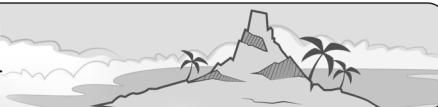


CYCLE 13**Discovery Island***Monkey Brothers and the Hero Twins*

This myth was told by the ancient Mayans who lived in Central America, in what is now Guatemala.

Long ago, there were four brothers who lived in the rain forest with their grandmother. The two younger boys were twins. They were helpful and smart. The older boys were lazy and selfish. It was their job to hunt for the family's food. As soon as the twins were old enough, the older brothers taught them to hunt. Then they spent their days napping while the twins did all the work.

Everyone could see that the twins were special. Even the plants and animals of the forest respected them. They knew that one day the twins would face terrible danger to save the world from evil. However, the people did not know these things yet. That is why the plants and animals secretly helped the twins in any way they could.

Even though the two older brothers were talented, they were jealous of the twins. People had once admired the older brothers. They were fine artists and dancers. But once the twins were born, they got all the praise. The twins were good at everything they tried, and people loved them. This made the older brothers furious.

One day, the older brothers grew bored as they waited for the twins to finish the hunt. For fun, they decided to scare the young boys. They planned to climb a tree and watch the path below. When the twins appeared, they would screech and holler. Then they would drop and pin the twins to the ground. How funny it would be to see the fear in their eyes!

A snake hiding nearby heard the brothers talking. The snake watched them hide in a large tree and peer down through the leaves to watch for the twins. The snake alerted the tree to their plan just as the twins came into view. The tree protected the twins with its special powers. It began to grow taller and taller. It raised the older brothers so high in the air that they cried out in distress. Fearing they would fall to their deaths, the

CYCLE 13**Discovery Island**

brothers twisted their clothes into ropes. They tried to tie themselves to the tree, but their clothes turned into furry tails. Then suddenly, the older brothers turned into monkeys!

The twins ran to tell their grandmother what they had seen. They led her to the tree to see for herself. A crowd of curious neighbors followed. When they saw two monkeys with the faces of the older brothers, they all began to laugh. Ashamed, the monkey brothers ran away and hid in the treetops.

In time, the twins grew into strong young men. They went on to do great deeds. People everywhere knew them as the Hero Twins. And the older brothers? They lived the rest of their lives as monkeys hiding in the trees.