

A guide to... The Hero Twins



WHAT LED TO THE BIRTH OF THE HERO TWINS?

Long ago there lived two brothers who were really talented at playing ball games. They were so good, in fact, that the Lords of Death living in the Mayan Underworld began to sit up and pay attention. The Lords of Death did not like people being too good at anything and they detested all the noise from the cheers of the crowd watching the boys play ball games. The Lords of Death sent the brothers an invitation to travel to the Underworld and meet them.

The journey to the Underworld was a perilous one. Passing through a river of dark red blood, a river of deadly spikes and a river of disgusting pus, they finally made it to the seat of the Lords of Death.

The Lords of Death decided to test the brothers. As the boys stepped forward and introduced themselves to the first Lord, they realised that it was not a Lord at all but just a wooden statue. As the real Lords of Death emerged, the brothers were ashamed to realise they had failed the test. Then the Lords of Death invited the boys to take a seat. As they sat themselves down on a bench, they quickly realised the bench was on fire and they had failed the second test. The Lords of Death killed the brothers, burying one of them and placing the head of the second one on a tree in the forest.

One day, a young lady entered the forest and came across the head in the tree. "You are going to give birth to my baby," said the head. "When the baby is born, take him to my mother's house to find my special ball." A short while later, the young lady gave birth to the Hero Twins.

What happened when the Hero Twins grew up?

The Hero Twins grew into strong young boys. One day when they were playing they caught a rat. "If you let me go," said the rat, "I will tell you all about your father and what happened to him." The twins let the rat go and in return the rat explained to the boys what had happened to their father in the Underworld. The rat

instructed the boys to go and find their father's ball and have a go at playing his ball game.

At once the twins set out for their grandmother's house and they found their father's ball. Soon enough they became just as skilled at playing ballgames as their father. Needless to say, when the Lords of Death heard about the twins, they became angered and invited the boys to come and play ballgames with them in the Underworld.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE HERO TWINS IN THE UNDERWORLD?

Just as their father had done, the boys survived the perilous journey to the Underworld. When they arrived, they knew just what to expect.

Faced with the wooden statue, the twins refused to greet it. The Lords of Death came out from hiding, impressed that the twins had passed their first test. "You have passed our test. Now, please take a seat," they said.

When the twins declined to take a seat, the Lords created even more tests to challenge them, including rooms of ice, deadly mosquitoes and footballs with secret sharp blades inside. Every time the Lords created a new test, the Hero Twins passed, becoming more and more powerful each time.

The twins began to realise that the only way they were going to overcome the Lords was by tricking them. After beating the Lords at the ballgame, the boys jumped into a hot oven. Thinking that the boys were finally defeated, the Lords scattered the twins' ashes into the river. However, the twins knew all along that as soon as their ashes merged with the restorative water in the river they would come back to life. Just as the boys had planned, they returned to life, first as catfish and finally back to human form.

As a result of their adventures in the Underworld, the boys had gained so many magical powers that they were able to destroy the Lords of Death once and for all and the sky gods decided to make them rulers of the Earth.