

Andres, The Mighty Maya Warrior

by Diana Perry

Illustrated by
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Published by
Biblio Publishing
The Educational Publisher Inc.
BiblioPublishing.com
BiblioBookstore.com
ISBN: 978-1-62249-316-6

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cody Sims". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "S" at the end.

Acknowledgments:

Thank you **Bob** and **Fran** of Biblio Publishing for all your support and wonderful efforts on my behalf.

also...

I am deeply grateful to '**Volker T**', my wonderful German Indiana Jones who makes a living at guiding tourists throughout Mexico into underground river caves, ancient Maya ruins and the jungles of Mexico. Thank you, Volker, for providing me with Mayan and Spanish words and for the great comments on my book as well.

also...

Thank you so much, **Ben Thomas**, Director of Programs of the Archeological Institute of America at Boston University, for your tireless assistance of the Maya culture and for your wonderful comments on my book.

let's not forget...

Thank you **Kiran** and **Nadia** for being characters in my book; I hope you love reading it and showing your names to your friends. You guys were great. I hope to make an author visit your school next year.

and always....

A really big 'THANK YOU' to Cody Sims, the very best illustrator on the planet earth. Your drawings are so real that I have people asking if they are photographs. You were born to draw and I thank God every day that you draw for me. I look forward to a long and very prosperous working relationship with you and, even more, to our growing friendship.

YOUNGBLOODS

The “bloods” part of the YOUNGBLOODS series is short for bloodhounds which is a nickname for detectives. Twelve pre-teens 10 to 12 years old put their heads together to solve the mystery in each of the twelve stories starting with the month of September in *Andres, the Mighty Maya Warrior*. Sometimes it is only the protagonist who solves the mystery; other times it is a few characters or the entire group as a whole.

For October, it is Xavier who leads the boys in egging on the girls to spend the night in the neighborhood haunted house. Plenty of scares and laughs intertwine in *The Baumgardner House*.

The Cast of Characters will place each story’s Protagonist at the top with any additional characters for that story underneath. The rest of the regular cast will appear below. Twelve characters – twelve stories; one character is the lead (the Protagonist) in each of the monthly stories.

Full of excitement, danger and comedy, these books teach moral lessons in stories kids can relate to while absorbing culture, languages, science, history and much more encouraging a love of reading that will last their whole lives through.

Enjoy each book in the YOUNGBLOODS series!

Cast of Characters

Protagonist: Andy Jamison – 12 years old

for Andres, the Mighty Maya Warrior.....

Carlito – 10 year old boy from Tinum, Mexico

Balam – 200 year old jaguar king

Melissa Parrish – 12 years old, cheerleader, outgoing and very nice. She always volunteers to help everyone.

Scott Parrish – Melissa’s brother, 10 years old, has to learn his lessons the hard way, but also eager to help anyone in need.

Xavier English – 12 years old, one of a set of twins, protective of both his twin and younger brother, very adventurous

Xander (X-ander) English – Xavier’s twin brother, the academic, loves to study, always gets good grades and has a great curiosity.

Xayne(Zane) English – 10 year old brother of the twins, tries to keep up with his brothers, prefers friends their age.

Kelly Miller – 12 years old, cheerleader, blond hair and blue eyes make her the crush object of every boy in school.

Michael Palmer – 12 years old, plays in the band, has a huge crush on Melissa but is too afraid to tell her.

Asia Lee – 12 years old, had a rough upbringing, is always hard on her friends but even harder on herself.

Molly Brown – 10 years old, fun loving, has a crush on Scott

Violet Johnson – 10 years old, the trouble maker

Rabah Kapoor – 10 years old; from India, nickname – Robbie

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MAYAN WORDS

zac tanquele'en shipa.....	white boy
muuk maaya t'aan ba'ate'el....	mighty Maya warrior
cenote.....	well
suku'um.....	friend
tz'uqtzun.....	anteater
sip che.....	green snake
Aak.....	turtle
t'uut.....	parrot
toloc o x merech.....	horned lizard
jabalik.....	jabalina
karneer.....	big horn ram
b'atz.....	spider monkey
aain.....	crocodile
ts'o'okol'beel.....	wedding ceremony
k'i'inam kaan.....	venomous snake

SPANISH WORDS

castillo.....castle

centavos.....cents

peso.....dollar

joyeria.....jewelry

ceramica.....pottery

sombreros.....hats

guayaberas.....shirts

zapatos.....shoes

cinturones.....belts

limonada.....lemonade

empanada.....turnover

maize.....corn



TEASER

Day One - 3rd week of September, 1:44pm, 5 days before the fall equinox; in a jeep down Highway 180 in the state of Yucatan, Mexico

ANDRES, THE MIGHTY MAYA WARRIOR

“But Mom,” Andy once again protested. “You promised that you and Dad were all done being missionaries now. You said we had a permanent home in Ohio and I could make friends and join a soccer team and...”

“Soccer?” Carlos interrupted from the driver’s seat. “My Carlito would love to play soccer with you.” He looked toward the woman next to him, “Jenny, your Andy and my

Carlito could have a blast playing soccer. With all the science stuff he gets into, the only way Maria and I can get him out of a book is to get him go play soccer.”

“Where is Carlito?” Jenny asked.

“He’s working on some science project, of course; something about finding a bug for one of his collections. I can’t remember what.”

Andy sank down in his seat and groaned.

“Oh, Andy!” his Mom turned around from the front passenger seat. “We’re only going to be here two weeks, not two years. You can pick up right where you left off when we get home. Dawn and Rick really needed this respite. Her parents are moving into an assisted living center and they needed help moving. Don’t you remember me telling you that her father had a health problem? Again, it’s only for 2 weeks.”

“It’s not just that.” Andy argued. “There’s nothing to do here and it’s hot.”

Carlos kept his eyes on the road but spoke back to Andy, “Really, nothing to do here? You have no idea. We’ve got the festival, there’s a zip line, cenotes, a carnival, a...”

“I know,” Andy answered. “I read the brochures. I just started playing soccer and made new friends and now I’m way down here.”

“Carlito will hang out with you.” Carlos repeated. “You’re twelve and he’s almost eleven.” He turned off Highway 180 and drove down a dusty road with many holes. The ride became very bumpy and dust clouds wafted up to choke them.

Andy recalled hearing all about Carlito. Carlito was a book worm. Carlito loved to study. Carlito didn’t get dirty. Blah...blah...blah! Yeah, Carlito sounded like a really fun guy!

They rode on for several more minutes with the jeep jerking and twisting so much that everyone had to hold on as Carlos apologized for the rough ride, promising they’d be at the backside of Chich’en Itza (Cheech-en eet-za) in about eight minutes.

“Why don’t you take some pictures?” Andy’s mom suggested. “Your camera is already hanging around your neck; just pick it up and take some pictures.” Then she looked toward Carlos, “David got him such a great camera. It’s waterproof and everything. Oh, look!” she pointed up ahead.

Andy leaned up to see a group of long horned cattle being herded toward them by several men and boys.

Carlos slowed the jeep to a stop to let them pass. “Andy, get some pictures of these cows. They’re called Corriente (cor-ee ent-tay) cows. The Spaniards brought them over here a long time ago in ships all the way from Spain. They’ve been here ever since.”

With nothing else to do, Andy unbuckled his seatbelt and stood up in the back seat with his head sticking out of the metal frame of the topless jeep. Focusing his camera, he snapped a few shots of the cows. Then something bright red flew past his lens and he pointed his camera up to follow the path of two colorful parrots flying up toward the treetops. They had feathers of bright red, blue and green and stood out against the jungle background. Andy got a few shots of them but didn't know if he got any good ones as they were looping and diving as they flew. They stopped on a branch and he saw his chance and aimed his camera. As if they knew, the birds flew off and Andy followed their trail through his lens snapping as fast as he could as his view passed over something orange and brown spotted. "Whoa," he said under his breath. "What is that?" Slowly he moved his camera down until he had the image in his sights and snapped a photo. The figure was all but hidden behind the large elephant ear leaves and all he could make out was one ear and what appeared to be a paw with claws. "Carlos, can jaguars stand up in the trees?"

"What?" Carlos asked. "No, of course not; why do you ask?"

Andy wasn't sure if his eyes were playing tricks on him. "Because I just got a picture of one; it was orange and brown spotted and it's up in the tree looking down on us and..."

"What? Andy, no!" Carlos interrupted. "I've lived here all my life and, because I'm an anthropologist, I've even been in the deep parts of the jungle and do you know how

many times I've seen a jaguar? Twice – twice in over twenty years. They don't come anywhere near humans. We do have a lot of orange flowers up in the trees and the brown color you saw could have been the brown tree bark that showed between the flowers.”

“But I saw it!” Andy exclaimed. “And it was looking down on us. I saw the orange and brown spots and a pointed ear and the claws on its’ paw and... and...no flower has ears and claws.” Andy turned back to look up searching the trees. For a moment, he couldn't remember the exact spot but after combing the area, he found it again. There it was, still up in the trees and still looking down at him. He had to get a really good picture this time so he could show Carlos and prove he really did see a jaguar. The last of the cows passed by and Carlos moved the jeep forward causing Andy to lose his grip on his camera, which fell down to smash him in his chest. “Ow, that hurt.”

“Andy!” his mom yelled as she turned her head back. “Sit down!”

“Just a second, Mom, please!” Andy begged as he steadied himself against the metal bars of the jeep frame. He tried his best to keep his balance as the jeep jerked up and down each time they went down in and up out of the holes. He looked back up to find the spot again; several seconds went by but at last he spotted the creature once more.

The jeep drove smoothly for a short distance until the left tire dipped down into a long hole, jerking and twisting until

Andy fell sideways; his head hitting hard against the outer frame. “Ow!”

“Ow.” Andy’s mom slid, too, as her head slammed against the side frame. She rubbed her head as Carlos apologized and both temporarily forgot all about Andy still standing up in the back.

Holding onto the frame with his left hand, he pulled himself back to the center and searched the tree tops. What luck - It was still there. With one hand, he held up his camera and looked through the lens but his view was bumpy and the jaguar kept coming into and out of focus. He managed to get several shots, hoping that at least one of them would turn out.

Carlos pushed on the gas and they now went faster in and out of the holes, making it feel more like they were on an obstacle course than on a road.

Andy bounced hard first to the left then back to the right and finally had to lower himself back down in the seat. He turned around to look back up at the trees but they were already so far past the spot where the jaguar was that he could barely make out the group of trees anymore. Suddenly, the jeep slid into a much deeper hole; the wheel made a hard spinning sound as dust and dirt came flying up over everyone. The wind blew it over them and Andy couldn’t see for a few seconds. After several tries, Carlos managed to pull out of the hole, apologizing again as Andy wiped the dirty film off his camera and waved his hand in front of his face to clear the air. He strained to see anything

at all from that area behind him but realized they were now way too far away. He looked out toward the roadside jungle at the parrots and other birds twitting about from branch to branch, wondering just what he did see when something orange and brown again caught his eye. He sat up and leaned over the side of the jeep. The trees, bushes and tall grasses occupied the area along the road so that anything on the other side was hidden from view...almost. Through the spaces in the greenery, he saw something running, something orange and brown and one ear, sometimes two; it was that creature running alongside the road keeping up with the slow-moving jeep. "Carlos, look! It's the jaguar – it's running through the jungle right beside us."

Carlos ignored Andy, wondering what was going in his head.

"Carlos, I'm sorry," Jenny apologized. "This isn't like him; he doesn't make things up or see things that aren't there. Maybe it's jetlag, I just don't know."

"Will you both just look?" Andy pleaded as he sat up in his seat to face Mom and Carlos but the look on Carlos' face said it all. "Come on, just look; you'll see for yourselves."

Carlos smiled but raised his eyebrows as if he was trying to be polite.

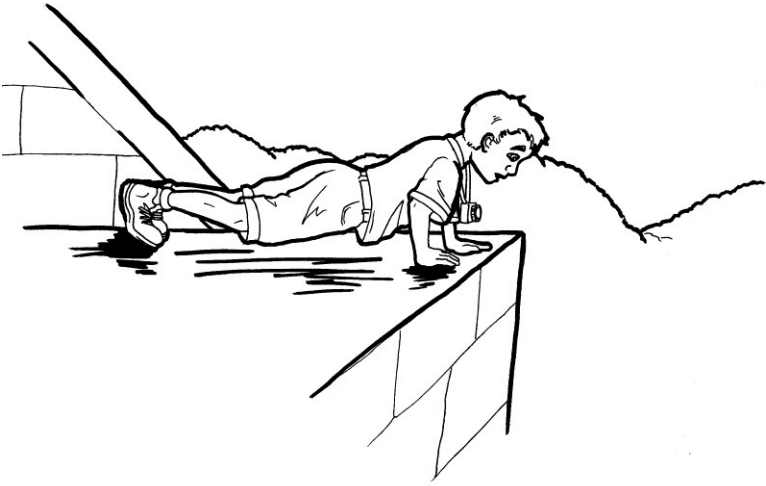
"Mom!" Andy looked at his mother. "You know I don't make things up; will you just look? Please!"

Carlos and Jenny exchanged looks, then Carlos slowed down to a crawl and both he and Jenny looked out toward the jungle. There was nothing there. “Are we looking in the right place?” Carlos asked suspiciously.

“Oh, of course it’s not there *now*.” Andy answered sarcastically. “If you’d looked when I told you, you would have seen it.”

“Okay, honey.” Jenny said soothingly. “We’ll see it later. Right now, just relax. We’ll be at Chich’en Itza soon. Then you’ll have some fun.”

Andy slumped back down in the seat, totally disgusted. ‘I know what I saw,’ he thought as he viewed his pictures; the cows, the parrots... “there you are,” he whispered to himself as the spotted ear and claws came into view. “I see you, even if it is a bit blurry. I know you’re out there, whatever you are, and no matter how dangerous it is or where I have to go to find you, I *am* going to find you.’



CHAPTER ONE

POC-TA-POC

Carlos pulled the jeep into the back of Chich'en Itza. They got out, dusting themselves off.

Andy couldn't stop thinking about that jaguar. None of it made sense. Carlos said there was no way to see a jaguar. Maybe he was going crazy, but how about that ear and those claws? That thing was running alongside the jeep, too; he was very sure of that. He had to prove to Mom and Carlos that he did see the jaguar; he'd have to track it down and get a photo. As they walked, Andy realized that the most important thing wasn't to prove it to Mom and Carlos; it was to prove it to himself!

They got behind the line of locals and, in a few minutes, were soon standing in the center of Chich'en Itza. Tents were everywhere, each one more colorful than the other. Crowds of people filled the view; tourists from all parts of the world, from so many countries. Many were locals, too.

“Well, honey,” Jenny said, holding Andy’s face in her hands. “Try to relax and have fun. You can come with me if you want but I’m going to find Maria so I can get my teaching material.”

“That’s so nice of you to help out at the school while you’re here,” Carlos said, pointing to a tent in the distance with a blue awning. “Maria will be in that tent right there. You go ahead; I’ll look out after Andy. And if you see Carlito with Maria, tell him to come find me. He’ll know where I’ll be.”

“I will,” said Jenny as she walked away.

“Come, on,” Carlos motioned for Andy to follow. After a short distance, Carlos pointed off in the distance, “See that building over there to the right, the one with all those stone pillars around it? That’s the Temple of Warriors; that’s where I’ll be. I’m in the show today over at the stage in the front. Carlito should be coming soon. I hope he’s not still out in the jungle. When he’s on one of his - science expeditions he calls them - he forgets all about time. He’s always late. This time it was...I remember – it was a Silverspot butterfly. He needed that for his insect collection project for school.”

Andy sighed, “Sounds fascinating.” He wondered how any normal ten-year-old boys wanted to go butterfly hunting. How boring.

“Hey, Andy,” Carlos turned to look at him. “*That’s* what you saw up in the trees; it was Silverspot butterflies. Their wings are shaped like cat ears and they hang out in large bunches so they probably looked like your jaguar, yes?”

Andy couldn’t believe it. “I guess, maybe.” How could Carlos think he saw a bunch of butterflies? Could butterflies have claws? Could butterflies run alongside the jeep?

“I guess I have a little time. Let me show you around,” Carlos offered. He pointed toward a huge building off in the distance. “That’s El Caracol (el care-a-col); it’s Spanish for ‘the snail’.”

“Why?” Andy asked. “It doesn’t look like a snail.”

“No,” Carlos answered. “Not on the outside, but wait until you see it from inside. Let’s go see.”

The two made their way over to the large stone building with many steps in front. Carlos stopped, “Take a photo of this, Andy.” Andy snapped a couple of pictures and then they moved on. In a couple of minutes they were walking up the outer steps coming out on a large level platform on top.

“Wow, there’s a lawn up here,” Andy noted.

“Yes, the grass grew over the platform,” Carlos stated. “There’s another platform up there.” He pointed to the