



BA'ALCHE'OB

MAGICAL TALES FROM MAYAN LANDS

TEXT BY EMILIO ÁNGEL LOME
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JUAN JOSÉ COLSA



EMILIO ÁNGEL LOME is a writer, composer and researcher of art and culture for children and young people. Graduated in Hispanic Language and Literature from the School of Philosophy and Literature of the UNAM, and has studied children's literature, philosophy for children and development of creativity at the Universidad Iberoamericana and theater at the INBA. He is certified as a coordinator of literary workshops by INBA and as a promoter of children's art and culture by CONACULTA. He has published more than fifty books in Mexico and Latin America. His songs for children and young people have been performed by Lila Downs, Susana Harp, La Maldita Vecindad, Bandula, Narimbo, Los Cojolites, Ernesto Anaya, Iraida Noriega, and others. He is the creator of the methodologies "Educating from cultural identity" and "Tale City" endorsed by the Ford Foundation and UNESCO. He is a pioneer in the dissemination and promotion of the history and culture of the indigenous peoples of Mexico among children, youth and educators through the integration of the arts.

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FROM MAYAN LANDS

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BA'ALCHE'OB

MAGICAL TALES FROM MAYAN LANDS

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Text: Emilio Ángel Lome Serrano

Illustration: Juan José Colsa Gómez

Translator: Varinia del Ángel Muñoz

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PRESENTATION

The stories found in this book, *Ba'Alche'Ob. Magical Tales from Mayan Lands*, are part of the **Árbol** collection; a series of books that the Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE, National Electoral Institute) offers to children with the goal of encouraging reading through topics related to citizenship and democratic values.

This publication is part of the Estrategia Nacional de Cultura Cívica 2017-2023 (National Strategy for Civic Culture 2017-2023), which seeks to strengthen our civic culture as well as to recognize that Mexico is a multicultural and diverse country. In this context, encouraging coexistence based on democratic principles is not only desirable, but necessary.

This volume offers children throughout the country the opportunity to learn about different cultural aspects of a region of our country, the southeast, heir to the Mayan culture. Mayan legends carry a cosmogonical worldview packed with wisdom. We have chosen to use fables because it is a literary genre that traditionally seeks to provide a lesson; and so, these stories offer lovely metaphors of how humans behave living in society, and in so doing, create citizenship.

This text, specifically aimed at children in lower elementary school, it is designed to celebrate that approximately one hundred years ago, in February 1917, Mexico's Constitution was signed, which is the highest law that governs us and regulates our interactions, that guarantees our rights and establishes our responsibilities as Mexicans. In this book, written by Emilio Ángel Lome and illustrated by Juan José Colsa, the animals of the Mayab will help us address the individual rights set down in Chapter I of the Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos (Political Constitution of the United Mexican States). These fables talk about the prohibition of slavery and discrimination based on race, religion or disability; the right of indigenous peoples to self-rule; the right to education; the right to fair working conditions; the right to freedom of speech and beliefs; and the right to travel freely throughout the country.

Parents and teachers will find in these stories a valuable tool to teach children about individual rights, consider their value and the need to uphold them in daily life. This book is, above all, an invitation to joyful reading, it is a journey through the Mayab, and from an educational point of view, a pleasant opportunity for children to learn about the fundamental content of our Mexican Constitution.

Aak

Why the Animals Respect and Protect Turtle

Human rights are imperative for every citizen, and our country has established guarantees to protect them. Therefore, it is forbidden to exercise slavery and discrimination based on race, religion, disability, a difference of opinion or any other cause that threatens the dignity and freedom of others.

It is said that when the world was new, Aak, the Turtle, was the most beautiful, fastest, and strongest animal in the Mayab. She was covered with brilliant, colorful feathers, long and powerful legs, and a sweet, musical voice that she used to sing when K'in, the Sun, rose on the horizon and again when he left to sleep.

In those ancient times, the night was completely dark. There was no Moon.

The animals suffered because of this, stumbling as they walked, crashing into one another; their lives were difficult in such darkness.

“Let us ask K'in to illuminate the night,” Turtle suggested.

And they did, but K'in, the Sun, paid no attention to them. He was always busy heating the Earth, and this is why he ignore this request.

Turtle invented a song for Sun, in which she explained the great need for light during the night.

K'in loved the song. Cheerfully and generously, he chose to respond to the animals' request.

“I will give you a drop of my saliva,” said Sun, in his warm, raspy voice. “You must take it and carry it until it cools. Only then you will be able to place it in the night sky.”

“I warn you, it is a difficult and dangerous task,” called Sun, shaking his curly mane as he disappeared over the horizon.

The animals spent many days planning how to accomplish such a complicated task. After much discussion, they accepted Turtle's idea. They selected solid, flat stones to create a giant slab. They tied it together with thick roots and spread the stickiest resin they could find on its surface to keep the drop of sun from slipping off and burning the plants.

“One of us will carry this slab on our back,” Turtle explained, “and will receive the drop of sun.”



“This animal will carry it on their back until the drop cools. The rest of us will take turns to blow on it. When it has cooled completely, the Bats of Darkness will take it up and place it in the sky.”

The plan was accepted enthusiastically, but nobody offered to carry that slab of stone. They were terrified of being burnt to death.

Turtle was the only one who agreed, not because she was brave, but because it was her plan and she firmly believed that it would succeed.

The day arrived. The animals climbed the highest and rockiest mountain. Turtle was waiting on the highest peak of this mountain. Upon her back she carried the sturdy contraption of stone, roots and resin.

Before leaving to rest, Sun bowed his shining face towards the Earth. He put out his long, yellow tongue and softly let a drop of his saliva drop upon the stone slab that Turtle carried.

This drop of sun was very heavy and burned like volcanic lava.

Aak, the turtle, struggled to walk, carrying this burning burden on her back.

The animals walked with her, taking turns to blow on the sundrop to cool it. They produced a constant breeze using their mouths, tails and ears. Birds created drafts by flapping their wings furiously. Turtle walked along dangerous and solitary paths to avoid setting fire to the green Mayab.

With such heat, Turtle’s feathers burnt off and her skin darkened.

Because of the great weight, her legs shortened, her feet became swollen, her pace became slower.

She cried so long and so loudly from the pain of her burns, that her voice began to vanish until it disappeared completely.

When night fell, the sundrop had completely cooled.

Turtle fainted at the edge of the Great River.

The animals threw water on her scorched and battered body that smelled of charred meat.

So much smoke rose up from her damp body that the Mayab was filled with a dark fog. The slab she carried became stuck to her body. She still carries and lives in it to this day.

The Bats of Darkness flew in to carry the drop of light into the night sky.

It was so bright that they became blind forever from the light it produced.

This giant drop of light, placed in the darkness, was called Uj... Moon.

This is why all animals respect Turtle and protect her at all costs.

Nobody cares that she is always late. Nobody makes fun of her clumsy movements.

Because thanks to her, Moon brightens the Mayab night.



Am

Why Mayan Women Weave Life

Our country is multicultural; it was born from the many indigenous peoples that live in our national territory, and who retain the right to meet their basic needs and exercise self-government.

Before the world was born, everything was surrounded by an immense darkness. It is told that Am, the great spider, used the thread of that dark material from the beginning of time to weave herself into being.

Am began to create everything in the world, spinning and weaving. That was why she had been born.

She had five days to finish her task. Otherwise, she and her creations would disappear forever into the silence of the universe.



She spun mountains, oceans, trees, clouds, and flowers; fish, birds, corn, butterflies, rivers, stars...

The more she spun, the smaller her body became. At dawn of the fifth day, the world was complete.

Am gazed upon her creations proudly. She was about to return to the darkness from whence she had come when a feeling stopped her.

“Something is missing in this world,” she thought, “but my time is running out. If I continue spinning I will disappear completely.”

“I still need to create those who will admire and protect the wonders of this world,” she told herself. “I must create the guardians of the earth.”

Her instinct for creation was greater than her fear, and so Am began to weave human beings. She fashioned them in great detail, giving them a variety of colors and shapes. She wove into them dreams and thoughts of a life where they had the right to meet their basic needs and freedom to choose their destiny.

When she was finished, Am was very small, as tiny as a seed.

Using her last bit of strength, she managed to bite a woman’s two hands before scurrying away to hide in a small hole in Mother Ceiba’s trunk.

Our ancestors in the Mayab tell us of how Am, the smallest of the weaving spiders, created the world in which we live.

They say that, in memory of this act, Mayan women weave into their *hipiles* images of mountains, birds, and clouds. They use their two hands to create representations of everything that is alive because, just like Am, the creator spider, women are the magical weavers of life.



Weech

How Armadillo Got Her Shell

Education is a right for all.

Weech, the armadillo, wanted to make herself an *hipil* to attend the spring dance: the big celebration where all the animals in the Mayab arrive wearing their fanciest clothes. Jaguar shows off new, shiny spots, Hummingbird displays colorful feathers, and Sun creates a new hairdo for his wild mane.

Weech wanted to wear a new *hipil*, but nobody wanted to teach her how to make it.

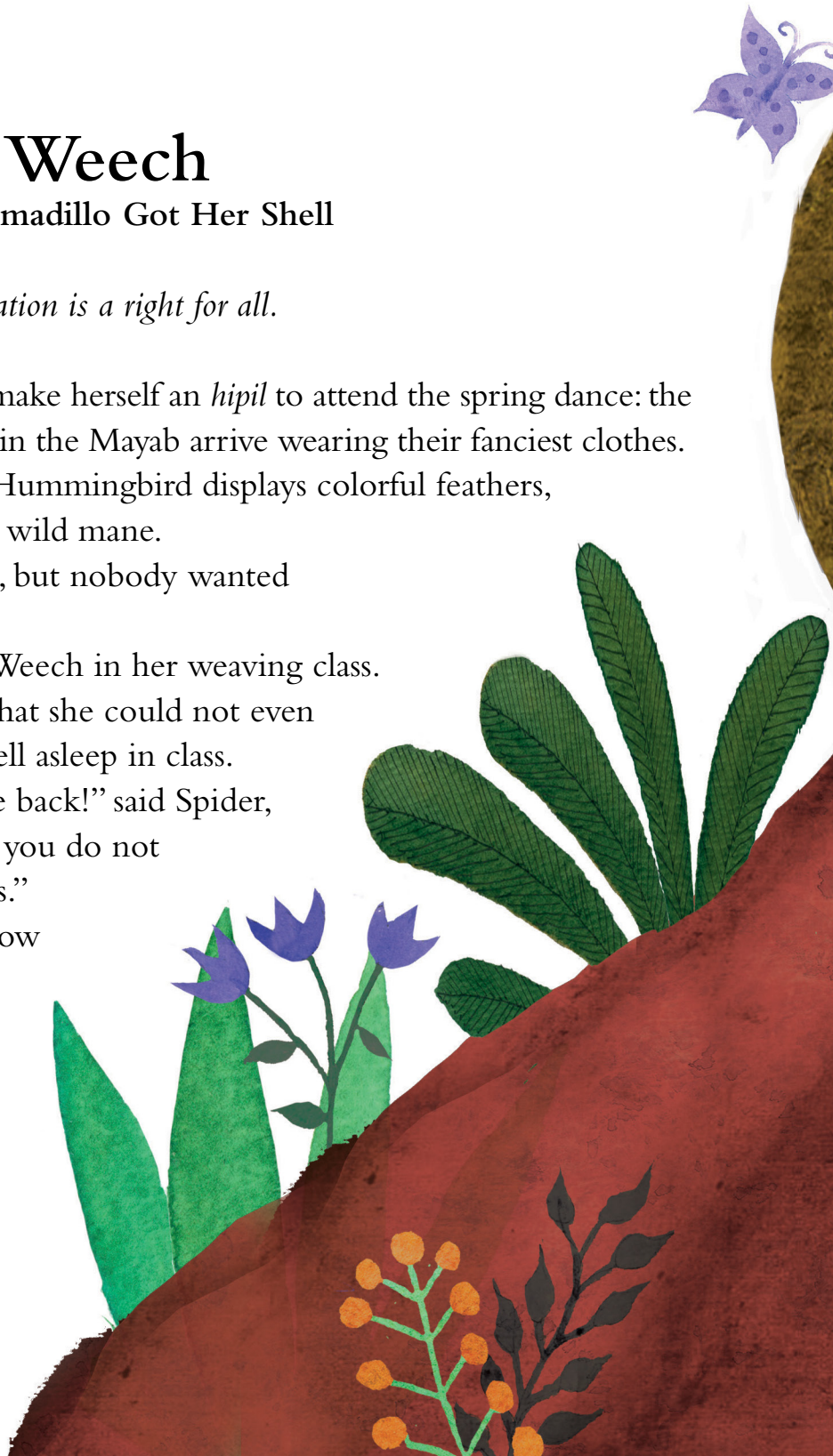
Am, the spider, no longer wanted Weech in her weaving class.

Armadillo had such clumsy paws that she could not even sew a simple stitch. And she always fell asleep in class.

“Get out of here, and do not come back!” said Spider, angrily. “You may only return when you do not interrupt my classes with your snores.”

Nobody wanted to teach Weech how to weave her *hipil*.

Sad and frustrated, Armadillo crawled under the trunk of Mother Ceiba, stuck her head out of the hole where she had hidden and began to wail, saying, “I want to learn to weeeeeave! Nobody wants to teach meeeeee!”





Her cries were louder than the screams of the monkeys, the roar of the jaguar, the thunder of the storm.

Day and night she cried, “I want to learn to weeeeeave! Nobody wants to teach meeeee!”

She cried so much and so long that the animals went to ask Báalam, the jaguar, Lord of the Mayab, to do something to make her quiet.

Jaguar tried to calm Weech down with kind words but she did not stop crying. He then tried to pull her out of her hiding place by digging under the ceiba tree, but Armadillo, still crying, kept digging further and further underground.

When her sense of smell told her that the large cat, tired of digging unsuccessfully, had left, she once again stuck her head out of the hole to cry, “I want to learn to weeeeeave! Nobody wants to teach meeeee!”

Báalam convened the counsel of animals inside a cave. Even inside that far-away cavern, you could still hear, “waaaaant...! Nobodyyyyy...!”

“It is the law in the Mayab that anyone who asks to learn must be taught,” said Jaguar. “My fellow animals, I ask those of you with the knowledge to teach Weech to weave her *hipil*.”

But nobody wanted to teach the stubborn and rowdy armadillo.

“Since you have decided to not obey the law,” growled Jaguar, “here is my decree: the spring dance is cancelled.”

When they heard this, the animals immediately organized themselves to help Weech.

Nucum, the worm, dug underground to tell her that the counsel had decided to help her fulfill her wish.

Spider taught her to embroider her *hipil*, Butterfly to choose the cloth, Hummingbird to combine colors, and Pheasant to wear it elegantly.

Pech, the tick, bit her every time she started to fall asleep.



And that is how Weech, the armadillo, wore her beautiful *hipil* for the first time at the spring dance. She liked it so much she never took it off again.

As time went by, the *hipil* became dirty with clay, pebbles, and moss; hardening until it became the scratchy shell it is today. If you look carefully, you can see both Spider's delicate weaving and the thick, clumsy stitches of that willful armadillo, Weech.



Ain

Why Nobody Believes Crocodile's Tears.

We all have the right to fair working conditions.

One day, Ain, the crocodile, got a huge bone stuck between his teeth.

Sprawled on the banks of the Great River, Ain cried out, large tears of pain spilling on the sandy bank.

Some birds that lived in the branches of a nearby ceiba came over to see what was happening.



“Help me!” begged Ain, “If you do, I will let you eat the leftover food stuck between my teeth every time I finish eating.”

The birds agreed, it seemed like a good deal to them. It was not easy to find food in those days, so, as a team, they managed to remove the large bone from Crocodile’s mouth.

After that, every time Ain finished eating, he would open his large mouth and the birds would come to eat the leftover food that had gotten stuck between the reptile’s sharp teeth.



It was a fair deal, but soon Ain began to take advantage of the birds. He made them do whatever he wanted, whenever he wanted.

The birds did not accept this. “This is not part of the deal we had with you,” they said.

“If you do not do what I say, I will go over to the tree where you have your nests and bang the trunk with my tail until your eggs and chicks fall to the ground. And then I’ll eat them,” threatened the enormous crocodile, showing them his sharp teeth.

The birds had no other choice than to do everything Ain asked them to. They were afraid that he would keep his word and eat their fledglings, so they sang to Ain, fanned him when it was hot, kept mosquitoes away, crooned lullabies as he slept, as well as cleaning his teeth after every meal.

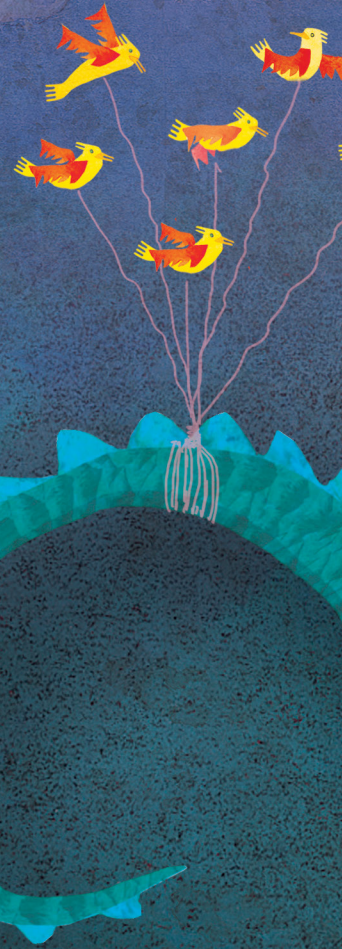
Desperate, the birds decided to put an end to this unfair situation and came up with a plan.

One afternoon, as Ain slept, they used thick tree roots to tie up his snout and body. Together, the hundreds of birds pulled Ain up and carried him over the Mayab.

As they flew through the air they asked him: “Are you going to stop taking advantage of us? Are you going to treat us fairly?”

Ain thrashed furiously at first, but knowing how far above the ground he was, he agreed to everything the birds asked of him.

After flying for a long time over the Mayab, Crocodile was returned to his den. A few feet from land, they dropped him into the river as though he were a heavy log.



Since then, Crocodile keeps his agreement with the birds who clean his teeth and feed upon his leftovers. He knows that if he does not, they may take him flying through the heights again.

Sometimes he throws a tantrum because he was not able to get away with what he wanted; so Ain starts crying on the banks of the Great River, but nobody in the Mayab pays any attention to him. They all know that they are only crocodile tears.






Moo'

How Macaw Became the Mayab Messenger

*We have the right to free speech and to be informed
about events that affect us all.*




Macaw talked all day, every day; she only talked about herself, she cared about no-one else.

“Please be quiet!” everyone implored.


“I have the right to speak,” she answered, annoyed.

This vain bird started to talk even more, now not only about herself, but about others.

“You are stuck up, a chatterbox, a gossip,” they told her, “arrogant, a nuisance, and a loudmouth.”







Nobody wanted to be near Macaw anymore. Every time she arrived, they left in silence.

Feeling rejected, the proud Macaw decided to keep her beak shut, she was finally quiet.

She spent a whole day flying in silence, and for the first time she heard stories and messages... and she listened carefully.

“I’ve never listened to anyone, gossiping and parroting on instead,” Macaw told herself, “and I want to change this.”

The next day she flew from one place to another, sharing the words she had finally listened to.

Upon hearing her, the other animals were entranced. They enjoyed listening to the stories as Macaw told them.

They began to seek her out to deliver their messages: stories, songs, and poems became her trade.

Today she spreads information throughout the Mayab; Macaw has become our messenger friend.





Eek'ob

Why Stars Gather in the Night Sky

*We have the right to assembly, to meet with others
if our purpose is within the law.*

One night Uj, the moon, felt very much alone in the high and dark sky, and she started to cry. Her tears splashed all over the night sky. And that is how stars were born.

Some of her tears fell towards earth and became Kokay'ob, fireflies.

Soot's, the bat, and his hungry clan were flying over the Mayab in search of food when they saw this sprinkling of shining drops fall to earth. Flapping, they quickly flew over, trying to swallow them before they could fall to the ground.

They loved their delicious flavor, and they were so hungry they decided to also eat the stars in the sky.

Since they were still hungry, they decided to eat Moon, as well. Bite after bite,



Just like every other night, Báalam, the jaguar, hunted, hidden by the night shadows. When he saw what was happening in the sky, he became so angry that his dark fur stood on end; in those times the jaguar was black from nose to tail.

The powerful Báalam decided to defend Moon; she was his best ally, without her company he couldn't continue to be the great night hunter that he was.

Springing over trees and rocks, he arrived at the cave where the bats lived.

“Stop eating the moon,” he roared, “or I won't let you back into your cave and the sun is approaching.”

Upon hearing this, the bats stopped nibbling at the heavenly body and quickly returned to their cave. Jaguar blocked their way, swiping at them with his claws and biting with his sharp teeth.

“Promise you will leave Moon alone, and I will let you in,” he warned them, panting and roaring as if going into battle.

Dawn was approaching. Bats cannot bear Sun's bright light, so they agreed.

Soot's and his clan promised to never eat Moon again. Báalam warned them, “If you do not respect this agreement, I will stop you from returning to your cave when you leave to look for food and you will be unprotected from Sun's rays.”

Because of this fight with the bats, Jaguar's fur became spotted with Moon's light. And it has remained so until this day.

Our Mayan ancestors say that Eek'o'ob, the stars, are the freckles of the sky, and they gather every night to tell stories to Uj, the moon.

And so, they keep her company as she travels through the sky, month after month, growing from a thin, silver slice to a round, shiny mirror.



Koj

How Puma Lost His Roar

We have the right to travel freely throughout the country.

It was to the distant forest of the great ceibas that Ke'ej, the last doe in the Mayab, fled.

She and the babies she carried in her womb were the only survivors of their species.

Koj, the hungry puma, ran after Doe; he was only one or two paces behind her.

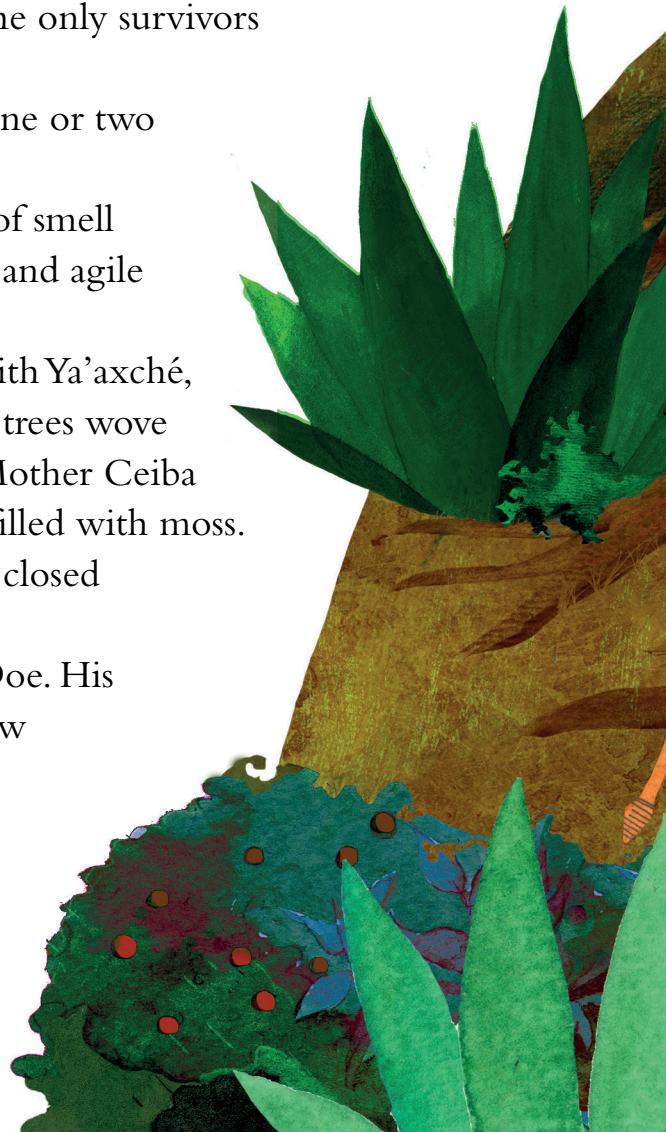
“She’s mine,” thought Koj. His hunter’s keen sense of smell savored the smell of fear and fresh meat that the swift and agile ruminant gave off.

Upon reaching a clearing, Doe came face to face with Ya’axché, the immense Mother Ceiba, around whom the other trees wove a closed wall. She had no escape. Then, surprisingly, Mother Ceiba opened her trunk like an enormous wooden mouth filled with moss. She opened it just in time for Ke’ej to slip in and she closed it immediately.

Puma gave one last desperate leap, trying to catch Doe. His attempt was futile. Furious, he began to growl and claw at the ceiba’s thick trunk with his sharp claws.

“Return my prey,” he demanded of the ceiba.
“It is my right as a hunter to eat that doe.”

But Mother Ceiba did not answer.





“Listen, everybody,” warned Puma in a fierce roar, “I hereby forbid anyone from crossing this territory. Nobody may cross the forest until Great Mother Ceiba gives me back that doe, and I will eat whoever disobeys.”

As all male cats do, Koj began to pee all over the forest, marking his territory.

With his fur standing on end, his mouth panting in hunger and anger, the rugged puma lay down on a tall boulder and began to lick his golden fur and keep watch.

Puma’s prohibition threatened the lives of all the animals.

The females understood what Mother Ceiba had done: protecting one’s young was the most important law in the Mayab. They also knew how much they would suffer from this prohibition.

“Ya’axché, Ya’axché, release that doe or all the animals of the forest will die,” begged Woodpecker, pecking at her branches.

But Mother Ceiba remained silent.

“Ya’axché, Ya’axché, give Puma his prey or all of us will die from hunger and thirst,” counseled Toucan, fluttering above her leafy crown.

And Mother Ceiba remained silent.


Days passed and no animal dared cross the forest.

Baj, the mole, desperate for food for her newborn pups, tried to outwit Koj’s order by creating underground passages.

The astute puma became aware of her attempt. He let Baj gain confidence, burrowing here and there. Then, pouncing, Koj grabbed her by her long, hairy tail.







Squealing in pain, Mole managed to escape into one of the holes she had dug, but her attractive tail remained in the puma's claws. This is why the mole only has a tiny bit of a tail.

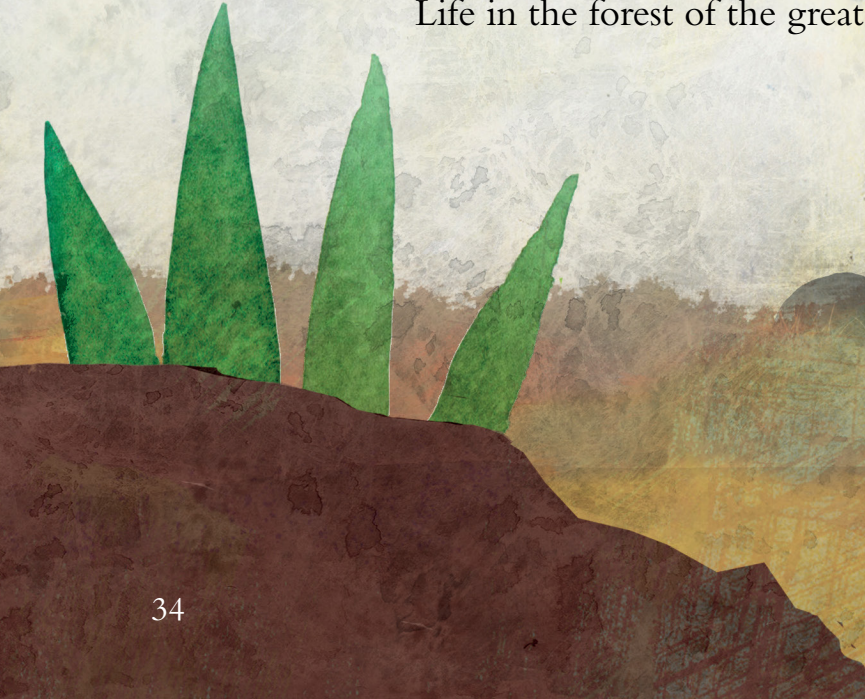
The furious puma again peed all over the land, saying, "I will destroy anyone who dares cross the forest." Hissing in anger, he directed a stream of urine on the ceiba's trunk, right where Sina'an, the scorpion, had just finished building her nest. Sina'an was about to give birth; she had spent a long time making her nest, so when she saw it being destroyed she was furious.

While Puma kept peeing at the foot of that enormous trunk, Sina'an dropped on him and stung one of his ears. When he felt the painful bite, Puma let out a roar that shook the whole forest. He leapt up, he dragged himself over the ground, he writhed among the plants. He let out so many roars of pain that he hurt his throat forever. That is why today pumas cannot roar, they can only purr.

Puma fled forever from those lands. When she learned he was far away, Mother Ceiba opened her trunk and Ke'ej leaped out, gracefully jumping for joy.

The animals once again travelled freely throughout their territory.

Life in the forest of the great ceibas returned to what it once was.



Baj fed her pups. Sina'an received help in rebuilding her nest. Ke'ej gave birth to twins, male and female. Thanks to them, their species was saved.

In the heart of that forest lives a great ceiba. The ceiba has many branches. In these branches there is a nest. In this nest there is a bird. In this bird there lives a dream. In this dream there is a forest. And in the heart of this forest there is a great ceiba who is dreaming.





Máas

How Grasshopper Taught Humans to Speak

We are free to profess any religious faith and beliefs we want.

When Am, the spider, spun life into the world, she also created human beings, but she did not spin their words.

It was Máas, the grasshopper, who gave words to men and women. He gave these to them so they would be better guardians of the earth, to give thanks for the things in life, to name their joys and sorrows.

Grasshopper gave them these words in their dreams.




For twenty nights, the first human couple dreamt of an ancestor the color of autumn; this was Grasshopper.

Night after night, Maás taught them each of the twenty songs that exist for everything that is alive. Songs of weaving, the road, corn, the mountains, birds, ancestors, the arts, planting, dawn, fire, the horizon, the departed, family, food, light, and play.

From Sun's awakening until his evening farewell, the human couple sang the words of that day's song.



The background of the page is a night scene. At the top, a dark blue sky is filled with numerous white stars of varying sizes. Below the sky, a large, gnarled tree trunk is visible on the left side. In the center, a bright campfire with orange and yellow flames is burning. To the right of the fire, there are dark green silhouettes of trees and bushes. In the foreground, a grasshopper with a green body and purple wings is perched on a dark rock. The overall lighting is dim, with the primary light source being the campfire.

Every night, old Grasshopper would come to them in their dreams and teach them the song they were meant to sing the following day.

That is why we, as Maya, continue to use our words to give thanks to everything that is alive. It is our way of talking with the world; we call them the “twenty prayers of life”.

There was a time we were not allowed to do so. Today we know that we are free to express our faith and our beliefs.

Every day we pray to this beautiful life, just as Máas, the grasshopper, does every night.



Baklam

The Song of the Manatee

It is the duty of all Mexicans to: encourage children to go to school, because they have a right to education; participate in the community's civic ceremonies; contribute to the expenses generated in organizing life as a community; respect the rules and laws that are established for peaceful coexistence.


Baklam, the manatee, sings to her calves every full moon.

When this happens, the whole Mayab listens carefully.

Manatee's song is learnt by all adult animals in Mayan lands. They memorize it to sing to their children on important days: births, anniversaries, celebrations of special achievements.

From her house of water and mangrove, gentle Manatee embroiders her song with moonlight:





You are air, water, land, and fire;
Your life is an everlasting joyful game.
Learn by listening to your heart;
Understand its beating, sing its song.
You have the right to exist and blossom,
never stop exploring and learning.
Live for yourself and live for others;
“I am”, but also “we are”.
Share, engage, contribute, cooperate;
Everything is given to those who expect nothing.
Respect every fair law without doubt,
Laws that the wise soul approves of.
Be the “In La Kech” that was never forgotten...
Remember: “I am you” and “you are me”.



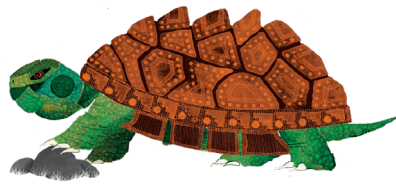
TO REFLECT
AND DISCUSS



INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

The Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos (Political Constitution of the United Mexican States) should matter to all of us because its rules affect the lives of each one of us. It is our supreme law and establishes the rights and responsibilities of all people in this country. Our Constitution is made up of 136 articles, and the First Title addresses the fundamental rights and responsibilities concerning to the freedom, safety, and equality of all Mexicans: our individual rights.

Although all of these rights are important, here we focus on those that Mexican children should know because they impact their daily lives, and will continue to be helpful in exercising their citizenship:



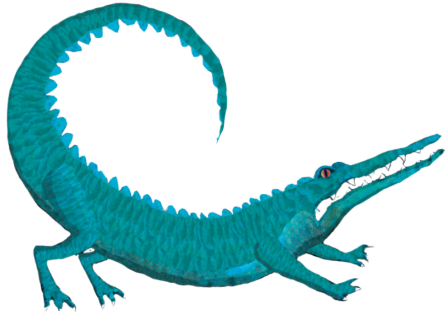
1. “Aak, Why the Animals Respect and Protect Turtle” talks about the importance of human rights, the prohibition of slavery and any kind of discrimination.



2. “Am, Why Mayan Women Weave Life” talks about the richness of living in a multicultural country, made up of many indigenous peoples.



3. “Weech, How Armadillo Got Her Shell” emphasizes one of the most important rights of all Mexicans: the right to education.



4. “Ain, Why Nobody Believes Crocodile’s Tears” illustrates that we all have the right to fair working conditions.



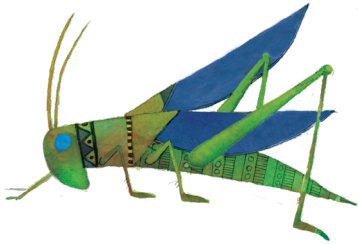
5. “Moo’, How Macaw Became the Mayab Messenger” shows our right to free speech and to be informed.



6. “Eek’o’ob, Why Stars Gather in the Night Sky” is a clear example of our right to assembly within the confines of the law.



7. Our right to travel freely throughout the country is narrated in “Koj, How Puma Lost His Roar”.



8. The right of Mexicans to freely express our beliefs and religious faith is talked about in “Máas, How Grasshopper Taught Humans to Speak”.



9. And, finally, “Baklam, The Song of the Manatee” emphasizes the responsibility all Mexicans have of ensuring that children go to school, of contributing to and organizing life in community, and of following the rules and laws that have been written to ensure peaceful coexistence.

It is very important to listen to the questions and opinions young readers may have, as well as the experiences they have had regarding their rights, both at school and in their community. We hope that children and their families enjoy this book and that it will contribute to their civic education.



BA'ALCHE'OB
MAGICAL TALES FROM MAYAN LANDS
The Bembo Std typeface was used.



JUAN JOSÉ COLSA was born in Mexico City. He studied architecture and postgraduate studies at the School of Architecture at UNAM, where he has also worked as a teacher. He has recently dedicated to editorial design and illustration of children's and youth books for several publishers (SM, Castillo, Porrúa, Norma, Planeta) and public institutions such as the SEP. He has participated in more than fifteen books as an illustrator and collaborates in UNAM's monthly popular science magazine *¿Cómo Ves?* He was included in the *Diccionario de ilustradores iberoamericanos* (CILELIJ 2013) and was a speaker at the IX International Congress on Designing for Humanity at the Anáhuac University. His graphic work has been exhibited both individually and collectively in several galleries.



Ba'Alche'Ob. Magical Tales from Mayan Lands, in a fun way, brings girls and boys closer to the individual guarantees established in the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, while narrating beautifully illustrated stories from the southeast of our country.

Topics on Constitution can be very broad and complicated for children. This work is part of the **Árbol** collection and provides elements so that the little ones can understand it and interact with their environment.

The last pages of this work include a section for adults so that they can reflect and dialogue with children about the concepts addressed, about their rights and obligations, and thus contribute to their civic culture.