Quetzal's Labyrinth

Readers' Guide

1. How does Diego change from the beginning of the story to the end. What brings about this change?

2. Early on, Diego is told he's part of a prophecy, a role he never asked for. How does being the "chosen one" make him feel? How would it make you feel?

3. There's a moment in the story when Diego stops doubting the myth and starts truly caring about saving the world. What makes this happen? What shows us that Diego is invested?

4. What is one choice a character made that you disagree with, and what would you have done instead?

5. Diego's victory came from more than just strength. What do you think helped him most?

6. Choose a moment in the story that made you feel something strongly. Why do you think it hits you that way?

7. What do you think was the central message or idea of the story? Describe a scene where you noticed it.

Questions written by Karla Arenas Valenti

Dear Teachers and Librarians,

This story is inspired by the rich and complex history of Aztec mythology. Like many oral traditions, these myths exist in multiple versions—varied, sometimes contradictory, and often changing across time and place. I do not claim historical or scholarly authority, nor am I attempting a definitive retelling of the Aztec creation story in this book. Rather, I've drawn from many interpretations, weaving together ideas, symbols, and anecdotes I found compelling to create a fictional narrative that stands on its own.

I believe there is a profound value in telling modern stories through the lens of ancient myths whose lore still informs our lives—tapping into timeless emotional truths. Writers like Rick Riordan have shown how ancient gods and epic quests can speak to contemporary readers, offering humor, heroism, and a sense of identity in a world that often feels unmoored.

In this way, myths are not just stories from the past. They are a living inheritance—a language for expressing pride and grief, memory and magic. Myths allow us to ask: What does it mean to be brave? To be chosen? To be part of something grander than ourselves?

And so, I offer this story in that tradition and invite you into a maze of wonder and feathery light, where the past finds its way to the present and hope finds a home in your heart.

Karla Arenas Valenti