



EXPLORING AZTEC MYTHOLOGY:

La Música, El Canto Y El Baile (The Music, The Song, and The Dance)

Translated from *Mitología Mexicana para Niños* por Nélida Galván

The Gods created the world, man, and his food. They watched over them as they worked and lived in peace, but they were unsatisfied. Something was missing, something that excited the souls of their creations and distracted them from long days of working - something that united them.

As was custom the gods meet together; Tezcatlipoca Negro wanted to give them the music, the song, and the dance, and so it came to be.

Tezcatlipoca Negro, God of the “Smoky Mirror,” looked for a child to send to the place where the musicians lived with their instruments. He entrusted the child to be the one to take them to the world so that man may enjoy their secrets.

“You will be in charge of bringing joy to the people. You will plow the seas and arrive at the House of the Sun; There you will find a variety of musicians and singers with a vast variety of instruments.”

“But, how will I make it to the Sun, lord of the Smoke?” asked the child.

“When you arrive at the sea, you will ask the turtles, whales, and the mermaids for help, they will come to you. Together they will make a bridge that leads to the Sun.”

“And how will the sun know that it is you who sent me?”

“You will learn a song that you will perform for him. He will be waiting for you.”

After many days of travelling, the child arrived at the sea and called for the aquatic animals, as the Tezcatlipoca asked. They appeared from various places, some giant whales, and turtles with their head outside of their shells and the

mermaids singing beautiful and mysterious melodies. The animals intertwined with one another forming a multilayered bridge that seemed to never end and impossible for anyone to reach the end.

The child walked across the bridge in order to find the home of the Sun; it took days for him to reach the end, and nothing of the world was visible. He lost sight of the mountains, and the reflection of the water. He did not want to look down and preferred to look forward and walk and walk and walk. Finally he reached the door of the Sun and performed the song that the black god had shown him.

What resulted was a song so beautiful that the Sun himself moved. Knowing the significance of the child, the Sun ordered his musicians to cover their ears so that they would not be seduced.

“Do not listen to him, Do not respond to him, he who disobeys me will have to leave forever with this mortal.”

Despite the threat, many did not have time to cover their ears, under the spell of the song many abandoned the house of the Sun. The Child continued to perform the song that he learned from the god as he descended the bridge.

Unfortunately for the sun, little by little his musicians abandoned him and followed the child.

Once they returned the people flocked to the child's discovery and had their first celebration; they were so happy with the melodies of the musicians that were brought from the sun that their feet began to move and they drew inexplicable figures. The Music, The Song, and The Dance, gifts from Tezcatlipoca Negro.