that he doesn't shoot us," said the [other] Chamulans.

"No uncle, he's gone to bring bread for us. Don't be afraid, uncle! Don't be afraid! Please take me away, uncle. I'm already beginning to swell here in the frightful cold, uncle. Take me away!"

"Grab the lasso, tie it around your waist! Grab the end of it!" he told her. He threw his lasso down [to
Three lengths of rope went into the cave. Ooh, it was hard getting the woman out.

But you see, “Nanita! Nanita!” said the horrible Spook coming up hanging on to her skirt. Her child [was clinging] to the hem of her skirt.

Pull it off with your hand, niece! Throw it off! It’s on the hem of your companion in deviltry!” said her uncle.

“All right, uncle,” she said. With one hand she held on to the rope, with the other hand she grabbed it and threw it down. That “Nani—ta!” could still be heard inside the cave from that horrible baby Spook.

Then the woman came out. So then they took her away. They went to leave her at her home. They looked for the girl’s house. They went to leave her at her home.

The poor girl had already begun to swell up. It was a sign of her having been submerged in water. Who knows how many days—she was submerged for a long time in water. Because it seems that her dirt had washed off. Her face was completely white. That’s what the face of that poor girl was like.

But she didn’t last long. It was only three months and three weeks that she was alive. She died. She just reached home and died. The swelling had already begun. She just reached home and died.

This account of the Spook’s attempts to win the cooperation of the venerable saint of Zinacantán, St. Sebastian, or alternatively of his younger brother, St. Lawrence, patron of Zinacantán, or failing that, of the patron saint of Chamula, St. John, so that they will provide him with company is perhaps Tonik’s most masterful narrative. St. Sebastian’s suggestion, that St. John might contribute some of his children because he has so many, is a true reflection of the much higher population of Chamulans. It is a widely held belief of Zinacanteces that their patron saint guards his children with far greater zeal than does St. John.

It is not clear to me whether the Chamulan girl was rescued by her uncle or whether the man was simply a fellow countryman, for among Chamulans men would normally be addressed by the term jun tot, “uncle.”

Tonik gives her story an authentic ring by putting in the Chamulan girl’s mouth words from the Chamulan dialect such as 7oronone for “heart” rather than Zinacantec 7o7one, and ve7ikutik for “eat” rather than ve7ikotik.

The opening acts of this epic are outlined in Tale 68, while the final act appeared in modified form in Tale 145.
When we first met, Chep Xantis was a puppeteer of the National Indian Institute. He was hired to spread "civilization" among the Indians of the highlands. Flamboyant yet solid and straightforward, he won the respect of Ladino and Indian alike. Chep's father had died when the boy was only a year old. Two of his older brothers were drafted into the army and never returned. After learning Spanish and working for the Institute for many years, he was hand-picked to run for the magistracy of Zinacantan. Winning the election, he stepped out of his Ladino clothes and into traditional costume. His decisions were so consistently fair that he became the most popular magistrate to have served within recent memory. Since then he has returned to the Institute, zipping himself up in a simulated leather jacket. Assigned to posts far from home, he bewails his fate, yet how else could he receive a secure income? I last heard his voice ringing out over the San Cristóbal radio advertising the soft drink Fanta—in Tzotzil!

Thirteen years ago Chep was the first Zinacantec whose voice I captured on tape. His mother used to gab about the past, but he confessed he never had paid much attention to her. In fact he could only remember one tale, and that he told with his throat so tense he nearly choked on it.

Two years earlier I had ignored the dire warnings of Ladinos not to venture in Indian towns alone, and had walked to Zinacantán Center to spend a night in Chep's house (which later, after a bottle of vermouth, he rented to me for ten pesos a month). My notes of this visit sound an echo from the far past,
but they also set the stage for the dark doings of the Charcoal Cruncher:

With startling abruptness I broke out of the cornfield onto the tiny square of packed earth which serves as Chep's front porch. A quavering "Buenas tardes" brought Chep leaping out of his doorway (he later confessed he thought I must have been some Ladino come to kill him). His home is in traditional style—one room 13' X 15', walls of mud-daubed wattle, a peaked thatch roof topped by a cross. Inside, sitting on the ground around the fire, were Chep's mother, his wife, his five-year-old daughter, Maruch, and his eleven-month-old son, Maryan.

The women fired questions at Chep, Maruch pressed close to her mother, staring at me wide-eyed.

The parents were very indulgent. Each time that Maryan began to cry he was offered the breast—through a slit in the side of his mother's blouse. Maruch was kept happy with peanut brittle brought from San Cristóbal. Even when Maryan broke a pottery bowl the parents only laughed.

At about eight o'clock the mother climbed into bed with Maryan, and grandmother with Maruch. There is a genuine double bed for Chep, wife and baby on the outside edge, protected by an encircling arm. I listened to the sounds of the night; within the hut the falling of burnt embers, the snores of the aged one, the rustling of Maryan on the bed, and the cat on the roof. The hut seemed wrapped in cricket song. Occasionally the steady sound would be punctuated by the soft laughter of neighbors, and every few moments the pulsing of a drum, lightened by the scarcely audible piping of a flute, would reach up from the church far below.

At 4:30 a.m. the wife sat up in bed, adjusted her blouse and skirt, stepped down to the floor, bent over and hoisted Maryan up on her back. [She] proceeded to fetch a pail of water to soak the corn and beans. A half hour later the grandmother arose, went out, came in, washed her peron, and regrind the corn dough. The two women faced each other silently, their faces lit by the yellow lamp-flame, their backs in wavellite motion, two black eyes peeping out of a white shawl. I wonder if the hollow sound of the corn being dropped by handfuls into the water, swirled around and finally ground as soothing to the sleep-filled husband as it was to sleep-filled me. It seemed to represent the security of the promise of another meal and the attentiveness of a faithful wife.

At 6:15 Chep was up and about. Chep was handed a cupful of water which was used for two mouthwashes, followed by much handwashing, then face-washing.

Breakfast over, we made out departure, slipping down the path. Chep's bright rose, blue, and yellow ribbons shining in the sun, resplendent amidst the bright green leaves of corn.

The Charcoal Cruncher
T47

Once, they say. . . . It was told to me at home. My mother told me about it long ago. There was a woman. She just cut off her head. It went out shouting. Then it was discovered who it was. When she woke up she was burnt. It went out shouting. Then it was discovered. It was seen that it was her. She didn't let herself be seen of course. But her husband spoke. "How did that happen to you? Where did you burn yourself?" asked her husband. He scolded her.

Bwéno, 7a ti vo7ne ta xalik chilo7iltabat ta jna chislo7iltabe jme7 ti vo7ne, 7oy la jun 7antz, ja7 no la sjol ta stuch' lok'el ta xbat ta ju-jun na ta sk'ux 7ak'al, li 7ak'ale, ta sbik' ech'el 7i ja7 nan chanpan ya7el, pero li 7antzte, chvy ba7yi, 7i ja7 to k'alal vayem xa 7oxe, 7oy smalal te vayem chikta li smalale, ja7 te pumul xkom li sbek'tale ja7 no 7ox xbat ti sjole, ta xbat ta ju-jun na ta xk'ux 7ak'al, ta ssibtas krixchanoetik, ti mi 7ilate, ta xjatav la lok'el ta 7ora, xbalet xa la muyel ta nuk' na.

Va7i 7un, jna7tik mi j7ak'-chamel mi k'usi nan ya7el taje, jna7tik ta spay chamel 7i bu sk'ot ta ju-jun na chak taje, ti yu7un la chalik li krixchanoetik ta xak' chamel ta x7ipajik 70, k'usi, ti mi xi7ik 70e yu7un ta xchamik, por 7eso ja7 yech chalik chi7a7i vo7on chak taje.

7Ora lavie, ch'abal xa bu xvinaj, mu xa bu xka7i yech pero ti vo7ne 7ep to 7ox la ta ja7mek, naka to 7ox la ja7 yech krixchanoetik ti vo7ne 7ep chilik ta j-mek jk'ux-7ak'al ta ja7mek, ja7 no 7ox sjol xbalet, ta sk'ux 7ak'al ta ti7 k'ok', k'usi.

7Oy jun bweltae, 7ipa7iat la, 7ik'ebbat la ech'el k'ak'al vo7, x7avet xa la lok'el 7un, ja7 to la vinaj 7o ti buy 7a li yajval 7une, k'ak'em xa la 7isakub 7un, ja7 to vinaj 7o 7ilat 7o ja7 7une, mu xak' sba 7iluk a7a, pero 7iylal li smalale. "K'un x7elan 7apase, bu lak'ak'?" xi li smalale. 7ililin la.
"I don't know where I burned myself," she said. But he spied on her the night after. He learned what she was doing and he saw her cut off her flesh and leave it. And [he saw] that her head left. Then he saw that it was his wife who was doing it. That's why he spied on her. He saw her. That was the only way that the husband saw it was her. He put salt on her neck and when her head arrived it no longer stuck on. It was just rolling about. Then it became known. She died. And when she died it became known. He went to bury her. You see, he went to bury her in the cemetery. It was discovered that she was the one. That was the end of her.

See also T12, T81, T82, and their notes, T60, and T175.

"Pwes mu jna7 buy lik'ak'," xi. Pero 7ispa7i la ta jun 7ak'ubal noxtok li yajnil ti k'u tzpase, 7i 7iyil la ti stuch' komel li sbek'tale, 7i ti 7ibat ti sjole ja7 to te 7iyil 7o ti ja7 yajnil li taj x7elan spas 7une, por 7eso yech'o 7ispa7i la 7un, 7iyil la 7un, ja7 solel 7iyil ti ja7e, li vinike, 7iyak'be la 7atz'am taj sjole, 7i k'alal 7ik'ot xa li sjol 7une, mu xa bu stzak sba yech xa la te xbalet un, ja7 to te vinaj 7o 7un, 7icham, 7i ti chame ja7 te xvinaj 7o 7ibat smukel, k'usi, bat smukel ta mukenal, 7ivinaj 7o ti ja7 7une, te laj 7o 7un.
Manvel K’obyox

I'm sorry to say it was pretty well agreed long before he was laid to rest in a pine box that Manvel K’obyox had become an old fool. He had known better days in his youth, and that had assured him if not respect at least a bit of tolerance.

At the age of ten he had left Zinacantán Center to work in San Cristóbal to help pay off the debts that his father had accumulated during his term as an officer in the religious hierarchy. When he was fifteen Manvel (pronounced Monvé) came home and attended school for five years. His ability to speak and write Spanish won him the nomination for sacristan, a post he served faithfully for the unprecedented span of fifteen years, followed by three years as scribe. After such auspicious beginnings, it is surprising that he never rose above the first level in the hierarchy. When I knew him, at the age of sixty-three, he was eking out a precarious living as a salt merchant and a corn farmer, but as he complained querulously to me, "Even the dogs are eating my corn!"

On Christmas Eve we happened to meet in front of the church where the godparents of the two Christ Children were passing out drinks. Manvel asked me to buy him a drink for the occasion. When a Ladino suggested he take advantage of the godparents' generosity, he protested, his voice heavy with scorn, "Their liquor's not worth a nickel!" Then he lectured us on their outrageous stinginess. "But buy me a drink. It's my birthday!" We were joined by the tiresome Ladino who soon declared he was leaving, at which old Manvel turned to me and loudly confided, "Chickens and turkeys go to roost early, but we are men!"

I recall one rainy afternoon walking to San Cristóbal and seeing Manvel topple monumentally over the horizon into the mud. I watched him lying convulsed in drunken laughter while his wife, also laughing, tried to gather up his hat and his pack.

Once, when Romin Teratol and I were travelling together on the town truck, Romin gullied the old man with some tall tale. When he realized that he
had been the dupe, Manvel laughed good-naturedly. Romin later remarked to me that old Manvel was a fool, but sometimes he was clever. Romin repeated the town gossip—how when he would ask for his meal his wife would tell him to get it himself. As a shaman, Manvel's wife was well-supplied with gifts of liquor. Once, they say, in a drunken brawl, she broke his leg and a rib, too.

Then there was the day after the fiesta of St. Lawrence when the old reprobate peered at me sulkily through the jail bars, his lower lip drooling and shaking as he protested his innocence. The whole fiesta, where had he been?—languishing in jail! It seems a crazy gringo had come to town. Manvel had sized up the prospects and approached the man with a piece of paper in hand. He asked the man to contribute fifteen pesos to the patron saint. He shoved the paper at him and instructed him to sign his name on the top line, just below where it stated the holy purpose of the gift. When the gringo had obliged and asked Manvel to whom he should give the money, Manvel mumbled, “To me, of course!” The shrewd old bird pocketed the pesos and shuffled off, only to be arrested. He claimed he was going home to buy some rockets for St. Lawrence. He swore he hadn’t given the gringo permission to enter the church, nor had he used the money to buy another swig. “But that magistrate, the bastard, was drunk and wouldn’t listen to me!”

When I first met Manvel in his home, he told me his memories of the Revolution and then “The Rabbit in the Melon Patch.” He asked me why I didn’t live in his house and work with him, because “That Romin [Teratol] doesn’t know anything!” When we finally agreed to set a date for a recording session, he demanded that I buy him a twenty cent candle to light before the saint on his house altar the night before he imparted his knowledge to me.

On our first day of work, Manvel examined the tape recorder, asked me where the words were stored, and how they entered. With no self-consciousness he told me twenty-two tales during a four-hour stretch. After each tale he demanded a playback. He was astonished and pleased at the faithful reproduction, commenting that it was unlike the records in the cantina that always went too fast. When he heard his own laugh or an emotion-filled expression, he would chuckle with both embarrassment and delight. After each replay he nodded approvingly and commented, “That’s good, too.” When I would ask about a tale that was unfamiliar to him, Manvel would invariably reply with absolute finality, “There is none like that.”

When the afternoon came, Manvel was so pleased with himself that he lowered his fee from eight pesos to five which he instructed me was the wage for a day of labor in the corn field. When we reached his home, for the first time since I met him, it was he who offered me a half pint.

Manvel’s narratives are marked by endless statements of the obvious, which transform his most serious discourses into absurdities, absurdities fully recognized by all but himself.

Despite his tiresome, often silly repetitions, Manvel’s tales were told with great emotion. As we tried to transcribe the tapes, whenever we reached a dramatic moment, Romin Teratol could not refrain from bursting out in a tone of sympathetic amusement, “Ah, the old man!”

Manvel’s tales, though varied in content, reflect a surprising number of folk versions of Biblical stories that he stoutly maintained were related to him by his parents. No tale has been told more fondly, though, than old Manvel’s gloating portrayal of the little rabbit who mercifully gulls the credulous coyote—Manvel’s impassioned identification with the clever rabbit is almost heartbreaking, for despite an encyclopedic store of local history, his perpetual sheepish grin masked some tragic flaw that converted his life into a shambles.

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Rabbit in the Melon Patch

There was a rabbit. There was a rabbit. It went into the garden. There were melons. There were watermelons.

When the owner looked, there was just rabbit shit in the melons. The rabbit had left its droppings. “But why is this here?” said the owner. “The melons are bad. The watermelons are bad. Just pure rabbit shit,” he said.

Then, “We’ll make an experiment,” he said. “I guess I’ll make a doll,” he said. He told his wife.

“Do it!” she said.

“We’ll see if that’s what it is. We’ll see what gets into the fruit, into the melons. We’ll see what it is.”

But they hadn’t seen that it was the rabbit. No, they didn’t know.

You see, [the rabbit] arrived the next night. They had set the doll up there, a wax doll.

“What are you looking for here?” said Rabbit when it arrived. Since it was a doll it didn’t answer. It didn’t know how to talk.

“Get out, I’m coming in!” said Rabbit. “Move over, I’m coming in!” It was blocking the place where his path was, it seems. It was standing there so that he had no way to come in.

“Then if you won’t move over, I’ll hit you,” said Rabbit.

Nothing. He waited again a bit.

“If you don’t get out, I’ll hit you,” he said. He hit it. Then his hand stuck in the wax, in the doll.

“Why did you grab my hand? I’ll give it to you again.” He hit it again. His second hand stuck.

“Why do you grab my paw? I’ll give a kick then.” He kicked it with his other foot, too. The other foot stuck, too.

Then he gave it to him with his other foot, too. He wanted to stamp on it. He gave it a kick, it seems. Then all four stayed [tight]. His hands, his feet stuck there.

At dawn the melon owner went. The owner of the garden went, it seems. “Ah well, look! It’s just what I thought it was. I knew him already. I thought it was a robber,” said the owner. “I’d thought it was something worse. It’s [only] the rabbit,” he said. “It’s there now,” he said. He told his wife. “It’s there now. It’s stuck there to the wax. It’s caught there now,” he said. “What shall we do to it?” he said.

“We won’t do anything much to him. Come on! We’ll heat a piece of metal. Come on! We’ll stick it up his ass,” said his wife.

“That’s good,” he said.

“Then go and get firewood, go get firewood to heat the metal.” [The rabbit] was left on the top. It was left on top of the roof, [you know] just like the roofs are here. It was left lying there.

The coyote came along. “What are you doing here, Uncle Rabbit?” he asked.


“Meltzanol!” xi.

“Ba jk’eltik mi ja7, ta jk’eltik k’usi li7 chk’ot ta yut lo7bole, ta yut melone, ta jk’eltik k’usi.” Pero muk’ bu vinajem, mi ja7 li t’ule, ma7uk, mu txna7.

Va7i 7un, 7óra k’ot la ta jun 7o 7ak’ubal 7un, te svaj7anik 7a li munyeka 7une, sera 7une, munyeka.


Bwéno, “Lok’an chi7och!” xi la. “K’ej abal chi7och!” Smakoj 7i bu li sbeee ya7elee, te va7al, yo7 mu k’u cha7al x7och 7o 7une.

Bwéno, “7Entzáne ti mi yu7un mu xajal abae, chajmaj,” xi la. Va7i 7un, mu xtak’av, ch’abal. “Mi muk’ chahal, k’ej abal, 7abolajan yu7n chi7och,” xi la 7a li t’ule. 7A li, mu buch’u xtak’av, kómo mu sna7 xtak’av.

Bwéno, “Ta me xajmaj che7e,” xi la.

Bwéno, ch’abal, spas 7ora noxtok la jun j-likel.

Bwéno, “Mi muk’ chalok’, ta me xajmaj,” xi la. 7Ismaj la un, te nap’al 7ikom li sk’ob ta sera 7une, li ta munyeka 7une.

Bwéno, “K’un chatzak jk’obe chakak’be 7otro junuk mojuk xa noxtok.” 7Iyak’be 7otro j-moj 7itzak xchibil 7un, sk’ob 7une.

Bwéno, 7a li, “K’u yu7un chatzak jk’obe chakak’be patada che7e.” Slik la tek’el noxtok 7otro jun yok, tzak li jun yok noxtoke.

Bwéno, 7iyak’ xa li jun yok noxtoke, ta sk’an tztek’e, chak’be patada ya7el, te kom xchibal xchanal sk’ob, yok te nap’al 7ikom 7o.


“Mu k’usi ta jnopbetik, la7, jk’ak’ubastik junuk tak’in la7, jpa7betik xchak!” xi li yajnil 7une.

Bwéno, 7a li, “Ja7 lek che7e,” xi.

Bwéno, “7Entzáne 7ak’o ba sa7uk tal si7, ba sa7o tal si7 yo7 chk’ak’ub 7o li tak’ine.” 7A li stuke te yo7 te kom ta jun ba, ta ba7, 7a li na, ta ba na la 7ikom chak k’u cha7al bu 7oy ba na li7e, te puch’ul 7ikom.

Bwéno, 7i7ik’ot la 7a li 7ok’i7l 7une. “K’u chapas li7 toe, Tio Konéjo?” xi la.
"I'm not doing anything," he said. "What do you think I should do? Because I'm going to be given a girl, whom I'm supposed to marry," he said.

"Whose daughter?"

"The king's daughter," he said.

"Oh, really! Why don't you marry her? The king has lots of money," said Coyote.

"But I don't want to, because I'm too little," said Rabbit. "I'm too little, and what's more the girl doesn't love me, because I'm too little. But you, if you want to, take her yourself," said Rabbit.

"Eh, but could you be telling the truth?"

"I'm telling the truth. You stay in my place. I'll leave you tied up. I'll leave. When they come to untie you then you'll take the girl," [Coyote] was told.

"Oh well. Eh, who knows," he said. He thought hard. He thought it over. "Okay. I can stay then," said Coyote. "Okay. I can stay." The owner of the melons arrived.

"Well, what are you looking for? You have no business here," Coyote was told.

"But it's because I'm staying as his successor in the garden."

"Then it's you whose ass I'll burn," Coyote was told.

Now his ass was burnt. He was punished. His ass was burnt with metal, with a wire or something.

When that was over they met on the trail. "What's up, Uncle Rabbit?" he said.

"What's up, Uncle Burnt-ass Coyote?" he said. Rabbit said.

"Oh, then it's you whose playing these tricks!" he said.

"No, it's because I heard the gossip that your ass was burnt," said Rabbit. "Oh, it wasn't me, because lots of us went for a walk, who knows which one it was," said Rabbit. "If you are giving a scolding, don't scold! Let's go look for something to eat! There is a cheese in the water," he said. "We'll drink the water," he said. "And I'll take the cheese out."

But it was the reflection of the moon in the water when [the moon] was full.

Now they looked at the cheese in the water, a round cheese, it seemed. But not, it was the Virgin, the moon, it seems. It was in the water. So they looked at its reflecton. It went from the sky into the water. The fool believed it. He believed it was cheese. They drank lots of water. "Drink!" said [Rabbit]. "Drink, try hard! I'm drinking and drinking." And he hadn't swallowed any at all, the bastard! He hadn't swallowed at all. Coyote tried hard.

"Almost, there," said [Rabbit]. "Try harder!" he said. "We've almost reached it. We'll probably win out soon," he said.
Then, "I'm drinking a lot, too," he said. "Me, I can't drink much, because my stomach is too small," said Rabbit. "You, your stomach is big. Drink a lot!" he said.

Before he realized it Coyote's belly was bursting with water. [You know] he drank a lot.

They never reached what they were after. Nothing. Then it burst. [Coyote's] belly burst.

Before he realized it Coyote's belly was bursting with water. [You know] he drank a lot.

They never reached what they were after. Nothing. Then it burst. [Coyote's] belly burst.

The next time, too, another time they met. "Hey, what's new?" said [Rabbit]. "Nothing. Are you in good spirits?" said [Coyote]. "I'm in good spirits."

"But I feel just terrible," said Coyote. "Because of what you all did to me. My ass was burnt," he said. "But it wasn't me, brother. It wasn't me. There are so many of us. Do you recognize me? Is it me? Really, we are all alike. But it wasn't me. I have other friends. But maybe it was one of them who bothered you," he said. "No, don't bawl me out. Let's go for a walk! Let's go look, let's go look for something to eat! Let's go look for fruit!" he said. There was a black sapote tree as we call it, a zapote negro. "Well, I'll climb up. I'll climb up and pick them. Open your mouth!" he said. "Get them!" he said. "I'll throw them down to [you]." said Rabbit.

Coyote opened his mouth. He was waiting for them to come down, since [Rabbit] was picking them off the tree. They landed between his jaws. They landed hard in his mouth. His teeth were knocked out.

You see he didn't die from it. He went on his way again. "All right," said [Rabbit].

Well, [Rabbit] spoke to him again. "Oh no, you bother me so much. I nearly died. All my teeth fell out," said [Coyote].

"Oh, but it wasn't me. [It was] somebody else," said [Rabbit] again. The rabbit is tricky. He's a great trickster. "Well, it's not much. If you want, I'm to be given a girl. But they say we have to become cowboys," said [Rabbit].

"Do you want to, because I can't run fast, I'm so small," said Rabbit. "You're bigger. You can run fast. Take the lasso," said Rabbit. "But tie the end of the lasso around your neck! If you pull with your paw it's no good. It might get loose from you. No, but if it's tied around your neck, your neck will do the work," the fool was told.

"Well, all right then." [Coyote] tied the lasso. He threw the rope at the cow. He lassoed it. Before he realized it he was dragged off. He went off, since it pulled tight around his neck. He died.

You see, that's how Rabbit won. That's how the story ends.

7Entónse, "7A li vo7one chkuch' ta j-mekuk 7uk," xi. "7A li vo7one mu xu7 kuchar 7ep, yu7un toj bikt' jch'ut li vo7one," xi li t'ule. "7A li vo7ote muk' 7ach'ute, 7uch'an 7e-7p ta j-mekl!" xi.

Bwéno, k'alal ya7e, che7e, yu7un xa cht'om xch'ut la li 7ok'il 7une, ta vo7 7une, toj 7ep 7iyuch' 7un.

Bwéno, muk' bu staik k'u staik, ch'abal, k'alal 7it'one, 7it'om xch'ut.

Bwéno, ta yan to bwelta noxtok 7un, jul 7o xa bwelta 7isnup sbai7un 7un. "7Ay k'u xi?" xi.

"Mu k'u xi, mi lek 7avo7on?" xi.

"Lek ko7on."

"Pero li vo7one toj chopol ko7on," xi la li 7ok'il 7une. "Porko k'u 7acha7leikon 7ik'ak' jchake," xi.

"Pero mu vo7nikon, 7ermáno, mu vo7nikon, toj 7epotikotik ta j-mek, mi7n chavo7hitikinon, mi vo7on 7un, melel, parejo, parejo li vo7hitikotik 7a, pero mu vo7nikon, 7oy yan 7o jch'í7lita7, pero te nan bu'ch'u layilbajine," xi la 7un. "Mo7oj, mu xa7ili-7n, battik ta payxaxal, ba jsa7itik, ba jsa7itik k'u jla7estik, ba jsa7itik lo7bol!" xi la. 7Oy 7a li 7uch xaktik7un li sapote negroe 7une. "Bwéno chimuy vo7on ba jitch' tal xajach' lavee!" xi. "Ch'amol!" xi. "Te ta jten yalel tal," xi 7a li t'ul 7une.

Bwéno, 7isjach' la ye li 7ok'il 7une tzmala chyal tal, kómo te stul tal ta te7 7un, skat'oj la k'o7 7un, tzinil k'o7 ta ye 7un, kolesbat stanal ye 7un.

Va7i 7un, muk' xcham 7o 7un, bat xa 7otro jun bwelta 7un. "Bwéno," xi la.


"7Aj pero mu vo7nikon, yan 7o," xi la noxtok 7un.

Manya li t'ul 7une, manya ta j-mek7un. Manya li t'ul 7une, manya ta j-mek7un. "Bwéno mu k'usi che7e, mi xak'ane 7oy chi7ak'bat jun tzeb, pero yu7un chi7ochotik ta vakeroal la," xi.

Bwéno, "Mi xak'an li vo7ote porke vo7one mu xu7 xi7anilaj, 7i 7ich'o lariatae," xi la li t'ule. "Pero xachuk ta 7anuk' li sba li riatae, ti yu7un xanit ta 7ak'obé, mu xtun repente xkol 7avu7un, mo7oj ti7n yu7un chukul ta 7anuk'e, te chak' pwersa lanuk' 7une," x7utat 7a li sonso 7une.

"Bwéno yechuk che7e." 7Ixchuk li sriata 7une, 7isten li riata li vakax 7une, 7ixoxjbe 7une, k'alal ya7i 7une, 7ikile ech'el 7un, bat 7un ja7 7ismit' ti snuk' 7une, 7icham 7un.

Va7i k'u cha7al spas 7o kanal li t'ul 7une, laj 7o sk'opolal ye7ch 7un.
This tale of Br'er Rabbit was first told to me by Manvel after he had recounted his memories of the Revolution. When I remarked that General Pineda had been very clever, Manvel agreed, but added, “Now I will tell you about someone who was really clever!”

Throughout Mexico and Guatemala the stick-fast motif is followed by a series of tricks played on a gullible animal. Many of these episodes have also been recorded among the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest (Foster, 1945b:230). It appears that the rabbit-coyote cycle, so omnipresent in the New World, adopted many Old World elements. Foster has pinpointed the distribution of twelve frequently linked elements, eight of which occur in Zinacantan. Of these eight, only the sapote (or prickly pear) episode seems limited to the New World (Foster, 230–235).

In Middle American tales the Tar Baby is made of wax, though two examples from the Mazatec-Chinantec area of Oaxaca describe the doll as a wax Negro (Johnson, 1940:215). The clear favorite for trickster is Rabbit, and for dupe, Coyote. The first scene is usually set in a melon patch, but Rabbit’s fouling of the melons is peculiar to Guatemala (Recinos, 1918, T1; Teletor, 1955:147–151).

The bogus wedding and Rabbit’s protestation that he is too small are standard elements, as is Coyote’s red hot poker treatment. Even Rabbit’s mocking name for poor, unfortunate Coyote is not original to Zinacantan (Boas, 1912:272–276). See also T20, T21, T50, T90, T166, and their notes.

Adam and Eve
T54

Our Lord, you see, he died on the cross. On the third day he revived. When he came to life he worked forty days here in Zinacantan Center, here on the earth. He made the trees. He planted the corn fields. He planted everything there is, animals and everything. He made birds, cows, sheep, horses, birds, chickens, whatever. He made everything.

Now he planted two apple trees. “Well what can we do? But who will come to look after the apples?” said Our Lord, “I guess I’ll make a lump of mud. I’ll make a person, I’ll make one out of mud,” he said.

He made one. He blew on it three times. He blew on it. The mud turned into a person.

“But I’m still going to do something else. I’ll make a woman so there’ll be two,” he said. So he made the woman. He made a lump of mud. He molded it, too, into a person. He blew on it the same way. It turned into a woman.

Now he gave the man a name. He thought up the woman’s name—Adam, and the woman—Eve. He named them a long time ago.

“Now he gave the man a name. He thought up the woman’s name—Adam, and the woman—Eve. He named them a long time ago.

“You will watch this here. I am planting apples here. Then you will look after them,” he said. “Care for them, don’t steal them!” he said.

But you see, they stole the apples. Adam ate one. [The apple] didn’t go down; it stayed [right] here in his throat. Apple it’s called. It stayed there.

“As for you, you’re no good. You steal too much,” said Our Lord. When he said that, they 7a li kajvaltike, che7e, 7icham ta kruse, ta yoxibal k’a7al 7ixkux, 7a li, 7ikuxe, 7a li cha7-vinik la k’a7al 7i7batej li7 ta Jtek-lum li7 ta balame, 7istmelzan la 7a li te7e, 7istz’un chobtik, 7istz’un 7a li ku7usok no 7ox skotole, chonetik, k’utikuke, 7istmelzan mu7, li vakaxe, li chije, li ka7e, li mutetike, li kaxlan, k’utikuke, 7istmelzan skotol 7un.


Bwéno, 7ismeltzan la, 7ixvuch’ta 7oxib bwelta, 7ixvuch’ta, pas ta krixchano li 7ach’el 7une.

Bwéno, “Pero le7e 7u k’usi syémpre ta jnop, ta jmelzan junuk 7antz yox7 xkom cha7-vo7e,” xi la 7un. Ja7 ye7 7ismeltzan 7a li 7antze, 7ismeltzan jun 7ach’el, 7ispat noxtok, skwenta krixchano 7un, ja7 ye7 7ixvuch’ta, pas ta 7antz 7un.

Bwéno, 7óra 7iyak’be la sbi 7a li vinik 7une, 7isnopbe sbi 7a li 7antz 7une, 7Adan 7i 7Éva li 7antz 7une, 7isbi7in li mas 7antivo 7une.


Bu, 7iyelk’anik la li mansana 7une, 7islo7 la, mum’ xa xjelav ja7 la li7e 7ikom ta snuk’ 7une, mansana sbi 7un, kom 7un.

Bwéno, “Li vo7ote che7e mu xatun toyol cha7elk’aj,” xi 7a li kajvaltik 7une. K’alal ti 7iyil ti
weren’t given any more apples. They weren’t given any to eat. They’d stolen Our Lord’s apples. Because they had been given other apples [to eat]. These they were supposed to have guarded. These they were to guard as if they were the owner. [They were] to guard the fruit, not touch it. But they went and stole them. So they ate them. [The apple] stayed [right] here in his throat. It was left just like this as a sign.

The creation of man and woman from mud is common, of course, both to the Popol Vuh (Edmondson, 1971:19) and the Bible. It is also related by the Lacandóns (Cline, 1944:108, 110), Popolucás (Foster, 1945a:235-237), and the Nahua-speaking people of Tecospa (Madsen, 1960:125-126). I imagine that this belief forms a part of every Mesoamerican creation story, though its position within the sequence of events seems to vary widely. In Chenalhó man and woman were first made of mud, but they could not retain their form—just as in the Popol Vuh. Their second creation was from sturdier clay (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:157). Reminiscent of the Popol Vuh account of man’s wooden creation is an alternate Zinacantec belief that an early creation of man lacked joints and so could not kneel and pray.

The origin of the Adam’s apple is described in a number of creation stories (Gossen, T175; La Farge, 1947:60; La Farge and Byers, 1931:113; Madsen, ibid., Shaw, 1972:124-126; Stross, 1973; T5). In Santa Eulalia the serpent enticed Eve to eat an orange. She in turn convinced “Old Father” who swallowed it whole, and that is why only men have Adam’s apples (La Farge, ibid.). In Chamula the Jews urged Eve to eat the apple, and she herself, alas, swallowed it whole, thus giving rise to the Adam’s apple (Gossen, ibid.).

Chamulan concern with the evil of carnal knowledge does not seem to be shared by Zinacantecs. Romin Teratol added a sequel to Manvel’s story to the effect that, after Our Lord taught Adam and Eve the facts of life, they enjoyed each other’s company so much that they would sleep late, while marauding animals gobbled up the fruits of the garden. And so Our Lord decided he must invent a natural alarm clock. His invention has proved to this day to be most effective—the flea!

When the Soldiers Were Coming

They used to be very strong men long ago. There were three men. They talked to each other.

“What can you do? Can you do anything?” one of the friends was asked.

“Nothing. I can’t do anything,” said [the first].

“And you, what can you do?”

“Me, I can be a little Thunderbolt,” said [the next].

“Oh, you can do that?”

“I can.”

“And you, what can you do?”

“Me, I can, I can only be a Butterfly,” said [the third].

“And you, what can you do?” the three asked each other.

“Me, I can be a Whirlwind,” said [the first]. “I can be a Hurricane,” he said [finally].

Oh, then, they went to Tabasco. They took a trip, walking to Tabasco. [They were] merchants. They bought tobacco.

Now they spoke. “But if [what they say] is true we’d better watch out or we’ll die. The soldiers are coming now to kill us. If there were something we could do. If there were something we could do to them,” they said. “Go on, you go then!” Butterfly was told. He went to look. There was a cauldron of food cooking in Chiapa.

7Oy to 7ox la batz’i tzotz viniketik ti vo7one, 7ox-vo7ik la li viniketike, 7isk’opon la sbak. Bweno, 7a li, “K’usi xana7, mi 7u k’u xana7 li vo7ote?” xut la ti jun xchixile.

“Mu7yuk mu k’u jna7,” xix la.

“Vo7ote, k’u xana7 li vo7ote?”

“Vo7one, jna7 j-tz’uj chavok,” xix la.

“7Aa, xana?”

“Jna7.”

“7A li vo7ot 7une, k’usi xana7?”

“7A li vo7one, jna7, pepen no 7ox li jna7 li vo7one,” xix la li june.

“7A li vo7ote, k’usi xana7?” 7Iyalbe la sbak li 7ox-vo7ik 7une.

“7A li vo7one, jna7 sutum 7ik,” xix la 7un. “7Ik’al vo7 jna7,” xix la.

7Aj 7entonse, 7ayik ta Tabasko ta xanbal ta Tabasko chpaxyajik, jkomersyanteetik, smanik moy.

70ra, 7iyalik la 7un. “Pero mi yech te jk’eloy jba chilal 7un, chtal xa li soltero milvanuk 7une, 7a ti 7u k’usi k’u li jnolitik 7un, mi mu xu7 ti xba kakb’etike,” xix la 7un. “Batan 7ak’o batan vo7ot che7e!” x7utat 7a li pepen 7une. Ba la sk’el 7un, lakal la jun perol ve7elil 7un ta Soktom 7une.
You see, Butterfly was circling around. It laid [its eggs] in the food. They turned into worms. It stuck worms in the meal. Now the soldiers wouldn't eat. Now they wouldn't eat their food, because it had worms in it. They didn't eat their food.

[The soldiers] came on. They came up. They were coming now to kill people. They continued on. They arrived at [a place] called Vok'em Setz' [Broken Bowls]. There were lots of bowls spread out there, dishes. They were very beautiful. They were scattered on the trail, so that [the soldiers] would want them and be distracted. They would have died on the way if they had been distracted, but they weren't diverted. They didn't look at them. They continued on.

They arrived near Burrero as well. There is [a place] there called 7ik'al Vo7 [Hurricane]. It was because they fought there—[the Zinacantecs] fought using wind and rain. The soldiers nearly died there, but they didn't die. But they continued on. They weren't scared off by the wind and rain that was hurled against them. They weren't frightened by it. That's why the place there is called Hurricane.

They arrive at Petz Toj [Pine Tree]. The pine tree, the pine tree danced.

They weren't distracted by it either. They didn't look at all. They didn't watch at all. They didn't look at all. They continued on. Here to the east of Salinas there was a cross. There was a market there. But what a market! There were loads of things. There was fruit. There was everything, food, and whatever else for sale. But they bought, bought fruit, bought something to eat at the market then all of them would be left behind. They weren't distracted by the things for sale. They never bought anything. They never looked at anything.

They came on. They came on. They were just about to enter Zinacantán Center.
"The devils have come now. What can we do?" said the men. "Oh, but what? There's nothing left to do. They weren't even distracted. What can we do now?" they said.

"I don't know if it would be a good plan to flood the river," said [one].

"Oh, yes, indeed. We can do that," said the others.

"Let it flood, then!" said [one of the Zinacantecs]. Quickly he sent a torrential rain. In a minute he sent it. The river floored. In a minute all the soldiers were carried away. They went. Then that was the end of them. That's how the trouble ended, because they were carried away by the water. Then the elders won, long ago. Not until then did they win. The river is called Pum-lajan Uk'um [Roaring River]. There is a place they call Xlok' Yo' Ton [Rock Whose Heart Appears]. Because the rock used to have a heart, too. The rock was good-hearted, but they'd never looked at it either. They'd continued on, so that they were already entering Zinacantán Center. Then [the Zinacantecs—thought of that river. The river flooded. It swept them all away. They all went. Then that was the end of them.

Zinacantecs were renowned for their trading activities at the time of the Spanish Conquest. "The people of this town are [treated] like chiefs in every town in this whole region. And simply by being from Zinacantlan they are honored as merchants." (Ximénez, 1929:360). It was reported in 1774 that "they are inclined to work in the other provinces and in Tabasco, especially with fruit and the clothing of the land" (Dahlgren de Jordan, 1966:212). In 1819 they were still trading extensively in Tabasco, where they fell prey to numerous tropical diseases (Archivo General del Estado, 5:86-89).

The inclusion of Whirlwind, Thunderbolt, and Butterfly here is curious, as they usually are associated with battles against Guatemala.

My translation of 7Ik'al Vo7 as "Hurricane" perhaps should be changed to "Black Rain," an equally valid interpretation that occurs also in the Popol Vuh, shortly before the scene of the bathing girls:

A storm was just created;
A black rain was just created,
And mud was just created
Which they saw,
Which the tribes watched,
And their hearts just tired of hunting them,
And so they abandoned it (Edmonson, 1971:192).

See also T17, T25, and their notes.

The Flood

T96

The people used to be very evil long ago. They would eat their children. Wherever there were fat babies they would kill them and eat them.

Now, Our Lord punished them. It rained boiling water. They just covered themselves with rocks. On the back side of Sisil Vitz [Cecilia Mountain] they built boxes of stone there. But the water still passed through. They died there. They died there. The water flowed underground as it was very hot, boiling water. The world, then, the world was flooded. All those people, who used to be evil, died then.

Bwéno, “Tal xa me li pukuj 7une k'usi ta jnoptik?” xi la li viniketik 7une. “7Ej pero k'usi mu xa k'u stak' jnoptik mi, kómo 7ech' xa tal skotol, li k'u x7elan 7ich'aybetik yo7one, muk' bu sch'ay yo7onik, k'u ta jnoptik xa 7un?” xiik la 7un.

“Mu jna7 mi ja7 lek ta jnoptik, ta jnojestik li 7uk'ume,” xi la 7un.

“7Aj ja7 bi xa ja7 xu7,” xi la li yan 7une.

Bwéno, “Ak'o nojuk che7e!” xi. 7Iyak' la benos vo7 ta 7anil, j-likel 7iyak', no—j la li 7uk'um 7une, j-likel tame ech'el skotol li soltero la 7une, bat 7un, ja7 to te laj 7o sk'oplat 7un, laj 7o k'op yech 7un, porke tame ta 7uk'um 7un, ja7 to te kuch yu7unik 7a li moletik vo7ne la 7une, ja7 to kuch yu7un, 7a li 7uk'ume che7e, Pum-lajan 7Uk'um sbi, Xlok' Yo7one Ton xalbeik yu7un la 7oy to 7ox yo7on i tone, noxtok 7une, lek xa la yo7on li tone, pero muk' bu sk'elik noxtok, jelav tal ke yu7un xa ch7och xa tal ta Jtek-lum xa 7un, ja7 xa taj 7uk'um xa snopik 7une, noj i 7uk'um 7une, 7ech' sbek'el ech'el skotol, bat skotol, bat skotol 7un, ja7 to te laj 7o sk'oplat 7un.
The flood of boiling water appears to be restricted to the Chiapas highlands. In Larrainzar it is said to have followed the second creation of men, whose immortality aroused divine wrath (Holland, 1963:72). Chamulan myths refer to two causes for punishment—man's inability to speak (Gossen, T113) and his appetite for six-month-old babies (Gossen, T177).

Zinacantecs were not the only people who took refuge from the flood waters in stone boxes. The same vain attempt was reportedly made by the ancient Mixtecs (Dyk, 1959:3-4), Yucatecs (Redfield and Villa, 1934:330) and Kekchi of Belize (J. E. Thompson, 1930:166). See also T7, T55, T70, T142, T161, and their notes.

Why There Is Soul-Loss

Our Lord spoke. “They are going to die.” We were going to die. Our Lord wanted his children to die.

Thunderbolt heard. “If you destroy my house I’ll smash your house, too,” Our Lord was told. “You keep me from smashing your house you had better give me half your children,” said the Earth Lord, the Thunderbolt.

“Okay, you can take them,” he said.

That’s when soul-loss began. It began because Our Lord permitted it. “You can take half [the people],” said Our Lord. Our Lord didn’t use to give them. He didn’t want to give them. That’s why there didn’t use to be soul-loss. Even if we fell, [our souls] didn’t stay [in the earth]. But now if we fall, if we are frightened [our souls] stay [in the earth]. Don’t you see, now the Earth Lord, Thunderbolt, takes half of us.

Soul-loss is an illness usually suffered by young children after they have taken a spill. The symptoms are upset stomach and intestinal disorders. During the curing ceremony, the shaman beats the ground with pine boughs and whistles in a small gourd to call back the soul.

For a poetic rendering of this tale see Merwin, 1972.

When Christ Was Born

“Won’t you give me a place for the night?” said [Joseph]. He walked and walked. The Christ Child was about to be born.

“No, there’s no place to sleep. Go take a walk, beggar!” Our Lord was told—Saint Joseph [that is]. Because he was travelling with the Virgin. The Christ Child was yet to be born.

He went to still another town. “Won’t you please give me a place for the night, because my wife is sick,” said [Joseph].

“Oh, there’s no place to sleep. If you want you can go to the stable,” said [the owner].

“All right if you would be so kind, even if it’s a stable, because my wife’s baby will be born tonight,” said the man, but he was a saint.

“All right then,” said [the owner]. They went to the stable. The Christ Child was born. A very hea—vy frost fell. The Christ Child was dying of the cold.
The cow was good-hearted. It breathed on [the baby]. The Christ Child was revived. It was dying of the cold. [The cow] warmed [the baby] with its breath. It blew and blew its breath on [the baby]. That's how the Christ Child was warmed. Our Lord [Christ] didn't die of the cold. When morning came he already had a halo around his head. It was revealed that he was Our Lord.

Then the priests went; the bishops went to look, everybody went. Then they had a fiesta. The band went; rockets went along, and everything when they saw that he was Our Lord. He wasn't a human being. He was a god now, because there was a sign, the halo around his head, like a crown. That's how they saw that he wasn't a human being. He wasn't. It turned out badly for the one who didn't offer his house. It turned out badly. He lost. He never lent his house. He lent something, but it was a stable he sent them off to. But it was because he didn't know that it was Our Lord.

Our Lord was born now.

So the next day, they saw [the man], who wouldn't lend his house, crying. "Oh, I thought it was a beggar who spent the night," he said the next morning.

They saw now that it was Our Lord. With priests and bishops they went to look, to watch them celebrate a wonderful fiesta on the principal day, Christmas. So it's called Christmas. [You see] when morning came they had a fiesta. The Christ Child was born already by morning time. When morning came the baby was already born. But he wasn't a human being. He was Our Lord.

Then when they saw him, they held a wonderful fiesta—sta, when morning came. There was music and everything. Yes, indeed! Now that was the principal day, Christmas. It's been just the same ever since, just like it is now.

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Bwéno, ja7 7a li vakax 7une, ja7 la lek yo7on li vakax 7une, ja7 la 7ixvuch'7a 7ikux 7o li Ninyo, chcham xa 7ox ta sik 7une, 7isk'ixa li ta ssobal li ye 7une, ta ssobal k'alal 7ixvuch'7a 7ixvuch'7a la 7une, ja7 la 7ik'ixa li Ninyo 7une, muk' xcham 7o ta sik 7une, kajvaltik 7une, k'alal 7isakub 7osil la 7une, 7oy xa 7a li xixojobal li sjol 7une, vinaj 7o ti kajvaltik xa 7une.

Bwéno, ja7 7o li bat paleetik, bat 7ovixpo, bat sk'el k'utikuk, bat skotol krixchano, ja7 to la spasik k'in, bat la musika, bat la kwete, k'utikuk, k'alal 7iyilik xa ti kajvaltik xa 7une, 7a le7e mu krixchanouk, kajvaltik xa, porke 7oy ya senya, li xixojobal li sjol, k'u cha7al li korona, k'u cha7al 7iyilik xa ti ma7uk krixchanouk 7une, ma7uk, chopol 7ibat 7a li buch'u mu xak' sna 7une chopol 7ibat yak' na ka7e, 7ich'aye, chopol, muk' bu 7iyak' ta ch'om li snae, 7iyak' ta ch'om pero na ka7 7istak ech'el, pero kómu mu tzn7 mi kajvaltik 7une.

Bwéno, ju7un ch7ayan i kajvaltik xa 7une. 7Ora, mu xak' ta ch'om ti sna 7une, k'alal 7iyilike, ja7 to x70k' xa la ta yok'omale. "7Ay ka7uk me jk'an-limuxnauk, 7isch'aman jnae," xi la 7un, sakub 7osile.

Bwéno, 7iyilik xa ti kajvaltik 7une, ba sk'elik ta pale, ta 7ovixpo, sk'el slok'esik k'in lek ta j-mek, ti ta sba-k'el xa Paskwa 7une, yech'o Paskwa sbi ju7un, ja7 7oy 7iyu7 k'in k'alal 7isakub 7osil 7une, 7ayanem xa, sakub i Ninyo 7une, k'alal sakube 7ayanem xa li 7unen 7une, pero mu7nuk krixchanouk, ja7 li kajvaltike.

Bwéno, 7entonse, k'alal 7iyilik 7une, lok' lek k'i--n ta j-mek k'alal 7isakub 7osil 7une, 7oy musika, k'utikuk ta j-mek la 7un, 7eso si, sba-k'el k'in xa Paskwa xa 7un, kómo yech k'alal tana k'u cha7al lavi 7une.

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Bellyache

T62

There was a man whose belly hurt. He didn't want to work. But you see his brother had a wife, it seems, his sister-in-law. [A brother's wife] is called "smu7."

But you see he was just lying that his stomach was sick. It was a trick, for he was having an affair with his brother's wife. It was so [he could] stay behind. He didn't work. He never went to work. He stayed at home because his belly ached.

7Oy la jun vinik, batz'i k'ux la xch'ut mu la sk'an x7abtej, pero bu yu7un, yu7un la 7oy 7a li yajnil yermano ya7el, smu7 7un, smu7 sbi.

Va7i 7un, 7a li bu, yech no la tznop ti 7ip xch'ut 7une, yu7un la manya 7un, yu7un la tzk'oportunbe yajnil li xch'itil 7une, yo7 kom 7o, chkom 7oe, muk' x7abtej 7une, muk' bu xbat ta 7abetel 7une, chkom ta na 7un porke k'ux xch'ut.
There was a man sleeping with his wife. She was a Charcoal Cruncher. The man touched his wife in the dark. She wasn’t there, just the stump of her was there. She had no head.

He looked. He lit a match. "Where did my wife go?" he said. "How could it be? Where did her head go? Could someone have cut her head off?" said her husband. "Eh, who knows. There must be a reason. Maybe she’s bad. Maybe she took a walk," said her husband. "No, I guess we’ll see what happens to her, if she’s a devil." He put salt on her. On the place where the cut was, he put salt.

When [her head] arrived it couldn’t stick on anymore. Her head was just flopping about like a chicken. It just bounced and bounced now. "Why are you doing this to me? Why are you doing this?" the woman asked her husband when she arrived.

"But why do you go out wandering then? Are you a devil? You are a devil!" he told his wife. She cried now.

"Well, why is it? But where can I go now that my flesh doesn’t fasten on anymore?" said the woman.

"Oh, I don’t know. See for yourself! I don’t want to be with you any longer. What you are doing is too awful," said her husband. "You’re a devil. You’re not good," said her husband.

[Her head] bounced. It landed and perched on his shoulder. Now he had two heads. The man had two heads. "Eh, but this is no good at all," he said. He prayed to Our Lord. "My Lord, but why is this? This is terrible. If the other one sticks on I’ll have two faces!" said the man. "One a woman’s, the other a man’s, it seems. That is too awful," he said. "What can I do about this? What?" he said. "If Our Lord would only do [me] a favor. If there were something, if only there were someone who would take it away, make it go, have it thrown away," he said.

See also T32 and notes.

The Charcoal Cruncher

T60

7O la jun vinik, yapem la xchi7uk yajnil 7un. Va7i 7un, ja7 la li jk’ux-7ak’al 7une. Bwéno, 7a li, 7ispik la yajnil li vinik ta 7ak’ubaltik 7une, ch’abal, k’ajom j-k’os xa no 7ox te, ch’abal xa sjol la 7une.

Va7i 7un, 7a li 7isk’el la, 7istzan la sk’ok’ 7un. “Bu bat ti kajnile?” xi la 7un. “K’un x7elane bu bat ti sjole mi7n van 7o buch’u stuch’bonuk i sjole?” xi la li smalal 7une. “7Ej jna7tik, yu7un nan 7u k’usi, yu7un nan chopol sjol, yu7un nan chlok’ ta paxyale,” xi la li smalal 7une. “Mo7oj ta jk’elik k’u x7elan chbat 7o le7e mi7n pukuj le7e.” 7Iyak’be la 7atz’am 7un, yo7 bu stuch’oj 7une, yak’be la 7atz’am 7un.

7A li, bwéno, mu xa xu7 stzak sba k’alal 7ik’ot 7une, yech xa te xvololet li sjol chak k’u cha7al kaxlan 7une, solel la chp’it, chp’it xa 7un. “K’un ti x7elan xapason 7une, k’u yu7un ti chapas yech 7une?” xut la li smalal k’al 7ik’ot ti 7antz 7une. “Pero k’un x7elan chalok’ ta paxyal chc7e, mi pukuj, yu7un pukujot!” xut la li yajnil 7une. X7o--k’ xa la 7un.

“Bwéno, k’u yu7un 7un, pero bu chibat 7un li7e, mu xa stzak sba li jbek’tale,” xi la li 7antz 7une. “7Aj, 7a li, mu jna7 7il avil, yu7un mu xa jk’an xajchi7in, toj chopol li x7elan k’u chapse,” xi la li smalale. “Yu7un pukujot le7e muk’ lekot,” xi li smalal 7une.

Va7i 7un, ta la xp’it 7une, li7 la nochol ch’ot tznekeb 7une, te la chk’ot, cha7-p’ej xa sjol 7un, cha7-p’ej sjol li vinik 7une. “7Ej pero muk’ lek,” xi la. 7Isk’opon la kajvaltik 7un. “Kajval pero k’u yu7un li x7elan chopol li x7elan, 7a ti mi stzak sba li jun 7une chib jst 7un bi!” xi la li vinik 7une. “Jun 7antz, jun vinik ya7el 7un bi, chopol 7onox ta j-mek,” xi la. “K’usi ta jnop li7e, k’usi?” xi. “K’usi mi mu no 7ox spas pavor ti kajvaltik, 7u k’usi, 7u k’usi 7ok buch’u tamonuk ech’ele 7ak’o batuk ak’o ba xch’ayele,” xi la 7un.
He tricked it. “All right, it’s nothing much, come down a minute, stay on the ground! I’ll climb the pine tree. I’m going to get pine seeds. So you’ll eat them. So we’ll eat them,” he said. “So you’ll chew them,” he said.

“Go on then, climb up, then!” He climbed up the pine tree.

When he climbed the tree, the—n the woman’s head bounced and bounced at the foot of the pine. It bounced, but it didn’t get up. It tried to climb the tree. “God, My Lord, but what can I do about this? If there were something, if there were something that would come and take it away,” said the man.

“All right, please eat,” he told her. He dropped the pine seeds down [to her].

A deer came along.

[Her head] landed and stuck on the deer’s back. [The deer] was terribly scared. Ever since, deer have been very wild. It was scared. It ran very fast. Then the woman’s head was lost. That’s the way it ended.

When Romin Teratol heard Manvel’s rendering of the Charcoal Cruncher, he was as amused as I. When the husband finds that he is lying in bed with a headless wife and muses, “How could it be?” “Where did her head go,” Romin burst into gales of laughter and exclaimed, “If I were that man I’d have been scared to death!” See also T12, T81, T82, and their notes, T47 and T175.

When Our Lord Was Chased

Our Lord spoke. He was passing by there. He was travelling. There was a man working. He was clearing trees.

“What are you doing?” asked Our Lord.

“I’m not doing anything. I’m chopping trees. I’m chopping stones,” Our Lord was told.

“Oh well, if you are chopping stones then, fine,” he was told. The next morning there were just cliffs. All the trees were standing. There weren’t any logs. Just rocks. Now none of the [trees] that had been chopped down were cleared. They were standing, the next morning. They were standing now, because he didn’t answer properly. He didn’t reply properly to Our Lord when he was asked.

“Have you seen a man go by?” he was asked [by a devil].

You see, “[Our Lord] passed by. He just passed by,” said [the farmer]. That’s why none of his work turned out well.

[Our Lord] went to another [person]. “What are you doing?” he asked.

“I’m planting. I’m planting stones. I’m planting trees,” he said, but he was planting corn.

When Our Lord Was Chased

Our Lord spoke. He was passing by there. He was travelling. There was a man working. He was clearing trees.

“What are you doing?” asked Our Lord.

“I’m not doing anything. I’m chopping trees. I’m chopping stones,” Our Lord was told.

“Oh well, if you are chopping stones then, fine,” he was told. The next morning there were just cliffs. All the trees were standing. There weren’t any logs. Just rocks. Now none of the [trees] that had been chopped down were cleared. They were standing, the next morning. They were standing now, because he didn’t answer properly. He didn’t reply properly to Our Lord when he was asked.

“Have you seen a man go by?” he was asked [by a devil].

You see, “[Our Lord] passed by. He just passed by,” said [the farmer]. That’s why none of his work turned out well.

[Our Lord] went to another [person]. “What are you doing?” he asked.

“I’m planting. I’m planting stones. I’m planting trees,” he said, but he was planting corn.
“Oh, fine, then,” he was told. In place of his corn field there were just rocks the next morning. No more corn field. Just cliffs. Just rock fields, just woods. No more corn fields, because he didn’t answer properly. [Our Lord] went to another person. “What are you doing?” he asked.

“I am planting Our Lord’s sunbeams,” said the man.

“Ah, good. That’s all. If you are planting corn and if someone comes, someone coming looks [for me], if you are asked, Didn’t a man pass by? if he says that, you tell him, He passed by, but it was a very long time ago. I was planting the corn field, but look here, now there are ears of corn,” said [Our Lord].

“Ah!” said. Since [Our Lord] had just passed by. Since he answered properly, the corn field suddenly had ears of corn. In just one day it happened. When morning came the next day the corn field had ears of corn, because he answered properly. When [the pursuer] passed by [he was told], “Oh, who knows, maybe it was around three months ago when he passed, because I was in the midst of planting. Since now the corn field is in ear,” he said. He told the devil. “Oh well, no one has passed by now, no one has passed by yet. He came by, but it was when I was planting the corn field, but my corn field already has ears. Maybe it was at least three months ago that he came by,” said the man.

You see, it turned out well, since his corn grew well. Whoever didn’t answer properly, not a single corn plant grew. None. It turned out badly. Their work was no good.

In this and the following tale, although the pukuj, “devil” or “enemy,” is not identified by Manvel, it is assumed that we know that the tormenters of Christ were the Jews. It is they who in Zinacantec Catholicism are identified quite simply as the murderers of “Our Lord, Christ.”

At first glance it would seem that the account of Christ and the farmer was a New World invention. If frequency of recording is any indication of a tales’ popularity, this tale is clearly the favorite throughout southern Mexico and Guatemala. Whether the objects of pursuit are Joseph and Mary or Christ himself, the dialogue is nearly identical from one version to the next. The particular crops being planted do vary—chicken eggs hatch pullets in Chichicastenango (Tax, 1949:126)—but the dramatic development is consistent. The tale is distributed among the Tepecanos (Mason, 1914:7), Huastecs (Laughlin, 1969b:307), Totonacs (Ichon, 1968:92; Reid, Bishop, Button, and Longacre, 1968:148–156 and 167–169), Popolucas (Elson, 1947:193–214), Mazatecs (Laughlin, 1957), Zapotecs (Parsons, 1932a, T6), Chenalho Tzotzil (Guiteras-Holmes, 1961:262), Kekchi of Belize (J. E. Thompson, 1930:161), Kanjobal (La Farge, 1947:57–58, Siegel, 1943:120–126). Quiché (Tax, 1949:126), and Tzutujil (Rosales, 1945:872).

The Popoluca version lends strength to the conclusion that this is a native American legend, for the protagonist is not Christ, but Homshuk, the corn god, who is fleeing from his most unChristian mother. Comparable tale elements have not been reported from the large collections of Spanish tales from North America, Cuba, Puerto Rico, or Spain itself. If it were not for the exhaustive studies of the nineteenth-century German folklorist Oskar Dánnhardt, we could conclude quite comfortably that this is an American invention. Dánnhardt, alas, uncovered a thirteenth-century Latin manuscript of Christ and the farmer. After tracing further versions through the Balkan countries, he determined to his satisfaction that the legend had been brought from the Near East to Europe by the crusaders (Dánnhardt, 1912, 2:95–107). See also T53, T177, and their notes.
When Our Lord Was Chased Again

T53

[Our Lord] passed by another town. [The devil] was about to come now. It was just a minute before the devil would arrive on the trail. "Oh, what can I do now?" said Our Lord.

"But who knows if maybe I make some soap. Then the trail will be very slippery. Let's see if he's delayed a bit," said Our Lord.

He tossed a cake of black soap [on the trail]. Maybe that's what made [the trail] muddy. But the trail was terribly slippery. But [the devil] was delayed a bit by it. [Our Lord] wasn't overtaken. Our Lord wasn't reached on the trail.

A little later, [Our Lord] continued. He went some distance. He was just about to be overtaken again.

"Well, what can we do? It would be better if we left some thread [on the trail]," he said. He tossed a ball of thread. It turned into fog. It grew dark. It closed in, the way clouds do. It grew dark. [The devil] was distracted a bit. The next day, our Lord continued for a long way. He had gone far. He wasn't overtaken. He wasn't caught.

The ruses in Christ's magic flight are similar to those employed in two other Zinacantec tales of undoubtedly European origin (T18, T163). A Tepehua version of St. Joseph's flight has Mary toss a cake of soap onto the path, with the same muddy effect. Then she tosses her comb to create a heavy forest, and a grain of salt to form a mountain (Williams Garcia, 1972:70-74). See also T52 and notes.

Rabbit Seeks a Brideprice

T50

[Rabbit] went to a cave. He had his little guitar.

"What's new, Uncle Tiger?" he said to the tiger.

"All right. Play then and I'll dance," said [Tiger].

When [Rabbit] played his guitar, in a minute, [Tiger] did turn after turn. He spun around. It was [Tiger] who danced. He was hit from behind, and he died from it. He died from it. [Rabbit] skinned him and went to give [the skin] to the king. He went to sell the skin. It was a lie he told, that he was to be given a girl. He just lied when he said that the king was having a fiesta.

"7Iday, Tio Tigre?" xut la ti tigre.

"7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.


"Bwéno, yech?" xi, 7a li tigre.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, Tio Tigre?" xut la ti tigre.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, yech?" xi, 7a li tigre.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.

"Bwéno, 7a li, bat la ta jun ch'en, 7oy yunen gitara, "7Iday, 7iday, amigo?" x7utat la ti konejo.
“I'm to be given a wife. Do you want her?” Rabbit had asked. “I am to be given a girl,” he'd said. “Well, I can take her,” Tiger had said. “I'll take her myself if you don't want her.”

“I certainly don't want her, because I'm so little,” said Rabbit. The bastard is tricky, tricky, so clever. Even now, when you see one, it can't be caught. When you see it, it runs off quickly. It goes. That's just how it is. Even now. Because it's so clever. Not just in olden times, for it's stayed that way ever since. You think a rabbit can be caught, it can't be caught! Even with bullets it's hard to kill.

“Ah, all right then,” Tiger had said.

[Rabbit] arrived at the king's house. “Sir, I have come here.”

“I want another one now,” [the king] said. Now it was the coyote skin.

“I want one of a coyote,” he said. Rabbit went to talk to [Coyote]. Coyote doesn't know how to dance at all. He doesn't know how. He just went in circles, so [Rabbit] stealthily hit him from behind. He killed him from behind. He hit his friend with a stick so that he would die from it. Since Rabbit had his little club.

So when [Rabbit] killed him, another skin went, too.

It was bought. [Rabbit] was paid for the skin that he went to give, it seems.

The king had a fiesta. [Rabbit] was given his pay. It was given to him. He was paid for the skin. Now he came with his money.

You see, when he took the money, he went to pay [the brideprice] for a girl. He paid it for the girl, but it wasn't even enough. It wasn't enough. "Skip it then, skip it! I don't want a girl very much anyway. I'm too little," he said. That's how the story ends.

It may be stretching the definition of chi7il a bit to call Rabbit, Coyote's "friend!" Perhaps "companion" is more appropriate.

Once more Rabbit plays the trickster, protesting his small size—just as in the standard rabbit-coyote cycle—but I am unaware of stories elsewhere in Middle America in which the hero holds a dance to gain pesos for the brideprice. See also T20, T21, T49, T90, T166, T169, and their notes.

**The Flood**

T55

Once the world was flooded by water. It was flooded with water, because the people were so awful, said [Our Lord]. Because they ate their children. They ate their children.

Our Lord, he gave forty days of rain. The world was flooded.

They were very bad. They ate their children. So they just disappeared. The people's seed was lost.
It seems that of whatever was left, just two were chosen to remain. Two apiece of each kind of bird. Two cows were left, two horses, so that the horses would be born and multiply. They were left, those who were obedient.

Now the monkeys, the monkeys climbed into the trees, but they used to be people. They just lived on berries. They turned into animals. They turned into monkeys as we say. The people turned into monkeys, because they climbed into the trees. They searched for their food when the world flooded, when the rain flooded. But there was a person who built a house and hid in it. It floated on the water. It rode on top of the water. When he heard that we were going to die he put a lot of corn and beans and everything inside. It was like an old railroad car. That's what it was like, it seems.

He built a house [that would float] on top of the water, until the water dried up. That's where the people's seed was left. The animals' seed was left there. The house, the sheep, the birds, they were left there. They were re-born so that they are here until this day. After they were re-born then they multiplied. There were just two animals, two apiece. There were two horses. There were two cows. There were sheep, all the birds, two were left. Then they multiplied. People were made again. New people were born. They appeared now. Then the world was remade again. The animals appeared now, too, because a little of their seed had been left. When the water dried up, then they began to build Zinacantan Center.

It is curious that in Mitla, too, Noah's ark is described as being as big as a train (Parsons, 1936:350). See also T7, T50, T96, T142, T161, and their notes.

The War of Saint Rose

Once there used to be a Saint Rose, long ago. But she was the mother of dissension, Saint Rose. There was strife. The Chamulans gathered together. Lots of women joined in. They were going to make war. They were going to wage war.

There next to the Quinta [Ranch] there is a bridge. The bridge is named Saint Rose. The trouble reached there, because they were fighting there. They went. There used to be cannons here [in San Cristóbal]. The [soldiers of San Cristóbal] went. They went to fire cannons there. The [Chamulan] women—first the women came. They came with their skirts lifted high and wide so that the cannons would grow cold, so that they would not fire.

Bwéno, 7a li bu xa 7ikom ya7ele, t’ujbil xa no 7ox cha7-kot xa 7ikom, cha7cha7-kot k’usi mut, vakax, cha7-kot xa 7ikom, ka7, cha7-kot, yo7 7ip’ol 7o, 7a li cha7-7ayan 7o li ka7 7une, kom xa 7un, ja7 xa ti bu xch’un mantal xa 7une.

7Öra, li maxe, 7a li maxe yu7un la muy ta te7 pero krixchano to 7ox, naka la ssat te7 7iyipan, pas ta chon 7un, pas ta móno xkaltik 7une, pas ta max ti krixchano 7une, yu7un muy ta te7 la 7un, ssat sve7el k’alal 7inoj li balamal to 7ox k’alal 7inoj li vo7 7une, yan ti bu a li te nak’bile 7ismeltzan la jun sna li jun krixchano, kajal ta ba vo7, kajal ta ba vo7 k’alal 7iya7i xa ti yu7un xa chilajotike, 7iyotes la 7ep 7ixim, chenek’, k’utik la ta j-mek, k’u cha7al mu mu ferokaril, k’u cha7al ya7el.

Bwéno, 7ismeltzan la jun na ta ba vo7 7une, te, 7ástata ke k’u cha7al 7i7ul li vo7e, ja7 te kom ta sz’tz’unbal ti krixchano, kom sz’tz’unbal 7a li chonetik 7une, ka7, chij, mut, te kom 7un, cha7-7ayan 7un, k’u cha7al lavi, 7oy k’alal tana 7une, laj cha7-7ayanuk 7un, ja7 xa 7ip’olesvan, chib xa no 7ox 7ikom jat chonetik 7une, cha7cha7-kot, ka7, cha7-kot 7ikom, vakax, cha7-kot 7ikom, chij, skotol mut, cha7-kot 7ikom, te xa 7ip’ol k’alal i smeltzanoj krixchano noxtok 7une, 7i7ayan 7ach’ krixchano, 7i7ayan xa, te xa cha7-meltzaj li balamal noxtok 7une, 7i7ayan xa chonetik noxtok 7une, porke kom sz’tz’unbal jutuk 7un, k’al 7i7ul li vo7 7une, lik meltzajuk Jtek-lum xa 7un.

It is curious that in Mitla, too, Noah's ark is described as being as big as a train (Parsons, 1936:350). See also T7, T50, T96, T142, T161, and their notes.

The War of Saint Rose

T65

Once there used to be a Saint Rose, long ago. But she was the mother of dissension, Saint Rose. There was strife. The Chamulans gathered together. Lots of women joined in. They were going to make war. They were going to wage war.

There next to the Quinta [Ranch] there is a bridge. The bridge is named Saint Rose. The trouble reached there, because they were fighting there. They went. There used to be cannons here [in San Cristóbal]. The [soldiers of San Cristóbal] went. They went to fire cannons there. The [Chamulan] women—first the women came. They came with their skirts lifted high and wide so that the cannons would grow cold, so that they would not fire.

7A ti vo7ne 7oy to 7ox la Santa-roxa, ti vo7ne, pero yu7un la ja7 7a li me7 pletu, 7a li Santa-roxa 7une, yu7un pletu 7istzob la sbaiak li jchamu7etik 7une, kapal ta 7a—ntz ta j-mek, la chak’ik, chak’ 7ox k’ok’ 7une, chak’ ... tzpasik i gera 7ox 7un.

Bwéno, 7a li ti jat ta tz’el Kinta 7une ja7 li te ba k’o 7une, ja7 Santa-rosa sbi li ba k’o te 7une, te yul li pletu te yo7 7une, yu7un te spasik pletu te yo7e, bat la, 7o to 7ox la kanyon li7 to 7une, bat la, ba yak’ik kanyon te yo7 7une, 7a li 7antzetik 7une, ja7 la ba7yi tal li 7antzetik 7une, sia—moj xa la tal sztekik 7un, yu7un la ja7 mi ta la sikub 7o li kanyon 7une, ti yo7 mu xt’om 7o 7une.
But the cannons did fire. All the women were left in heaps like chickens. They were all killed by the cannons.

The [Chamulan] men came on. They didn't enter [San Cristóbal]. They never entered. They were just finished off like the others.

Now, Saint Rose—the soldiers [of San Cristóbal] went to seize her and bring her in. Saint Rose arrived at the barracks. She was a Chamulan woman, a human being, not a saint. She just lied that she was transformed so that the people would say she was a saint, since her name was Saint Rose. Saint Rose, the Virgin, she was supposed to be.

But she herself knew how to eat. She ate. She drank posol. Would a saint eat? That's why it was lies. That's why they just went to seize her and bring her in. Nothing happened. Nothing happened to the town. She lied. She just deceived people. She tricked them. So they assembled in great numbers. There were many celebrations at her house. She was given alms, and everything, candles, money, and everything since she was the Virgin, it seemed. She was a saint, it seemed.

But she lied. She just deceived the people. They had gone to seize her and bring her in. She arrived at the barracks. That was the end of her. The trouble died down long ago.

The War of Saint Rose (1868–1871), provoked by the native usurpation of Catholic ritual, is only one of many such events in the history of southern Mexico. In 1712 the neighboring Tzeltal formed a native church that was suppressed only after great loss of life. The Caste War of Yucatan, which nearly achieved native control of the peninsula in 1847, was the logical successor of many earlier movements. One of these occurring in 1610 was deplored by the historian López de Cogolludo:

There were two Indians, one named Alonso Chable and the other Francisco Canul. The former pretended to be the Pope and supreme pontiff and the latter, a bishop, and they announced themselves to be such among the Indians. Also they caused themselves to be venerated, deceiving the wretched Catholic Indians with their infernal doctrine. They said mass at night dressed in the sacred vestments of the church which no doubt the sacrists had given them. They profaned the holy chalices and consecrated oils, baptized boys, confessed adults and gave them communion, while they worshipped the idols which they placed on the altar. They ordained priests for service, anointing their hands with the oil and the holy chrism, and when they ordained them they put on a miter and took a crozier in their hands. They commanded the Indians to give them offerings and openly taught other deadly heresies (López de Cogolludo, 1955, 3:14).

With remarkable perspective, the Chiapas historian Vicente Pineda, in 1888, laid down his judgment on the Indian participants in the War of St. Rose:

It is necessary to point out that in speaking of the savagery of the Indians we refer only to what developed in times of war, in 1712 as in our days of the Caste Revolution of 1869; but it should not be thought that because of these acts [the Indians] merit the same description in times of peace. Because, in spite of their intellectual, moral and material backwardness, in spite of their vices and defects, under no circumstances can they be compared to the Irish dynamiters, the Russian nihilists, the German anarchists, the Belgian socialists, the French communists, to the lowest levels of the people called Ladino, nor to all the modern savages who have appeared in the heart of the great cities and against whom civilization finds itself in perpetual struggle, the Indians compared to all this rabble are no less than a constellation of honest men (V. Pineda, 1888:65).

A Chamulan account of the War of Saint Rose adds a scene not found in the Zinacantec versions, but which is reminiscent of scenes in many other Zinacantec battle legends—the Ladino soldiers are surprised and massacred by the followers of St. Rose while they are in the midst of a meal (Gossen, T162). See also T117, T154, and their notes.
Lost Sheep

There used to be a young boy who was watching sheep. But he let the sheep get lost. They got lost in the woods.

Now [the boy], who was watching the sheep, wasn't fed. He wasn't given his meals, because he let the sheep get lost.

You see, he prayed to Our Lord. "But where shall I go? I'm not given tortillas anymore. I'm not given my meals anymore. Where shall I go? Shall I just abandon the sheep?" he said. "But I couldn't find the sheep." He just searched in the woods. He never found the sheep.

He was in the woods when he prayed to Our Lord, [when] he thought of Our Lord. Then, "Baa, baa," said the sheep in the woods. They reappeared when he spoke to Our Lord. He prayed to Our Lord. The sheep appeared.

He was able to find the sheep.

When he found the sheep, then he was given plenty of food. He was given plenty of food to eat, because he wasn't guilty any longer. He had found them. The sheep that were lost had appeared. But they appeared. The sheep a—nswered by themselves in the woods, because he prayed to Our Lord about where the sheep had gone. "Please My Lord won't you bring the sheep for me from where they went?" he said.

But you see he went to look in the woods. Then, "Baa, baa," said the sheep. They appeared. He found them there, but it was because he prayed to Our Lord so that the sheep would not be lost for good.

How the Weak Ones Won

Deer was talking with Toad.

"Do you want to race?" said Deer.

"Oka—y!" said Toad.

"Let’s try it out. Let’s see who can run faster," said Deer.

"Oh, I think we probably run the same!" said Toad.

"All right if you’re going to race, let’s race! We’ll see which one wins, then!" said Deer.

"Let’s race!"
You see, lots of toads got together. They talked to each other. “If you want to, come on, we’re making a bet. We’re getting a lot of us together. Line up then! Line up as far as Deer races, and then answer! Answer so that he will think there is just one, just me there right behind,” said the [first] toad.

“Okay!” they said.

“All right, come on, I’ll do it. Come on! Let’s line up then. We’ll form a line as far as the deer runs. Then stop there,” he said. They tested it out [to see] how far Deer would run. How far, if it was half a league or what that he would run. How long.

They raced.

“Uncle Deer!” he was told.

“Uncle Toad!” [Deer said].

“Uncle Toad!” he said. They answered back and forth, back and forth. Each one answered. [The first toad] was left behind. Now it was the others that answered, since Deer thought [the toad] was right behind. He thought Toad was running even, since he answered back. He thought he was running just as fast, but Toad never ran. They were just sitting there. Just one [at a time] answered, answered back.

Now Deer spoke. He thought they were running even, that they matched each other. “Look here, look here I say, we run just the same,” he said when they reached the place where they were no longer sitting, where the toads stopped, the distance that they had lined up.

Then, “Oh, you told the truth that you can run fast!” said Deer.

“I told the truth, see here, we arrived at the same time for the distance that we bet on,” said Toad. That’s how it ended.

See also T5 and notes, and T167.

The Little Bird
T66

They used to know prayers. There used to be many Chamulans who knew prayers.

Now those who knew the prayers gathered together. They decided to wage war. They assembled. There was a leader, it seems. Little Bird was his name. He was the one who mustered the men. He was in agreement with those who were in office here [in Chamula].

He mustered his men. Whoever didn’t join in they killed—all of them. They finished killing those who hid in caves. Those who fled, they finished killing. It was the ones who didn’t want to gather together with the others. All those whom they mustered were
their friends. Those who didn't want to join in, fled. But they went and hid themselves in caves. [The others] went to kill all of them. They all died, murdered in caves where they had hidden. They hadn't wanted to join in. [Little Bird] went from house to house. He began to give orders, since he was just like their chief, it seems. A leader, a real leader, it seems. Little Bird was his name.

That ended. All those who had hidden died. They all died. They finished killing them all.

Now [the Chamulans] gathered together and entered here in San Cristóbal. They marched in here. They had clubs, spears, everything. They just had spears. They just fought with clubs. They didn't have guns. None at all. Just with clubs. They just had spears. That's all they had to kill with.

The [Chamulans] went as far as Chiapilla. They went there. All those [federal soldiers] who were called up were sent off. They went there [to Chiapilla from Acala]. They went to look at the war there. The soldiers came up to there. Then the Chamulans were attacked. They died. They were left in a heap. All of them. They all died in Chiapilla.

All those who died had gasoline thrown on them. They burnt them up. They all burned. They burned, like firewood. They gathered them together. They made a pile. They added gasoline and set fire to them. The flesh just turned into charcoal, turned to dust. Just their bones glowed. They burned.

All those that they captured alive had their ears cut off. Their ears were removed. The few who let themselves be captured had no ears when they came back, when they returned. Who knows if they didn't die. Who knows how it turned out. That's how it ended. That's all there is to say.

Manvel's account of Little Bird agrees well with the preceding versions. The final detail of the federal soldiers' punishment of the Chamulan prisoners is also reported in historical sources. Although the Chamulans had been armed by the Ladinos of San Cristóbal, even they became alarmed at what seemed to be developing into a race war. There were many stories of Chamulans hacking pregnant Ladinas and babies to death. The guerrilla army of Little Bird was described with terror as a "wild horde." It was decided by the federal army that these barbarians must be taught to respect civilization by means of a punishment "in harmony with their rudimentary understanding." (L. Espinosa, 1912:152). The particular means chosen was suggested by newspaper reports of the Tripolitan War then being waged by Italy on the tottering Ottoman Empire. The Italians had taken a number of Turks prisoner and had shown them that Christians would not shrink from lopping off the ears of captive infidels. And so in Chiapilla eight prisoners were selected to bear this message back to the highlands of Chiapas. It is only fair to say that the action caused great revulsion among the many Chiapas Ladinos who thought civilization could be better represented (L. Espinosa, passim). See also T22, T28, T116, T153, T154, and their notes.

The Buzzard Man

There was a buzzard man as we say. He was lazy. He didn't want to work.

He spoke to the buzzard. The buzzard was named Don Juan. Don Juan was the buzzard's name. "What's up, Don Juan? How are you?" he said.

Bwéno, 7oy jlon xulem vinik chhalkite, taj ch'a'je, mu sk'an x7abteje.

Bwéno, 7isk'opon la li xuleme, 7a li xuleme Don Jwan sbi, Don Jwan sbi li xuleme. "7iday, Don Jwan, k'u xa7elan?" xi.
“Won’t you give me your suit?”
“T’ll give it to you. Why not?” said the buzzard.
“T’ll give it to you.”
“Okay, if you give it to me, then, let’s go,” [the buzzard] was told. He left. He was given [the buzzard’s] clothes.

“Well, if you want to look, to look for your food, you’ll see that if it’s just a small meal there are only a few fumes,” he said. “On the other hand if the meal is bigger then the fumes go very high,” he said.

“Okay, Is that so?”
“Yes,” he said. “If you see lots of fumes coming up, go, because its a very big meal,” the man was told. “Just like when a horse dies then it is certainly a big meal, because a dog is smaller. Whatever animal is smaller [the fumes] are fewer. Now a horse, a cow, or whatever, when it dies [provides] a bigger meal, and they say it has more fumes.”

The idiot believed it. “As soon as you see the fumes coming up, go, look!” he was told.

He went to look. “Ah, that’s a meal there now!” he said. He left. He flew off.

Now when he looked, what was burning was cleared trees. That’s what was burning. That was its smoke. When he went, he dove into the fire. That was the end of him.

A few nights after transcribing this tale of the buzzard man, Romin Teratol had the following dream:
The constables had arrived to arrest him and lead him off to jail. He refused, resisting desperately. Finally he sprouted wings and flew three circles over Zinacantan Center. The constables sent a boy up in pursuit. When Romin was approaching San Andrés Larrainzar, the boy nearly caught up with him, but he pulled off the boy’s hat and sailed it down into a deep ravine. The boy flew down to retrieve his hat, and Romin returned home. Soon, however, the constables were back again, trying to seize him as before, but this time Romin turned himself into a Thunderbolt and successfully defended himself against their assaults. See also T42, T43, T69, and their notes.

When the Church Rose and the Ashes Fell

There [St. Sebastian] was with his little slit drum slung from his shoulder. He played and played it off and on, every day, every day. When morning came, there he was standing already in the field, where there used to be lots of hawthorns.

They started to talk to him. They didn’t know he was Our Lord. He seemed to be a man, but he had his little drum. That was a sign of [his divinity].

You see, they spoke to him. “What are you looking for here?” they asked.

“I’m not looking for anything. I want to live here.”

“But why don’t you go over there? Go join Larry!”—St. Lawrence, that is.
“Oh, I don’t want to be over there,” he said. “I don’t want to. [I want to be] here, because I’m going to have a good fiesta. But I want to live alone. Because I’m going to live here, here where I’m standing. Because my house will be built here if you want me,” said Our Lord.

“Okay, then.” [The people of] Zinacantán Center agreed to it. They built a church immediately. It was the Creator Gods who built it. It was they who built it. It wasn’t humans who built it. The church was completely built in a moment. Our Lord settled in it. He settled there at once. It was built. So it is a very old church. It doesn’t fall in earthquakes. But the big church [of St. Lawrence]—it was replaced. I saw it. The one that fell always faced this way [to the north]. The new one that was made faced this way [to the west] opposite Mother Nacha’s house. It faced that way.

Now I had already become a scribe when the old church [of St. Lawrence] was torn down. Because the bell tower was about to fall, too. It was longer ago that it fell, that the bell dropped. The church collapsed in the earthquake. We nearly died when the ashes fell, as they say. Ashes fell. There was an earthquake and everything [when] the volcano erupted. But who knows if it was a century ago. Another [century]. I never saw it myself. I didn’t see it. Maybe it was seventy or eighty years ago. [It was] around then since I think I’m sixty years old. So I never saw it. It was longer ago, maybe seventy [years] or so. Because I have an older brother who saw it. The ashes were like clouds. It grew bla—ck, like in a nor’easter. The ashes fell and fell. When they looked [again] the ashes had grown higher and higher and higher. When they looked [again] there was nowhere for the horses to eat. The horses died of starvation, since there were only ashes. There were no more plants when everything was covered. The animals had nothing to eat. They just died off. Those who had food, their seed was left, but all those that were loose in the fields died of starvation. They had no more food. The ashes were this deep. I don’t know if they were a yard high. The ashes were the same [depth everywhere], since the volcano erupted here near where the earthquake was. A volcano erupted across from Tapachula or somewhere. A volcano erupted there.

Then the ash came. It fell everywhere. We were going to die. Then there was an earthquake. That’s how the church [of St. Lawrence] collapsed. The bell fell long ago. It fell.

Then they turned [the church] around. It used to face the other way.
Then they put it like this. I saw that indeed! I saw that of course. It was torn down. In 1910, the new church was built. It was built in 1910. Writing was left on the church so that it could be seen how many years old it was. It was long ago, because who knows how many years the old church had been used. Because it was torn down. They turned it around because Our Lord didn't want it as it was. He wanted it to face this way, [westwards] like this.

Writing in 1794, Ordoñez y Aguiar speaks of a temple in the coastal town of Soconusco that was built by puffs of air and contained jade figures of the calendric Gods (Ordoñez y Aguiar, 1907:14). The iconic association of the teponaxtle or slit drum with St. Sebastian is suggestive of an early assimilation of Mayan elements. The principal deity of Chiapas was Votan, Lord of the Hollow Trunk, who was also called Tepanaguaste (Ordoñez y Aguiar, loc. cit.). Votan is unknown in Chiapas today, but in Santa Eulalia, Watan is the name for the day that always begins a new year—the “year bearer” (La Farge, 1947:8–10).

The Fiddle

The fiddle, the fiddle was first. They learned to play the fiddle first. No one used to play the fiddle, the harp, the guitar very much. Since the fiddle was more . . . the fiddle was played, it was played by Our Lord, too. That's why the fiddle is called “angel.” The angels play the fiddle. But the guitar, they don't. They play the harp and the fiddle. Our Lord plays them.

Now that's how it was left. That's why there are harps and fiddles today.

Manvel thought this scrap of ethnography worthy of recording.

The Flute

Once there were no flutes. The drum was first. Long ago no one played flutes. They just had trumpets. They played them with the drums for a fiesta. When there was a fiesta there didn't used to be any flutes. Flutes appeared later, too. Flutes appeared later, because the trumpets disappeared. Then the flutes appeared.

Now, today, there aren't any trumpets. Before, there used to be trumpets. That's what they played with the drums.

Now, today, it's the flute, the flute now with the drum today. We don't see those trumpets anymore. Tun Kanto was the name of the person who played them. He died long ago. Just his name is left.
Why the Bell Sank

T91

Once there was . . . they saw that there was a bell there. They noticed that it was like [the stump of] a pine tree.

They thought it was a pine tree, since they saw the redness. They tried to chop it down.

But you see it struck off sparks. They saw that it was metal, not wood. They looked at it. They had thought it was pine, because it was just like pine. The redness showed, it seems.

They looked at it. “This is a bell!” they said, since it’s rim was above ground.

They went to make the announcement it seems. Men came to dig it up. They were going to dig it up.

The work began. The work began. They were going to dig up the bell. They had almost gotten it. Very little was needed for it to come out.

But you see, all the men went down to the stream. They went to drink water. When they finished drinking the water the bell had sunk more and more. It’s hole was deeper and deeper, too, so that it couldn’t come out.

They prayed. They just offered candles and prayed and so on. But it never, it never . . . it went in very deep because they had abandoned it. They abandoned it. They forgot it. They went to drink water. When they returned it had sunk down deeper in the bottom of the pit.

Little by little it was left that way. They didn’t get it. It disappeared. It went in there. They abandoned it. They couldn’t dig it out anymore. That’s the way it was left. But it was a very deep hole that they dug. But they never got it. It went in. It stayed there. They never . . . they abandoned it. They were worn out. They saw that it went on sinking, went on sinking. There was no way for them to dig it out. When they saw it before, the top of the bell was much more visible.

But you see, when they were distracted and went to drink water, maybe [the bell] didn’t like that. They abandoned it. Maybe its soul was taken by a robber. It was taken by a robber. It just disappeared, it seems. They couldn’t dig it out.

Manvel lays the blame for the loss of the bell quite explicitly on the workers who abandoned it. Unlike other versions (T76, T114, T157), the bell does not fly off in the sky but merely sinks into the ground. But lest it be assumed that this is a "natural" event, Manvel reminds his listeners that perhaps the bell’s "soul" was stolen. See also T76, T114, T157, and their notes.
Once there were many Spooks, long ago. Many, too many Spooks long ago. There weren't many people at all. There were few people—just women.

It was nighttime when the Spooks arrived. There were many of them. They came to eat. That's what they did. The Spooks came to eat.

One came. One arrived. There was a neighboring house nearby where the Spook killed someone, killed that woman.

It seems she was asleep next to the fireside. The fire was already hissing with her blood.

Now the other house was nearby. [The neighbor] lived nearby, like in a room next door. "Comadre, your corn boiled over," she said, for she thought that [her comadre] was making corn gruel, that she had boiled the corn.

But no, it was her friend's blood! "Your corn boiled over," she said. Because [her comadre] had boiled the corn, boiled it. That's what she thought, that the corn pot had turned over and spilled.

But no, it was her friend's blood! The Spook answered. "The corn is ready, coma—dre," said the spook.

"It's spilled, it's spilled, comadre, your corn has spilled!" said her friend.

The Spook answered. "The corn is ready, comadre," said that Spook, you see.

He went away. She died. That woman died. That was the end of her.

He went, he went another night. All the women gathered together. They moved into one house. Now they weren't apart. Each house had been separate. There weren't many people at all. Just Spooks were abroad then.

They gathered together one night. "But the devil will come tonight," they said. For the women were strong-hearted. They cooked a meal for him. They cooked a chicken. The broth was good.


"Well, I could eat," said the Spook.

"Well, drink lots of broth, please drink the broth! We have broth," said the women. When they saw that he was drinking the broth, when his face was hidden a bit, then they thre—w the broth at him. It was very hot. They thre—w it at him. They killed the Spook. They killed him. The Spook died. He died. He died from the boiling water, but it was broth. They spit broth, sprinkled it, spilt it. The
women gathered together. They used boiling water on the others. They boiled it another time. They threw—w lots on them. [The Spooks] died from the boiling water. That was the end of the Spooks.

I recall Manvel's wife telling her version of this tale to her young grandchildren as they sat rapt in attention. She repeated it when her daughter-in-law appeared, exclaiming over and over how the women in the old days used to be bad, but braver and stronger.

Now that the Spook is a thoroughly familiar character, I shall try to present his pedigree.

First is the report of Bishop Nuñez de la Vega:

In many towns of this bishopric seven Blacks, corresponding to the seven days of the week, are painted on the repertories or calendars for making divinations and predictions . . . and whom he whom Cosohunotox (who is the devil, and according to the Indians has thirteen dominions) is painted on a throne, and he has horns on his head like a ram. The Indians are greatly afraid of Negroes because they preserve the memory of one of their original forefathers having the color of Ethiopians, who was a great warrior and extremely cruel according to a very ancient historical notebook in our possession that is written in their language. Those of Oxchuc and other towns of the lowlands hold in deep veneration [a god] called Yalajau (which should be corrected to Ical-Ajau) which means Chief Black or, Lord of the Blacks (Ordoñez y Aguilar, 1907:13).

A representation of this deity was carved on a beam of the church in Oxchuc “in the form of a ferocious Negro, like a piece of sculpture or a painted bust, with human limbs” (Payne, 1932:63). It was destroyed by Bishop Nuñez de la Vega in 1687. It is possible that Ical-Ajau is kin to Ek Chuah, the principal god of Yucatec merchants, who was always portrayed in black paint. This same god is also a warrior god. The intimate relation between Aztec merchants and conquest, already illustrated in the tale of Tale 115, was probably not peculiar to the Aztecs.

Drawing upon a multitude of parallels in Mayan literature from Yucatan and Guatemala, Sarah Blaffer concludes that the Spook is the ancient bat demon associated with sexuality, blood, sacrifice, and death (Blaffer, 1972:57-67). The name Zinacantan means “bat net.” The Zinacantecs “called themselves Zotcil Vinic which is the same as saying batman . . . . Their ancestors . . . discovered a stone bat and considered it God and worshipped it” (Ximenes, 1929:360). Surely the Dominican friars, in their zeal for conversion, did not hesitate to call it the Devil!

In a sixteenth-century Tzotzil dictionary compiled in Zinacantan, “hical” is given as “negro de guinea” (Diccionario en lengua zotzil, n.d.:234). The Spook’s attributes of fear and sexuality may derive from a memory of the African slaves. Although Negroes are no longer native to the region, as late as 1778 there were 723 living in San Cristóbal. They were treated more as confidants than as slaves, for they were permitted to wear daggers and to dress in European clothing. As such, they served the role of majordomos and foremen who most likely were entrusted with the task of inflicting physical punishment on their master’s Indian serfs (Favre, 1971:81-82). It is not farfetched to assume that the Spaniards increased their authority by spreading stories of the Africans’ former cannibalistic appetites. The Spook’s cave-dwelling habits may possibly be traced to a memory of African slaves who escaped from the lowlands and sought temporary refuge in the wildest mountain areas. This is supported by the Spanish name for the Spook, “Negro Cimarron,” “Black Runaway Slave.” So much for the Spook’s mixed ancestry.

The cultural role of this boogeyman is described in convincing detail by Sarah Blaffer, but I will restrict myself to her conclusions:

In these tales about spooks from all over the Maya area, and the spooks and their victims share an equivalent anomalous status . . . ; furthermore, in the Black-man tales, the treatment dealt to a spook or to the spook’s victims often reflects the offense committed . . . More tentatively, the nixtamal in these myths is a euphemism for menstrual blood . . . When [j7ik'al] seizes a woman at a task involved with cooking corn, and then kills her with an overdose of sexuality, I suggest that she is being punished for an underdose of care in her female responsibilities . . . In order to depict a woman careless of her sexuality, Zinacantecs may choose the metaphor of a woman negligent during the times she should be most careful—when she is cooking corn and when she is in an ambiguous condition, as during menstruation . . . By his own example and by the retributions he enacts, [j7ik'al] clarifies normative roles for men and women in Zinacantán (Blaffer, 1972:120-121).

Several nights after helping me with the transcription of this tale of the scolding of the Spook, Romin Teratol, who had in recent days been assured by several people that he possessed the qualities of a shaman, had the following dream:

A townsman had arrived on Romin’s doorstep and asked him to please come and cure his wife. Romin consented. According to local custom, the shaman should bathe his patient and also the patient’s “substitute,” a live hen, with warm “flower water”—water in which sweet-smelling herbs have been brewed. But instead, Romin poured boiling water over his patient, whereupon she turned into a scalded hen right in front of Romin’s astonished stepmother and the rest of the patient’s family. Immediately they all accused him of being a witch. Since that time Romin never has had the proper dreams which signal the possession of shamanic power. See also T23, T71, T122, T145, and their notes.

The Spook and the Saints

Once the Spook prayed to Our Lord.

“Won’t you give me permission. I want several of your children,” he told St. Lawrence.

“I won’t ever give away my children. Why don’t you go talk to John, see if he’ll give you his,” said St. Lawrence.

7A ti vo7ne yu7un la 7isk’opon 7a li kajvallik 7a li j7ik’ale.

Bwénó, “Mi mu xavak’bon permiso ta jk’an jay-vo7uk lach’amale,” xut la li San-lorenso.

‘Muk’ bu chikak’ ch’jhamal mi xak’ane, ba k’opon kik 7a li Xune, 7aver mi xayak’be,” xi la 7un, 7a li San-lorenso 7une.
Well, as for John, “Okay,” he said. “Look for them!” St. John gave permission. John is his name.

“John,” he said. “Larry doesn’t want to give them away, he doesn’t want to give his children. Nothing doing. I went to talk to him already, but he won’t give them away. Will you kindly give me your children, give me a few?” said the Spook.

“Look, look wherever you can find them, look, take them!” the Spook was told.

“Not Larry, he’s too mean-hearted. He doesn’t want to give his. He doesn’t want to give his. He doesn’t want to give even one. I had longed for his children, but he won’t ever give away even one of them. It’s because he’s so mean-hearted,” said the Spook.

“Ah no, as for me, I’ll give you permission. See where you can get them!” It was because St. John is good-hearted. He gave away his children. It’s been just the same ever since. That’s why they can die any time. Now we, not even one of us dies from assassins or whatever, from Spooks or whatever. We never die from that. The [people of] Zinacantán Center aren’t killed by assassins, nor are they ever killed by Spooks. But the Chamulans are killed by assassins. They are killed by Spooks or whatever, because long ago Our Lord gave permission. That’s why it’s like it is till now. Whenever there are assassins, then it’s the Chamulans who die. A few of them die when they are held up, or from whatever it is that they die, because their saint, St. John, said so. He promised that they could be taken. He gave permission for one or two of his children to die. They could be taken. “There are too many,” he said. “You can take a bunch of them, there are still too many,” said Our Lord. But St. Lawrence, he didn’t give away any at all!

“I won’t give them, I haven’t many children,” he said. “There aren’t many. Go talk to John, maybe he’ll give you his. He has more children,” said St. Lawrence.

[The Spook] went to talk to [St. John]. “Well, okay, you can take a few,” said St. John.

“Well, then, that’s fine if you’ll be so kind. But Larry is too mean. He wouldn’t give me even one,” said the Spook.

That’s the way it was.

Manvel provides here the essence of “The Spook and the Saints,” expressing the conviction universally held by Zinacantec that St. Lawrence is a jealous saint who will not let his children be spirited off by Spooks nor murdered on the road. See also T130 and notes.
Once there was a Chamulan boy [Juan Diego]. His father was sick. He was going to get medicine. And then he met what seemed to be a Ladina.

“Are you looking for?” the young boy was asked.

“I’m not looking for anything. I’m getting some medicine because my father is very sick,” he said.

“No, go leave this paper, here! I’ll look after your father. I’ll go and give him some medicine. Go leave the piece of paper at the Bishop’s house!” he was told.

“Well, I can go leave it, then,” he said. It was not accepted. He left. He was given a good scolding.

“Get out, stupid Indian!” he was told.

He went a second time, too. He was scolded just the same way. It was not accepted. “Well, if you are telling the truth, then have that lady who wished to speak [to us] leave a . . . bring a sign. Have her bring a sign so that we will believe her,” he was told.

“Well, they won’t accept it,” he said—he told that lady. She was told.

“No, then, it’s better if you take them along, since they want a sign. Take them along! I’ll give you some flowers [to take].” Juan clutched the flowers in his little tunic. He arrived there.

“Here is the sign,” he told them at the Bishop’s house. When they looked there was [the image of] Our Holy Lady left sticking to Juan’s chest.

Then they believed it.

“Oh, then he is telling the truth, indeed! That is the Virgin, the Virgin of Guadalupe,” said the Bishop.

Now they went to look. They didn’t find her anymore. They found her, but it was just her picture. They never found her to talk to.

That’s how it was left. Juan Diego exists to this day.

This abbreviated legend of Juan Diego and the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe differs little from official versions. It was not Juan Diego’s father but his uncle, Juan Bernardino, who recovered with the Virgin’s aid. The locale is, of course, more immediate; the characterization of Juan Diego as a “stupid Indian,” sharper. For another folk version see Robe, 1971, T24.

There was an armadillo once. It was talking with a weasel. “Let’s try out and see if we walk the same way!” said Weasel.

“Eh, but me, I don’t walk much. My legs are too short,” said Armadillo.
"Ah, but me, I'll walk. Me, I'll run!" said Weasel. "I'll try it out for you to see," he said. Weasel ran two laps. Then, "You run, yourself!"

"But me, I can't run, but I'll hide my head," he said. Armadillo shielded his head. He raced, but it was by rolling, he didn't walk with his legs.

"Oh, but you, so you travel by rolling! That isn't the way I do it. Me, I run with my legs," said Weasel.


"Oh that's the way I am!" he said. "But what else can I do? I haven't long legs," said Armadillo.

"Well, me, I'm going to drink some water. I feel so thirsty," said Weasel.

"Oh, well, drink it!" he said. Now there was a little, a little spring. It was left. That's why it has that name. It's called "Weasel Well."

I have been unable to discover the location of Yañal Saben. "Weasel Well." Best guesses place it in the direction of Ixtapa.

The King and the Ring

Once there was a boy. He was very, very poor. He had no home. None. He was a beggar. Early in the morning he would arrive near Muxul Vitz [Muxul Hill]. He arrived there. Then he would stop whoever was going to San Cristóbal. He was given tortillas and so on. He asked for tortillas then. When the people here returned again in the afternoon, if they had fruit or something they were carrying back that they had bought, then he waited in the afternoon to be given fruit, to be given whatever had been bought, too. He was there until he went to bed. When there were no more travellers from San Cristóbal he went home to sleep. But his house was wretched. He didn't have a good house.

Who knows if it was Our Lord who wanted it to turn out as it did. [The boy] picked up a ring. He put the ring on his finger. He returned home. On the second or third day afterwards, at daybreak, ooh, there was lots of money. Money was piled up now like corn. Loads of money was heaped up.

He went to borrow pots. He went to borrow pots wherever there were big pots, big pots. He went to borrow from house to house. "Please [let me] borrow one or two of your pots."

"7Aj, pero li vo7one chihanav chi7anilaj i vo7one!" xi la li saben 7une. "Ta jpas proval avil," xi. Chib la belta 7anilaj 7a li saben 7une. 7A li k'al "7A li vo7ote 7une, 7anilajan me!

"Pero vo7one mu xu7 7a li chi7anilaj vo7one, pero ja7 ta jnak' li jjole," xi la 7un. 7Islutz' la li sjol i kapon chone, 7i7anilaj pero balalijel tpas mu7nuk ta yok chanav 7un.

"7Aj, pero li vo7ote, ku chabalalij li chaxanave mu7nuk ja7uk ye7 chak k'u chu7al vo7one, 7a li vo7one ta kok chi7anilaj," xi la li saben 7une. Va7i 7un, 7entó7e, "7A li tol taki-ti7il," xi la li saben 7une. "Vo7ote muk' taki-ti7il chavatl7i yu7 van 7o bu chaxanav tavo7, vo7ote ye7 no 7ox chabalalij," xut la li kapon.

"7Aj ye7 li vo7on a7a!" xi la. "Pero k'u ta jpas yu7un ch'abal natik kok," xi la li kapon chon. "Bwénol, vo7one chhuch' li vo7e, tol taki-ti7il cha7a7i, li7anilaj ta j-me7 nat ti vo7one," xi la li saben 7une.

"7Aj, bwénol, 7uch'an!" xi la 7un. 7Ora te li 7unen, te la li 7unen vo7 7une 7ikom 7o, ye7ch s7i 7un. Ya7al Saben s7i 7un.
“What do you want them for?”
“To put my corn in,” he said.
“Where did you get your corn? Where would you get corn? You beg for money!” he was told.
“No, it isn’t corn, then. It’s money,” he said.
“Where did you get your money?”
“It appeared by itself. It’s heaped up now inside. There was a great deal by morning. I have nothing to put it in. I’ll fill a couple of pots,” he said.

He went. He went to the town hall. He went to report it. “Go look, go visit me!” the elders were told. “Go visit me, if you want to go visit me. Really I do have money,” he said.

“Eh, could it be true? He’s telling lies,” said the elders. “Where could his money come from? He begs. Where could he get money?” they said.

“Go see for yourself, go look, because I’m telling

“K’u stu 7avu7un 7un?”
“Chkak’ 7o kixim,” xi la un.
“Bu 7ata lavixim 7une, bu chata lavixim, chak’an limuxnael’” x7utat.
“Mo7oj mu 7iximuk che7e, tak’in,” xi la 7un.
“Bu 7ata latak’in 7une?”
“Te 7ayan stuk, te xa busul ta yut na, sakub batz’i 7ep, mu k’u bu xkak’ 7un, ta jnojes chibuk p’in,” xi la 7un.

Bwéno, bat la, bat la ta kavilto, ba la yal un. “Ba k’el avilik ba vula7anikon!” x7utat la li moletik 7une. “Ba vula7anikon, mi xak’an xba vula7anikone, melel 7un, 7oy ti jtal’ taka7un,” xi la 7un.

“7Eee mi yech van 7altik chale le7e,” xi la li moletik 7un. “Bu chtal stak’ in, tzk’an limuxna, bu tzta tak’in?” xi.

“Batan avil ba k’el avil, yu7un yech kal, mu
the truth. Who knows if it’s God’s will, because there’s lots of money,” he said. “Two pots are filled already. The rest is still piled up there,” he said.

“Let’s go! Let’s go, I guess,” they said. The elders went. Since there used to be communal taxes in former times, he had an awful debt. He hadn’t paid the communal tax.

“Look, I have a large debt outstanding. Take it!” he told them. He gave a cupful to each of the elders. It was scooped up with a cup, like corn. He gave it to them as a present.

It was publicized, it became known. Who knows if it was the President of Mexico that heard or who. [Who knows] if the government heard or what. He was summoned.

“There is a king there. Send him to me!” said [the President] in Mexico City. “Send him to me!”

“There is a king there. Send him to me!” he said. As for the people of Zinacantan Center—“Maybe it’s better to have him go or else soldiers will come to kill us, since there is a lot of money,” they said. He went off. He went on down. God, Zinacantan was left penniless. All the money went off. He went away. He took it with him. He took it away. Before he arrived in Mexico City his ring was stolen from him. It was stolen. Oh, when the ring was lost, God, he didn’t have a single penny of the money left either.

It happened that there was a man who went, went and swallowed it. He went and swallowed the ring so that it couldn’t be discovered. “Who knows now where it went,” said [the king]. “But who took it? It must be you who stole it,” he said.

[And the king added], “Who knows what [the thief] did with it, maybe he swallowed it. Maybe he swallowed the ring. Come on, we’d better talk to the mouse about it, have him cut the seat of [the man’s] pants. Have him gnaw a path for it. Let’s see if when [the man] straing—ns, let’s see if there’s a way for it to come out,” said [the king].

“Okay,” [the mouse] told him. The mouse left then. He went to cut [a hole] as wide as the seat of the man’s pants. He went and stuck his tail up [the man’s] nose. [The man] cho—ked. He strai—ned. The ring came out.

It came out. Then when it came out, in a minute the money appeared—red again. Ohh, it was piled up in the king’s house. The money was there in heaps. Oh, there was lots of it now, because he had recovered the ring again.

But you see, they dropped it in the Grijalva River, the people who had taken it before. They dropped it in the Grijalva. It was the little dog. There was a little dog. “Please go bring [me] a ring that is in the water,” [the king] told him.

“Eh, but I don’t know if I can get it. I guess I’ll
talk to the fish,” said the dog. He talked to the fish.
“Please bring it to me. There is a ring that fell in the
water. Bring it to me! You’re used to being in the water,” said the little
dog.
“Well, okay,” said the fish. He was able to rea—ch
it in the water. The fish found the ring in the water
so he gave it to the little dog.
Now the little dog went to deliver it to its owner.
Now he went off with the ring clutched in his teeth.
But he went to give it to its owner.
When the owner received the ring, then the
money appea—red again in quantities. That’s how it
turned out. He remained rich because of it—as much
as he had. He stayed rich. [But] for Zinacantán
Center, that was all the soul [of the money] here in
Zinacantán Center. So the town here was left penni-
less. The money left. The soul of the money left, it
seems. But if it was here that it appeared [again],
then the town would be rich.

Manvel’s “The King and the Ring” joins the chorus of
statements that explain to the Zinacantecs why they no longer
possess the power and wealth that once was their prerogative.
See also T11, T31, T34, T113, T165, and their notes.

Salt Spring

7A li Ninab 7Atz’am [Salt Spring] once had good salt,
long ago.

But you see it’s brown-grained salt. The reason
[the people of] Zinacantán Center don’t work it is
because the cave, the salt, wanted to take half the
town for servants. Then they could work the salt.
They didn’t accept that. So it was left. Horses just
drink there. When horses go there they eat it. There
isn’t anyone who works the salt.

They tried it out at the time when the epidemic
passed, long ago. They tested it. They boiled it in a
pot, in a little pot. It yielded one bowl of salt, but it
was brown-grained salt. It was brown. It was Romin
[Terato’s] grandfather who boiled it. It yielded a
bowl of salt. But not much crystallized, the salt just
disappeared. There was [practically] no salt. It was
when there was so much sickness. Then they pro-
duced it that way. They saw what the salt was like.
But there’s no one who wants to mine it.

Don’t you see, it’s no one’s work. It was just left
like that. Just horses drink it there, that’s all. The
well is abandoned now. It’s gone. It’s just a mudhole
now. You can’t tell where it was.

See also T83 and notes.
There used to be a long-haired person, long ago. But he would hold up [people] all the time there at the Crossroads as we call it. There is a cave there that the mules passed. That Long Hair stripped them of all the baggage. He had long hair. He stripped them there. He stripped them there of everything, absolutely everything. The cave was already filled with nothing but baggage, everything, muslin, clothing of all kinds, everything. Whatever there was, if salt or fish or anything else came up, it all filled that place there inside the cave.

Once there were three of our countrymen, elders. They went. They reached on their trips, they reached Tabasco, they reached Tonala. They carried tobacco there. They went to sell it in the lowlands. They were stripped there. They were stripped by that devil. He stripped them.

They asked each other, “Can you do anything? Isn’t there anything you can do? Why don’t we see if our packs get confiscated,” they said.

“Oh, you can do anything?” said [one].

“Me, I can be Thunderbolt.”

“Me, Whirlwind and Rain,” said [the other].

“Well, but let’s fight. If we fight can’t we attack him, then?” they said.

“Oh, you, can you do anything?” said [one].

“Me, I can be Thunderbolt.”

“Me, Whirlwind and Rain,” said [the other].

“Well, but let’s fight. If we fight can’t we attack him, then?” they said.

“Eh, but it’s still not right if we attack him, because if it’s by government order that he blocks the road like this . . . . It’s much better if we go and ask, if we ask, request, request permission to attack him,” he said.

“Let’s go!” they said. They went to ask. “Well, have you declared it, sir? Have you declared that the road be closed so that baggage can’t pass through at all? Or what?”

“Well, there’s nothing you can do about it. Soldiers have gone to look, but the soldiers didn’t do any good,” said the governor.

“But we, we’ll see how to open the road if it’s possible,” they said.

“Oh, you can, why not? Fight, [see] if there’s anything you can do. Take your present!” they said. They were given money. They were given money already. “Do [us] the favor then. If you can open the road, open it! See what it’s like, I guess, what you can do about it, if you are successful,” said [the governor].

“We’ll see if we can open it. Then the news [of it] will come,” they said. “Well, let’s fight!” they said. They attacked him with a machete. The machete didn’t penetrate since his hair was so long.

Then the other one, the other one began. He started. He started to turn himself into a Whirlwind.
So he tossed his hair upwards. In the sky, they fought now in the sky. They blew him up into the sky so that they could fight. Then they won there. They cut him again and again with machetes. The wind made his hair move to the side. [He was killed]. Then all the baggage came out.

When everyone, everyone whose packs had been confiscated, heard, they gathered together. Presents were given to all those who worked. They opened the road. They won. There was a great deal of baggage.

Ohh, the owners of the packs went. Whoever had lost things went there to take out his things, since it was there that all the baggage was lost. It all came out, the muslin came out, the clothing, since it belonged to the big stores.

See also T10, T104, T158, and their notes.

One Leg

They say the hummingbird is very big. So that’s what some workers [saw] in the tropics. They were burning [empty] bean pods. The fire was visibly very high [in the sky]. The hummingbird came. It came flying [down] from the sky, then.

It saw the fire. It was blinded by the smoke. It came down and down and down so that they saw it was big. Don’t think it’s little, it’s big! It’s like a dove. It’s wings are white. It’s completely white. I was right that it’s a lie they tell, saying that the hummingbird is little. See! The men said it was very big. That’s when they recognized what it was like because none of us had ever seen it. We didn’t know what it was like. It’s the one that sings “tz’untz’un” at night, but we didn’t know what size it was. [But] that one, they saw how big it was. They saw it. It was the same as, as big as, a hawk. It is in league with the Tutelary Gods. “One Leg” we call it.

This seemingly inconsequential tale provided the germ for an extraordinarily sophisticated historical and structural analysis by Eva Hunt, which unfortunately was not seen by me in time to include for discussion here. Hunt argues conclusively that One Leg is none other than the Aztec god Huitzilopochtli! (Hunt, in press).

This hummingbird serves as a messenger of the Tutelary Gods, advising people when they need to hold curing ceremonies. Its nocturnal call is slow and measured, unlike that of the witch hummingbird that Romín Tan-chak described rushing off to announce death at the wrong houses (T140).
There was a man who went to draw water from the Grijalva River. He discovered a crocodile lying there. He came upon it lying there. It was warming itself in the sun.

He went to draw some water. In a minute it went and caught the man. In a minute it went and swallowed the man. He was swallowed whole. He wasn't, he wasn't eaten.

When the man regained his senses, it seems, he felt terribly cold, because the crocodile had been under water. The man was under water. Its belly was terribly cold.

He regained his senses, when its belly warmed up, because the animal, the crocodile came out to warm itself in the sun.

He said to [himself], "But, man, what can I do about this? That [crocodile] has come out," he said. Inside the animal's stomach he prayed to Our Lord. "How can I get out of here? But I can't get out of here now, My Lord!" he said. He remembered it. He took out his knife. He ripped open its belly. When its belly was ripped open then he came out, the man came out.

He arrived to tell his friends. "Where did you go? Why did you disappear?"

"Man, I had an accident. An animal swallowed me," he said. He arrived to tell his friends. "Now, thank God, I had my little knife. I ripped open its belly. I came out," he told his friends.

"Well, are you hungry?" they asked.

"Oh, I'm hungry. I'm famished, because this is the third day now since I've eaten, because I was stuck inside the animal's stomach," he said.

"Eat, then!" he was told. He continued on. He escaped. The animal was left there. He killed it and left it. He killed it and left it, but he himself got out.

The hero of this epic fared far better than his Chamulan counterpart, who, after a week's sojourn in the crocodile's belly, cut his way out and returned home. But having lost the flesh on the fingers of one hand and the flesh on one leg, he only returned home to die (Gossen, T37). An Oxchuquero, swallowed by a snake, remembered his knife and carved out an exit (Montes Sánchez, c. 1959:28). A man from Panajachel, Guatemala, who was swallowed by a "water dragon," spent two days in its belly before cutting his way out and escaping intact (Tax, 1950:2671).

The Birth of Cane Liquor

The elders once. . . . There didn't used to be any cane liquor. There always has been chicha. The elders decided long ago, "But chicha, for a
Chicha is a rather thick sugarcane drink that may either be sweet or fermented. Although it is sold by Chamulan merchants at all major fiestas in Zinacantan and is especially important at Carnival, it is associated with informal drinking, much like beer in the United States. In fact, the high consumption of beer in Zinacantan has probably reduced the sale of the more traditional chicha. Distilled cane liquor is still the proper beverage for religious officials at a fiesta. Prodigious quantities are also drunk by men who are celebrating their good fortune to be alive to celebrate another fiesta.

A Chamulan version credits St. John with the invention of chicha, and Christ with the invention of cane liquor. But the primacy was awarded to cane liquor after St. John and Christ took a swig of it and burst into song. “That’s why they say that when there are fiestas there is cane liquor.” (Gossen, T24).

When the Bell Was Lifted

Once there used to be a big bell in Zinacantan Center. It was very big. It was huge.

The bell was very much alive. When the sacristans were going to ring it, they discovered that it had descended. [Its moorings] hadn’t come untied.

They went to tell the priest. “Sir, we can’t ring the bell. It is down,” they said.

“No, go look!” they were told. When they went to ring it the next time they found that the bell was up again. But the sacristans found one or two pesos, their little charm, that the bell left them as a present.

But when it was learned that the bell was very lucky, the Chiapanecs came to steal it. They came to steal it with Whirlwinds. With Thunderbolt they came to steal it. The Chiapanec elders went to Zinacantan Center. [The Zinacantecs] weren’t able to take it back. They didn’t win. It was the Chiapanecs who won. They stole it away. So it arrived there in Chiapa where it has been ever since.

7Ora, k’al tana kom 7o yech 7un, ti 7oy trago la 7une.

See also T74, T115, T151, T157, and their notes.
There was a man whose wife died. The man went to look for work in Simojovel. I don't know if he worked for maybe three weeks, if that's how long he worked. Then they came back from work.

He had three friends. He said to his friends . . . . They neared San Juan [el Bosque], San Juan Chamula, as we say. It used to be the town of Chamula, but it isn’t anymore. It has changed. The women’s clothes [skirts] are blue now like the women’s here. Yes!

Well, since the man’s wife had died he wanted to look for a replacement for his wife.

“Uncle,” he said to his friends, “you go on while I pass by and visit in the town here,” he said. They were on the road passing by the town of San Juan. They were coming from Simojovel, because they were returning home.

“What are you going to look for?” they asked.

“I think I’ll go look and see if there are any cigars,” he said, since [the people of] San Juan make cigars. The only work they do is with tobacco, tobacco for cigarettes, for cigars. “I’ll pass by. I’ll pass by and look for some, I’ll go ask for some to smoke. I’ll see if there are any cigars already made,” he said.

He arrived. He found a man sitting there.

“Are you there?”

“I am here,” he said.

“Have you any cigars made? I’ll buy some,” he said.

“No, there aren’t, but if you want some I’ll make them right away. Sit down a minute or so,” he said. The man knew. He knew the gossip that there were girls there. The people of the town are kind-hearted. He had brought a liter of cane liquor.

“Well, won’t you drink a little? Come on, let’s drink!” he said. He was sitting there by the door.

“No, what’s in it for you?” said the old man.

“Nothing in particular. We'll drink and chat. Let's drink a little.”

After they drank up the liter then he started to tell him, “Ah, do you happen to know if there aren’t, where there are, if there is any place where there is a woman who can be petitioned here, because my wife is dead,” he said when he arrived.

“Eh, who do you want to stay here?”

“I want to come here [and stay] for good.”

“Ah, if you come here, women there are!” he said. There are women, but if you take her home with you we certainly won’t give her away,” he said. "But if you come here, if you leave your country
behind, if you come to settle down here, [then] there are [women],” he said. “We'll see where we'll find one,” he said.

They were sitting there with their mother, the three girls there. “If you want to come, I have daughters, myself, if you want one,” said the old man, since he had already drunk the cane liquor.

“Oh fine, but if you would be so kind, then. But I want to stay here forever. But right now if you would be so kind, for I'll go bring your present,” he said to him.

“But do you have the money?” asked [the old man].

“I do! I have my pay. I have the pay from my job. I have money,” said the man.

“Hand over the money then, I guess! I guess I'll see how much there is. I'll add it up to see how much there is, how much we need,” he said.

They added it up. There was [enough] money. They added up the cost of the jug of cane liquor, the bread, meat, and whatever [the girl's father] was going to get in the town. He went to get it in the town. He went as far as, as far as the town. As far as Simojovel he went to get what they needed.

He came back. “Go!” he said. “As for the leftover money .... We've added up how much it will cost you. There is still some left over,” he said.

“They added it up. There was [enough] money. They added up the cost of the jug of cane liquor, the bread, meat, and whatever [the girl's father] was going to get in the town. He went to get it in the town. He went as far as, as far as the town. As far as Simojovel he went to get what they needed.

He came back. “Go!” he said. “As for the leftover money . . . . We've added up how much it will cost you. There is still some left over,” he said.

“Give it to her. Go see which of the girls you want,” [the girl's father] told him.

[The man] looked at her right away. No, there were three. “I want that one,” he told him. There was one who was prettier. He looked at her. She was the one.

“If you've seen already which one, then, go give her the leftover money. Go. go together! Go get what I need, what we need. We'll have a fiesta,” he said. Right off, right away [the man's] wife was given to him right away! It wasn't a long time. They hadn't received their gifts yet. They just drank one liter. That was all they drank. In a minute that old man gave his word. “If you are going, then, go on, go together!

“So give her the leftover money now. Let her take it along. You can buy [things] with it. So you can buy your food, so you can buy something to eat in the town. So you can buy fruit to eat. Take it! Let your wife take it along.”

“Fine!” he said.

He went to give it to her. “Maybe it's you I'll marry. Take this money!” he told her. The one who was given to him, was chosen by him. He chose which one now.

Her mother didn't say a word. She didn't say a word. She didn't criticize him. Not at all!


Bwéno, te la chotolik schi7uk sme7 7a li 7ox-vo7ik to la tzebetik te 7un. “7A ti mi yu7n cha7'kan chatal 7une, 7oy jteb vo7on ti mi cha7'kane,” xi la li mol 7une. Kómo yuch’ xa 7ox li trago 7une.

“7A bwéno, pero ti mi cha7abolaje, che7e, pero ta jk'an li7 chikom ta j-moje, pero ta 7ora ti mi yu7un 7a li cha7abolaje, yu7un chba jsa7 tal 7amoton,” xut la 7un.

“Pero mi 7oy 7atak’i?” xi la.

“7Oy, 7oy li jtojole, 7oy jtojol ta 7abtele, 7oy jatak’i,” xi la li vinik 7un.

“7Ak’o tik tal i jk’ine che7e, ta jk’el tik k’u yepal 7oy, ta jnit kwentu k’u yepal k’u yepal ta xtun ku7untike,” xi la li 7un.

Bwéno, 7a li 7isnitik la 7un, 7oy tak’i7 7une, 7isnitbe stojol 7a li Jun garafon 7a li trago, pan, bek’et, k’usi ba sa7ik tal te ta jtek-lum 7une, ba sa7 tal ta jtek-lum, bat la k’alal, k’alal to jtek-lum, k’al to Tzima7 Jobel, ba sa7 tal 7a li k’usi ta xtun yu7un 7une.


7Isk’el la ta 7ora, mo7oj, 7o 7ox-vo7ik la 7un. “Ja7 ta jk’an le7e,” xut la. 7O la te mas lek 7un, sk’el la 7un.

Ja7 la, “Ti mi7n 7avil xa buch’ue che7e, ja7 chba 7avak’be li sovra tak’ine, batanik 7un, ba ch7in abai, ba sa7ik tal 7a li k’usi chtun ku7un, k’u xtun ku7untik, ta jpastik 7o k’ine,” xi la 7un. Ta 7ora, 7ora 7ak’bat yajnil ta 7ora, mu7nukul jal mu to bu 7ox yich’o jmoton, k’ajom no 7ox jun litro 7iych’ike k’ajom no 7ox 7iych’ik 7une, j-like 7iyal sk’op taj mole. “7A ti mi7n chabatike che7e, batanik 7un, ba ch7in abai!”

“Bwéno, 7a li, bwéno 7a li, ja7 xa 7a li 7ak’bo xa li sovra tak’i7 7ak’o yich’ ech’el, tek xamanik 7o, mi chamanik 7ave7elik mi xaman 7o k’u 7alajesik te ta jtek-lume, mi chaman 7o lo7bol 7alo7ik 7ich’o 7ak’o xa yich’ ech’el lavajnil.”

“Bwéno!” xi.

Bwéno, ba la yak’be 7un. “Vo7ot nan chak’ik 7ich’o li tak’iin li7el!” xut la 7un. St’ujbil 7il7ak’bat, st’uji ti buch’u xa 7une.

Bwéno, li sme7 7une, mu la k’u xal, mu k’u xal, muk’ bu x7ilin, ch’abal.

“Bwéno, battik xa ba jsa7ik tal k’usi ta xtune,” xut
he told her. He left now. He left now with a wife. They went to look for it. They went to get it. The cane liquor arrived. Everything they needed arrived. It arrived. It came in. "Here it is," he said.

"Fine!" said [the old man]. He gathered together his relatives. They came in to drink the cane liquor. They got drunk.

The old man, that girl's father, went to fix their sleeping place for them. There was a little room. He covered the door with [a piece of] muslin. Yes!

He fixed it. He spread out their straw mat in case they got drunk. "Here are your sleeping quarters. You can go sleep there," said the old man. They got drunk. They got drunk.

At daybreak, "Well, did you rest?" he asked his son-in-law, it seems.

"I rested."

"Isn’t there a little left over anywhere? Has the little bit of cane liquor been finished? I feel so sick," said the old man.

"There still is some," he said. "There still is this! Maybe there’s still two or three liters here," he said.

"Get it then! I’ll drink a little. Come on, let’s drink, since it’s almost light already. It will fix up [my stomach]. But I feel so sick," said [the girl’s father]. They drank.

They went back to sleep for a little while longer, Dawn came. "Well, that’s all, then." Since the old man had lots of fruit . . . . He just had bananas. There were just bananas where he had planted them, it seems. "Well, go look at the fruit! Go, if you’ve finished eating. Go on, go together, the two of you. Go see, because they will be yours. When I die all the fruit will be yours, because now you will stay here if I die," said the old man. "It’s you who will get the women together, then. Make them grow, work, grow the fruit properly, lots of fruit," he said. They just looked at all the bananas. Ohh, they ate lots of fruit. They carried back the fruit. Ohh, they ate lots of fruit. They found ripe ones already.

All Souls’ Day had almost arrived. "Well, will you let me take my wife along, since my father is dead?" he asked. "My father is dead. I’m going to wait for him. I’m going to wait for him on All Souls’ Day. Then I’ll come back when All Souls’ Day has passed," he said.

"Go on! Take some along. Get some if you [want to] get some to take. Get some fruit to take. Carry your fruit with you. Carry along as much fruit as you want to take. It’s to put on top of your late father’s table, it seems," he was told.

"All right, then, if you give me permission. If you let me [take] my wife."

"Take her, then, go on!" he said. [The man] arrived home.
“Oh, see what your wife is like!” he was told. That’s when they became acquainted with his wife. “Ohh, your wife is wonderful!” he was told.

There was a boy there. “There wouldn’t be still another there, too?” he asked.

“Ask them then, I guess, if they want me. Send me word if they want me,” said [the boy]. [The woman] told them. She arrived to tell her sisters.

“Wouldn’t you like it... your uncle has a younger brother,” she said. “He has a younger brother who wants to come here, too, if he is desired,” she told the girls, her younger sisters.

“All right then,” said [her sister]. “Well, I’ll go ask him whenever I go. Then I’ll go tell him to come if you want,” she said to the other.

“No, he doesn’t hit people.”

“But then that’s what I want if that other one is just the same, too, but if he hits people a lot, of course, I don’t want him,” she said.

They returned when All Souls’ Day was over. “Have you returned?” asked the old man. “We’ve returned,” they said. “Well, did you spend a good All Souls’ Day?” asked the old man. “It was fine!”

“But you, you weren’t here for the fiesta here. Fix some corn gruel for us to drink! We’ll drink corn gruel because we weren’t gathered together to drink it here, since you passed the fiesta separately in another town.

“Now fix the corn gruel! We’ll share it and drink it here,” he said.

They shared it and finished it that way. The fiesta came to an end, it seems.

Because the hero of this tale addresses his companions as *jun tot*, “uncle,” we know that they all must be Chamulans. For a bride to be won with a single liter of cane liquor and no arguments is a fantasy that would be dear to any Chiapas Indian’s heart. Since Chamulans are known to settle far from their own township, it is not beyond belief that the man would agree to remain in Simojovel.
Rey Komis

My introduction to Rey Komis on 10 November 1959 proved also to be my introduction to public life in Zinacantán. It was Rey’s wedding day—a wedding in the grand style. He stood stiffly before the house cross in his new sandals with broad-brimmed black felt hat in hand, his head turbanned in a scarlet cloth, his neck wrapped also in scarlet, with just the pink pompoms of his neckerchief protruding at the back. A white lacy shawl was drawn over a double layer of long-sleeved white shirts. His short shorts were encased in long shorts, and these in turn by green velveteen breeches that reached below his knees. His waist was encircled by a woolen sash, a leather belt, and an embroidered cotton sash. A rosary and a scapulary hung from his neck.

His bride, too, was nearly hidden from sight beneath her woolen headdress, her shawl, her feather-embroidered huipil, her two white blouses, her red sash, and her two blue skirts. From her neck hung a rosary and a scapulary.

As a wedding guest I was told to don a ceremonial robe, and to flourish a gourd rattle and a bouquet of orange leaves while I danced more and more lurchingly, until I fled in the dusk down submarine trails where the trees waved to and fro like giant seaweed. At last I reached the safety of Romin Teratol’s home with no memory of the fate of my companion, Manvel K’obyox’s benighted son, left crumpled in a muddy ditch.

It wasn’t until a few days later that I learned the gossip. For five years Rey had been engaged; the wedding preparations were proceeding in perfect order. But five years is a long time to wait, and Rey couldn’t. His fiancée’s family had left to cut firewood, and she was at home alone. Rey slipped in to pay a quick visit, but before his visit was over he heard footsteps outside the door. He scrambled up into the loft just before the family marched in. When night fell, Rey’s fiancée’s sister, sleeping below, was suddenly awakened by a shower of corn kernels. She sounded the alarm. Rey’s fiancée assured them it was only a mouse, or maybe a rat, but his bed of planks was too hard for poor Rey to keep stock still. They lit a pine torch and poked it up toward the rafters. Pink pompoms were discovered in the flickering light. Someone ran to bring an uncle and the uncle’s flashlight. The white beam fell upon Rey, clad only in his short shorts. But thinking quickly, Rey warned the man he was armed and had better not be provoked to violence. After a hurried consultation, the family filed out, locking the door behind them. The next morning when they peeked in, Rey was found slumbering on the floor, wrapped in borrowed blankets. To court he went, accompanied by the men who were his bridal petitioners. When asked by the magistrate if he had touched his fiancée, Rey assured the magistrate he had. His fiancée admitted it, too. Rey added that he had met her three times before in the woods. Her younger sisters confessed that twice she had “dropped” premature babies at the market in San Cristóbal. The sentence: two weeks of hard labor to be followed, after emotions had cooled, by a wedding.

Some months later Rey tried to tell me “The Adventures of Peter.” Romin Teratol had intimated that Rey only told tales when the cane liquor was running in his veins, but this time Rey was awash, and his words foundered in his throat. The next morning, Romin bought a half pint and took it to Rey. Romin called out, and from the black void, behind the heavy oaken bars, came a quavering reply. In front of the jail a constable was huddled before a fire, weaving a palm strip for a new hat. Romin asked him if his friend Rey could have a bit of cane liquor to chase away his hangover. “Well, not a liter!” Laughter. “No, only a half pint.” The constable nodded. Romin called into the void, chains clanked, a chalk white hand stretched out of the black woolen blanket to receive the bottle. Three-quarters of the fiery liquid was gulped down in a long gurgle, while the rest was left to be shared by two constables, Romin, me, and an idle bystander. The constables recounted how Rey had ended his spree the night before by a visit to his mother’s house, where he had grabbed her by the hair and pulled her about. When the constables arrived to make their arrest, Rey ripped off his shirt and resisted so fiercely that it took three constables to drag him screaming half-naked through the streets to jail.

Eleven years later I enlisted Romin’s help in locating Rey to see if he would tell me a few tales. Though now in his late thirties, with no religious post to his name, nor any prospects of becoming an elder, he, like his father, is known for his racy wit. He had entertained Romin Teratol with many tales when they were working on the roads together. After searching high and low, we found Rey in a
small shop where he was seated majestically, his face wreathed in smiles. He was surrounded by a group of boisterous young men, a row of bottles at his feet. It seems that Rey was retiring from his post as President of the School Board. He and his colleagues were instructing the new board about their future duties. From the earnestness of his delivery one would never guess he was an illiterate! Generous as always, he invited us to join the celebration, and we helped him home after the bottles were empty and the discussion closed. Next to his hearth, he told us with great verve the story of “The Long Hair,” while his father sat at his side, adding approving remarks and sharing still another bottle. Rey agreed to work with me the next Sunday, and pulled from his wallet thirty pesos to half a debt he had owed me for many years.

True to his word, he met me in San Cristóbal at the market. We sat before the tape recorder, downing a couple of beers. I wish we had drunk a few more at the outset to brush away Rey's self-consciousness, because his first tales were not nearly so lively as they might have been. But soon his enthusiasm took hold, and with increasing confidence he told tale after tale in his characteristically virile, direct, almost bovish style. Hear the words of Rey, the “King,” for in Zinacantán they are the words of Everyman!

John, Head of Gold

There was a person, it seems, as we say, who met up with the Earth Lord, as we say. He had three children.

“Compadre,” said [the Earth Lord] when he arrived.

“Compadre,” said [the other].

“Won't you give me one of my godchildren? Let him go and guard my house for me,” said [the Earth Lord].

“We can do it, compadre, why not?” said [the man]. Quickly that little boy mounted on horseback, as we say. He went to . . . . He was taken to his house, as we say. To his godfather’s house, as we say. But [his godfather] was the Earth Lord.

And he arrived. That boy was given keys, seven keys. “Well, don't touch anything! Stay here! Guard my things!” he told that godchild of his.

“Okay, fine!” said [the boy]. Afterwards he opened up all the rooms. It was probably that silver that dropped down, dropped down, that he dipped his fingers in. But he couldn't get them out. They stayed there for good. Oh, that godfather of his came [back]. Quickly [the boy] was killed. He was stuck in the silver there.

After he died [the Earth Lord] went to speak to that compadre of his again. “Compadre,” he said, when he arrived.

“Compadre,” said [the other].

“Give me another of my godchildren now! The first one feels at home now. They would be happy talking to each other. Lord, he's really content now!” he said. He asked for another of those godchildren of his, too.

“Okay, let him go!” [the father] said. [The boy]
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went and just the same way he was given those keys, seven keys again. They were given to him just the same way. Lord, the joker o—pened them all up, too. He o—pened up all the rooms, too.

But then he saw the skeleton of that older brother of his sticking out there. But he dipped those fingers of his in, too. They wouldn't come out now either. He just went and reached that brother of his where he [lay] dead. He died there.

That one died. [The Earth Lord] went now to bring the other one, too. It would be the whole number, all three whom he would take back in [to his cave]. “Compadre,” he said when he arrived.

“Compadre,” said [the other].

“Sonofabitch, won’t you give me now the other one of my godchildren? Hell, they really feel at home. Let him see! Then all three would be together,” he said. “Let him go and guard my house!” he said.

“Sonofabitch, why not let him go!” said [the father].

“All three will come then,” he said, since they were his godchildren, you see. Since he was his compadre, you see. Lord, [the boy] was given those seven keys, too. He o—pened all [the rooms]. He o—pened them all up.

But that joker . . . where that gold was . . . quickly he bent over. He washed his hair with it. But there he stuck fast. The poor guy stayed there, they called him “Head of Gold.” “But what the devil can I do?” he said. He saw them now. He saw now that his older brothers had died. [Their skeletons] were sticking out there. There was a magic wand. It was that Earth Lord’s. “Magic wand!” he said. It belonged to that Earth Lord there. Oh, he pulled it out. Since that godfather of his, it seems, had gone wherever he had gone. “Magic wand, is it long before my godfather will come back?”

“Ah, he’s coming near now. I guess you ought to go right away!” it said. He left with that magic wand, Ye—s!

There was a very skinny horse he took. He rode on it. Bu—t the horse bucked and bucked when it walked, too.

He left. He left with that little devil of his that talked, as we say. He left with it. Ooh, he went on and on. And first he tossed down a comb. As for that comb, that godfather of his couldn’t pass by it. He just saw lo—ts of hawthorns.

[The boy] was almost caught up with again, since [the Earth Lord] went to catch him, you see. Since he had taken that [wand] that talks, you see, the power of that Earth Lord. He tossed down a mirror, too. That just turned into cli—ff after cliff, so that
that godfather of his couldn't pass by again. That [Earth Lord] then, we—nt on. He went on and on, dashing after him on horseback until he got to where [the boy was].

After [the boy] tossed that [mirror] down, too, he tossed down some ribbons or whatever I've heard them say. It just tu—rned into a swamp. It turned into [that], too. It just turned into a swamp, too. [The Earth Lord] couldn't get by it either. He was distracted there, until [the boy] came out on the earth's surface. "Well, magic wand," he said again. He asked it if his godfather was left behind or if he was right behind.

"He stayed behind," it said. He stayed behind. Lord, [the boy] went on. He arrived then in Zinacantán Center. That John, Head of Gold, as he's called, I think. John, Head of Gold, but because his head was of gold. He had wrapped [his head] in a neckerchief, but it was seen that it was gold now.

As for him, since he had his devil . . . . He took it. He took it with him. He had taken it. He wouldn't give away that magic wand, since it was his companion now, you see. Since it talked to him, you see.

He arrived there, it seems. He borrowed a house [for the night] as we say. He met a beautiful girl there. "Sonofabitch, wouldn't you like us to get married?" he said.

"Eh, I don't know," she said.

"Well, I don't have a wife, myself, so let's get married!" he said. Now it was that magic wand that spoke, that deceived her. It coaxed her, as we say—that devil.

"Lord, all right, then," she said. She probably let him sleep with her, but he never married her, either. He went to another town, too. Wherever he travelled and travelled he just tried the women out, as we say.

Then after that who knows where he went. He probably disappeared like that. That's what I've heard, indeed!

Versions of this tale, clearly of Spanish origin, have been recorded from the southwestern United States to Lake Atitlan, Guatemala. The example from the Southwest is the closest. The devil tells his godson not to feed a skinny horse or to open the last door in his palace. The boy disobeys, covers his hands and hair with gold, and rides off on the nag, employing the usual tricks of a magic flight (Rael, 1957, T232). A variant from Jalisco has a "golden child" escape from the devil by means of a magic flight (Wheeler, 1943, T84). In Yucatan a giant entrusts the palace keys to a boy who does not heed his warning, opens the doors, and is covered with gold. He, too, must escape by a magic flight (M. Redfield, 1937:40-42). In San Pedro la Laguna it is the king's servant who disobeys the command, puts his head in a font of gold, and his hands in a font of silver. A beautiful girl falls in love with the servant, but the king has him thrown in jail (Rosales, 1945:876).

The presence of three godsons and of a magic wand are peculiar to Zinacantán. So also is the hero's rakish exist.
**Fallen Flesh**

T176

There is a Fallen Flesh, a devil, as we say, indeed! He was a person in fact, but he would hang himself up on the cross.

He would hang himself up on the cross. His flesh would come down there. That skeleton of his would take a trip, as we say. His skeleton would take a trip. His flesh would be left behind there in a heap by the cross.

When he came back again . . . “Go down, meat! Go down, meat!” he said when he let his flesh down.

Then when he came back, his flesh climbed up again.

He was seen there. It was seen probably two or three times that he kept on doing it over and over. They went to rub salt on him. They rubbed lots of salt on him.

That fucking Fallen Flesh came back. “Come up, meat! Come up, meat!” he said. But there was nothing you could do to have it stick on. It would fall down. He carried that flesh of his in his arms. He went to rinse it off in the river. But even that didn’t do any good. It didn’t do any good. [His flesh] wouldn’t climb up. That’s how that man was finished. Wherever it was that he fell dead, as we say, the Fallen Flesh.

7Oy la yaleb bek’et pukuj xkaltik bi, krixchano a7a pero ti yu7n sjok’an sba ta krus.

Va7i 7un, te la sjok’an sba ta kruse te la chyal li sbek’tal 7une, ja7 la chbat ta paxyal taj sbakel xkaltik 7une sbakel chbat ta paxyal 7un, te losol chkmoon li sbek’tal ta ta krus 7une.

Bwéno, va7i, k’alal k’alal xul tal noxtok 7une, 7a li “vája kárnie, vája kárnie!” xi la li k’alal tzya7ales sbek’tal 7une.

7Óra li k’alal xul tale chmuy li sbek’tale. “Suve kárnie, suve kárnie!” xi. Pero mu la k’u xachá7ile stzak xa sba 7un ta la xp’aj yaleb 7un, 7isjop la ech’el taj sbek’tale ba la ssap ta 7uk’um pero mi ja7uk la sbalin mu la sbalin, mu xmuy te nel 7o ye7ch 7ibat taj vinike ja7 ti bu pak’al laj xkaltike yaleb bek’et 7une.

See T73 and notes.

**How Rabbit Tricked Coyote**

T166

The rabbit went to the bathroom in the awful cultivated papayas. He went to the bathroom. He left droppings on the insides of the papayas.

Well, the owner arrived to look. He kept arriving to look. He never found [the rabbit].

The thing is, he molded some beeswax. He stood it up where that rabbit’s trail was. He came to catch that awful rabbit. “What are you doing standing here, you bastard? You’re blocking me. You’re blocking me! ” said [Rabbit]. It didn’t answer. That beeswax didn’t answer. Quickly he slapped it. His forefoot got stuck. He couldn’t get it off. “Then I’ll give you the other one, too, you bastard! Why don’t you let me go? ” he said. He gave it the other one. The second one was caught, too. “Sonofabitch, but let me go properly. If you don’t let me go, I’ll kick you, if you don’t want to let me go!” he said. He kicked it. The other [leg] got stuck, too. “I’ll give
you the other one, too!” he said. It wouldn’t answer since it was beeswax, you know. Lord, he gave it the other foot. All four. “I’ll bite you!” he said. He bit it. Lord, he was flattened there once and for all, then.

That owner arrived. “Oh Hell, so I was right, it was you bothering me, then!” he said. Quickly he caught [Rabbit]. [Rabbit] was grabbed by the ears. He was dragged off to the river.

After that, he was shut up, in . . . I don’t know what that dumb rabbit was shut up in. [The man] went to heat up a metal spit. A metal spit was going to be stuck up [Rabbit’s] ass. It was just a punishment. He wasn’t going to be killed. “Coyote!” That coyote passed by then. “Coyote!” said [Rabbit].

“What?” said [Coyote].

“Sonofabitch, if you want to, man, if you want you can take my place here, because I’m being offered a girl, but she’s really beautiful. But me, I’m not a good match. Me, I’m smaller. As for you, you’d make a wonderful match. You are goo—d and tall,” that Coyote was told.

“Eh, but are you telling the truth?” said that Coyote.

“I’m telling the truth, man!” he said. “Sonofabitch, but me, I’m no match for the sexy girl, but she’s really beautiful,” he said.

“All right, I can do it, then. I’ll open [the cage] for you to get out, then. Me, I’ll get in,” said [Coyote]. It was the fucking coyote that was there now. That metal spit came. It was stuck up his ass. But it was the sonofabitching rabbit that tricked him. That’s who tricked him.

“Uncle Burnt-ass Coyote,” said [Rabbit]. He was watching in the distance. But [Coyote] was scared. He got that metal spit up him.

“Oh, hell, well you won’t go now!” said [the man].

“Oh hell, you’re different! Hell, [you used to be a] rabbit. Hell, what you are, then!” said that owner, that person who impaled [Coyote]. Since it was a bigger [animal] he found shut up there.

[Coyote] was freed. He went off.

He met up with the sonofabitch on the trail again. “Sonofabitch, don’t get mad, Coyote!” he said. “If you want to, come on, let’s get the cheese here,” he said. It was in the water. It was Our Holy Lady [the moon]. “Come on, let’s finish up the water here, drink it! We’ll get the round cheese,” he said.

“Well, are you telling the truth?” said [Coyote].

“I am,” said [Rabbit].

It looked as if that Rabbit was swilling it, but his nose was just touching it. But Coyote, Lord, he was gulping it down, of course. Sonofabitch, it was coming out of his nose now. That water was spurring
out of his ass, because he was [nearly] dying now. Lord, then Rabbit dashed off. He left that Coyote in a heap again.

It was probably [not] until his belly subsided when they met again on the trail, as we say. “Oh, sonofabitch, now the time’s come, Rabbit!” said that Coyote. “The time’s come, you bastard. It’s the second or third time you’ve tricked me, but now today we’ll give it to each other!” he said.

Sonofabitch, Coyote, you’re still mad, but if you want, I’ll climb up and get the mamey here,” he said. A ripe mamey, a mamey.

“All right, climb up, then,” said that fucking Coyote. Their quarrel was already ended again, as we say. That fucking rabbit climbed up. He climbed up to look for mameys. He found a ripe one. He picked it. [Coyote] was given a ripe one. That Coyote gulped it down, too. Still another one. [Rabbit] loo—ked for another one that was good and hard, very green. Poor Coyote had his jaws wide open. Sonofabitch, it landed in [his jaws]. It was wedged in, too.

[Rabbit] saw that it was stuck there now. That [Coyote] had no way to get it out.

Then that fucking rabbit climbed down. He went on again. He went on again—n. “Ow, sonofabitch!” said the gent [Coyote].

They met on the trail again. “Coyote!” said [Rabbit].

“What?” said [Coyote].

“Sonofabitch, do you want to hold up the rock here for a minute, because it’s rolling down?” said [Rabbit]. It was a cliff, as we say, Ooh, Coyote rushed off. [Rabbit] was [left] leaning against [the cliff].

“Wait for me, hold it up still, because I’m going to get some rocks to prop it up well,” said [Coyote].

“Ohay!” said [Rabbit]. He was leaning against it. In the end that fucking Coyote climbed up on top of the cliff. Coyote rolled rocks down at [Rabbit].

After that, Lord, that fucking went on again—n. He went on. He went on. [Rabbit] was hurt by that Coyote. But he never died, either. He we—nt on again. He met on the trail the fucking . . . after that Coyote, after that, he met Skunk on the trail. Now it was Skunk he met. “What’s up, Skunk?” said that fucking rabbit.

“Nothing much,” said [Skunk].

Sonofabitch, man do you want to play some music here, because I’m getting married,” he said. “Sonofabitch, I’m marrying a girl, but she’s beautiful!” said that fucking rabbit.

“Why not?” said [Skunk].
“When the rockets come, when the rockets burst, then you play your instrument well,” said that fucking Rabbit.

“Okay!” said that Skunk. He was buried in terribly thick reeds. That fucking Skunk was buried there. He was strumming away at his little guitar.

That fucking Rabbit set fire to [the reeds] in a line all around [Skunk]. There that poor Skunk was done in. It was the fucking Rabbit who won again, as we say. He tricks us so badly. The fucking Rabbit just does tricks.

That’s the way it ends.

Although Rey assigns no etiological function to Rabbit’s fouling of the papayas, there is a striking similarity between rabbit droppings and papaya seeds.

All the episodes in this version of Rabbit’s exploits are quite standard except for Coyote’s revenge. Usually Coyote is duped into supporting the cliff. See also T20, T21, T49, T50, T90, and their notes.

The Adventures of Johnny Fourteen

Johnny Fourteen, because he had the strength of fourteen people, as we say. And he had fourteen meals served to him, too. Johnny Fourteen because he had the strength of fourteen, as we say.

He would look for jobs, wherever he could get jobs. But he was given rocks to carry, as we say. But the rocks were this big! I don’t know, I think he amassed hundreds. But they were big! They certainly weren’t this small! Johnny Fourteen it was.

But you see it was a trick, too. He was being tricked. Yes!

He didn’t mind gathering them. Lord, he could accomplish in a minute whatever he was told. He could do it. They wanted him to be bumped off. He was supposed to die from it, but he wouldn’t die. He wouldn’t die. No!

After that test there was a snake, but it ate people. It ate lots of people. It wanted them for its meal.

[Johnny] went. He was given [the job] of spending the night in a cave, as we say.

Lord, but the joker—those devils arrived—he killed them. That Johnny Fourteen killed them. He killed them. Yes!

The next day he arrived again. “Well, I’ve come back. I’ve killed them,” he said when he arrived. They went to look. A snake was lying there dead still.

“Sonofabitch, how could it die?” they said. But they had wanted that [Johnny] to die. He went to the graveyard, too. Three days and three nights. He went to the graveyard. The first night there was nothing. The second night there was nothing. The
third night all the ghosts came out. He was dragged in [to the underworld]. When he woke up he was already underground.

“But what can I do?” he said. He poked out that earth there by the great door. He got out again. He wasn't left behind there either. He came back to the place where the king's house was, as we say, since there didn't used to be registries. It was at the king's house where orders were given long ago.

He got out again. “But what can we do to him?” they said. He wouldn't die. He was the one who dished it out. He was the one who really dished it out. And there was a serpent that kept asking for its meals, for people. It was fed every night. I don't know how many heads that serpent had. I forget what the serpent's name was. It was a snake that came out of the ocean. It always came out of the ocean. It always came out of the ocean. If you didn't give it its meal then a number of people in the town would die. Half the townspeople would be doled out. Over and over they would give it [people to eat]. But if you gave it a meal then its belly would be filled and it would go back [to the ocean], as we say.

That [Johnny] arrived. That king had a daughter, as we say. “Well, take my daughter! Go sleep with her in that house!” [Johnny] was told. It was the house where the serpent came.

“Oh, I can do it!” he said.

“Take your tool along with you!” he was told. He took that tool of his with him. It was a sickle he took along, a grass cutter, as we say. A sickle. Ye—s!

“Well, never mind if I die, what's the difference?” he said. Since the poor guy probably didn't know [what was in store for him].

“Well then, let's go to bed!” said that wife of his. “I'm not going to bed. Me, I'm not going to bed. Not till I want to,” he said. That woman heard when that serpent was approaching. She spoke, too.

“But now I'll die, then, too!” said that king's daughter. Since they used to arrive and hump her, arrive and hump her. The men would fall asleep. The woman would leave her husbands dead-still there, as we say. She would leave. She would go home.

Now that [Johnny] didn't sleep. “Yes, indeed, as for me, I won't go to bed!” he said. He had no heart for it. First, she asked [Johnny to come to bed], too. He had no heart for it at all. When she heard that sea breaking [as the serpent rose], that woman told her husband about it.

“Then both of us will die here,” she said.

“Well, we'll see, then!” said [Johnny]. He stood behind the door, as we say. When that serpent stuck its head in, then he swung at it with that sickle. Then he swung at it. That serpent's head landed far away.
He killed it. And he was happy now. He and that woman calmed down now, as we say. He killed it, as we say. Yes! But [before then] the serpent couldn't be killed by soldiers, by bullets. "Ah, my daughter has died," said the king. They went to look. The next morning they went to look at that king's daughter, as we say.

But that great serpent lay there dead-still. They wouldn't go in. Then that awful Johnny Fourteen came out himself. Then he came out himself. He went to speak to his father-in-law, as we say, Eh, they held a fiesta. They had marimbas. And [Johnny] became the king now, as we say. His father-in-law stepped out now, as we say. His father-in-law stepped out.

Now [Johnny] stayed, since he won, you see. He won. He succeeded.

Since he killed that serpent, as we say. He took his father-in-law's place, as we say. Now it was that Johnny Fourteen who became king. Lord, he got a pile of money! He got a pile of that money. That's all. That's how the story ended.

Rey's plot of "Johnny Fourteen" is quite similar to Romin Teratol's (T109), but there the snakes attack Johnny by a banana palm, not in a cave. The scenes of Johnny delivering a message to the Earth Lord and dodging soldiers' bullets are absent here. Rey gives the credit to Johnny Fourteen for the major exploit of John Skin. See T107, T109, and their notes.

**The Charcoal Cruncher**

There was a man. And he had a wife, as we say. Yes!

She was no problem. There was no trouble. He didn't know his wife was a Charcoal Cruncher.

The way it became known, it seems, was that he wanted—there was something he wanted now in the dark, as we say. He touched her head. It was gone. Sonofabitch, he lit his lantern. That man was scared. He didn't do anything to her.

That Charcoal Cruncher scrambled swiftly under the eaves. She arrived at the fireside. Then she grabbed those coals. She crushed away on them, but the ones that were burning—not the extinguished ones—the hot ones, as we say.

"Okay," said the man. He didn't say anything to her. No. The next night [it happened] again. "Well, sonofabitch, but I'll rub salt on her," said that man. He rubbed salt all over the severed part. He rubbed it with salt. She tried to stick on. She couldn't stick on now.

"Sonofabitch, why did you do this to me?" said that woman.

"Well, but you deserved it!" said the man.
Lord, that horrible woman’s head came—came and settled here on that man’s shoulder. That man had two heads. “Sonofabitch!” said that man. But what did it do now? It hardly came off! It wouldn’t come off now. It stuck on there now for good, as we say. “Well, if you want to, wife, let’s go get some fruit,” he told her.

“Let’s go!” said that woman, since she was stuck on there now. But as for that bottom part of her, then, it probably was left lying there. They probably buried it, of course!

They went. They looked for fruit. It was from the pine trees, as we say, that have yellow pine cones, as we say. Or their disease [pine rust], as we call it. That was it. “Well, see here, wife, stay here a minute. I’ll go get some fruit for us to eat,” he told her. He told her.

“All right,” she said. That woman’s head came off. And that head of hers sat on the ground.

He climbed. That man climbed up. He climbed way up. He climbed to the top of the pine. “Well, you bitch of a woman, hell, do you think I’m coming down? Hell, see for yourself where you’ll die!” he told that wife of his. Ooh, she tried to bounce up. She tried to bounce up, but she couldn’t reach him. She had the strength to reach halfway up the pine tree. But then she came crashing down. Then she came crashing down. She was lying there. The fucker probably got worn out. She was lying there for a minute.

But then a deer appeared. Now that deer came walking along.

It passed by next to where she was lying. Lord, it approached. She bounced up on it. She landed sitting on its shoulder, too. Stuck on to it, she went off, indeed! Ooh, as for the deer, hell, it simply sprinted off since it had a burden now, you see. The deer threw itself off a cliff somewhere. That’s how [the deer and the woman] were finished. That’s how they died. That’s how that story went, indeed! Just a few words.

See also T12, T81, T82, and their notes, T47 and T60.

How Toenails Won a Bride

He had a mother. “Mother!” he said to her.

“What?” she asked.

“I really long to marry that princess.” [The king] already had a wife. That princess was the king’s wife. The king’s wife. “I really long to marry her,” he said.

70 la sme7. “Me7!” xut la.

“K’us!” xi la.

“Batz’i chak kik’ ta j-mek i prinsesa le7e.” Kómo 70 xa la yajnil taj 7une, yajnil rey la taj prinsesa 7une yajnil rey. “Batz’i chak kik’ ta j-mek,” xi la 7un.
"Oh, God, son, poor child, you marry her? It's even the king seated there, you know. She would be hard to ask for," he was told. "What makes you think a princess would want you?" he was told. That old woman told her child.

"Eh, but I'm mad about her. I'm simply going."

"Well, you stay, mother! We'll see if I get to speak to her. If I don't get to speak to her, well, never mind. I've fallen completely in love," he said.

"Well, go on, then!" said the old woman. That man left his house.

"He went on. Then he found a dead cow. The buzzards were there. Everything. The blowflies, the flies. They were eating that mule [sic]—the coyotes and so on. They were all there. "Brother, where are you going?" asked those animals.

"I'm not going anywhere. I'm going wherever I want to go. It makes no difference at all," he said.

"Man, won't you do [us] the favor of dividing up our food for us, here? Because we are simply quarrelling with each other and hitting each other. We aren't getting our food," they said.

"Well, all right," he said. Lord, quickly that man pulled out his knife.

"Well, we want to ask a favor. If the animals are big we want them to have bigger meals," they said.

"But give those tiny little animals a smaller [amount]," said those animals, those awful buzzards and so on.

"Well, all right," he said. After he had cut up each little bit for them equally, he portioned them out. After he passed it out—"Well, take care of yourselves! Don't quarrel with each other. I've finished passing out your food," he told those animals.

"Well, then, thank you," they said. "It's not much, but we are giving you a little bit of our toenails. They will be a real help to you. Travel with them, too," that man was told.

"Well, all right," he said. Those little flies, the animals, finished cutting off their nails. The animals finished giving him a little of their toenails and so on.

"So I must get to speak to the princess, then!" he said. Who knows how many stories high that princess was sitting with that husband of hers.
And, “Adios, Eagle!” he said. “Eagle,” because he went now as a hawk, as we say. He was soaring along. “Well, but this is fine, then,” he said. He went on. And, “Adios, Fly!” he said. He saw that that Princess was sitting alone. He was soaring along now. “Well, adios, Ant!” he said. Now he turned into an ant. Now the ant was crawling up that princess' face, as we say. That princess flicked him off. “Well, princess, it's me!” he said. He spoke to her. He turned into a human being when he was gotten to speak to that princess, you see. “Eh, okay, I guess it doesn't matter,” he said. He approached where that wall was. “Adios, Lion!” he said. [The wall] only moved a little, like that, you cut open their stomachs. Their eggs are there. That's the last one, of course,” he was told. “If you can win out! Who knows if you can win out!” he was told.

“Eh, who knows, but you can’t kill my husband. But he has a lot of souls,” she said. “Seven souls,” she said. That king had seven souls, as we say. He had seven souls.

“But where? he said.

“Here, here, by the wall. Here. If you leave, a deer will come out,” she said. After the deer comes out, doves will come out,” she said. “After they have come out, sparrows will come out,” she said. “After that, you cut open their stomachs. Their eggs are there. That's the last one, of course,” he was told. “If you can win out! Who knows if you can win out!” he was told.

“Ah, I don't know what the other kind was this. “Adios, Tiger!” he said. It moved quite a bit behind. He went to see where that deer went. “Adios, ant!” he said again. That wall landed over on its side, as we say. Ooh, a deer came out. It bounded out now. “Adios, Eagle!” he said. So that hawk

“Eh, okay, I guess it doesn’t matter,” he said. He spoke to her. He was happy since he had gotten to speak to that princess, you see.

He approached where that wall was. “Adios, Lion!” he said. [The wall] only moved a little, like this. “Adios, Tiger!” he said. It moved quite a bit now. Ah, I don't know what the other kind was now, either. And, “Adios, Lion!” he said again. That wall landed over on its side, as we say. Ooh, a deer came out. It bounded out now. “Adios, Eagle!” he said. Ooh, now he was a hawk following right behind. He went to see where that deer went. “Adios, Tiger!” he said. Then he went to cut open that. . . . He was able to jump on that deer, as we say. Then that Tiger went to work, as we say.

He killed that deer. Then three doves came out. Three doves came out. Ooh, now the doves were soaring off. “Adios, Eagle!” he said. So that hawk went to kill them, too. He killed them. He cut open the doves' breasts, as we say. Three sparrows came out, too.

Then when those three sparrows came out, they [went] into the ocean. Now he couldn't do anything at all. He couldn't go into the ocean. He was crying there. He was crying and crying.

Some fishes appeared. “Well, what are you crying about?” asked those fishes when they arrived.

“Well, it's nothing much. The little sparrows went in [to the ocean] here.
“The trouble is, now I can’t get them out,” he said. “Well, don’t worry! Wait a minute, we’ll get them,” said [the fishes].

Then it was those fishes, they were the ones who brought those little sparrows out. Then they came out. After he got them, he cut open their breasts. He cut open their breasts. Now there was an egg there.

Then he brought it to that princess. But that king was just thrashing about, since his powers were exhausted, you see. His powers were exhausted, you see. He was just thrashing about.

“Well, adios, Eagle!” said that man again.

Then he arrived at the window—there where that princess was still sitting. “Well, here is its egg,” he said when he arrived.

“Well, all right,” she said. She took her egg, as we say. It was as big as a chicken egg, as we say.

When that king came staggering in, she knocked him on the head with that egg of hers. Then he died. Then he died right away.

That king had some soldiers, as we say.

That woman begged permission to come down, as we say—that princess. She begged permission from [the king’s] soldiers. “Well, see here, princess, well, when you have asked for permission, I will pass by quickly and scoop you up. I will turn myself into a hawk,” said that man.

“Well, all right,” she said.

That princess begged permission and came down, it seems, to the ground. Lord, that hawk appeared. It passed by to scoop her up. He scooped her up the way they catch their food, chicks, as we say. He went on. They tried to shoot him, but he wasn’t hit by the bullets now. He wasn’t hit by the bullets now. That king died there and the princess, then, left. It was that other man now, it seems, who took her away, as we say. She went with another husband now. He killed her husband, as we say.

He went to another town now since he had a wife now—the one whom he was mad about, you see. That’s all I’ve heard. That’s how it ends.

Rey’s transformation of the dead cow into a dead mule is either an inadvertence or a correction.

This tale is widely known in Europe and Latin America (Aarne-Thompson 302, A. M. Espinosa, 1967, T141; Hansen, 1957:302). Typically, the hero is aided by grateful animals, who enable him to secure the ogre’s heart in the egg, dispatch the ogre, and win the princess. In the New World the helpful animals most commonly are ants, eagles or hawks, lions, and tigers (Boas, 1920:17–24; A. M. Espinosa, 1911, T1; Espinosa, 1914b:212–213; Parsons, 1932a:310–313; Paredes, 1970, T29; Radin, 1943:194–207; Reid, 1935:112–119; Robe, 1970, T35, T36; Robe, 1971, T5; and Wheeler, 1943, T80, T112, T113, T115).

“K’usi, mu xa jta lok’el 7un,” xi.

“Bwéno, mu k’u xal 7avo7on malao j-likelihood ta jse7ti7kómit tal,“ xi la 7un.

7Óra, li ja7 xa la taj choyet 7une ja7 xa la yik’ lok’el tal taj gurionsito 7une.

7Óra, lok’ la tal 7un tisjavbe la yo7on ti staik 7une sjavbeik li li yo7on 7une ton xa la tey 7un.

Bwéno, ja7 la yich’oj xa tal taj prinsesa 7une pero taj rey 7une yech xa la vuk’ul chevel 7un kómo laj xa li spersatak chava7i to laj xa li spwersatak chava7i 7une yech xa la vuk’ul chevel 7un.

“Bwéno, 7adyos, 7ágilal!” xi la ech’el taj taj vinik noxtok 7une.

Bu, te la k’ot taj ta ventana taj ta buy taj prinsesa chotol to 7une. “Bwéno, li7 me tal ston 7une,” xi la k’otel 7un.

“Bwéno, stak’,” xi la 7un. Yich’ la taj ston xkaltik j-p’ej la ta ton xka77an xkaltik 7une.

Va7i 7un, k’al xvuk’laj k’otel taj taj rey xkaltik 7une 7ixchek’be la tzjol taj taj ston 7une, te xa la me cham 7un te xa cham ta 7ora 7un.

Bwéno, porke 70y yajsolterotak xkaltik taj rey 7une.

Bwéno pws, sk’an la permiso yalel taj 7antz ya7el xkaltik taj prinsesa 7une sk’anbe permiso yajsolterotak 7une. “Bwéno, k’el avil 7un, prinsésa, bwéno, ti mi 7ak’an permiso 7une ta me xTeche’ jhopot ta 7anil 7un xik me ta jpas jba 7un,” xi la taj 7a taj vinik 7une.

“Bwéno, stak’,” xi la 7un.

Bwéno, 7isk’an permiso 7iyal ya7el taj ta balamit taj prinsesa 7une, he, tal la taj xike 7ech’ la sjop sjop ech’el k’u cha7al stzak sve7el vivich xkaltik, bat la, te la ya7uk xa la 7ak’bat bala pero mu xa xtae ta bala 7un, mu xa xtae ta bala 7un, te la te nel taj rey 7une 7i li prinsesa che7e bat ja7 yik’ ech’el taj yan 7o vinik xa ya7el xkaltik 7un yan xa 7o smalal bat xchi7uk 7un ja7 smil komel li smalal xkaltik 7une.

Bwéno, bat ta ya7o jtek-lum xa 7un kómo 7ooy xa yajnil ech’el ti vinik ti bu yaloj yo7on ta j-mek chava7i 7une, ja7 nox yech i ka7yoj chak taj 7une ja7 yech 7ilaj 7o yech chak taj 7une.

The animals bestow on the hero a toenail, leg, hair or feathers. So equipped, when he calls out “Dios y hormiga” or “Dios y un buen león,” etc., he is transformed into that animal. The conquest of the ogre in three Mexican versions begins with the killing of a porcupine, from which springs a rabbit. When the rabbit is killed, a dove flies out, and when the dove is killed, its egg is removed. The egg, applied to the ogre’s forehead, causes his death and frees the princess (Reid, loc. cit; Wheeler, T113, T115).

In Zinacantán, where equal distribution of food is considered so important, it is fitting that the hero’s fairness be rewarded, but even this detail is basic to the European tale type.
How Rabbit Lost His Hat and Sandals,
How the Weak Ones Won

T167

“My elder brother!” said Deer. Since Rabbit used to have antlers, as we say. “Let me borrow your shoes and your hat, because ... but me, they fit a little. You, you’re small, they don’t fit you,” said Deer.

“Eh, I don’t know if I’ll give them to you,” said [Rabbit].

“Just for a minute,” said [Deer]. “I’ll borrow them for just a minute,” said that awful Deer.

“Oh, take them, then! But give them back to me! Please don’t run off with them!” [Deer] was told.

[Rabbit] gave him those shoes of his. [Rabbit] gave him that hat of his. It was his antlers, as we say. Lord, that deer took them. Lord, now he didn’t give them back. [Rabbit] tried to ask him for them. [Deer] never gave them back to him. They were good, the deer’s hoofs were good, as we say. And his hat was good now, as we say. But as for Rabbit, he was simply left without his sandals. He just was walking along barefoot. So dumb Rabbit got tricked.

That Deer, I think he got into a contest. He got into a contest with Toad.

Now he and Toad talked to each other when they met at the spring. “Shall we race and see who is man enough—who wins, who races faster?” said that Deer. He asked Toad.

“Oh, I can do it,” said that Toad. “I can do it,” he said. “When shall we have the contest?” he said. They set aside a day for it, either tomorrow or whenever, it seems, as we say. “Okay, I can do it,” he said.

The toads talked to each other. They lined up, far apart. Far apart they lined up, each one.

“Okay, now, Toad!” [Deer] said.

“I’m ahead,” said that Toad. Deer thought that Toad was left behind. He had da—shed ahead, you see.

“Now, Toad!” said that deer.

“I’m ahead. I’m ahead.” They had lined up, you see.

That Deer grew tired. And, “I’m ahead,” said the toads who were lined up.

“Oh, hell, you were right that you can jump terribly well, then!” said that Deer.

Another day, too, it was Mosquito.

Those mosquitoes were walking about, swarming. “Hell, I’d like to squash you underfoot, to squash you underfoot,” said that Deer.

“Jbankil!” xi la li te7tikil chije, kómo ja7 7o to 7ox 7a li xxulub xkaltik i t’ule. 7a li “Jch’amuntik j-likeluk li 7asapatoe xchi7uk lapxole, yu7n pero vo7one ja7 jnupin 7o jutuk, vo7ote bik’itote mu xanupin 7o,” xi la li te7tikil chij 7une.

“Je, mu jna7 mi xakak’be,” xi la 7un.

“J-likel nox jch’amuntik 7un,” xi la taj taj mu te7tikil chij 7une.

“Bwénó, 7ích’o che7e pero xavak’bon me 7un mu me xajata7 7o 7un!” xut la 7un. Yak’be la taj ssapatoe 7i7ak’be la taj spixole, ja7 li xxulub xkaltik 7une, ke7re, yich’ taj te7tikil chije, ke7re mu xa bu 7iyak’be 7o 7un, ja7 li lek lek svoy xkaltik i te7tikil chij 7une, 7i 7i lek xa xpixol xkaltik 7une, yan i t’ul 7une, solel yech te ch’abal xa xa Nobob, yech xa xchunchon yok chanav 7une, yech’o ja7 7ista cho7el li j7a7yel t’ul 7une.

Va7i taj te7tikil chij 7une, 7a li 7ispasik preva chka7i 7un, 7ispasik preva xchi7uk sapo.

7A li 7ora, li sépo 7une, 7is’opon sbai7 7ista ta vo7. “Mi xak’an xi7anilajotik jk’eltik buch’u vinik, buch’u xkuch yu7un, buch’u mas x7anilaj?” xi la xi la taj te7tikil chij 7une. Xut ti sapo 7une.

“Bwénó, stak’,” xi la taj sépo 7une. “Stak’,” xi la 7un. “K’usi 7ora ta jpastik preva?” xi la 7un. Xch’akbe sk’ak’alil mi 7ok’ob k’u xi ya7el xkaltik 7une. “Bwénó, stak’,” xi la 7un.

Bwénó, sk’opon la sbai7 ti sapo7etik 7une, 7ixchol la sbai7 ta nomtik ta nomtik, 7ixcho—l la sbai7 ech’el ta j-mek, ju-kotik 7un.

Bwénó, 7a li “7Orá, sépo!” xi la 7un. “7Adelánto stoy!” xi la taj xi la taj sépo 7une. Xa7uk xa la komuk taj sépo li te7tikil chij 7une, sli—chojbe chava7i 7un.

“7Óra, sépo!” xi la taj te7tikil chij 7une.

“7Adelánto stoy, 7Adelánto stoy!” Xcholoj sbai7 chava7i 7un, cho7el 7iyich’ 7une.

Bwénó, 7ilub taj te7tikil chij 7une. 7l “7Adelánto stoy!” xi li sépo 7une. Te choloj ech’el 7un.

“7Ay kavron, yech ka xaval ti xana7 xap’it ta j-meke leke che7e!” xi la taj te7tikil chij 7une.

Bwénó, ta 7otro jun 7o k’ak’al noxtok 7un, xenen la 7un.

Bwénó, te la xkotlajet xlamet taj xenen 7une. “Kavron, sk’an ko7one xajju7 ta tek’el xajju7 ta tek’el,” xi la taj te7tikil chij 7une.
“Hell, I’d like to have a contest. You’d see!” Me, I have wings. I’ll race, hell, until I leave you behind,” said that Mosquito.

“Oh, God, how could you do it?” said [Deer].

“Let’s try it out then!” said [Mosquito]. Let’s try it. You’ll see!” Sonofabitch, those mosquitoes swarmed on his ear.

“Now, Mosquito!” said that Deer. [Mosquito] was whining there. He was whining there on [Deer’s] ear. Whining on his ear, sitting on his ear. He never flew. He was bu—zzing there. “Now, Mosquito!” said that fucking Deer.

“Eeee!” they went, sitting on his ear.

So that Mosquito won, too. But he was sitting on [Deer’s] ear. He scarcely flew! After that, then I think Rabbit came. I think they raced. He and Rabbit. Let’s have a contest!” said that Rabbit.

“Eh, who knows,” said [Deer].

“But, okay, but forget it since I haven’t any shoes anymore, myself,” said [Rabbit].

“Well, let’s try it out, then,” said [Deer].

But it was that Deer who succeeded. Deer did better, because his legs were longer. It was that poor Rabbit who was left behind. So he was left behind. Rabbit didn’t ever win again. It was Deer now who won. That’s all I’ve heard.

There is [a war story] like that about the elders of long ago.

They would go as soldiers. They kept going to war, but it was always like that. We . . . the elders, it seems, just carried burdens, carried bullets. [The Mexican soldiers] never asked [what you wanted to do]. It was always just burdens—as if [you were] a mule, an animal, as we say.

The [Mexicans'] soldiers were killed, it seems, where that war was. They were killed.

Then [the Zinacantecs] spoke to that chief, the leader of the soldiers, as we say. They spoke to him. “Well, I guess we’ll get into it,” they said. “We’ll see if we’re killed. Who cares?” said those elders of long ago. Since they had chosen from among themselves. There was Thunderbolt. There was Fog. There was Whirlwind. They chose the few elders who always worked, it seems.

“Well, if you can do something, then, do [us] the favor,” said the leader of the [Mexican] soldiers, as we say.

“Karájó, sk’an ko7on jpastik preva avile, vo7one 7o jxik’ chi7anilaj ka7rájo 7asta ke chakom ta be ku7un,” xi la taj xenen 7une.

“7Aj, di7o7s, bu lata le7e?” xi la 7un.

“Jpastik preva che7e!” xi la. “Jpastik preva avil!” xi la. Púta, te la svotzan sbaij taj xenen chchikin 7une.

7A li “7Óra, sankúdol!” xi la taj te7tikil chij 7une. Te la x7i7et, te la x7i7i7et ta xchikin, x7i7et ta xchikin nochol ta xchikin muk’ bu ta xvil, te la x7i7i7e—t 7un. “7Óra, sankúdol!” xi la taj jkobel te7tikil chij 7une.

Te xa “7I—7!” xi la. Te xa nochajtik ta xchikin.

Va7i, ja7 la 7ispas kanal taj xenen noxtok 7une, pero te nochol ta xchikin 7un yu7 van chvil 7un, 7ilaj taj 7une ja7 xa chka7i tal li t’ul chka7i 7anilajik chka7i 7un chi7uk i t’ul 7une. 7A li “Jpastik preva!” xi taj t’ul 7une.

“Je, na7tik,” xi la 7un.

“Pero bweno pero te k’alal 7un, kómo ch’abal jsapato xa li vo7one,” xi la 7un.

“Bweno, jpastik preva che7e!” xi la 7un.

Bu, ja7 la 7itojob taj te7tikil chij 7une, ja7 ja7 mas 7ikuch yu7un li te7tikil chij 7une, porke mas natik yok, ja7 7ikom la taj povre t’ul 7une, ja7 xa 7ikom 7o yech 7un, mu xa buy 7ispas kanal yech li li t’ul 7une, ja7 xa 7ispas i te7tikil chij, ja7 xa nox yech ka7yoj chak taj 7une.

When Zinacantecs Rode Home on Horseback

There is [a war story] like that about the elders of long ago.

They would go as soldiers. They kept going to war, but it was always like that. We . . . the elders, it seems, just carried burdens, carried bullets. [The Mexican soldiers] never asked [what you wanted to do]. It was always just burdens—as if [you were] a mule, an animal, as we say.

The [Mexicans'] soldiers were killed, it seems, where that war was. They were killed.

Then [the Zinacantecs] spoke to that chief, the leader of the soldiers, as we say. They spoke to him. “Well, I guess we’ll get into it,” they said. “We’ll see if we’re killed. Who cares?” said those elders of long ago. Since they had chosen from among themselves. There was Thunderbolt. There was Fog. There was Whirlwind. They chose the few elders who always worked, it seems.

“Well, if you can do something, then, do [us] the favor,” said the leader of the [Mexican] soldiers, as we say.

“Karájó, sk’an ko7on jpastik preva avile, vo7one 7o jxik’ chi7anilaj ka7rájo 7asta ke chakom ta be ku7un,” xi la taj xenen 7une.

“7Aj, di7o7s, bu lata le7e?” xi la 7un.

“Jpastik preva che7e!” xi la. “Jpastik preva avil!” xi la. Púta, te la svotzan sbaij taj xenen chchikin 7une.

7A li “7Óra, sankúdol!” xi la taj te7tikil chij 7une. Te la x7i7et, te la x7i7i7et ta xchikin, x7i7et ta xchikin nochol ta xchikin muk’ bu tu xvil, te la x7i7i7e—t 7un. “7Óra, sankúdol!” xi la taj jkobel te7tikil chij 7une.

Te xa “7I—7!” xi la. Te xa nochajtik ta xchikin.

Va7i, ja7 la 7ispas kanal taj xenen noxtok 7une, pero te nochol ta xchikin 7un yu7 van chvil 7un, 7ilaj taj 7une ja7 xa chka7i tal li t’ul chka7i 7anilajik chka7i 7un chi7uk i t’ul 7une. 7A li “Jpastik preva!” xi taj t’ul 7une.

“Je, na7tik,” xi la 7un.

“Pero bweno pero te k’alal 7un, kómo ch’abal jsapato xa li vo7one,” xi la 7un.

“Bweno, jpastik preva che7e!” xi la 7un.

Bu, ja7 la 7itojob taj te7tikil chij 7une, ja7 ja7 mas 7ikuch yu7un li te7tikil chij 7une, porke mas natik yok, ja7 7ikom la taj povre t’ul 7une, ja7 xa 7ikom 7o yech 7un, mu xa buy 7ispas kanal yech li li t’ul 7une, ja7 xa 7ispas i te7tikil chij, ja7 xa nox yech ka7yoj chak taj 7une.

7A taj 7ak’-k’ok’ 7une 7a li, 7o la yech taj vo7ne moletik 7une.

Va7 7un, ta la xbatik ta soltero 7un bat ta 7ak’-k’ok’ ta j-mek pero yu7a li k’ex yech yu7n vo7tikotik moletik ya7e le naka la kuch-7ikatzil kuch-bala ma7uk tzjak’ulan ja7 nox ti yu7un naka 7ikatzil k’u cha7al j-kot ka7 j-kot 7animal xkaltik.

Va7 7un, 7a la li laj la taj yajsolterotak ya7el taj, 7a taj buy taj 7ak’-k’ok’ 7une, laj la 7un.

7Óra, yalbe la taj 7ajvalil yech 7ajvalil yu7un soltero xkaltik 7une, yalbeik la li vo7otikotik 7une.


Kómo st’ujoj sbaij 7oy cha7uk, 7oy 7oy lumal tok, 7oy sutum 7ik’ 7une, st’ujoj sbaij ta jay-vo7 moletik 7onox ch7abtejik 7onox ya7el 7une.

“Bweno mi 7o k’u xana7ik che7e, pasik pavor,” xi la ti totil yu7un soltero xkaltik 7une, skwenta 7ak’-k’ok’ xkaltik 7une.
"Well, I guess we'll join in," they went to see how their enemies could be killed. "Well, I guess you should go, Hawk."—There was a Hawk—"I guess you should go, Hawk," they said. Hawk went. Lord, he was flying off high up.

"They're eating," [Hawk] said when he arrived home.

"Well, if they're just about to eat, then, go on, then, Blowfly!" they said... that blowfly was told. Blowfly went. He arrived there, buzzing. Sonofabitch, in a minute, in a minute—ill their food was just [filled with] maggots. They never ate. He laid [the eggs], but the maggots grew right away. You can't say they didn't grow right away! Sonofabitch, those [enemy] soldiers never ate.

"Hell, some trouble's up, then!" they said. They never ate it. They threw it out for good.


But they were already getting prepared there. They were getting ready. "Get ready!" [Butterfly] said when he arrived [back where the elders were].

"All right," they said. "Let's go, then! Let's go, then!" said that Thunderbolt and Whirlwind and Fog. Lord, they went to attack them. [The enemy] were all finished. They were finished for good. The trouble ended once and for all.

They had horses, it seems, those [Mexican] soldier chiefs, as we say. They had horses, it seems. Lord, it was the elders of long ago—they were the ones who came back mounted. Those chiefs, as we say, came back on foot. They came now on foot, since [the elders] were able to win, you see. That's why the soldier chiefs could now come on foot, you see. They didn't win with their own men, you see. It was only the bearers, they were the only ones who won, it seems. Then the trouble ended, indeed. Those soldiers keep winning in the ocean, but the enemy when it is submerged in the ocean, however, is absent from Rey's plot. See also T110 and notes.

The cast of this version of "When the Zinacantecs Rode Home on Horseback" differs from Romin Teratol's only in the substitution of Fog for Tornado. The problem of attacking the enemy when it is submerged in the ocean, however, is absent from Rey's plot. See also T110 and notes.

The Adventures of Peter

That Peter went looking for a servant's job, as we say. He went to be a servant. He went to get a baby-
sitting [job] or whatever he could. He went looking, it seems, to the master's house, as we say. One who was rich, as we say.

"Don't you have any jobs?" he asked when he arrived.

"I have work, but who knows if you can stand baby-sitting?" that Peter was told.

"As for me, it doesn't make any difference, just so long as I get a job to live on," said that Peter.

"Well, all right, then," he said. [Peter] baby-sat. He baby-sat there for a few days. But the baby cried and cried. The sonofabitch lost his temper. He picked up a needle. Quickly he stabbed it into its breathing spot. It died. That kid died.

He went and laid it down in its bed. "I'm hungry. As long as the baby is asleep I'll eat, mistress. Or else it will wake up, because it cries so much. It doesn't let me eat," said that Peter.

"All right," she said. He ate. Yes!

After he had eaten, Lord, then he dashed off.

"Where did Peter go?" said that mistress. "Could my child have slept this long?" she said. She went to look at her child. It was stiff. It was dead. "Oh hell!" she said now. But where would she find him now? He had already gone to another town, too. He dashed far away, too.

He reached another town, too. "Master, haven't you any jobs?" he asked when he arrived.

"I do, but who knows if you'll work," he said.

"What kind of work do you have?" asked [Peter].

"There is pigherding," said that master.

"Ah, pigherding, yes, indeed, of course I like that!" he said.

"Okay," he was told. He looked after those pigs.

He looked after them. He cared for those pigs a long time.

Somebody came by. "Sell me your pigs!" [Peter] was told.

"Ah, I won't sell them," he said. "The pigs I won't sell. I'll sell them. I'll decide whether to sell them. But I'll sell them all, don't think I'll sell [just] one!" he said.

"Well, think it over carefully, then. If you'll sell them all, then, sell them to me!" that Peter was told.

"Well, all right, but don't think I'll sell them completely. A little will have to stay behind. Their ears will stay. Their tails will stay. They'll stay with me, of course! I'll cut them off," said [Peter].

"Well, that doesn't make any difference," said that pig buyer. Several days passed, too.

Since they had agreed when he would come and take those pigs—he came to take those pigs. As for that fucking Peter, he cut off their ears and their tails. He cut them off. Those pigs went off. They
went on contract. Who knows how many thousands. Yes!

Then [Peter] went to tell that master of his. He went to stick them all in . . . there was a mud-hole. . . . That's where he went to stick all their ears and tails. They were probably a sign for where they went in the mudhole, as we say. “The pigs went in. All the pigs died. They went into the mudhole,” he told that master when he arrived. That master came.

“Oh, sonofabitch!”

“Don’t you go in, master!” said [Peter]. “I guess I’ll go in. Me, I can die,” said that fucking Peter. “Me, I can die. I guess I’ll go in myself,” he said. That Peter went in. That master stayed there, standing, as we say. [Peter] went in to pull at their ears, but he was shaking now [tugging at them]. He was supposed to be pulling those pigs out by their ears, but he had just stuck [the ears] in. He had just stuck them in. “Hell, see here, I say, master!” he said. “Its ear pulled off! The meat went further down in,” he said.

“Go on, then, go get a shovel right away!” It’s leaning behind the door,” he was told. That Peter went. “Bring me my food,” said [the master]. “Well, I’m to take the master’s food. And this is what the story is—you’re to give me a turn behind the door, my master told me,” he said. Now it wasn’t that shovel anymore. Now it was what he was asking from her.

“But what is it?” asked that old mistress.

“I don’t know. Well, you’re to give me a turn behind the door, my master told me,” he said.

“Eh, then what you want is this, then!” she said. Quickly that old mistress got on all fours. Lord, that fucker gave it to her well.

“I’ll take along his meal. I want a big meal for him,” said [Peter]. He took it with him. She fixed his meal for him. Lord, he went to another town. Hell, that master was squatting there. He was squatting there, waiting for that shovel. A shovel, it was supposed to be a shovel. It was hardly what [Peter] asked for behind the door. It was supposed to be a shovel.

“Sonofabitch, I’ll go in and look, then. I won’t ever die from it,” said that master. He went in to look at those pigs of his. Those pigs’ [ears and tails] had just been stuck in the mudhole one after another. Ah, he was furious. He thought he would still find that sonofabitch Peter there. That master went home.

But [Peter] had already gone to another town. Who knows where that fucking Peter took off to. “Hell, he tricked me!” said [the master]. He told his wife, as we say, when he arrived.

“Wasn’t it what you agreed on, what you told
him, then? Wasn’t it what he was supposed to do, asking me for a turn behind the door, then?” she said.

“There’s a shovel leaning behind the door, I told him,” said that master.

“Ah, hell!” said that old mistress. “This is what he asked me for,” she said.

“Oh, sonofabitch!” Where would he find [Peter]? He’d already gone.

After that he went to another town, too. A person came along, came riding along on horseback. He came riding along on horseback. “Sonofabitch, what can I do? Sonofabitch!” said that fucking Peter. Quickly he squatted down and took a shit. Quickly he took off his hat. Quickly he covered it. Then he was pressing down [on the hat].

“What’s there?” asked that Ladino coming along.

“Sonofabitch, there is a dove here, but it’s beautiful. Sonofabitch, but it scratches terribly,” he said. He had a pocketknife. He had scratched and scratched that hand of his with the pocket knife. “But there’s nothing you can do. It scratches. Look at the way my hand is!” he said. He showed [the Ladino] that hand of his. Yes!

“Oh, hell, if you want to, go and bring my birdcage! We’ll put it in it,” said that master.

“Eh, but will you give me your horse?” said [Peter].

“If you’ll give me your horse, I’ll go and bring it for you,” he said.

“Well, ride it!” he said. The fucker had a whip [no, a needle]. When that fucking Peter mounted [the horse], then he stabbed that needle in that horse. Sonofabitch, it bucked and bucked!

“Your horse isn’t used to me. If you want to, give me your clothes so that your horse gets used to me,” he said. Yes!

[The Ladino] gave them to him. That poor Ladino took off his clothes. He was left squatting there in only his underpants. He was pressing down that hat there. Lord, [Peter] took the horse and dashed off. He went to another town, too.

“But hell, what’s the damn bird look like?” said that Ladino. “Hell, but I guess I’ll see if it pecks me,” he said. Quickly he stuck that hand of his in [under the hat]. Sonofabitch, horrible shit squished in his fingers. “Oh, sonofabitch!” he said. Hell, it made him furious.

After that was over, too, that damned Peter went on.

Since now the fucker had some money, he thought it over. He got some pesos and fifty centavo pieces and so on. He looked for some [coins]. They were like flowers, as we say. They bloomed, it seems, as we say. He stuck them on [a stem] one after the other. They bloomed, as we say. The money was just sprouting there now, as we say.
A Ladino came along. “Will you sell that?” [Peter] was asked.

“Ah, I won’t sell this, because I get . . . . Every day, every day it gives . . . . its flowers open, but just money, just money comes out,” he said.

“Sell it to me!” said [the Ladino].

“Well, if you get as many thousand as I say, never mind, I’ll sell it,” said [Peter]. Sonofabitch, the dumb Ladino bought it. Lord, who knows how many thousands the deal was. [Peter] received the money for that one little flowering plant, as we say. When it fruited it was just pesos, just fifty centavo pieces, as we say. That Ladino watered it. He watched over it. Finally when the sun set, Lord, it was lying dried up. “Hell, he tricked me!” said [the Ladino]. “Sonofabitch!” he said. But where, where would he find [Peter] now? He had left. He’d gone to another town already.

He reached another town, too. He made a deal with a giant. A giant, as we say. Probably a devil, as we say. “Peter!” he said.

“What?” said [Peter].

“Do you want to make a bet to see who can make a hole in the tree with his fist?” Just with their fists they were going to try out on the tree.

“Okay, but not today, tomorrow,” said [Peter].

“Jpastik preva avill!” xi la 7un. Mu jna7 jay-mil li tak’in ta xch’oj yu7un i te7 ta k’obole? Ta k’obol nox tzpasik preva ta te7 7un.

“Bwéno, pero lavie mo7oj 7ok’ob to 7un,” xi la 7un.

“Jpastik preva avill” xi la. Mu jna7 jay-mil li tak’in ta xch’oj yu7un i te7 ta k’obole? Ta k’obol nox tzpasik preva ta te7 7un.

“Jpastik preva avill!” xi la. Mu jna7 jay-mil li tak’in ta xch’oj yu7un i te7 ta k’obole? Ta k’obol nox tzpasik preva ta te7 7un.

“Bwéno, pero lavie mo7oj 7ok’ob to 7un,” xi la 7un.

“Jpastik preva avill!” xi la. Mu jna7 jay-mil li tak’in ta xch’oj yu7un i te7 ta k’obole? Ta k’obol nox tzpasik preva ta te7 7un.

“Bwéno, pero lavie mo7oj 7ok’ob to 7un,” xi la 7un.

“Jpastik preva avill!” xi la. Mu jna7 jay-mil li tak’in ta xch’oj yu7un i te7 ta k’obole? Ta k’obol nox tzpasik preva ta te7 7un.

“Bwéno, pero lavie mo7oj 7ok’ob to 7un,” xi la 7un.
"Well, it makes no difference to me," said that fucking Peter.

And, well, they tied that fucker up. Those muleteers caught him. They tied him up. They stuck him in a sack, as we say. They sewed up the mouth of the sack. It was dumped [on the ground].

They waited for it to grow dark, till late at night, as we say. Then, they were going to toss him in the river. They weren't going to kill him. They were just going to toss him in the river.

The fucking Peter was clever at least, the sonofabitching Peter, it seems. He had his little knife. He had his little pocketknife, as we say. Slowly he pulled it out. He cut the mouth of that sack with it, as we say. He cut it.

Now the fucking muleteers fell asleep. They had fallen asleep. They didn't hear the sonofabitch get out. He got out. Then he gathered up their food and their lassos. He stuck them in, in his place. He sewed [the sack] up well.

Then the fucking Peter crossed the river. That Peter was on the other side now.

Then those sonofabitching muleteers woke up. It was already light when those sonofabitching muleteers woke up. Ah, quickly they carried [the sack] between four of them. Quickly they tossed it in the river. "Now Peter's gone!" said those muleteers.

"Now the eggs are gone, the lassos are gone, the food has gone!" said that fucking Peter, but he was already on the other side of the river.

"Oh, sonofabitch!" they said. Those muleteers were scratching their heads now, too. What could they do, because their food had already gone!

That's how it ended. That's how I've heard it.

Rey's version of "The Adventures of Peter" is very similar to Romin Teratol's (T6), though the vocabulary is much racier and the dialogue longer. The episodes of the flowers and the bird are reversed here, and the stone-rolling contest is not included; otherwise, the plot is identical. See T6 and notes.

When Our Lord Was Chased

Our Lord was being chased by the Judases, as we say.

Our Lord . . . one of our countrymen was planting there. He was planting. "What are you planting? What are you doing here?" asked Our Lord.

"Me, I'm planting trees, I'm planting stones!" he said. That person answered.

"Ah!" said Our Lord. "Well, if people come looking for me, then, if people come looking for me, tell them that you are just planting trees and stones," he told that man.

"Bwéno, pwes, muk' ta 7alel," xi la taj taj jkobel jkobel Pégro 7une.

7I bwéno 7ixchukik la taj jkobel sztazik la taj 7ariero 7une 7ixchukik la 7istzi aktik 7isjat 7o la yun 7une.

Bwéno, tzmala ch7ik'ub chnaxub 7ak'ubal xzaklik 7un ja7 7o ja7 7o la tzjipik ta nab 7un mu7tuk tzmilik naka nox tzjipik ta nab ech'el xa 7un.

Bwéno, li jkobel Pégro 7une vivo 7onox ya7el li puta Pégro 7une, 7o la yunin kuchilu 7o la yunin navaxax xzaklik 7un, 7isk'un-lok'es la 7un 7isjat 7o taj taj taj 7o la sti7il taj taj taj 7une, 7isjatbe 7un.

7Óra, li jkobel 7arieroetike tzake ta vayel tzakbikil ta vayel muk' xa7i lok' i puta 7une, lok' 7une ja7 la szobbe li sve7eltake li riatae ja7 la stik' komel chk'exol 7un stzis' la komel lek 7un.

7Óra, li jkobel Pegroe stuch' la jelavel nab 7un, j-jech nab xa taj Pégro 7une.

7Óra, yul la xch'ulel taj puta 7ariero sa7 sak xà la yul xch'ulel taj puta 7arieroetik 7une, 7aj, j-likel la sk'echnik ta chan-vo7 j-likel la sjipik ta nab. "7Óra se fwe el Pégro!" xi la taj 7arieroetik 7une.

"7Óra se fwe el wevo se fwe el riata se fwe el bastimyentol!" xi la taj jkobel Pegroe. Pero j-jech xa 7ox la nab 7un.

"7Ay, jijo la chingada!" xi. Sjot' xa la sjolik noxtok taj 7ariero. K' u tzap yu7 xa bat i sve7elike.

Bwéno, yu7n ja7 yech 7ilaj 7o yech 7ika7i yech chak taj 7une.

Our Lord was being chased by the Judases, as we say.

Our Lord . . . one of our countrymen was planting there. He was planting. "What are you planting? What are you doing here?" asked Our Lord.

"Me, I'm planting trees, I'm planting stones!" he said. That person answered.

"Ah!" said Our Lord. "Well, if people come looking for me, then, if people come looking for me, tell them that you are just planting trees and stones," he told that man.

"Bwéno, pwes, muk' ta 7alel," xi la taj taj jkobel jkobel Pégro 7une.

7I bwéno 7ixchukik la taj jkobel sztazik la taj 7ariero 7une 7ixchukik la 7istzi aktik 7isjat 7il la taj la yun 7une.

Bwéno, tzmala ch7ik'ub chnaxub 7ak'ubal xzaklik 7un ja7 7o ja7 7o la tzjipik ta nab 7un mu7tuk tzmilik naka nox tzjipik ta nab ech'el xa 7un.

Bwéno, li jkobel Pégro 7une vivo 7onox ya7el li putal Pégro 7une, 7o la yunin kuchilu 7o la yunin navaxax xzaklik 7un, 7isk'un-lok'es la 7un 7isjat 7o taj taj taj 7o la sti7il taj taj taj 7une, 7isjatbe 7un.

7Óra, li jkobel 7arieroetike tzake ta vayel tzakbikil ta vayel muk' xa7i lok' i puta 7une, lok' 7une ja7 la szobbe li sve7eltake li riatae ja7 la stik' komel chk'exol 7un stzis' la komel lek 7un.

7Óra, li jkobel Pegroe stuch' la jelavel nab 7un, j-jech nab xa taj Pégro 7une.

7Óra, yul la xch'ulel taj puta 7ariero sa7 sak xà la yul xch'ulel taj puta 7arieroetik 7une, 7aj, j-likel la sk'echnik ta chan-vo7 j-likel la sjipik ta nab. "7Óra se fwe el Pégro!" xi la taj 7arieroetik 7une.

"7Óra se fwe el wevo se fwe el riata se fwe el bastimyentol!" xi la taj jkobel Pegroe. Pero j-jech xa 7ox la nab 7un.

"7Ay, jijo la chingada!" xi. Sjot' xa la sjolik noxtok taj 7ariero. K' u tzap yu7 xa bat i sve7elike.

Bwéno, yu7n ja7 yech 7ilaj 7o yech 7ika7i yech chak taj 7une.
“All right,” he said. “I’ll tell them,” he said. That awful man was evil, as we say. He didn’t know it was Our Lord. He didn’t know who was passing by there.

Those devils came along. “Haven’t you seen him pass by?” they asked—they asked when they arrived.

“Ah, he passed by, but it was when I was planting trees and stones,” he said. But it was just trees, just stones. It wasn’t corn that appeared where he planted. It wasn’t corn. It was just trees. “Sonofabitch, but why did that happen?” said that man.

Our Lord went on again. He met another planter, “What are you doing?” he asked that man when he arrived.

“I’m not doing anything. I’m planting a corn plant. Who knows if it will grow,” he said. He spoke properly, indeed!

“Oh!” said Our Lord. “Well, if people pass by looking for me, or something—He passed by, but I was planting my corn field here, please say to those following me,” that countryman of ours was told.

“Well, all right,” said that countryman of ours who was planting.

When those pursuers passed by . . . right away, right away the corn had ripened. Some of it was already dry corn, since it seems he answered correctly, as we say. “Haven’t you seen a man pass by?” asked those devils, the Judases.

“Ah, he passed by, but I was planting my corn field here,” he said. “And he passed by a long time ago, indeed! Now they’re ripe,” said that countryman of ours.

“Oh, hell!” they said. “Well, then, I guess we’ll see if we can find him,” said those Judases.

“Oh, he passed by long ago, of course!” he said. But I don’t know if it was recently, two or three days before, that he had passed by. Then the corn grew and grew right away.

[Our Lord] went on again. He went on. He was never caught up by those Judases at all. It’s true when he was about to be reached by those Judases an angel appeared. He had a sword. He appeared and stood on the path. Then those Judases went back. Then those Judases went back. Our Lord wasn’t seen by them. He was defended, as we say. So in that way, in that way the days passed. He grew up, as we say. Our Lord became an adult. He didn’t die young, as we say. Our Lord was old when he died. He was captured when he was really old. But he turned himself in, as we say. He didn’t care if he was punished, as we say. He was captured. He carried his cross. He was made to carry his cross, but his cross was terribly big, terribly heavy.


Bwéno, 7ital la taj pukujetik 7une. “Mi muk’ bu 7avil jelav?” xi la. Xi la k’otel taj 7une.

“7A, 7ijelav pero ja7 to 7ox ti k’al ta jit’z’un te7 tone,” xi la 7un. Pero naka te7 naka la ton 7un ma7uk xa ti 7ixim 7ital ti k’u stz’unoj 7une, ma7uk xa la 7un, naka xa la te7 naka xa la ton 7un. “Juta, pero k’u yu?un ya?el ti x7elan 7ispase?” xi xa la taj vinik 7une.

Bwéno, bat la taj kajvaltik noxtok 7une, 7o la te sta j7ovol noxtok 7un. “K’usi chapas?” xut la k’otel taj vinike.

“Mu k’u ta jpas ta jit’z’un j-petzuk jchob mu jna7 mi xch’i,” xi la. Lek la yal a7a!

“7A!” xi la taj kajvaltik 7une. “Bwéno, ti mi yu?un 7o 7ijelav jasa7el k’u x7elane, 7a li 7ijelav pero ja7 to 7ox ta jit’z’un li jchob, ja7 to 7ox 7ijtz’un li jchob li7i xavut me ti mi tal jasa7ele,” x7utat la taj jchi7iltik 7une.

“Bwéno, stak’,” xi la taj jchi7iltik ch7avolaj to 7ox 7une.

Bwéno, k’al 7ijelav taj ssa7ele, ta 7ora la ta 7ora la yu?un la k’anub xa 7ox i 7ixime yu?un la taki-7ixim xa j-lom 7un k’u ti lek 7iyal ya?el xkaltik 7une. 7A li “Mi muk’ bu avil 7ijelav jun vinik?” xi la taj pukujetik xutaxetik 7une.

“7ijelav pero ja7 to 7ox 7ijtz’un li jchob li7i?” xi la 7un. “7I vo7ne sjelavel 7un bi lavie che7e k’onik xa,” xi la taj jchi7iltik 7une.

“7A, kavron!” xi la 7un. “Bwéno pwes, te jk’el kik mi jta che7e,” xi la taj xutaxetik 7une.

“Ji, vo7ne xa sjelavel 7un bi!” xi la 7un. Pero mu jna7 mi 7ach’ to 7ox, chabje 7oxje to 7ox la jelav 7un 7ora ch’i ta j-mek ta 7ora li chobtik 7une.

Bwéno, va?i 7un, bat la noxtok 7un, bat la 7un muk’ bu mu 7onox bu taat taj yu?un taj xutaxetik a7a, melel k’alal chtaat xa la yu?un taj xutaxetike ja7 7o la chtal 7a li jun 7anjel 7o la yespara ta la xtal va7luk ta be 7un ja7a la te tzut 7o taj xutaxetike, ja7a la te tzut 7o taj xutaxetike mu x?ilat i kajvaltik 7une 7o spojel xkaltik 7un, ja7a la ye7ch’ja7a la ye7ch 7ibat 7o k’ak’al 7ich’i 7o xkaltik 7ispas 7o ta mol li kajvaltik 7une, muk’ xcham ta bikk’it xkaltik 7un mol xa 7icham li kajvaltik 7une 7itzakat to ta batz’i smolile pero yu?un xa yak’ sba 7entrokal xkaltik yu?un xa yu?un xa te xa nox k’alal ti kastiko chich’ xkaltik 7une, ja7a taj tzakate ja7 taj x7ixkuch la skrusal 7i7ak’bat skuch skrusal pero skrusale pero 7animal la muk’ 7animal la 7ol ta j-mek.
But Our Lord was carrying the cross. They were poking Our Lord in the ass with a stick. The fucking Judases were giving him the stick.

Our Lord was captured. He was captured. He hadn't any strength left, because he was captured, as we say. Our Lord felt he'd reached the limit, too. He felt that that was all the tricking [he could do], too.

Our Lord was captured long ago. Our Lord was hung on the cross. It was Judas who hung him. [Our Lord] was buried. They took him down and buried him.

They got some stone slabs. They buried him under stone slabs long ago. Our Lord was under lots of stone slabs, as we say.

The Judases were squatting there, keeping watch for three nights. For three nights they kept watch.

But the fuckers—those sonofabitching Judases— grew sleepy. The sonofabitches grew sleepy and nodded off. Lord, as for Our Lord, then Our Lord came out. He went into the sky.

Our Lord came out. He tossed a stone up. It turned into the sky. As we say. He made it turn into the sky.

Our Lord rose up when heaven was created. Our Lord rose up. He went up. He went up by himself.

Then the sonofabitching Judases saw that Our Lord had left. They tried to look for him, but they couldn't find him anywhere.

I don't know if several left, supposedly to look for him. But ever since they have been walking until the time when the world ends. They walk every day, every day. They travel, but they don't die. Those Judases don't die either. As for the other group—a terrific rain came. But, yes, indeed, it was something! It was because there were still devils, long ago, as we say.

They tried to hang on to cliffs. They tried to perch in trees, and so on, as we say. Lord, Thunderbolt came. A rainstorm came, but yes, sir, it was heavy. Some of those Judases were killed by Thunderbolt. Some died. Some of those Judases died from lightning, others died from the water.

Then the others who were supposed to be looking for Our Lord, but where would they find him crouching? He was in heaven.

Now the Judases walk again to wherever they think they can find him. But they don't reach him. To this day those Judases are walking. To this day they are walking.

Our Holy Father, then, was already sitting in heaven.

Now those Judases wander forever and they don't even die. They wander. That's what I heard long ago.

Bwéno, pero li kajvaltik 7une xkuchok krus 7une te la xxijxon te7 ta xchak li kajvaltik 7une ja7 chak' te7 li jkobel xutax 7une.

Va7i 7un, te la 7itzakat i kajvaltike 7itzakat mu xa buy ch'abal xa pwersa yu7un 7i yu7n xa tzakat xkaltilke yu7n xa te xa nox K'alal cha?i li kajvaltik 7uk 7une te xa nox K'alal li cho?el ta j-mek cha?i 7uk 7une.

Va7i 7un, taj kajvaltik vo7ne 7une 7itzakat 7ijok'anat ta krus li kajvaltik 7une, ja7 7ijok'anvan li xutax 7une 7imukat 7un.

Va7i 7un, 7ismukik yalele ssa7ik la laja-ton, laja-ton la stenuik 7o lek ta laja-ton xkaltilkaj kajvaltik vo7ne 7une.

Bwéno, li xutax 7une te la xok'ajtik 7un xchabiik la 7oxib 7ak'ubal 7un 7oxib la 7ak'ubal xchabiik 7un.

Bu, li jkobel 7une tal la vayel yu7un taj püta xutax 7une tal vayel nikav i püta 7une, ke, kajvaltik 7une ja7 7o la me lok' i kajvaltik 7une bat la ta vinajel 7un.

Bwéno, 7ilok' taj kajvaltik 7une ja7 taj 7isjip la muyel j-pej ton 7une, ja7 taj 7ipas la ta vinajel 7ipas la ta vinajel yu7un xkaltilk 7une, pas ta vinajel yu7un.

Va7i 7un, li kajvaltik 7une 7imuy ech'el ti pas ta vinajel 7une, muy ech'el li kajvaltik 7une, muy muy xa stuk 7un.

7?Ora, li püta xutax 7une 7iyil li lok' xa li kajvaltik 7une ya7uk xa ssa7i pero mi ja7uk 7o bu sta.

Bwéno, mu jna7 mi jay-vo7 to la li lok'em ech'el tza7 sa7vanuk ta 7alele pero k'al la tana chanav taj taj xutax, k'al tana yu7n chanav yu7n k'u cha?al xlaj 70 li balmile yu7n chanav sil k'a7al sil k'a7al yu7n chanav, pero mi ja7uk xcham mu xcham ta xutax 7uk 7une, pero yu7n chanav, 7a taj j-lom 7une, 7ital la jün benosal vo7 pero 7e6o so toj 7ech' la ti 7oy to 7ox i pukujetik vo7ne xkaltilk 7une.

Va7i 7un, ya7uk xa la sjok'an sbai k'ch'en ya7uk xa la buy ta te7 k'u x'elan luchulik xkaltilk 7une, ke, tal li chauk 7une tal li jün vo7 pero 7e6o si yu7n tzotz chauke laj la chamuk 7o taj j-lom ta xutax 7une chan j-lom 7un chan j-lom ta chauk ta vo7 7icham j-lom taj xutax 7une.

7?Ora, li j-lom 7une ja7 tza7 li kajvaltik ta 7alel 7une pero bu kujul tzta li kajvaltike te ta vinajel.

7?Ora, li xutax 7une cha?7-chanav ta j-mek ti buy sta ti yaloj 7une pero mu sta la 7un k'al la tana chanav taj xutax lavi 7une k'al la tana chanav 7un.

7A li jch'ul-tottike che7e te xa chotol ta vinajel.

7?Ora taj xutaxe yu7n chanav yu7n sbatel 7osil 7i mi ja7uk xcham yu7n chanav ti ka?yoj vo7ne yech 7une.
It is not surprising, in a culture where age and experience are so highly valued, that Christ is imagined as an old man at the time of his crucifixion, even though the images of Christ in the church represent, of course, a young man.

As in Romin Teratol’s account (T8), the creation of the sky is associated with the crucifixion, but the wandering Jew episode is a new emphasis.

The use of Judas as a name and an image to describe the Jews who persecuted and strove to murder Our Lord is renewed associated with the crucifixion, but the wandering Jew episode is a new emphasis. Though many of the scenes are familiar biblical events, Christ’s character in these Mesoamerican tales is startling—only by a slight shift of emphasis Christ has become a hero remembered more for his cunning than for his love of mankind. It would not be difficult to imagine this Christ in the guise of Hunahpu or Xbalanque of the Popol Vuh.

Christ’s utter humiliation before and during his crucifixion contrasts sharply with two other versions, one from Zinacantán and another from Chichicastenango. In the first, Christ is left bound to a tree, but does not die. The Jews try to cut down a tree to make his cross, but tree after tree splinters. They ask Christ to cut the tree himself. He does. The Jews try in vain to hew it. Christ does. They try in vain to carry it. Christ does (Bricker, T10). Similarly, in the Guatemalan version, the Jews are unable to cut down the tree for Christ’s cross. The chips turn into snakes and frogs, until Christ volunteers his services. Then the chips turn into fish and edible animals (Tax, 1947:457-460). See also T8, T52, and their notes.

It seems they grew up. There were three brothers.

One child, the smallest one, couldn’t climb the tree. Those two older brothers got that honey. They would chew [the honeycomb].

It was the chewings they tossed down to that little younger brother of theirs who didn’t climb the tree.

As for that one—“Give me a little, older brother!” he kept saying.

“Okay, it’s coming!” they said. It was the chewings that came down.

That poor younger brother ga—there up his little bit of wax from that honey. Quickly he stuck it under the tree roots. Sonofabitch, it turned right away into a gopher! It turned right away into a gopher. When the time came, Lord, that tree came toppling down. But first, first he went. He went to fix his little oval tortillas. “Mother, I want two oval tortillas,” he said. “With three holes in them,” he said.

“Well, let’s make them!” that little child was told by that mother of his. He took them because that gopher had stayed behind to work. He took those oval tortillas. Lord, when that tree toppled over, then that younger brother quickly stuck those oval tortillas on [his older brothers’] faces. They turned into pigs. One went to the woods. It was the peccary. But the other one, he led home—that’s the domestic pig. That’s the way it was long ago. But it was [the younger brother] who has been Our Lord in Heaven ever since, they say. But it is the sun, as we say. That’s who it was. He was the youngest brother. The older brothers didn’t succeed, because they were so mean, as we say. They wouldn’t give their younger brother anything to eat, as we say. They were so mean, that’s why it turned out like that. It would not be difficult to imagine this Christ in the guise of Hunahpu or Xbalanque of the Popol Vuh.

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**The Three Suns**

**T162**

7A li 7ich’iik ya7el 7ox-vo7 xchi7il sbaik xkaltik.

Bwéno li li jum k’oxe 7a li mas bik’it mu xmuy ta te7, 7a taj pom 7une, 7a li ta staik taj cha7-vo7 bankilal 7une, ta la smatz’ik 7un.

Va7 7un, smatz’ 7une, ja7 la sjipe yalel taj yunen k’ox 7itz’in mu xmuy ta te7 7une.

Va7i, taj 7une, “7Ak’bon j-set’uk 7un, jbanki--ll!” xi la batel 7un.

“Bwéno, te xa me chtal 7uni” xi la. Smatz’ben la chyal tal 7un.

Va7i 7un, stzo—b la taj 7unen yunen chabil taj, 7a taj pom taj prove 7itz’inal 7une, j-likel la 7ixch’ik ta yisim te7 7un, pûta, pas la ta ba ta 7ora 7un, pas la la ba ta 7ora 7un, k’al la 7ista 7orae, kere, xbutut xa la yalel taj 7a taj te7 7une, pero ba7i la ba7i la ma ti bat 7a li ba smeltzan tal yunen memela. “Me7, ta jk’an chibuk jmemela,” xi la 7un. “Ta 7ox-ch’oj ssat,” xi la 7un.
was that younger brother, then, who is Our Lord in Heaven, as we say. The sun, as we say. As for those elder brothers of his, they became food. They became food. That's how I've heard that.

This tightly expressed tale illustrates the central tenet of Zinacantec moral philosophy that food must be shared equally.

Journey to Irdivolveres

T172

They arrived to bathe. They arrived to bathe in the stream—those three doves.

[A man] stole from one of them. They had taken their clothes off, as we say. It was their feathers, as we say. That man stole the clothes. He went and hid them.

Now the two [other doves] didn't have their clothes stolen. They left.

Then the first one was left behind. The man spoke to her. The bird turned into a person, as we say. “But if you are looking for your clothes, here are your clothes!” said that man. They talked to each other. That girl was the mistress of the river, as we say. “I really would love to marry you. I have lost my heart to you,” said that man.

“All right, that’s fine,” said that woman. “But [only] at nighttime. I don’t want us to see each other’s faces.” It was just a question of their sleeping together, it seems, as we say. He wasn’t to see her face. No!

She went. That woman was taken to his house, as we say. She slept there. But he didn’t see her face. They were together just in the dark. Who knows if she was beautiful. Who knows what the woman’s face was like. “But, hell, but why does it seem I can’t look?” said that man. He bought a candle, a match.

Now it was probably when she had fallen asleep. “But what is her face like? I guess I’ll look!” said that man. He looked at her face. He lit his candle. He looked at her face. Sonofabitch, the child’s face was really beautiful, as we say. ‘Oh, that wife of his felt the candle wax drip on her. Ah, she got mad. Lord, they didn’t even get married. There was nothing you could do. That woman changed houses, it seems. She went to her father’s and mother’s.

“Well now, look here! Take care of yourself! There’s absolutely nothing we can do after what you did to me. But what we had agreed, then, was that we would never look at each other’s faces, we would just be together in the dark,” said that girl.

“Now, after that, look after yourself!” she said. He was thrown over. Ooh, the man cried and cried over...
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being abandoned, as we say. The man cried and cried. But the man had been told, you see, what her father's and mother's house was called. It's name was Irdivolveres, it seems, as we say. "Well, if you go looking for me, go there!" she said—said that woman now when she left. "If you will still marry me with your whole heart, go look for me!" she said.

"Well, I guess I'll go, then!" he said. He spoke to the Wind. He spoke to her. She was a wild-haired old woman. It was Mother Wind, as we say. "Well, won't you tell me if Irdivolveres is still very far away?" he said.

"Wait, my son is coming!" she said. "My son is coming in the afternoon. Pay him!" she said. It was Whirlwind, as we say, strolling along.

"Where do you think Irdivolveres is? Where do you think it is?" he asked that old woman's child.

"It exists, but my grandfather knows [where]," he was told. "Well, if you want to go, I'll take you along," he was told. "But you really stink!" said [Whirlwind]. That countryman of ours was told.

"Well, never mind!" He was flown off by Whirlwind. That man went to [Whirlwind's] grandfather's house, as we say. Yes!

He arrived. "I'm not looking for anything. It's just that my wife left, but she told me where [she went]—to her father's and mother's house, Irdivolveres. It's there. That's where she is living," he said. He told them at Mother Wind's, as we say, again.

"Well, but I don't think I go there very often, but I've heard stories about it, of course. But if you are going, I can take you along," he said. "Well, how big is the world now?" he asked.

"As big as a peso," said [Whirlwind's grandfather]. They went on and on.

"How big is the world here now?" he asked.

"As big as a fifty centavo piece," said [Whirlwind's grandfather]. They went on and on. Gradually [the world] grew smaller. They had almost arrived.

"Well, how big is the world here now?" he asked.

"As big as a twenty centavo piece," said [Whirlwind's grandfather] now. They had almost arrived. The world had grown small, as we say. They went on.

"How big is the world?" he asked.

"As big as a five centavo piece," said [Whirlwind's grandfather]. Ah, they had just about arrived.

"How big is the world?" he asked.

"As big as a five centavo piece," said [Whirlwind's grandfather]. Ah, they had just about arrived.

They arrived there at her house, as we say. He arrived on the Wind to ask—"Is this the house of Irdivolver [sic]"? he asked.

"Ah, yes. She just left. Their daughter just left. Their daughter is coming out over there," said [Whirlwind's grandfather]. Sonofabitch, that fucking countryman of ours was overjoyed!
He arrived. He arrived to speak to his father-in-law, as we say. "Oh, but, well, it's all right if you are up to the work. But if you aren't up to it, then you certainly won't have a wife!" said that father-in-law of his.

"Well, even so!" he said.

"Well, you're going to clear roads, then!" he was told. [His father-in-law] took him out.

That wife of his, his wife, it seems, as we say, whom he had taken, spoke to him. "Well, you are to take the worst tool. But if you pick up the good ones you can't work with them. [Pick] one that is terribly dull," he was told.

"Okay!" said that man, since she had been his wife, you see. He was informed by her, as we say. So he grabbed up the worst tool. Lord, he was assigned a job, but there was lots [to do]. Lots! He was to hoe a mountain. Eh, he cried over it. How could it be finished? He hadn't even pecked at a little bit yet.

"Is it finished?" asked that woman when she arrived. She went to give him his tortillas, as we say. "Sonofabitch, I can't finish it!" he said. How would it be finished? He wasn't a tractor!

"Rest, then!" he was told, since he was her husband, as we say. So that woman worked. Immediately she cleared the trail. Immediately. Who knows how.

Now the work was finished right away. He returned.

"Well, have you finished?" he was asked by that father-in-law of his.

"It's finished. Go see for yourself!" he said. He hadn't worked at all. It was that woman who worked.

[His father-in-law] went to look at his work. He had finished it, but it was his wife's work, as we say. "Well, that's all then. Go clear the underbrush tomorrow!" But it was heavy forest. But it was left flat. It was to be burned. She went to give him his tortillas again. Lord, that gentleman hadn't felled even one tree. Not one.

That woman arrived, but who knows how she worked. It wasn't with her hands. The trees just fell by themselves for her.

She finished burning them. It was left all ready, by that woman. He returned. "Well, I've finished it, I've burned it," [he told] that father-in-law of his. "Well, are you telling the truth?" he was asked. "Go look for yourself!" he told [his father-in-law]. That father-in-law of his went to look.

"Well, that's all, then. The planting is tomorrow," he was told. The planting is tomorrow and the day after you harvest," he was told. "But it's to be all ready!" he was told.

Bwéno, 7ik'ot la 7un, k'ot sk'opon i sni7-mol xkaltik 7une. "7O pero, bwéno stak' pero mi yu7un xkuch 7auv7un 7abtele yan ti me mu xkuch 7auv7une 7entόnse ch'abal lavajnil bi 7a!" xi la taj sni7-mol 7une.

"Bwéno, mu say-lok'el!" xi la.

"Bwéno, chba pol be che7el!" x7utat la 7un. Stzak la lok'el.

Bwéno, yal xa taj yajnil yajnil ya7el xkaltik yik'oj to 7ox 7une. "Bwéno ja7 me xavich' lok'el li batz'i chopol ta j-mek 7abtejebale yan ti mi lek 7atame mu me xa7abtej 7achi7uk 7un bi 7a, ja7 ti bu batz'i ch'abal ta j-mek yee," x7utat la 7un.

"Bwéno!" xi la taj vinike. Kómo yajnil xa 7onox chava7ie 7albat xa ya7i xkaltik 7un, ja7 la stzak lok'el ti batz'i chopol ta j-mek 7abtejebal 7une, kere, tzinanbat la tarya pero yu7n 7ep yu7 van 7ep yu7n j-p'ej vitz chvok', je, yok'ita la sba 7un, bu chba lajuk mi ja7uk to j-set' xch'otoj.

"Mi laj 7un?" xi la k'otel taj 7antz 7une. Ba yak'bel yot xkaltik 7un.

"Puta, mu xla!" xi la 7un. K'u xi chla7 yu7 van makina 7un!

"Kuxo che7el!" x7utat la 7un. Kómo smalal xkaltike ja7 la 7abtej taj 7antzte, ta 7ora la 7ispol li be ta 7ora7e yu7n na7tik k'u xil.

7Óra, laj la 7ora li 7abtele sut ech'el 7un. "Bwéno, mi laj 7avu7un 7un?" x7utat la yu7un taj sni7-mol 7une.

"7Ilaj, ba k'el avil!" xi la 7un. Mi ja7uk 7o bu 7abtej ja7 7abtej taj 7antz 7une.

Bwéno, ba sk'elbel taj yabetl 7une laj la yu7un 7un, pero ja7 yabetl yajnil xkaltik 7un yu7 van.

"Bwéno, mu k'usi che7e ba velo 7osil 7ok'ob!" Pero montanyatatik la pero yu7n ta 7ora k'iil chkom yu7n la chchik' komel yu7 van, bat la yak'bel yot noxtok 7un, kere, mi ja7uk la lomem j-petzuk te7 yu7un taj mole ch'abal la.

Bwéno, k'ot la taj 7antzte pero na7tik xa k'u x7elan ch7abtej ma7uk xa 7onox ti ta sk'ob ye7h xa nox chlom yu7un stuk i te7etik yu7une.

"Va7i 7un, laj la xchik' komel listo la kom yu7un taj 7antz 7une, sut la 7un. "Bwéno, laj komel ku7un jchik' xa komel." Taj sni7-mol tal 7une.

"Bwéno pwes, mi ye7h 7aval?" x7utat.

"Ba k'el avil" xut la. Bat la sk'el taj sni7-mol 7une.

"Bwéno, mu k'usi che7e 7ovol 7ok'ob!," x7utat la.

"7Ovol 7ok'ob 7i cha7ej chak'aj!" x7utat la 7un.

"Pero yu7n listo!" x7utat la 7un.
“Okay,” he said. The sonofabitch wasn’t very scared anymore because he had seen that his wife worked.

She planted. Lord, it was ready. It was that woman who went to plant, too.

Now she harvested it. It was ready immediately again.

Well, he succeeded. “Well, never mind, then, since you’ve succeeded. Well, get married!” said that father-in-law of his.

They took each other. They were married. He became the chief, as we say. The chief, the chief, the king, as we say, of the world now, as we say. That’s all. That’s how the story ends.

The word balamil can mean both “world” and “place,” so it is not clear whether the hero becomes the king of Irdivolveres or of the whole world, but the distinction seems unimportant.

Rey’s tale of the journey to Irdivolveres combines a number of European elements that are not always associated together. These same elements are joined in other New World stories with the “grateful animals,” (Radin, 1943:194-207; J. E. Thompson, 1930:175-178) found in T174 and the ear-biting incident (J. E. Thompson, ibid.) occurring in T164.

Three princesses disguised as doves appear in Spain (A. M. Espinosa, 1967, T122), Zimatlan, Oaxaca (Radin and Espinosa, 1917, T15), and Jalisco (Wheel, 1943, T109). In the Oaxacan version the doves are daughters of Thunderbolt and Wind. As in Rey’s story, the hero in the Jalisco tale steals the princesses’ clothes.

The injunction against looking upon the princesses’ face and her subsequent flight occur in Spain (de Soto, 1886, T20), the West Indies (Hansen, 1953, 302 II), and Belize (J. E. Thompson, ibid.). In the Spanish tale the protagonist also wakes the princes with a drop of wax.

The journey to Irdivolveres is, of course, to the Castillo dTras y no Volveras, the “Castle of Going and no Returning.” At first glance, the characters are drawn from the native cosmology—Mother Wind and Whirlwind. In Chumula, as in Zinacantan, Mother Wind is conceived as having long twiggy hair. Chumula’s Mother Wind also has an ugly square face and neck, and is quite deaf when in flight (Gossen, T58). But why does Whirlwind’s grandfather comment on our hero’s body odor? The answer is found in Belize, where the cannibal wind giants detect the fragrance of ripe chicozapotes (J. E. Thompson, ibid.). This, of course, is an Indian variety of “Fe, fa, fi-fo-fum.”

The dialogue in mid-air, equating the size of the world with pesos and centavos, is unique so far as I know.

The assignment of impossible tasks, that are only accomplished with the princesses’ aid, is a frequent prelude to the happy ending (A. M. Espinosa, ibid.; Radin, ibid.; Thompson, ibid.; and Wheeler, ibid.).

Long Hair
T158

Well, I guess I’ll tell a story, then. Long ago there were elders. There was the Long Hair, here at Juteb Chauk [Bit of Thunderbolt], here on the trail to Chiapa, as we say.

They would die there. The travellers couldn’t pass by, as we say. They would die there. They would stay there. That Long Hair would eat them.

The elders of long ago went, since they were powerful, it seems. Those elders of long ago were Thunderbolts. They went to see if it was true that those people couldn’t get by.

But they met up with him there. They met up with that Long Hair there. They tried to see if they could [win]. They drew a line, like this. That Long Hair rose up into the sky. He had a sword. He would thrust that sword down. If you didn’t jump aside you would be pierced in the head by that sword. That’s why you would stay there.

Béno, chkal ka7tik j-kojuk che7e, 7oy la, ti vo7ne moletike, 7oy la 7a li, jnatikil jol, li7 ta Juteb Chauk, li7 ta beles Soktom xkaltike.

Va7i 7un, te la chlaj 7un buch’u mu x7ech’ li pasajero xkaltike, te la chlaj, te chkom, te chkom ja7 chti7van taj jnatikil jol 7une.

Va7un, bat ti vo7ne moletik 7une, kómo 7oy tzotz ya7el spersaik ya7el, chauk la taj vo7ne moletik 7une, bat la sk’elik mi yeche taj mu xjelav taj krixchano 7une.

Bu, te la 7ista 7un, te la 7ista taj jnatikil jol 7une, pasik la preva 7un, 7ispasik la raya xi to 7une, taj jnatikil jole che7e chmuy la ta vinajel, 7o la jun yespara 7un, ja7 la tzpajan yelal taj yespara 7une, ti mi muk’ xap’it lok’el 7une, ja7 vo7otik xa chisvombotik ta jiojotik xa taj 7espara 7une, tey yecho te chikomotik la 7une.
Those elders of long ago, they made an agreement [with the Long Hair] about having a line [drawn], as we say.

When he rose up and when he came down, those elders of long ago had already jumped aside, as we say. They had staves, since there weren't any machetes. There wasn't anything long ago. [Just] staves. Have you seen the one the Old Spook carries? The stave is a round, black stick. That's what they would kill [him] with. But when he came down they simply struck him over and over. But he kept bouncing back from death. He wouldn't die either. They had a hard time killing him—that Long Hair. Yes!

Those elders of long ago went as far as Chiapa. They went to Chiapa. “Well, how did you get by?” asked those people in Chiapa.

“We killed him,” they said.

“Eh, I don't believe it,” they said. It wasn't believed that they killed him. They aroused their countrymen. And they came to look there [to see] if it was true that he died. Lord, he was lying face up. He was dead. And they were given lots of money. The money they were given simply in mule-loads.

All the muleteer’s things were there, the packs. A cave was jammed full, too. They went to get them out. They found money.

After that the trail was open, as we say. [The trouble with] the devil ended, ended right away, it seems, as we say. He died, it seems. Yes!

Rey describes the stave used to kill the Long Hair as being like the one carried by moluj7ik’al, “Old Spook.” By “Old Spook” he is referring to a Carnival character, usually called totj7ik’al or “Sir Spook.” This role is often assigned to Rey’s father in recognition of his ability to trade outrageously obscene jokes with the Carnival goers. His stave, the same kind carried by Tenejapanecs, also figures in Tales 71, 145, and 131.

This is the only version of the Long Hair tales that explicitly identifies Long Hairs as cannibals. See also T10, T95, T104, and their notes.

Rabbit Wins and Rabbit Loses

There was a man and his wife, as we say. The man went to the woods, as we say. He left that wife of his standing on the trail where she was waiting for him. I don’t know if . . . what's that called? That deer hunt, hunting for whatever could be found on the earth.

He left.

But you see, the Earth Lord came along. Quickly that Earth Lord took that woman inside a cave, inside his house, it seems.

7O la jun vinik xchi7ukan jun yajnil xkaltik.

Bwéno, li vinike bat ta te7tik xkaltik, yajnil sva7an komel ta be ti bu chimalaate taj yajnil 7une, mu jna7 mi k’usi sbi taje, taj sa7-te7tikil chij, ssa7 ja7 ti k’usi sta ta balamile.

Bwéno, 7ibat la 7un.

K’u xavil, tal la yajval balamil, j-likele la 7iyik’ ochel taj 7antz ta ta yut ch’en ta sna ya7el taj yajval balamile.
The poor man was simply crying and crying. He was simply crying and crying. He was heartbroken, because his wife was gone now, you see. First, it was probably a bull that came along. "What happened to you, friend?" asked [Bull]. "Why are you crying?" he asked.

"Well, man, it’s because, it’s because I don’t know where my wife went, if she was stolen. I don’t know where she’s gone," he said.

"Ah, but I’ve seen, of course!" said that Bull. Ye—s!

"Where?" asked [the man].

"Ah, that wife of yours is just nearby, of course!" said [Bull]. "If you want, I’ll go get her out," said [Bull].

"Please, then!" said the man. Bull went to get her out. He arrived and knocked on the door. He went "bang, bang, bang!" on that door.

"Who is it?" asked [the Earth Lord].

"I’m the good Bull," he said. The door was opened.

"What do you want?" he was asked.

"I don’t want anything. It’s because there’s a poor man here who’s crying and crying. I’m taking his wife out for him," said [Bull]. Hah, a stick was grabbed. [Bull] was poked in the horns with that stick. [Bull] couldn’t get her out.

A donkey came along, too. "What’s the matter with you that you’re crying?" asked [Donkey], too, when he arrived.

"Nothing’s the matter with me, man. It’s because I don’t know if my wife was stolen. Because she had come here," he said. "But she can’t come out now," he said.

"Ah, me, I’ll go get her out. You’ll see!" said that Donkey. Ye—s!

He arrived and knocked on the door, too. "Well, what do you want?" he was asked.

"I don’t want anything. It’s because I’ve come to get the woman here out, because the poor man is crying and crying," he said.

"Ah, now it’s you! Where did you come from?" [Donkey] was asked. He was poked with a stick, too. That poor Donkey went hobbling off now.

Coyote arrived, too. "What’s the matter with you that you’re crying?" he asked. "Ah, it’s because my wife was stolen, but how could you get her out? You’re smaller. The bigger animals have already done their best," he said. "They weren’t any help," he said.

"Well, I guess I’ll go," said [Coyote]. He arrived and knocked on the door.

That, "What do you want?" he was asked. "Who is it?" he was asked.

"I’m Uncle Coyote," he said. The door was opened. Lord!
And, “What do you want?” he was asked.

“I'm taking out a woman, because the man is crying,” he said. He was driven out with a stick, too. He got the stick.

Rabbit arrived. “What's up, friend?” he said when he arrived. “Why do I see you crying so much?” asked [Rabbit].

“Ah, God, now it's you I'm asking! Could you get her out? The big animals have already done their best. My wife can't get out. Because it was my wife, my wife who came here, but she can't get out now,” he said.

“Hell, I'll get her out! How come I can't get her out? If you let me sleep with her for one night, I'll get her out,” he said.

He arrived and knocked on the door. “I'm Rabbit,” he said.

“What do you want?” he was asked.

“I don't want anything. I want to take this man's wife out,” he said.

“Ah, where have you come from? Could you get the woman out? Even big animals have come.” [Rabbit] wasn't allowed to take that woman.

“Well, if that's all there is to it, then, there'll be war tomorrow,” said that Rabbit.

“Okay, I can manage,” said [the Earth Lord].

“You muster your men and I'll muster my men, too!” said that Rabbit. Because he was angry that that woman couldn't get out.

“Okay, I can manage,” said [the Earth Lord].

[Rabbit] went to report it to that man.

“Well, that's all there is to it. Get two gourds. Collect all the wasps, whatever in the world has a stinger. There should be two or three gourds filled [with them]. Yes, indeed, then of course your wife will get out!” said that Rabbit. “But only if you let me sleep with her, but it you don't let me join her, then of course I won't get her out!” said that Rabbit.

“Well, join her, it doesn't matter!” said that man.

He got those wasps, whatever insects in the world had stingers. Yes!

“Well, there'll be a war tomorrow,” said that rabbit.

“Okay, I can manage,” said [the Earth Lord]. “Okay, I can manage,” said [the Earth Lord, too]. That Earth Lord mustered his friends, too, so that little Rabbit would be killed, you see.

That Rabbit arrived the next day. He arrived and knocked on the door. “Well, will there be a war today? Are you all ready now?” he asked when he arrived.

“Oh, all right,” said [the Earth Lord]. “Come on in!” he said. He was already holding a stick. That Rabbit was going to get it. Yes!

That Rabbit had dragged in two or three gourds, those gourds. He arrived and shattered those gourds.

“71 k'u chak'an?” x7utat.

“Ja7 ta jlok'es i jun 7antze yu7n ja7 ch7ok' ti vinike,” xi la 7un. Tijbat la lok'el te7 noxtok, yich' lok'el te7.

Bwéno, k'ot la t'ul 7un. “K'u xi, 7amigo?” xi la k'otel 7un. “K'un batz'i cha7ok' ta j-mek chkile?” xi la 7un.

“7Aj, di7os vo7ot xa chakalbe, vo7ot xa chlok' 7avu7un 7ech' xa yu7n mol chonetike yu7n mu xlok' i kajnil yu7 kajnil kajnil tal li7 talem li7 toe pero mu xa xlok' 7u--n,” xi la 7un.

“Ka7rájo, ta jlok'es k'u cha7al mu ta jlok'es ti mi chavak'bon jchi7in ta vayel junuk 7ak'ubale ta jlok'es,” xi la 7un.

Bwéno, k'ot la stij ti7 na 7un. “Yo soy 7éste konéjó,” xi la 7un.

“K'u chak'an?” x7utat la 7un.

“Mu k'usi ta jk'an, ta jk'an ta jlok'esbe yayinil li vinik li7i,” xi la 7un.

“7A, bu latal mi vo7ot xa chlok' 7avu7un 7antz, 7ástá ke 7ay xa muk'tik chonetik.”

Bwéno, mu x7ak'bat lok'el taj 7antz 7une.

“Bwéno, mu k'usi che7e chu7 junuk gera 7ok'ob,” xi la taj t'ul 7une.

“Bwéno, stak’,” xi la 7un.

“Chatzob 7avinik vo7ote ta jtzob jvinik 7uk!” xi la taj t'ul 7une.

“Bwéno, stak’,” xi la 7un. Bat la yalbel taj vinik 7une.

“Bwéno, mu k'usi sa7o cha7-p'ejuk tsu, tzobo skotol li 7akov li k'usitik 7o yat ta balamile, yu7n noj cha7-p'ej 7ox-p'ej tsu, 7ésó si chlok' tal lavajnil bi 7a!” xi la taj t'ul 7une. “Pero ti mi chavak' jchi7in ta vayel 7une yan ti mi muk' chavak'bon jchi7ine mu jlok'es bi 7al” xi la taj t'ul 7une.

“Bwéno, chi7no muk' ta 7alel!” xi la taj vinik 7une.

Bwéno, ssa7 la taj chanul 7akove k'usitak 7onox chanul 7oy yat ta balamile 7une. Ji7!

“Bwéno pwe, 7ok'ob chu7 gera,” xi la taj taj 7une.

“Bwéno, stak’,” xi la taj yajval balamile 7uk 7une. Sztob xchi7il taj yajval balamile 7uke yu7n ja7 chmile taj 7unin t'ul chavaj7i 7une.

Bwéno, k'ot k'ot ta yok'omal taj taj t'ul 7une, k'ot stij ti7 na 7un. “Bwéno, mi chu7 gera lavie mi chapalojuk xa?” xi la k'otel 7un.

“Bwéno, stak’,” xi la. “7Ochan tal!” xi la. Tombil xa 7ox te7 chich' taj t'ul 7une. Ji7!

Va7i 7un, skiloj ochel cha7-p'ej 7ox-p'ej tzu taj taj t'ul taj tzuetik 7une, k'ot la silin ta vok'el ta yut sna
inside the Earth Lord's house. Those wasps suddenly came buzzing out. They went and enveloped that Earth Lord.

[The Earth Lord] was distracted by the wasps. Then that Rabbit quickly went and dragged out that woman.

He got that woman out. That Rabbit won out, as we say. That Rabbit won, as we say. “Well, I got her out. I won. I got your wife out.”

“Now I’ll sleep with her later on!” said that Rabbit.

“Okay, that’s all right,” said [the man]. “Sleep with her!” he said.

That woman went to bed with her husband, as we say. That Rabbit cuddled up behind [her]. That Rabbit cuddled up.

But that old lady [felt] a fart coming. Suddenly her fart burst. “Ooh, I’ve been shot!” said Rabbit. He ran off. Yes, indeed, that’s how the tale ended.

This tale is essentially the same as the second part of Tale 5, though the cast varies slightly; Tiger and Ant have been replaced by Coyote. Rey does not attribute to the final scene the origin of rabbits’ timidity. See also T5 and notes.

A Visit to the Underworld

T173

He cried and cried. That man’s “wife” died. But he cried and cried. He cried and cried.

He went. He spoke to that “wife” of his. That man went to the graveyard, as we say. He went.

He had never married the woman. She had another husband. That man went to sleep [with her], but the man went far off to sleep [with her] since she already had a husband, you see. The woman already had a husband. “Damn, but what can I do?” said the man.

Sonofabitch, he lit his lantern. He looked at his wife in the dark, as we say. Just her bones were piled there. They hadn’t any flesh anymore.

The next morning she [seemed like] a whole person again. “Well then, go back to the upperworld since you’ve seen what I’m like. I have a husband already. I can’t be ‘married’ to you anymore,” she said. She told her “husband,” as we say. She had a second husband, too.

“Eh, but I’m not leaving,” he said. “But I’m not going,” he said. “It makes no difference at all,” he said.

“Well, stay a day, then. Go and bring me my firewood!” she said.

Bwéno, batz’i ch7ok’ cham la yajnil taj vinike pero batz’i ch7ok’ la ta j-mek, batz’i ch7ok’ la ta j-mek 7un.

Bwéno, bat la 7isk’opon la taj yajnil 7une, 7ibat ta mukenal xkaltik la taj vinik 7une, bat la 7un.

Bwéno pwes, ti 7antz 7une, kómo mu la bu nupunemik 7une 7o la smalal ta yan 7o yan xa 7o smalal xkaltik la taj yajnil 7antz 7une, 7a taj vinik 7une te ba vayuk pero nom ba vayuk 7un kómo 7o xa smalal li 7antz 7une. “Yanche, pero k’u ta jnop?” xi la ti vinik 7une. Puta, 7istzanbe la sk’ak’al 7un 7isk’el la ti yajnil ta 7ak’ubaltik xkaltik 7une, naka la bak te chapal 7un ch’abal xa sbek’tal 7un.

Bwéno, sakub 7osil 7une lek la krixchano noxtok 7un. “Bwéno pwes, sutan ech’el batz’i yavil ti 7avilon k’u xi7elane 7o xa jmalal mu xa xu7 xakik’,” xi la 7un. Xut i smalal xkaltik 7une, 7o xa smalal ta yan 7o noxtok 7un.


“Bwéno, pajan junuk k’ak’al che7e ba kuchbon tal jsi7l!” xi la 7un.
"But where am I to go carry the firewood?" he said.

"Go and bring it from there, there along the edge of the gully!" she said. He went to bring the firewood.

"But where is the firewood? There isn't any," he said. The firewood was just bones. That firewood was just bones. There wasn't any. There wasn't any firewood. There were bones. He never carried the firewood. "There isn't any firewood," he said.

"Isn't the firewood heaped there?" he was asked.

"There are [piles], but they're bones," he said.

"Ah, but that's the firewood, of course!" Then he went to carry back those bones. So he went to carry back those bones. He brought them. It was those bones the [spirits] wanted. "Well, you've seen now. Well, go on!" he was told.

"Well, all right, then," he said. That man came back [from the underworld]. Yes!

But he wasn't alive for long. He was alive for three days after he came out. He was alive three days. He went back again right away. He was probably scared, you see. I've just heard a word or two of that tale. That's all.

See also T9, T19, and their notes.

What's Man Like?

It was Mule and Donkey. Tiger came along.

"What are you doing, friend?" he asked that mule, as we say.

"I'm not doing anything, because I'm worn out from the pack. I just arrived," said [Mule].

"Who, who gives you your pack?" asked [Tiger].

"It's Man," said [Mule].

"What's Man like?" asked [Tiger].

"Two, two hands, two feet. Man. He walks," said [Mule]. "But don't do anything to him! He whips you," said [Mule].

"Ah, but me, if I see him, I'll eat him up!" said that Tiger.

"Eh, you can't eat him up, Ti-ger!" said [Mule].

"Man will attack [you]!" he said. "He has a gun. He has a machete. Yes, indeed, he'll attack [you], of course!" he said.

He went on, that Tiger went on. "Well, we'll talk together, then," he said [when he left]. That Tiger went on. Then he met the wife of that Man. She was washing clothes. "Are you Woman?" asked that Tiger when he arrived.

"It's me," she said. "It's me, Tiger," she said.

"I'll eat you up!" he said.

Ja7 la li ka7e, chi7uk buroe, 7ital bolome. "K'u chapas, 7amigo?" xut la tal ka7 xkaltik 7une.

"Mu k'u ta jpa---s yu7n lubemon ta 7ikatzil ja7 to liyul," xi la 7un.

"Much'u much'u chayak'be 7avikatz?" xi la 7un.

"Ja7 li vinike," xi la 7un.

"K'u x7elan li vinike?" xi la 7un.

"Chib chib sk'ob chib yok vinike chanav," xi la 7un. "Pero mu k'u 7avalbe le7e chak' 7arsial," xi la 7un.

"7A, pero li vo7on chak kile ta jti7i!" xi la tal bolom 7une.

"Je, mu xti7 7avu7n bolo---m!" xi la 7un. "Li vinike chak!' xi la 7un. "7Oy 7oy stuk' 7oy smachita yu7n 7eso si yu7n chak' a7al!" xi la. "7Oy 7o yajnil," xi la 7un.

Beno, bat la 7un, bat la taj bolome. "Bweno, te jk'opon jbatik che7e," xi la komel 7un. 7bat la taj bolom 7une, te la stabe yajnil taj vinik, ch7uk'umaj la 7un. "Mi vo7ot ti 7antzote?" xi la k'otel taj bolom 7une.

"Why would you eat me up? You know—I'm really dying anyway all by myself. I'm terribly wounded here by Man," she said.

"What's it like? Where is your wound?" he asked.

"See here, Tiger!" she said. She uncovered it for him to see. "See here, because it's already maggotty. It stinks horribly now," she said. That Tiger sniffed it.

"Ah, that already has maggots, it seems. Well, take care!" he told that Woman [when he left]. She wasn't ever eaten up.

He came upon that Man. He came upon him, too. That Man was splitting his firewood. "Are you Man?" he asked when he arrived.

"It's me," he said.

"Ah!" said [Tiger]. "Well, now I'll eat you up!" he said. "Why do you torment poor Woman? Poor Woman, she has maggots because of you," he said. [Tiger].

"Okay, I can help you," said [Tiger]. "When we've finished splitting the wood, then I'll eat you," said that Tiger.

"Eat me up, of course! Eat me up, of course!" said that Man. That man split it. He gave that wood a blow of the axe, as we say. [The axe] landed in the crack, it seems, as we say. [Man] pulled that axe of his out. [Tiger's] paw was stuck.

"Ow, let me go! I won't eat you up!" said [Tiger].

Lord, that Man picked up a stick and struck him with it once and for all. That Tiger was finished for good. That's what I've heard of the Tiger story, those few words, like that, indeed!

This version of "What's Man Like" corresponds closely to Romin Teratol's (T3), except that Coyote and Ox are missing, and Donkey is added to the cast. Also, the episode with Woman must precede Tiger's encounter with Man, because Man does not merely wound Tiger with his rifle, but kills him with a stick. See also T3 and notes.

The King and the Ring

Long ago there was a very poor, a terribly wretched [person]. He hadn't anything to live on. He simply had nothing at all.

He kept ro—lling about by the courthouse door. He would beg from the elders. He would beg from them. He would be given a tortilla or so, it seems, by the civil officials, as we say. He was terribly poor.

"K'un chati7on 7ana7o—j batz'i chicham xa 7onox jtu---k batz'i li7i batz'i 7ep xa yayijemon yu7un ni vinike," xi la 7un.

"K'u x7elan bu layayijemalne?" xi la 7un.

"K'el avi, bolom!" xi la. 7lsjolbe la yil 7un. "K'el avi yu7un xa batz'i yu7un xa chayan xxuvital batz'i yan xa yik,'" xi la 7un. Yutz'i la taj bolom 7un.

"7A taje 7o xa xxuvital ya7el, bweno te k'el aba komel!" xut la komel taj taj 7antz 7une. Muk' bu 7iti7at 7un.

Va7 7un, sta la taj vinik 7une, sta la noxtok 7un, te la tzjav ssi7 taj vinik 7une. "Mi vo7ot ni vinikote?" xi la k'otel.

"Vo7on," xi la 7un.

"7Aa!" xi la 7un. "Bweno lavie chajti7!" xi la 7un.

"K'un ti 7ibaj xavil li prove 7antze yu7n xa 7och xxuvital 7avu7un li prove 7antze, xut la 7un.

"Bweno, pero k'el avil, bolom," xi la 7un. "Mu xati7, mi chati7one ti7on pero koltaon tzjavel li jsi7e," xut la 7un.

"Bweno, stak' chajkolta," xi la 7un. "Ti mi laj jjavtik i si7 7une ja7 7o chajti7 7un," xi la taj, xi taj bolom 7une.

"Ti7on a7a, ti7on a7a!" xi la taj vinik 7une.

"7lsjavbe taj, 7isjav la taj vinik yak'be j-moj 7ek'el taj si7 xkaltike, 7a li kachal 7ik'ot yu7un xkaltik, li skachbenal xkaltike. "Bweno, lik'o lak'ob 7une, bolom, lik'o lak'obe, javo li si7 7une!" xut la taj bolom 7une. J-likel la stik' sk'ob taj bolome, 7aj kômo pim i 7ek'ele, sbotz' lok'el taj yek'ele, te la matz'al 7ikom i sk'ob 7une.

"7Ay, koltaon 7un, muk' bu chajti7!" xi la 7un. Ke, stam tal te7 taj vinike st'usbe la taj moj, te nel ta j-moj taj bolom 7une, ja7 yech ka7yoy skwentoal bolom 7une, jay-p'el chak taj a7a!

The King and the Ring

T165

Long ago there was a very poor, a terribly wretched [person]. He hadn't anything to live on. He simply had nothing at all.

He kept ro—lling about by the courthouse door. He would beg from the elders. He would beg from them. He would be given a tortilla or so, it seems, by the civil officials, as we say. He was terribly poor.
He was really poor. He couldn't earn a thing in the world.

Here at the foot of Muxul Vitz ... he would come there time and again. He would spend the day there, over and over. He rolled about there. He played there. But he was probably grown up already. They say he had a wife. He was already old. Just that he probably didn't know how to earn a living, either.

He was rolling around there. He was rolling around there. He would keep sssing the sand up. He would keep tossing the sand up into the sky, as we say. He would keep throwing it up.

But suddenly a golden ring came flashing down. He grabbed it. He put it on his finger.

He went. He went home now.

Lord, that money appeared! The little pots and things were filled. Or baskets or whatever, they were filled with money. "Sir, see here, do you want to go and visit at my house? Our Lord has given me a little [something]," he started saying.

"Lord, where would you get anything, you loafer?" he was told. "When would you get anything, you loafer?" he was told. He wasn't believed.

"Well, go see for yourselves! Really, it isn't a story, because I was given it by Our Lord at least," he said. Hm!

Lord, [the civil official] went. He went to see if [the pauper] was telling the truth. Quickly [the pauper] scooped up a little gourdful. He gave a gourdful to [the civil official], it seems. It was scooped up with a gourd now. It wasn't counted out, of course. It was scooped up with a gourd, now.

"Lord, you were telling the truth after all, then!" [the official] started saying.

Little by little it became known that there was a king now, it seems, as we say. It became known. It was heard in Mexico City that now there was some money. Ah, they came. Those soldiers came. Three girls came. But he was to choose whichever one he wanted for a wife, because they were beautiful.

"Well, but never mind, but I'll go. But what can we do now, since you have heard about me," said that king.

"Sonofabitch, but there's nothing else we can do, then!" they said. [His money] wasn't confiscated now since he was coming on orders from the government in Mexico City, as we say. A very strong order came, it seems, that he was to go.

And, oh, the money—it simply was carried on mules, since there weren't any trucks long ago, then. It just went on muleback.

He arrived in Chiapa. That wife of his, as we say, had taken the ring.

Lord, [the civil official] went. He went to see if [the pauper] was telling the truth. Quickly [the pauper] scooped up a little gourdful. He gave a gourdful to [the civil official], it seems. It was scooped up with a gourd now. It wasn't counted out, of course. It was scooped up with a gourd, now.

"Kere, 7ana yech ka xaval che7e!" xi la likel 7un.

Va7 7un, li7 la ta yok Muxul Vitz 7une, te la chta-1 batel te chnul yu7n k'ak'al batel tey, tey xbalet tey chtaqin la, pero yu7 nan mol xa 7un 7o la yajnil xiik to, yu7n mol xa 7un, ja7 nox ti yu7n yu7n mu sna7 k'u tza7 7o sve7el nan 7uk 7une.

Bu, te la stz'ayluj 7iyal tal jun 7aniyo de 7oro 7un, 7istzak la 7un, xxoj la ta sk'ob 7un.

Va7 7un, bat la bat la tzna xa 7un.

Va7i, taj tak'in 7une, kere, tal la me taj tak'in 7une, noj la ti 7unen pinetite k'i k'usui moch yu7n la noj ta tak'in 7un. "Tottik, k'er avil 7un, mi xak'a---n xba vula7ajaniq ta jna 7i 7o xa liyak'be j-set' i kajvaltik 7une," xi la likel 7un.

Va7 7un, la xbalet, te la xbalet 7un, ta la sji--pulan muyel yi7', ta la sjipulan muyel yi7 ta ta vinajel xkaltik tztenulan muyel 7un.

"Bu, te la stz'ayluj 7iyal tal jun 7aniyo de 7oro 7un, 7istzak la 7un, xxoj la ta sk'ob 7un.

Va7 7un, bat la bat la tzna xa 7un.

Va7i, taj tak'in 7une, kere, tal la me taj tak'in 7une, noj la ti 7unen pinetite k'i k'usui moch yu7n la noj ta tak'in 7un. "Tottik, k'er avil 7un, mi xak'a---n xba vula7ajaniq ta jna 7i 7o xa liyak'be j-set' i kajvaltik 7une," xi la likel 7un.

"Kere, bu chata le7e, jaragan?" x7utat la. "Bu chata le7e, jaragan?" x7utat la. Mu la xch'unbat 7un.

"Bwéno, ba k'er avi ka7uktik mu lo7iluk yu7un li7ak'bat xa yu7un kajvaltik sil 7une," xi la 7un. Juju!

Kere, 7ibat la, ba sk'elel 7o mi yech xal 7un, likel la 7isipul 7unen j-boch, 7isk'elanbe ya7el j-boch ya7el pulbil ta boch xa mu7nuk mu7nuk 7atbil to a7a, pulbil ta boch xa 7un.

"Kere, 7ana yech ka xaval che7e!" xi la likel 7un.

Va7 7un, k'unk'un la vinaj 7un ti yu7n 7oy rey xa ya7el xkaltik 7une, 7ivinaj la 7un, 7i7a7yat ta Mejiko la ti yu7n ti yu7n 7o xa tak'in 7une, 7aj, tal la me 7u---n, tal la ta la taj solterotek 7une, tal la 7ox-vo7 tzebetik pero la 7ak'o la st'uj bu junukal tz'akan ti yajnile yu7n, yu7n lelek sba. "Bwéno pero ni modo pero yu7n chibat 7un, pero k'u xa ta jpastik 7un, ja7 li x7elan 7avinajesikone," xi la taj rey 7une.

"Juta, pero mu k'u jpastik 7un che7e!" xi la 7un.

Mu xa mu xa xoja7 7un bu ti yu7n ta 7orten xa ti yu7n tal, yu7n yu7n jyu7el xa xkaltik ta Mejiko tal xa lek tzotz 7orten ya7el ti yu7n 7ak'o batuk 7une.

"Juta, pero mu k'u jpastik 7un che7e!" xi la 7un.

Va7 7un, 7i, ji, ti tak'ine solel kuchbil 7ibat ta j-mek ta mulaetik kimo ch'abal karo ti vo7nee che7e naka ta mulaetik la 7ibat 7un.

Va7 7un, k'ot la ta Soktom 7un, tey ja7 xa yich'oj taj 7aniyo taj yajnil xkaltik 7une.

k'u sta ta balamil.
A Ladino appeared. "Let's see your ring!" he said. That woman showed it to him. Lord, quickly that thief dashed off with it. That ring was stolen from her. Ooh, that money, Lord! It simply stopped, it ended. The king was about to get it. That king when he was there in Chiapa was about to get it. To be killed.

But a dog and a cat spoke. They spoke. "Well, don't worry. I'll go look for it," said the dog. That thief continued on. He crossed the Grijalva River. He swallowed that ring. He swallowed it. He swallowed it. It reached his stomach. Sonofabitch, since the dog probably knew it already, it seems, as we say, and the cat, as we say. The dog carried the cat across the Grijalva River. Since the cat probably didn't know how to paddle in the water. So the cat was carried across, it seems, as we say.

They found that thief lying down in the deep forest. He probably felt very tired. He had gone to sleep.

That cat looked for a mouse. The seat of the thief's pants had a hole gnawed in them, where that ring was to come out.

That dog, too, looked for a little lizard. The lizard kept wiggling its tail in the thief's nose. It poke...
But before they covered it—"Don't open it for me for three days!" he said.

But they opened it before the three days were up. They looked.

He was just being transformed. Then he died once and for all. That's how he ended. He ended like that. That's how I've heard it.

Rey's version of "The King and the Ring" elaborates more fully on the ring's recovery and corroborates Xun 7Akov's account of the king's unsuccessful attempt at rejuvenation (T34). See also T11, T31, T34, T64, T113, and their notes.

The Flood
T161

I've heard a few words about the Flood. The people of long ago, it seems, as we, ourselves, call them. . . . There was a flood. But there were some who shut themselves up with wood, it seems, as we say. They shut themselves up [in a boat], as we say. The water didn't get in. [The boat] floated, it would float on the river, as we say, on top of the water, as we say. Some didn't die. They were [to become] the monkeys. It was when there was a flood, as we say. Some shut themselves up.

Our Lord came when the water dried up, as we say. Our Lord in Heaven came. "What did you eat?" asked Our Lord when he arrived. "What did you eat [so that] you survived?" he asked. Those awful [people who soon would turn into] monkeys were mad, as we say. They were angry.

"We ate nuts. We ate vine berries," they said. They said it angrily.

"Ah!" they were told. "Well, go eat them, then!" they were told. So they turned into monkeys. Then they ate vine berries and nuts. They didn't eat corn anymore. That's what happened to them. And the magpie jay. He was an ensign-bearer. He was in office. That's why he has a crest, as we say. And the awful roadrunner, he was a person, too.

But the trouble was, he turned into a bird, because he didn't tell properly how he had survived. Since he said that, "I ate nuts, I ate rock berries," that's why he eats berries forever. That's how it turned out. He became a bird, and so forth, it seems. That's how it was. Yes!

[What was the roadrunner?] He was a musician, indeed! The roadrunner. As for the ensign-bearer bird, as we say, he was an ensign-bearer. He was in office. That's why his clothing is blue, you see. That's all. That's the way it was. That's all. That's all, it seems.

I have translated nab as "river," but it can mean any large expanse of water. The story of Noah's Ark is combined with the clearly pre-Columbian account of the Sun's encounter with the survivors.

Buy, 7i naka to 7ox la 7ismak mi, "Mu to me xajamikon 7oxibuk k'ak'al 7un!" xi la.
Bu, mu la sta 7oxib k'ak'al 7isjamik 7un, 7isk'elik la 7un.
Bu, naka to 7ox la ch'ocholaj 7u—n, te la cham xa ta j-moj xa 7un, te nel xa 7o yech 7un, nel 7o yech 7un, ja7 yech ka7yoj chak taj 7une.

Yan skwenta nojele 7oy ka7yoj 7unen j-p'el, 7a li ti vo7ne krixchanoetik ya7el xkaltik vo7otike, tal nojel pero 7o xa 7oy la j-lom li 7isbaj sbaik ta te7 ya7el xkaltik 7un, smak sbaik xkaltik 7un, muk' x7och i vo7 7une 7ikajuj ta xkajuj ta ba nab xkaltik 7un, ta ba vo7 xkaltik 7un, muk' xchamik j-lom 7un, 7a li ja7 li max 7une, ja7 ti k'al tal nojel xkaltik 7une, 7isbaj sbaik j-lom 7une.

Va7 7un, tal la taj kajvaltik k'alal 7i7ul xkaltik i vo7 7une, tal taj kajvaltik ta vinajel 7une. "K'usi 7alajesik lakole?" xi la 7un. Kapem la taj mu mu max xkaltik xa 7une, kapem la 7un.

"7Ijlajes 7a li ssat te7 7ijlajes 7a li ssat 7ak," xi la 7un. Kapem la 7i7al 7un. "7A!" x7utat la 7un. "Bwéno, ba lajeso che7el" x7utat 7un. Ja7 7o la 7ipas ta max 7un, 7i ja7 7o la tzlajes ti ssat 7ak' li ssat te7etik xa 7une, mu xa buy tzlajes xa 7i7im 7un, ja7 la yech 7ibat 7o 7un, xchi7uk 7i 7a li mut 7alperese, le7e 7a li 7alperes 7o la yabetel, yech'o li 7o sk'uk'umal sjol xkaltik 7une, xchi7uk li mu 7an k'ux jole, krixchano la noxtok le7e.

Pero k'usi pas ta mut 7un, ja7 li ja7 li muk' xal ya7el lek ti k'u x7elan 7ikuch yu7un 7une. Ja7 taj, "7Ijlajes ssat te7 7ijlajes ssat ton," xi 7une. Yech'o ssat te7 tzlajes ta j-moj xa 7un, lok' 7o yech 7ipas ta mut k'utik x7elan xa ya7el 7un, ja7 la yech 7un. Jii7!

Jvbajom la a7a li k'ux jol 7une, 7a li 7alperes mut chkalaktike 7alperes yu7un la tik'il ta yabetel, yech'o ti 7oy yox sk'u7 chava7i, laj 7une, ja7 yech bi 7a, laj 7o, laj 7o ya7el taj 7une.

The magpie-jay, an extremely noisy bird, is given a different origin by Romin Teratol, who reports its transformation after its betrayal of Christ to the Jews (T8). Its blue plumage is likened to the blue cloak worn by the ensign-bearers, officials of the third
rank of the religious hierarchy. Its crest derives from the black felt hats topped with a peacock feather and worn by those officials.

The roadrunner, also a vociferous bird, has so mournful a call that it is named k'ux jol, "headache." See also T7, T55, T70, T96, T142, and their notes.

The Bear’s Son

There was a woman. That woman went to leave some tortillas for her husband, as we say.

But then a fucking bear appeared. That woman was carried off to his cave. She was naked there, since she hadn’t any clothes anymore. Just berries were what the poor woman ate.

His child was born. That child of his had legs like that bear’s, his face was a human’s. He was a boy. It was a boy that was born.

Since, you see, his mother was naked. . . . That bear grew. “Mother, how come we don’t leave?"

“Can you open the door?” Since the door was a rock, you see. “Can you open it?”

“I guess I’ll try,” he said. He tried. He moved that door a ti—ny bit. “Well, I guess I’ll grow for three days, then. We’ll see, we’ll see if I’ve grown strong,” he said.

[When] the three days were up, for him to grow, as we say, he moved it more. He could move it more.

Another three days passed, too. It was nearly opened. It [nearly] came out for good, indeed. Another three days passed, too. It came out. “Let’s go right away, then, mother!” he said. Ooh, they left. But the fucking bear came. Hell, he stopped at the edge of the town. He was about to drag off that wife of his.

But she had already entered the town. But she was simply naked. She simply hadn’t any clothes. That awful boy was the same, too. He was naked, you see. He hadn’t any clothes either, you see.

Her [bear] husband went. He still went to get her. But somebody had already taken his place. Already [she had] another [husband], too.

She was probably treated kindly, as we say. She was given a skirt, as we say. She told, it seems, how she had been abducted long ago, as we say.

“It doesn’t matter,” said [her new husband]. That boy of hers grew. He grew. She put him in school.

But the guy learned ri—ght away.

Now his other friends didn’t learn. Those other friends of his were beaten by the teachers. That bear’s child was well-liked [by the teachers]. He kept being called “Pig’s Foot” [by the boys]. He kept being called “Pig’s Foot.” That bear child lost his
temper. He slugged them, but their souls departed for good. They died. Because he was strong, as we say.

And they got tired of the way he hit those students so much, too. He was thrown out. “Get out once and for all!” he was told.

“All right, okay!” he said. “But plea—se get a walking stick for me. I’ll go,” he said. They got a walking stick for him, then. It probably wasn’t very thick. “Lord, what good is this to me?” he said. “I want a bigger one,” he said. He was given a bi—gger one. Who knows if it took two men or what to carry that stick. He took it. He went. He went. He journeyed a long ways.

He met up with one of our countrymen on the way. “Where are you going, friend?” they asked each other. “As for me, I’m going to wherever I fall dead. It makes no difference, because I’ve left like this,” he said.

“Sonofabitch, it’s just the same with me, too!” said the other one. The two met up with each other, as we say. They went on again. They met another of our countrymen, too, as we say. There were three now.

But they got te—ribbly thi—rsty. Those others, those companions of his, simply longed to drink some water—his two friends.

“But there’s probably some water here,” said that bear child. There was a pit there. “If you want to, let me down. I’ll climb down,” he said. They tied vines together. They tied them and lowered them. They tied them and lowered them. [The bear child] climbed down to the bottom where the water was. But there he met the Earth Lord. He met two girls there. He took one out. He took one of those girls out. “Well, pull me out! I’m coming out now,” he said. He was taking the girl out.

Then that other girl came out.

That bear stayed behind, as we say. And, “Well, now I’m coming out myself. Pull me [up]!” he said, too. It was supposed to him.

But it was a big rock that weighed just the same, as we say. Then he tied that rock [so it could be] lifted. Lord it just reached halfway up the pit. Then it was tossed down. They thought it was the bear. They thought it was him [they were dropping].

But it was that rock. Oh, the black gentleman arrived. Lord, he was the lord of that place, it seems, as we say. The black gentleman arrived. They hit each other. Quickly [the bear child] grabbed his knife. He cut off one of [the Earth Lord’s] ears. He cut off one of his ears.

Since he couldn’t get out, you see, there was no ch’amal 7osov 7une, ta la st’anbe majele pero yu7n la chlok’ xch’ulel ta j-moj, yu7n la xcham ta j-moj, yu7n la 7o spwersa yu7n xkaltik.

Va7 7un, 7i tavan la xa7liik taj x7elan tol tzmaj taj jchan-vunetik noxtok 7une, 7a li lok’esat la. “Batan ta j-moj!” x7utat la 7un.

“Bwéno stak!” xi la 7un. “Pero 7abulajaa—nik 7un, sa7bekon junuk jnun-te7 7un, chibat,” xi la 7un. 7i7a7bat la jnun snam-te7 7un, jun snam-te7 pero yu7n, yu7n me ja7uk stotz la 7avu7un, mu la xlik ku7untik, sa7bat la pimero jnun snam-te7e che7e te nan k’u yunen yijil. “Ke?re k’usi bal 7o chka7i li7e?” xi la 7un. “Jk’an mas mu’ki,” xi la 7un. 7i7ak’bat la ma—s xa mu’k’ na7tik mi cha7-vo7 yajval k’u la cha7al taj 7ispet taj te7 7une, stzak la ech’el bat la 7un, bat la 7un, stam yok ta j-moj 7un.

Béno, 7isnup ta be i jun jchi7iltik 7un. 7A li, “Bu chabat, amigo?” xut la sbai7k 7un. “Vo7one chibat ja7 ti buy pak’al xilaje muk’ sk’oplal yu7un lok’emon chak li7e,” xi la 7un.

“Púta, ja7 yechen 7uk!” xi la tjaj jun 7une. I sta la sbai7k cha7-vo7 xkaltik 7un, ba—tik xa la noxtok 7un, snu—p ta be 7otro jun noxtok jchi7iltik xkaltik 7un, pas ta 7ox-vo7 7un.

Buy, ta xta—ki7 la sti7 ta j-me—k, solel la chak yuch’ vo7 taj taj yan jchi7iltak 7une, cha7-vo7 xchi7il 7une.

Va7 7un, “Pero 7o nan vo7 li7 toe,” xi la taj ch’aman 7osov 7une. 7O la te jun ch’en 7un. “Mi xk’an xa 7a li niton yalel ta xiyal,” xi la 7un. 7istz’akulanik 7a li 7ak’etik 7istz’akulan la yalel 7un, 7iyal taj ta chak vo7 7une.

Bwéno, buy, te la sta 7a li yajval balamil 7un, te la sta cha7-vo tzeb te vo7 7une, 7islok’es la jun 7un, 7islok’es jun taj tzeb 7une. “Bwéno, niton me lok’el 7un, ta xa me xilok’ tal,” xi la. Tz la tzlok’es 7un. 7Ora, lok’ taj jun tzeb 7une.

Bwéno, te kom taj taj 7osov xkaltik 7une. 71 “Bwéno, ta xa me xilok’ tal vo7on 7une nitikon me 7un!” xut la noxtok 7un. Ja7 xa ta 7a7ale 7une.

Bu, j-p’ej la mol ton ja7 nok k’u cha7al yatal xkaltik 7une, ja7 7o ja7 ja7 7ixchuk muelyel taj ton 7une, kere, ja7 no la ti 7ista 707ol ch’en ja7 la sjipat yalel tal 7un xak’ ja7uk li li 7osov 7une, xak’ ja7uk 7un.

Buy, ja7 taj ton la 7une, 7aj, k’ot ta 7ik’al mol 7un, ke, yajval ya7el taj balamil xkaltik 7une, k’ot la 7ik’al mol 7un, smaj la sba xchi7uk 7un, j-like7 la 7istzak skuchilu sjosbe la jun xchikin, 7isjosbe la jun xchikin.

Bwéno, kómo mu xa xlok’ chava7i 7une, mu xa k’u
way, there was no longer a way to get out—"Well, will you carry me out? If you don't carry me I'll bite your ear," he said. He bit his ear, but he was already holding his ear. But it hurt [the Earth Lord].

"Ow, don't bite my ear! I'll take you out, then," said [the Earth Lord]. [The boy] was carried out.

Halfway up the pit, he was about to be tossed down again. He bit [the Earth Lord's] ear again. "I guess I'll bite the black gentleman's ear," he said. He bit his ear again.

"Ow, don't bite my ear!" said [the Earth Lord]. But his ear was being held [in the bear child's hand]. It probably hurt him still, it seems, as we say. [The bear child] was taken out.

He reached another town. He had taken along the ear of that black gentleman, as we say.

He found two rocks, but they were beautiful rocks. But he met a girl there. "Well, I guess I'll bite the black gentleman's ear. We'll see if he brings me some money for marrying this girl," he said. He bit that black gentleman's ear. But who knows where he was, it seems. Who knows where that owner [of the ear] was.

"Ow, don't bite my ear!" said [the Earth Lord] again, but he was far away.

"Okay, if you give me some money. This much, like this," he said. "Well, if you give me some money for marrying this girl," he said. He bit that black gentleman's ear. And he placed that rock there. He placed one by his head to sleep on. That rock.

That girl came along. "What's that?" she asked.

"Ah, this is my charm," said that awful bear child.

"This is a charm, of course!" he said.

"Do you want to give it to me?" she said.

"Ah, I'll give it to you, but [only] if we get married," he said.

"Eh, I don't know about that," she said.

"Well, it will be yours, if we get married," he said. She thought it over. "Well, shall I come sleep [with you], then?" he said.

"Come on, come on, sleep! Come on, sleep, then!" said that woman. She had probably made her decision.

"Well, can I put my arm over [you]?" he said. He embraced her.

"Yes, you can!" she said.

"Can I touch you a little bit lower?" he said.

"You can!" she said. He touched her a little bit lower.

"Can I climb on slowly?" he said.

"You can!" she said.

"Can I poke it in slowly, I guess?" he said, too.
“Poke it in!” he was told. Lord, he poked it in! Sonofabitch, but yes, indeed, the blood certainly flowed! Who knows what horrible length his tool was! She was screaming now. She was screaming now since it was probably long, you see. Who knows what his tool was like, you see. He was an evil animal, you see. Lord, it was discovered. He was an evil sonofabitch, but yes, indeed, the blood certainly flowed! Who knows what horrible length his tool was! That's how the tale ends, like that.

But he wasn't arrested or jailed. He fled again. He went to another town, too. And he just did the same. He just kept deceiving people like that. That's what happened. That's how the tale ends, like that.

Buy, muk' sztk a chukel 7ijatav la noxtok bat ya yan 7o jek-lum noxtok 7un, bat ta yan 7o jek-lum noxtokes, 7i ja7 no la yech tzpas naka la puro cho7vanej tzpas chak taj 7une, k'u' x7elan bat 7o yech 7un, ja7 yech 7ich'ay 7o yech kwencho chak taj 7une.

The “Bear's Son,” sharing many motifs with Beowulf, is widespread in Europe, especially in Scandinavia. It occurs in India and North Africa and among North American Indian groups (Barakat, 1965:330-331). It has been reported frequently among Mexicans living in the United States (Colgrave, 1951:409-413; A. M. Espinosa, 1911, T12: Goodwyn, 1953:143-154; Paredes, 1970, T29; Rael, 1957, T232). In Mexico there are versions from Chihuahua (Barakat, ibid.), Jalisco (Ma- son, 1914:176-179; Wheeler, 1943, T93-196), Guadalajara (Ribe, 1970, T34), Mitla (Radin and Espinosa, 1917, T108; Radin, 1943:22-30), and Tehuantepec (Boas, 1912:241-245) in Oaxaca, and in Chiapas—Chamula (Gossen, T75).

Rey's story, like other Mexican versions, conforms quite closely to the Aarne-Thompson tale type 301 and to Spanish tales (A. M. Espinosa, T133-T135). Emphasizing the similarities with Rey's story, I will try to make a composite of the other Mexican tales:

(1) A woman, abducted by a bear, gives birth to a son, half bear and half boy.

(2) Bear's Son escapes by pushing a heavy rock from the cave's entrance. (His magical growth and his mother's return to town are not featured.)

(3) He kills his tormentors in school, and is forced to drop out. (His learning abilities are not mentioned.)

(4) He requests a heavy stave.

(5) He meets up with three friends (not two). They usually are giants with special abilities and names like Mountain Mover, River Gulper.

(6) They grow very thirsty. With the aid of a long rope, Bear's Son descends into a deep well.

(7) He discovers three (not two) beautiful girls. He may have to rescue them by first killing serpents or devils.

(8) He lifts the girls out. When he, himself, tries to get out, he is either abandoned or suspects his companions' good will and ties a rock to the rope.

(9) He battles a Negro, sometimes identified as Lucifer, cuts off his ear, and escapes from the well by biting the Negro's ear and so compelling his assistance.

From here on Rey's tale takes an unusual turn. Customarily, Bear's Son, with the aid of the Negro's ear, tracks down his former companions, denounces them, and wins one or all three of the princesses for himself. Rey's Rabelaisian conclusion adds a fresh dimension to this ancient epic.

The very existence of an early Spanish loanword, TOSOV, for “bear” in Chiapas, far from bears' native habitat and where it is not likely that travelling circuses would have ventured, is mysterious. Perhaps this tale holds the key.

When the Guatemalans Were Blown Sky-High

There is another one, too, a tale, as we call it, too. In Guatemala, of course! It seems the people used to arrive [there] long ago. They died there. They were given cane liquor to drink. When they got drunk, then [the Guatemalans] sharpened up a knife blade well. Their balls would be cut off.

They were fattened. There in Guatemala. They were fattened like pigs. Yes! They were fattened. Ooh, it seems that lots of the elders of long ago were lost, as we say. Many were lost—those it seems, who couldn't be Thunderbolt or anything. [Just] some of them [were strong]. They didn't all have the same power long ago.

The elders chose several from among each other. 7O la j-tos xtok skwenta kwento xkaltik noxtok 7un, 7a li ta Watemala la bi 7a, ta xk'ot ta xk'ot ti krixchanoetik ya7el ti vo7ne 7une, te chlaj ta la x7ak'bat yuch'ik trago, 7i mi yakubik la 7une, ja7 7o la chjux lek ye kuchilu 7un, ta la xlok'bat sbek' yat 7un.

Va7i 7un, te la chjup'esat 7un taj ta Watemala 7une, chjup'esat k'u cha7al k'u cha7al chitom. Jii7! Chjup'esat la 7un, ji, 7ep xa la ta j-mek 7ich'ay, ch'ay ya7el ya7el ti vo7ne melectik xkaltik 7ep i ch'aye ti bu mu sna7ik ya7el mu sna7ik ya7el chauk k'usi ya7el j-lom 7une, mu parejouk sna7ik ti vo7ne 7une.

Va7 7un, 7ist'uuj la sba ech'el ti melectik ti ti jay-vo7
There was a Thunderbolt, a Fog, a Whirlwind, a Butterfly, a Blowfly.

They went. They were given cane liquor, just the same way [as the ones before]. They were given jug after jug of cane liquor.

It looked as if they drank the cane liquor, but who knows what they did. Those elders of long ago didn’t get drunk.

It looked as if they got drunk. They toppled over. They collapsed to the ground, it seems. Quickly [the Guatemalans] grabbed a knife. The knife blade was well-sharpened. Ye—s!

Their balls were going to be cut off, then. They were going to be cut off, then. Now Fog appeared. Thunderbolt crashed. Half the town . . . those people were finished off by Thunderbolt.

Of those others who had been fattened, it seems, some came back still. The others stayed there for good, because they were too fat to walk. That’s how the matter ended, too. It was that Thunderbolt who [went to] work. Thunderbolt worked. That’s what the elders of long ago were like. Since they could be Thunderbolt and they could be Whirlwind, and so on, it seems—the elders of long ago.

They succeeded. The world was set aright by them, too. That’s how it ends. A tale like that.

Yu7 xa la lok’esbat taj sbek’ yatik 7une, yu7n xa la chlok’esat 7un, ke ja7 7o tal lumal tok 7un, yak’ la chauk 7un, ke7re, 7ásta ke 7o7ilol la jtek-lume, ja7 laj la komel yu7un ta chauk taj krixchanoetik 7une.

Béno, ta xuch’ik la yiel li tragoe pero na7 tik k’u chcha7le 7un, mu la xyakubik taj vo7ne moletik 7une.

Ja7 7un, taj te to 7ox yan ya7el ti jup’mik xa taj 7un, tal to la j-lom li j-lome te xa kom 7o kómo mu xa xanavik yu7un sjup’enal, tey 7inel 7o yech ti k’op noxtok 7une, ja7 taj chauk 7i7abtej 7une, chauk 7i7abtej, ja7 yech ti vo7ne moletik 7une, kómo sna7ik chauk 7i sna7ik sutum 7ik’ k’usitak ya7el ti mas vo7ne moletik 7une.

Va7 7un, ja7 tojob yu7un taj 7une 7imeltzaj yu7un li balamil noxtok 7une, ja7 laj 7o yech chak taje, jun kwento chak taje.

I chose Rey’s account of the war with Guatemala to end the series, because it was he who taught Romin Teratol the epic that was recorded by me as Tale 1. Had this been the last rather than the second tale that I asked Rey to tell me and had he been enlivened by more bottles of beer, I believe it would have been more eloquent. See also TI, T115, T150, and their notes.
Postscript

"Talk of many things, ... of cabbages and kings"—no scholar’s array of evidence to prove a favorite theory, no logical design, no academic pyramid, just a few samples of the talk of the town to whet the appetite of those who dare to wonder "why the ocean boils and whether pigs have wings."

Imagine an archeologist attempting to reveal a buried civilization with only the potsherds he finds littering the surface of the ground—so has been my frustration in trying to gain an understanding of life in Zinacantán from this random collection of tales.

The comparative material displayed in the commentaries is no less random. Scattered far and wide in fieldnotes, mimeographs of federal Indian development programs, in missionary publications, in journals of linguistics, ethnopoetry, and folklore, tucked into anthropology monographs, this material defies easy discovery. Even after examining every scrap that reached my attention, it became clear that there is only the spottiest knowledge of the stories that the Indians of Middle America tell each other at home and at work. Indeed, outside Chiapas no study has focused on the role of folk literature in a single community.

Of Cabbages and Kings is a first endeavor to present a common tradition through the personal styles and interpretations of a variety of townspeople who made no claim to special knowledge, but who told with relish what came to their minds during a few insignificant mornings and afternoons of their lives.

They never would dream of the care that has been lavished on their ordinary words—the hours, the years spent by countless persons laboring with reels and pens, typewriters and word-processors, computers and Linotrons to reproduce their voices, then to reduce their words to writing for the amusement and edification of mere strangers.

For those of us who assume without question the value of literacy, may this volume have intimated the exuberance of living speech!

Paraded here in black stripes, these letters have reached their limit, but in Zinacantán the real words rush heedlessly into tomorrow, recreating and repeating, forever and forever.
Appendix 1

CAST OF NATIVE DEMONS AND DEITIES

Chauk
J7ik’al
Jk’ux 7Ak’al
Jnatikil Jol
Jvala-pat-7ok
Konchave
Xulem Vinik
Xulub Chon
Totil Me7il
Vaxak-men
Yajval Balamil
Yalem Bek’et

Thunderbolt
Spook (literally “black”)
Charcoal Cruncher
Long Hair
Turnabout Foot (literally “backward foot”)
Dwarf (etymology unknown)
Buzzard Man
Horned Serpent
Tutelary God (literally “father mother”)
Creator Gods (literally “eight supports”)
Earth Lord (literally “lord” or “owner of the earth” or “of the world”)
Fallen Flesh
Appendix 2

GAZETTEER

Acala
7Ach’ Jtek-lum
7Ak’ol Mukenal
7Anob
7Avan Ch’en
Ba Stentej
Be Chij
Bik’it Nich
Bik’it Vo7
Burrero
Cañita
Carranza
Chakkajon
Chamula
Chiapa
Chiapilla
Chix-te7tik
Chobtik
Choko7
Comitán

7Ichin
7Ik’al Vo7
7Isbontik
7Isbontikal Vo7
Ixtapa
Jok’ Ch’enom
Jok’ Ch’enomal Vo7
Jol Na 7Ichin
Jol Na Joj
Jolob Na
Jolom Na
Joyijel
Juteb Chauk

Kakate7
Kakav Te7
Koral Buro
Lach-chikin
Laguna Grande
Magdalenas
Muk’ta Jok’
Muxul Vitz

lowland town on the Rio Grijalva
Chiapilla
eastern cemetery in Zinacantán Center
on trail to Bik’it Nich
cave in Paste7
on trail to Ixtapa
trail from Zinacantán Center to Chamula
ranch east of San Lucas
spring in Paste7
colony on the trail to Ixtapa
ranch near Ixtapa
lowland Tzotzil town (Venustiano Carranza, formerly called San Bartolo)
in Chamulan hamlet of Milpoleta
Tzotzil town near Zinacantán Center
Chiapa de Corzo, town on the Rio Grijalva
lowland town
colony of Mitontic
Zinacantec hamlets west of Naben Chauk
at western entrance to Zinacantán Center, on trail to Vo7-bitz
Comitán de Dominguez, town on the Pan American highway
7Olon Mukenal
on trail to Ixtapa
on Pan American highway north of San Felipe
spring in Zinacantán Center
town on the trans-Chiapas highway (with Tzotzil minority)
(La Granadilla) Zinacantec hamlet
spring in Jok’ Ch’enom
7Olon Mukenal
mountain shrine north of Zinacantán Center
on trail to Ixtapa
Jolob Na
(Jojjel) Zinacantec hamlet
cave near fork of trans-Chiapas highway and Pan American highway
hamlet of Ixtapa
Kakate7
spring in Paste7
cave on trail to Ixtapa
ranch in foothills east of San Lucas
highland Tzotzil community in Larrainzar
hamlet of Ixtapa, west of Jok’ Ch’enom
mountain in Zinacantán Center

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APPENDIX 2

Na Chij
Na Joj
Naben Chauk
Ni-nab
Ni-o7 7Atz’am
Nibak
7Olon Mukenal
7Olon Ravol
Pajal Chix-te7
Pale Ton
Paste7
Petz Toj
Pulatual Vo7
Pum-lajan 7Uk’um
Quinta
Ravol
Rincón Chamula
Rinkon
Rinkontik
Rosario
Salinas
San Andrés
San Cristóbal
San Felipe
San Francisco
San Gabriel
San Juan Chamula
San-kixtoval
San Lucas
Santa Lucia
Sek’emtik
Simojovel
Sisil Vitz
Soyaló
Stzellej Minax
Tapachula
Tenejapa
Tierra Blanca
Toch’
Tonalá
Totolapa
Tuxtla
Tzajal Ch’en
Tzajal Yemel
Tz’ajom Pik’
Tz’akav 7Uk’um
Tzoj Lum
Tz’uitlsabil Vo7
Ventana
Vo7-bitz
Vo7-ch’oj Vo7
Vo7 ta Paste7
Vok’em Setz’
Vom Ch’en
Vunal

(Nachig) Zinacantec hamlet
Jol Na Joj
(Navenchauc) Zinacantec hamlet
spring in Zinacantán Center
spring in Zinacantán Center
Ixtapa
western cemetery in Zinacantán Center
ranch in Zinacantán Center
spring in Paste7
cave in Paste7
(Paste) Zinacantec hamlet
settlement in Vo7-bitz
cave on Pan American highway north of Chiapa de Corzo
stream in Zinacantán Center
ranch in the barrio of San Ramón in San Cristóbal
7Olon Ravol
Tzotzil town on the trans-Chiapas highway
Rincón Chamula
Rincón Chamula
lowland ranch
Vo7-bitz, Zinacantec hamlet on the trail to Ixtapa
San Andrés Larrainzar, highland Tzotzil town
San Cristóbal de las Casas
agencia of San Cristóbal (with Tzotzil minority)
church and barrio of San Cristóbal
ranch on trans-Chiapas highway
(El Bosque) Tzotzil town on road to Simojovel
mountain in Zinacantán Center
El Zapotal, lowland town (with Tzotzil minority)
church and barrio of San Cristóbal
(Sequentic) Zinacantec hamlet
temperate Tzotzil town
mountain in Zinacantán Center
town on the trans-Chiapas highway
on trail to Na Chij
city on the Pacific coast
highland Tzeltal town
settlement in Salinas
stream between Paste7 and Na Chij
town on the Pacific coast
lowland Tzotzil town
Tuxtla Gutiérrez, capital of Chiapas
cave south of Chiapa de Corzo
hamlet of Chamula, near Mitontic
on trail to Vo7-bitz
on trail to Ixtapa
on trail to Ixtapa
spring in Zinacantán Center
mountain pass at eastern entrance to Zinacantán Center
(Salinas) Zinacantec hamlet
(Bochoboh) Zinacantec hamlet
spring in Paste7
Pulatual Vo7
cave in Paste7
lowland ranch
Xlok’ Yo7on Ton
Xul Vo7
Ya7ajvil
Ya7am Ton
Yaleb Taiv
Yav Ch’ivit
Yerbabuena

Yox K’otik

Yox K’otik

Zinacantán Center

rock on trail to Vo7-bitz
spring in Paste7
Ventana
mountain shrine north of Zinacantán Center
(Yalem-Tay) Zinacantec hamlet
on trail to Ixtapa
ranch on the Pan American highway south of San Cristó-bal
stream in Chamulan hamlet of Ichin Ton next to road to San Cristó-bal
Jtek-lum
Appendix 3

TALE SCHEDULE

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Maps

Nearly all the local place names occurring in the tales may be found on maps 1–7. Place names and languages mentioned in the notes are located on maps 1, and 8–10. The language area boundaries should be considered as tentative approximations.

Map 1.—Central Chiapas.
MAP 2.—Zinacantán township (adapted from E. Z. Vogt).
MAP 3.—Zinacantán Center (adapted from E. Z. Vogt).
MAP 4.—Paste7 (adapted from E. Z. Vogt).
Map 5.—Western approach to Zinacantán Center.
MAP 6.—Northwestern Mexico (Language area: 1 = Yaqui, 2 = Tarahumara, 3 = Tepehuan, 4 = Tepecano, 5 = Cora, 6 = Huichol).
MAP 7.—South Central Mexico (Language area: 7 = Huastec, 8 = Nahua, 9 = Totonac, 10 = Popoluca, 11 = Tlapanec, 12 = Mixtec, 13 = Mazatec, 14 = Chatino, 15 = Zapotec, 16 = Chinantec, 17 = Chontal, 18 = Mixe, 19 = Popoluca, 20 = Huave, 21 = Zoque).
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