Scene 3

How the Sun Was Born

Scene three narrates how the sun was born. Here the deity Blue Deer (*Tamatz Kayumari*) oversees the development of light on earth and guards the first fire into which a lame boy sacrifices himself to become the sun. The Huichol people share this solar origin myth with the Pre-Columbian Aztecs of central Mexico.
"Tamatz Kayumari, the Blue Deer, overseeing the development of light on earth, was not pleased with the amount of light given off by the moon. He ordered several children to be thrown into the fire as a sacrifice. But to everyone’s surprise, when the first four were thrown in, birds came flying out of the fire. In this way the earth was populated with birds. Then a sickly child, afflicted with many diseases, was chosen. At first he refused to be sacrificed until certain votive objects were offered: prayer arrows adorned with a pair of sandals [which serve to guide the feet and prevent them from stumbling on the trail], a nierika ["god’s face"; a disk decorated with symbolic figures], and eagle feathers.

After this was compiled with, the child jumped into the fire creating a whirlwind of sparks out of the diseases he’d had, and all those sitting around the fire became afflicted with them. In this way, the sun was born."

Emeteria Martinez Rios, artist

[The Huichols recount many versions of this story. In one, the boy who becomes the sun is a lame child who was thrown into a black pit. In others, a boy who is lame and unerringly accurate with a bow and arrow is convinced to immolate himself. The trait that most versions have in common is that the voluntary self-sacrifice of a young boy was necessary for the sun to be born.]