

Monday-Tuesday 18th-19th Jan 2021

Setting

The Jaguar Stones: Book One - Middleworld by J&P Voelkel

The streets were lined with wooden shacks. Their tin roofs were rusty. Their walls, once gaily painted, were cracked and stained. On nearly every corner was a dimly lit bar where men hunched over empty glasses. Old women in black sat in doorways, but none bothered to look up as the bus went past. Even the scrawny little dogs lay still, their heads on their paws, while flies buzzed halfheartedly around them.

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An old stone wall, topped by a walkway and fortified with crumbling guard posts, encircled the villa's grounds. Was that to keep predators out or to keep guests in? Max wondered.

From his second-floor vantage point, he could see over the wall from the bay on one side to the rainforest on the other. Faint animal sounds—whoops and cackles—floated over from the forest. Max scanned it for signs of wildlife, but the tops of the trees were packed tightly together like evil mutant broccoli and he could see nothing move in their impenetrable green depths.

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All was quiet.

Suddenly a flock of parrots exploded from the trees, shrieking and squawking, and three men burst out of the rainforest.

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What was he doing wrong? He'd jumped over the massive tree roots, sidestepped the boa constrictor sleeping in the leaf pile, bypassed the battalion of army ants, and outswum the hungry crocodiles that lurked under the surface of the river. He'd got everything right, but he still couldn't get past this level.

The Jaguar Stones: Book One - Middleworld by J&P Voelkel

Stars were twinkling in the jungle sky, and a big round moon was shining down. It reminded him of another

The Jaguar Stones: Book Two – The End of the World Club by J&P Voelkel

At first the noise seemed far away—a rumbling boom like a battering ram hitting a heavy oak door on some distant castle.

After a few seconds, there was another, closer boom.

Then one after another, the booms continued, growing louder and deeper, each one sending tremors through the floor and reverberating around the room.

All they could do was cover their ears as the thunder crashed and jagged fingers of lightning arched in every direction, illuminating the room with retina-burning flashes of white light.

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Character description

'Lord Asriel was a tall man with powerful shoulders, a fierce dark face, and eyes that seemed to flash and glitter with savage laughter. It was a face to be dominated by, or to fight: never a face to patronize or pity. All his movements were large and perfectly balanced, like those of a wild animal, and when he appeared in a room like this, he seemed a wild animal held in a cage too small for it.'

Northern Lights by Philip Pullman

'Behind Fed sat a girl and her little brother. They had the same slanted eyebrows and the same brown skin, the same long eyelashes. The girl had been shy, hugging her parents until the last possible moment at the airfield; now she was staring down at the water, singing under her breath, her brother trying to eat his seatbelt.'

The Explorer by Katherine Rundell

The animal on the branch let out a mew like a cat. It was grey-brown with a cream face, a dog-like snout and immense black eyes. Its arms were long and chicken-bone thin, ending in curved claws. It was small enough to cup in your hands.'

The Explorer by Katherine Rundell

'Harry managed not to shout out, but it was a close thing. The little creature on the bed had large, bat-like ears and bulging green eyes the size of tennis balls. Harry knew instantly that this was what had been watching him out of the garden hedge that morning.'

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets by J.K. Rowling