



THE MAYAN CREATION STORY

In the beginning of the world there were only two gods. These gods were called Gucumatz and Tepeu and they glittered with blue and green feathers. The two gods decided that they would create the Earth. They thought of the Earth and it was created. They thought of the trees, mountains, valleys and cliffs and they were created. They thought of grass, flowers, fields and forests and they were created.

When they had created the world, they said to each other, 'Look at this amazing world we have made. We need beings who will take care of the Earth and who will praise us for what we have created.' So they made the animals. They made jaguars, panthers, snakes and deer. They made dogs, turkeys, parrots, fish and all the other animals that are in the world today.

But the animals could not praise Gucumatz and Tepeu. They could only bark or growl or bleat. They tried as hard as they could but the meows and twitters and roars became so loud that the gods told them to stop. 'What a racket! We need better beings who will be able to say our names to praise us instead of just making noise,' they said.

They decided to make people out of mud but they were weak. They couldn't stand up and soon crumbled and died. They tried again, this time using wood and rushes to make people, but these people had nothing in their minds or hearts. They soon forgot to worship the gods and were destroyed by a great flood. The few people who survived became the monkeys who live in the trees. Gucumatz and Tepeu left them there as warnings of what happens when the gods are not worshipped.

One day, the animals brought the gods a sack of white maize. The gods ground this into a paste and made four men. The four men immediately started praising Gucumatz and Tepeu. The gods knew that these men had hearts full of emotion and heads full of questions. They were so pleased with the men they had made that they created four women for the men. This is how the human race began.

