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The Young Jaguar (Pre-Aztec Trilogy Book 1)



Synopsis

Having achieved the exalted position of a Chief Warlord, Tecpatl was content, happy with his career and his family. Even his refusal to take an additional wife, a necessary thing for a man of his status, especially if his woman was a barbarian imported from the distant lands of Anasazi, did nothing to hinder his progress up the Tepanec military ladder. He was too successful as a War Leader to care about the opinions of others. Yet, when the old Emperor dies, leaving two dominant heirs to struggle for succession, Tecpatl suddenly finds it difficult to follow the edicts of the dead ruler. With Atolli, his elder son and a very promising but hotheaded youth, getting caught in the political turmoil, everything changes. Tecpatl is forced to choose between his duty and his family, while his wife takes her own non-traditional paths to deal with the crisis.

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Customer Reviews

The Young Jaguar by Zoe Saadia is the first book in a pre-Aztec trilogy, and introduces us to Atolli, a teenager in the Tepenic Empire of Central America, whose father is Tecpatl, the Chief Warlord. Prior to the rise of the Aztec Empire, this Empire was strong and growing. Tecpatl's position is very high within the social structure and he is very content, having returned from a series of successful

wars, and he loves his family. His wife, Sakuna, followed Tecpatl home when he warred in her native land of the Anasazis, and theirs is a deep and respectful love that has withstood the criticism of the Tepenic elite. Atolli is a hot-headed daredevil, who climbs the walls of the palace with the skill and cunning of a jaguar, just for fun. The story begins when Atolli, his best friend Mecatli and some other adventurous boys from the warrior school that Atolli attends, roam the palace walls at night, drinking octli, a potent drink reserved for the warriors of the tribe. This is a serious transgression, but an adventure they have taken before. This time, they are discovered and chased and Atolli and Mecatli fall over the wall into one of the palace gardens. There they meet Chictli, the beautiful daughter of the second son of the Emperor, and Atolli is smitten. His position as Tecpatl's son saves him from serious punishment, but he has to vow to support Chictli's father in the future as one of his warriors. At the same time, the Emperor dies, making Tecpatl vow to support his first son as the new Emperor, thus putting him at odds not only with his son, but much of the Tepenic elite. Tecpatl is thus forced to choose between his duty to the new Emperor and his family, which ultimately puts them all in danger. Sakuna uses her skill with herbs and healing to deal with the crisis. I become completely immersed in Zoe Saadia's historical novels. The characters come alive; because of her detailed research on everything involved in tribal life - customs, food, clothing, jewelry - the reader feels like they are there, amidst the action. Family dynamics, especially in this book, are very recognizable, even though the tribal dynamics are complex. Zoe makes it clear that people haven't changed much over the centuries: they are greedy, power-hungry, loving, driven, devious, envious, bored and frustrated. These emotions fuel this story. I highly recommend this book to any lover of historical fiction but more widely to any reader who likes a barn burner of a story with great characters and lots of action. What's even better is that you can follow Atolli on his journey to adulthood through the next book in the series, *The Jaguar Warrior*.

I was so impressed with Zoe Saadia's "*At Road's End*", the first in the series belonging to *The Young Jaguar*, that I plunged right into the second book in the series. I wasn't disappointed. Zoe has a gift for moving a story along with just enough action, just enough emotion and just enough suspense to keep you greedily turning the pages. Great book, great author. A must read.

The complexity of the lives of the people who lived in early America is astounding. Family dynamics and the caste system is a strong part of the story. Historical information makes the novel seem to be a real peek into their world. I am anxious to read the next in the trilogy.

MARK'S REVIEW This is why I love reading Indie. Supporting authors who don't have the traditional support system makes me feel good, and I can get just as excited about an Indie book as I can with a traditionally published book. The plot, though not the most unique, comes alive because of the characters, specifically the three main characters. Another review mentioned that the characters weren't well fleshed out, but I totally disagree. Each of the characters, both major and minor, are unique. Their actions aren't all dictated by the same cookie-cutter, bland personality you find in some books. In fact, the actions and decisions of the three main characters, members of the same family, often kept me on the edge of my seat. Although it isn't absolutely necessary to understand what's going on, reading *At Road's End* before this one did help. Not only was I familiar with some of the characters, but I could see the growth of these characters. Comparing the two books, I will say that the characterization in this book is better than the first, though if you've read my review of the other book, you know I enjoyed that one as well. And one other thing that I like that some other reviewers turn their nose up at: the historical aspects aren't overwhelming. You get a taste for the time period without having to completely immerse yourself in it. I would classify this as light historical, so if you're a fan of detailed, extremely accurate historical novels, you may not find Zoe's writing all that interesting. And I say you're missing out, for I think I will eventually read everything that Zoe has published. She's definitely on my favorite author list.

I really enjoyed this book ... I've read several novels about the Aztecs, etc, but this one was of a more dominant culture and, although similar, there were some interesting notes ... It kept my interest and I look forward to reading the rest of the books in the series ...

Prior to the rise of the Aztec Empire, the Tepanec Empire was strong and growing. The Mayan domination to the south of the growing central Mexican tribal city states was being dissolved. Although fictional, the author has laid out a well written and believable historical look at the groundwork that led to the rise of the bloody Aztec Empire.

Great historical fiction. Am looking forward to reading more of this author, for stadia,s works . I will soon be an avid fan,based on this easy read

This was an interesting look at Pre-Aztec peoples through the family of a powerful war Lord and his immediate and extended family. Political intrigue seems to have been born with these Azcapolzalco people. Very entertaining and fast moving.

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