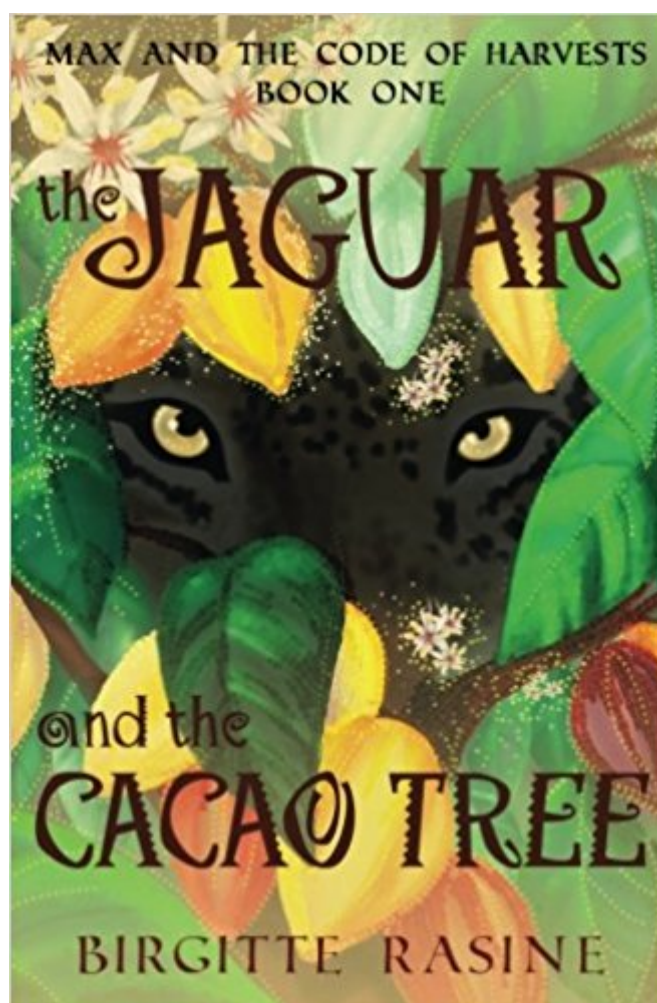


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The Jaguar And The Cacao Tree (Max And The Code Of Harvests) (Volume 1)



Synopsis

If you liked "The Golden Compass" and "The Chronicles of Narnia," be prepared to fall in love with mythic fantasy all over again. The Jaguar and the Cacao Tree pulls you into a mesmerizing world that blurs the lines between science, mythology, and the hidden magic of nature most adults find all but impossible. One of the world's authorities on chocolate, the C-Spot, calls the book "a strong contender for the best [chocolate] title in the last 5 years." When American-born Max and Maya-born Itzel open the pods of the Sacred Cacao Tree one night, they unwittingly unleash forces that threaten the past and future of the world's most desirable food--and awaken two mythic beasts guarding the very DNA of chocolate. This book is perfect for book club discussions. A sequel, a coloring book, and an interactive game are all in the works for fans. "A mesmerizing, imaginative smorgasbord of facts and fantasy blended into a charming tale." - Allen Young, PhD, Curator Emeritus, Milwaukee Public Museum and Author of "The Chocolate Tree" The Jaguar and the Cacao Tree is Book One of the "Max and the Code of Harvests" series.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 5-8 • Not only is the rain forest in Guatemala full of exotic plants, animals, and insects, it has an old, mysterious magic. That magic seats itself inside an ancient cacao tree, where the stories of the past are held within the cacao pods. Up until recently, only the Mayan elders knew of the secret magic. All of that changes when a young boy named Max travels to Guatemala with his

family to study the stingless bees of the Maya. The magic of the rain forest immediately casts a spell on Max. A young Mayan girl, Itzel, notices the magic surrounding Max and befriends him by sharing her customs and the history of the cacao trees. Itzel slowly begins to reveal the secrets of the rain forest, until one night the two wander deep into the forest and release a magical force. This is a unique middle grade novel that expertly blends magic, science, culture, and ecological awareness. While the writing is rich and detailed, it may go over less experienced younger readers' heads. Max fluctuates between having authentic, typical 11-year-old boy reactions and experiencing thoughts and feelings like those of a much older person. The extensive vocabulary used makes this book an excellent resource for readers looking for a challenge. VERDICT An original concept helps propel this story forward, creating a magical world that entertains and educates. — Annalise Ammer, Henrietta Public Library, NY

Mayan prehistory intersects with nature exploration and even gastronomy in a dreamy, mystical story line. ... Readers can learn snippets of language and history while simultaneously being entertained by Max's mystical rainforest adventures. -- Foreword Reviews After reading almost every book or blog on the subject, *The Jaguar and the Cacao Tree* is a strong contender for the best title in the last 5 years. -- Mark Christian, The C-Spot.com Who would have thought the world of chocolate hid so many secrets and mysteries? Brought to life through the eyes of two remarkable children Max and Itzel, this beautifully illustrated book draws you into the magical realm of the chocolate-giving Cacao Tree and the exuberant biodiversity that surrounds it. ... Grab your detective hat and help Max and Itzel when they realize something goes terribly wrong... you'll be glad you did! -- Sharon Edgar Greenhill, co-author, *Chocolate: Pathway to the Gods* Producer, Blue Deer Productions A fantastical tale for young adults that explains, through chocolate and the sacred cacao from which it manifests, how we can preserve biodiversity and celebrate the cultures that sustain it. -- Simran Sethi, author of *Bread, Wine, Chocolate; The Slow Loss of Foods We Love* *The Jaguar and the Cacao Tree* offers an original perspective on a meeting of ancient and modern cultures in the forests of Guatemala, whilst deftly revealing the threads that bind us all together. A heady blend of honey and chocolate, science and mythology, help oil the wheels of this rollercoaster treat for younger readers. -- Dan Eatherley, author of *Bushmaster: Raymond Ditmars and the Hunt for the World's Largest Viper*

A sweet, smart story that follows a young American boy on his adventures with a young Maya girl and her family. A very entertaining book--the fantasy aspects reminded me of *Lord of the Rings* or

Harry Potter!! I feel like this is the type of book adults can enjoy reading right along with their kids. It teaches you about the history of chocolate, to think about where your food comes from, and to appreciate nature and other cultures. There are a lot of different layers to the story that kept me thinking long after I put the book down.

Wonderful story full of imagination and interesting facts! Such a rare combination. Fun, educational, and intriguing!

The perfect combination of history, mythology, culture and chocolate! This book is a magical tale of a young boy who experiences the adventure of a lifetime in the rainforest of Guatemala. I loved the descriptive language and had to appreciate and admire the amount of research that clearly went into writing this book. A story for young and old, get ready to be taken into a colorful world where you will rediscover the wonders of nature. I can't wait to follow Max on his next adventure!

This is a wonderful book about an American boy and a Mayan girl. Max comes with his parents to Guatemala to study the Cacao tree. There he meets Itzal and Juan, two Mayan kids. Max and Itzel hit it off and she teaches him about the jungle and also shares her secrets with him. As they move through the jungle and Max learns more about the Mayan culture and history, he also learns about himself and what he is capable of. This is an interesting book about chocolate (it comes from the cacao bean) and history of the Mayan people. The way it is written makes you want to read more. Kids and adults alike will love this story and also learn about chocolate and Mayan culture. I like the way the Spanish (Hispanic) and Mayan languages are interspersed in the story--makes it all the more real just as the characters are. I got this book free from the Story Cartel in exchange for my review.

Entertaining, yet educational journey into the Mayan world in the jungles of Guatemala. It's a fun read especially exploring the adventures of Max, an American boy, and Itzel, a Mayan girl. Their experiences in the magical world of the jungle is suspenseful to keep the reader guessing. Once the two kids explore, you don't want to stop reading. Young readers can learn through the two, young protagonists as they discover not only the secrets in the jungle, but learn more about themselves especially as they overcome their fears and push beyond their own self-imposed limitations. It's a story of discovery for many of the characters in the book. It's also a great read for adults too especially if you love chocolate and appreciate nature. Overall, I recommend this book especially if

you want a young reader to learn about the Mayan culture and gain an appreciation for conservation in an entertaining way.

This delightful story takes you on a journey with two young people as they explore the rain forests of Guatemala. While their parents study bee research, Max, an American visitor, and Itzel, a Maya girl, befriend each other. Their escapades introduce them to the history of chocolate making with cacao beans, ancient rituals of their elders, intriguing animals of the forest, all intertwined with visions and fantasy. Their accomplice is Luna, a charming humming bird. I read this story with my 11-year old grandson, and it's hard to say who enjoyed the tale more or who was more sorry when it ended. The artwork throughout the book adds a special dimension. I highly recommend this book to readers of all ages. You will devour your chocolate with new appreciation!

This tale of Max, the son of a bee scientist, and his new Mayan friend Ixtel who takes him deep into the rain forest and shows him the ancient secrets of the cacao tree is great fun. With everything from sneaking off from their parents, conflicts with Ixtel's brother, talking hummingbirds, and ancient mysteries, I was captivated from very early on and, as the story deepened, became more and more engaged. I loved the way the socks at the beginning were tied back in at the end. I've given it only four stars, however, because there were too many places where lengthy and awkward sentences threw me out of the story. This happened less after I reached the halfway mark, either because I became so engaged that I ignored them, or because they were only in the first half. I received a free copy of this book from Storycartel, in exchange for my honest review.

I thought this was going to be a "children's" book... either I'm still a child or I just really like these fantasies. Birgitte's ability to mix fact and fiction make for a really fun read... Try it out-loud either to yourself or the kids. The book does make you want to eat chocolate... so hide the M&M's. Very entertaining and an opportunity to escape reality for a while.

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