



Children of Blood and Bone

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They killed my mother.

They took our magic.

They tried to bury us.

Now we rise.

Zélie Adebola remembers when the soil of Orïsha hummed with magic. Burners ignited flames, Tiders beckoned waves, and Zélie's Reaper mother summoned forth souls.

But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, maji were killed, leaving Zélie without a mother and her people without hope.

Now Zélie has one chance to bring back magic and strike against the monarchy. With the help of a rogue princess, Zélie must outwit and outrun the crown prince, who is hell-bent on eradicating magic for good.

Danger lurks in Orïsha, where snow leoponaires prowl and vengeful spirits wait in the waters. Yet the greatest danger may be Zélie herself as she struggles to control her powers and her growing feelings for an enemy.

Children of Blood and Bone Details

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Author : Tomi Adeyemi

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From Reader Review Children of Blood and Bone for online ebook

????? ? says

I didn't really like this book but no matter, it has served its purpose which was introducing me to Amari so thanks for that I guess.

It wasn't a terrible book, I am just a horrible hollow kind of indifferent towards it. My heart was itching for an *experience* that I just didn't get.

Ojo says

Mixed feelings, this one.

While it's a good book (for most YA fans), I found it far too typical, too clichéd, too predictable.

The book has spawned a lot of awesome reviews. For a debut novel, Tomi Adeyemi has actually done quite well. The writing style is especially good. But then, most of the good reviews garnered by this book are from Americans and Europeans, not Africans (especially Nigerians). She has the right idea, blending Yoruba mythology with regular YA. It's a great idea, but I must say (from a Nigerian POV), it's poorly, poorly done.

I was surprised to see that the book came with a map. Being a lover of maps, I was quite excited to see how the world-building would go. Alas, it turned out terribly sub-par. She tried uswd actual places in Nigeria as setting. While it's not a totally bad idea, the way she depicted the entire thing was thoroughly unsatisfying. A walled Lagos? Snow-capped mountains in Ibadan? A floating Ilorin? Really???

And then there's the naming system. While you white folks are probably raving about the story and all, it's us Yoruba people that'll shake our heads at how our dear language was properly murdered. I felt the names were totally inappropriate. Yoruba is unlike the shallow English Language. It is a language with a lot of empahasis on semantics. Everything has a meaning. Every meaning, every name is significant. Funmilayo Forest??? Really??? How is a forest supposed to give you joy??? Forests in Yoruba mythology are dark, forbidden places, typically evil in nature. We don't use 'wood' or 'jungle' to describe them in Nigeria. It's just not appropriate. They're called 'forest' because that's the closest word in the English Language that indicate a bit of their mytho-religious significance. Adetunji Sea? Really? In short, I felt the names didn't reflect the soul of what they were meant to represent. Mines of Calabrar? That's straight from Legend of the Seeker. She could've simply said Calabar. When Calabar is discussed, what comes to mind is the beautiful women and the delicious food. I don't think there are any mines in Calabar. Perhaps, a floating Calabar would've been more appropriate instead of a floating Ilorin.

The summary is that I felt Tomi tried to compress African setting and mytho-religion into the narrow confines of American YA. While the writing and the storyline are quite good, it's the world-building that's the problem. I'd score it a big zero and I'm sure any Nigerian who comes across this will definitely feel the same.

The book appeals to white folk because it's written to resemble American YA. The gods and goddesses of Yoruba traditional religion are not as nice, not as approachable and certainly darker.

The use of the Yoruba language in the books is pretty much unsatisfactory. Incantations are certainly not that literal. Real incantations are composed of a complex kind of poetry in mostly archaic Yoruba, a lot of figurative meanings, allusions and other indirect literary devices.

It's not a bad book altogether though. But it's not 100% African. It's a supposedly African book that closely mirrors American YA. Maybe 5% African. The soul of the entire thing is certainly not African, and definitely not Yoruba.

If you're looking for an enjoyable YA read with sweet characters, then this book is for you. But if you're Nigerian and you're hoping to find something of our culture in this, chances are you'd be disappointed.

I'm focusing on the poorer side of this read because I'm Yoruba, and I was excited to see some proper employment of Yoruba mythology in fantasy writing. Hopefully the next book in the series will come with big improvements in the world-building because I'm certainly going to read it.

Thumbs up to the author nonetheless.

Catriona (LittleBookOwl) says

Full review to come!

In the meantime - THIS WAS AMAZING. Each of the characters goes on their own intriguing journeys throughout the story, and I enjoyed going along for the ride so much. The setting, magic, and characters were so vibrant and full of life.

I need the sequel, and I don't know what to do without it D:

Review copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Tomi Adeyemi says

You'll like this book. I'm biased, but I need to meet my goodreads challenge so I'm marking this as read.

Melanie says

ARC provided by the publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Buddy read with Adri! ?

(And my favorite BookTube reviews: Frankie's, Tati's, & Lauren's!)

“You crushed us to build your monarchy on the backs of our blood and bone. Your mistake

wasn't keeping us alive. It was thinking we'd never fight back!"

Children of Blood and Bone is worth every ounce of hype and praise it has received thus far, and I only anticipate it to receive more and more, especially since you're all about to read a gush review for it. The world is amazing, the characters are so real feeling, the writing is perfect, the action is abundant, the romances are beautiful, the topics are important. This was such a fantastic read, and even though it is only late January, I have no doubts that *Children of Blood and Bone* will make my best of 2018 list, and I wouldn't be surprised if it even takes the number one spot come December 31st. I'm also honored to say that this is the very first book I've given five stars to in 2018.

In this world of Orïsha, magic used to thrive and be celebrated. Our main protagonist, Zélie, remembers this time and what a powerful Divîner her mother was. But she also remembers the way her mother's body looked, when it was left on display the day that magic died.

"I think about the way her corpse hung from that tree. I think about the king who took her away."

Now, the king of Orïsha wants to make sure magic is kept dead, while also keeping all the Divîners that live in Orïsha oppressed. The king ensures that the Divîners are reminded they are lesser, in hopes that they will forget how powerful they once were, along with everyone else. And this has worked, for the last eleven years, that is until a powerful artifact is found and if it is combined with a couple other powerful artifacts it can bring magic back to Orïsha once and for all.

When a Maji is born with white hair, it is a sign that they are touched by the Gods, so they are called Divîners. And back before magic disappeared, when a Divîner turned thirteen, they would develop what kind of power they had from whatever God had touched them. The powers range from healing, to taming animals, to wielding light, to controlling time, to making fire, to calling water, to controlling people's minds and dreams, to even more things! They were very powerful, and the ordinary people didn't like them being that powerful, so they had to shut them down and keep them down.

"No matter how much I crave peace, the gods have other plans."

This story truly focuses on two sets of siblings. One set is Zélie and her brother Tzain, who are currently living in Eloirin, which is surrounded by water, with their father. Yet, the people in Eloirin are forced to pay a Divîner tax, and the prince keeps raising them higher and higher. And if you can't pay it, then you are forced to perform hard labor (or other worse things) until your debt is paid off. But that's the thing, you'll just accumulate more and more debt, and you will never be free again. You will die a slave. And Zélie's family is unsure how they are going to afford to pay the tax for her, so they are forced to go to the city of Lagose to trade. Then, Zélie and Tzain's story mixes with the other sibling's story by pure fate of the Gods.

Amari is the daughter of the king that has done everything to destroy magic. Yet, this princess is nothing like her tyrant of a father. And once her father does something completely unthinkable and totally heartless, Amari flees her royal life once and for all.

Inan is the king in waiting and Amari's older brother. He is probably the most interesting character in this

book, because he constantly is struggling between what he wants to be and what has always been forced upon him. And he is tasked to bring Amari back to their king of a father, by whatever means necessary. Then, these four young adults, from very different upbringings, come together to change the fate of Orisha forever.

“They built this world for you, built it to love you. They never cursed at you in the streets, never broke down the doors of your home. They didn’t drag your mother by her neck and hang her for the whole world to see.”

This story is truly unforgettable, and I loved it more than any words I can string together to form a review. The world building is expertly done, and perfectly interwoven through the story. The magic system is so unique and was an absolute joy to learn and read about. Zélie is everything I want in a main protagonist, and her castmates are nothing short of amazing, too. This book was everything I’ve ever wanted from the fantasy genre.

The writing in this is so very lyrical. I was completely blown away by the magnificent prose. This story is just told so beautifully, I think it would be hard not to fall in love with it. And I want to emphasize that romance is never at the forefront of this story, but some of the one liners that Tomi Adeyemi gave me were truly some of the most romantic lines I’ve ever read. I can’t believe this is her debut novel. Please, just give her all the awards now, because her writing is truly on another level.

“You have your duty and your heart. To choose one means the other must suffer.”

And the messages and parallels to our world, from systemic racism, to prison systems, to so much more, are so very important. I know this is a YA high fantasy novel, but I hope people can’t miss the similarities to the very society we are living in today.

And every single character in this book is beautifully black. Yet, the author does such a wonderful job touching on how people perceive darker skinned individuals to lighter skinned individuals in this world. In this world, the royals want to look as light as possible. Even going as far as to make sure their skin is always powdered, and it is shunned to spend too much time outside where you could become darker. Yet, this young girl, Zélie, with the darkest skin, living in poverty and dealing with the brutal murder of her mother, could be the most powerful person in Orisha, yet she is viewed as nothing more than a racial slur. This book is powerful, eye opening, and I hope you all take more out of it besides it being an amazing, five starred story.

“I won’t let your ignorance silence my pain.”

This book was a masterpiece. Again, I know with my whole soul that this book will make my best of 2018 list without question. I loved this book with the sum of my being and I know it is going to make so many other’s lists, too. Tomi Adeyemi will forever and always be an auto-buy author for me, because this is maybe the strongest debut novel I have ever read in my entire life. Perfection.

Trigger/Content warnings for attempted rape, physical abuse, death, gore, murder, torture, war themes, and similar things in that vein.

“The truth cuts like the sharpest knife I’ve ever known. No matter what I do, I will always be afraid.”

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The quotes above were taken from an ARC and are subject to change upon publication.

Emily (Books with Emily Fox) says

THE HYPE IS REAL!

I always prefer to decide for myself if the new overhyped YA book is worth it... and I'm happy to say that this new Fantasy book totally was!

I loved the magic system, the world, the characters and cannot wait for the next book!

My only complain is with the romance. I hate romance. I hate how everyone needs to be paired up especially in YA and how cheesy it is. I kinda wish this series was adult instead but if you're looking for a book you'll fly through I totally recommend this one!

Will impatiently wait for book #2!

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

Gah! I was just talking about how I hoped I get my poster for the book and it came and it's freaking awesome! ♥

I loved this book so much! ♥?

This book is everything and I have a new favorite author =)

I try not to think of her.

But when I do, I think of rice.

When Mama was around, the hut always smelled of jollof rice.

I think about the way her dark skin glowed like the summer sun, the way her smile made Baba come alive. The way her white hair fuzzed and coiled, an untamed crown that breathed and thrived.

I hear the myths that she would tell me at night. Tzain's laughter when they played agbon in the park.

Baba's cries as the soldiers wrapped a chain around her neck. Her screams as they dragged her into the dark.

The incantations that spewed from her mouth like lava.

The magic of death that led her astray.

I think about the way her corpse hung from that tree.

I think about the king that took her away.

I love Zelig so much and I also love Amari and Zelig's brother Tzain and Nailah < -- I'm not telling you what she is => I eventually fell in love with Inan too. And there are a lot of minor characters that were awesome!

I love this whole story line. I love that Zelig and Amari are two very tough women who should be enemies but become friends. I love, love, love everything!

Amari and Inan's father is the evil king. He killed magic so to speak a long time ago. I hate him so much and I'm so glad that Amari came to see his evilness first hand. He wants to keep the Diviner's down and treats them unfairly. This is what Zelig and her family are and some are a little bit more.

The little group of Zelig, Amari, Tzain and Nailah set out to try to bring magic back. And you can imagine all kinds of things happen during their journey.

I had so many feels during this book and I think everyone that loves fantasy should give it a try because it's like nothing I have read and it's awesome! *Sings praises*

It's his blood.

It's him.

The ultimate sacrifice.

The greatest blood magic I could wield.

"Kill her!"

The first two guards charge at me, swords pointed and raised. They run with a vengeance.

The last mistake they will ever make.

We are all children of blood and bone.

All instruments of vengeance and virtue.

This truth holds me close, rocking me like a child in its mother's arms.

It binds me in its love as death swallows me into its grasp.

This is just the beginning, lovelies =)

I can't wait for the next book!

Happy Reading!

Mel ♥

MY BLOG: [Melissa Martin's Reading List](#)

AMAZON: [REVIEW](#)

Emma Giordano says

5 STARS! This is genuinely the greatest debut fantasy novel, greatest fantasy novel in general that I have read in a very long time. Initially, I was TERRIFIED to read *Children of Blood and Bone*. The combination of it's size and an epic high fantasy novel was very daunting to me, but I am so happy I picked it up. I cannot possibly recommend it enough.

The writing was fantastic. Despite being such a large novel, the pacing was well-done, where I felt I was flying through the novel much quicker than many other long fantasy novels. Adeyemi has a beautiful prose that compliments such a vibrant world and mystical magic system. All elements of Orisha were flawlessly executed – the history, the divide among maji/diviners vs. nobles, the different types of magic, ALL OF IT. I'm totally infatuated with this world and cannot wait to see it expand in following novels.

I really loved the characters in this story. Zelig is such a fierce warrior. I loved watching her strength grow, but also still preserving some of her innocence and vulnerability. I feel that she is such a wonderful protagonist that so many will fall in love with. Amari is another character I LOVE. Her character transformation was really well done. It was so nice to see a girl start out meek and afraid but slowly grow into herself and become more comfortable in a group of people totally different from her. I also find the friendship that develops between Zelig and Amari to be so sweet. They are so different and would not get along at an eye's glance, but I enjoyed watching them grow to support each other. Inan is a character I also loved, but I did have some issues with. I loved him as the vengeful prince out to prevent Zelig and Amari from bringing magic back. he was a GREAT villain to follow from the beginning with a ton of layers, and it was especially cool to follow the antagonist's perspective for once in YA. But as the story progresses and the characters go through new things, I found his characterization to be a bit off-putting. Inan is a very intense character to begin with and his changes are equally drastic. To keep it spoiler-free, there were some times where I felt his feelings and reactions just didn't make sense and flipped around a lot. I do still love him as much as the others, and I am definitely anticipating seeing more from this epic cast in the future.

There is so much action in this story. There are endless chase scenes, epic battles using swords, staffs, bows, and different kinds of magic. There are unexpected twists and turns and just so much intensity. The plot is wonderfully constructed with so much to enjoy. *Children of Blood and Bone* will totally keep you on the edge of your seat the entire time while reading - but you won't be able to *completely* predict what's coming next.

I'm completely obsessed with *Children of Blood and Bone*. My favorite new-to-me start to a fantasy saga. Surely, one of my favorites of the year. This book has gotten so much hype even before it's publication, and it is totally deserving of every ounce of it.

Nenia ? Queen of Literary Trash, Protector of Out-of-Print Gems, Khaleesi of Bodice Rippers, Mother of Smut, the Unrepentant, Breaker of Convention ? Campbell says

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WELP. Looks like this book is joining THRONE OF GLASS on the books-that-made-me-lose-friends shelf.

Note: I'm going to start blocking people who come onto this review to tell me that I have read or reviewed it incorrectly. I tried it, I didn't like it, I wrote about my feelings. What do you want? A five-star review? Write your own. ?

After reading some of the five-star reviews for this book, I'm reevaluating how much I trust some of my friends. This was a *terrible* book. I don't think I've been this disappointed since picking up FLAME IN THE MIST or THRONE OF GLASS. What the hell were you guys reading? Is there a "good" version and a "shitty" version? What happened?

I specifically *chose* to read CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE after AMERICANAH because I thought they would complement each other well and lead to some interesting parallels that I could discuss in my review. AMERICANAH is a book that discusses the racial and cultural issues of real-life Nigeria, and CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE is a book that discusses racial and cultural issues of a fantasy-inspired country *based* on Nigeria. I *loved* AMERICANAH and I was so sure that I would love CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE because it's exactly what so many readers have been asking for: Diverse Fantasy!

CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE is a fantasy novel inspired by Nigerian mythology, specifically focusing on the Orisha. In this world, magic is forbidden and those who are descended from the maji are called "maggots" and systematically oppressed, if not killed outright. It's narrated by three characters, Zelig, who is a maji and a target of these genocidal tactics employed by their ruler, and also Inan and his sister, whose name I can't remember, who are the children of the evil king, but also maji, so uh-oh, nobody better find out or anything because that would be awkward.

Zelig runs away, accompanied by that sister, and Inan hunts them down while fighting his unwanted (of course) attraction to her. Because he can see her in *dreams*. *eye roll* All the people saying this book is

action-packed must either never read *good* fantasy, are reading a completely different edition from mine, or are lying outright, because this was the LONGEST 500-something pages I've ever read BECAUSE IT'S SO SLOW-PACED, OMG. I didn't care about any of the characters. When the climax happens, we're supposed to be *so worried* for poor Zelig, but I didn't care because her voice is completely interchangeable with the other two. Characters appear whenever it's convenient for the plot, and there's a romance thrown in haphazardly because what's a YA without mediocre romance?

Because that's what this is. Just another generic fantasy story with cardboard cut-out characters and a tepid romance that lacks chemistry. The only thing that sets it apart is the setting and mythology.

I want to close with these thoughts. I get why so many people are excited about this book. It's thrilling to read books about people who are like you and have a narrative that you identify with. I emphasized that (more nicely) in my review of TYLER JOHNSON WAS HERE. Even if I thought it was a bad book, I can appreciate the meaning and importance it has for people who are seeking out those stories. Fantasy novels are notorious for having bad rep, and when you *do* see characters of color, they often fit neatly under the cringe-worthy Magical Negro umbrella, which is not cool. That's a huge reason behind why I was so ready to embrace this book: I want those diverse stories too. Stories that give a new perspective and delve into territories that aren't explored nearly enough.

However, I have seen people on Tumblr and Goodreads posting status updates about how they don't think people should be allowed to write negative reviews for diverse books because the intentions of the author supersede the quality of the writing itself. I am 100% NOT OKAY with that, and here's why: if you do that, you're going to create a culture of mediocrity, where people will feel comfortable churning out poor-quality books while using diversity the way you might use a checklist. I'm not saying that TYLER JOHNSON and CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE fall into that category, but by shutting down valid criticism and enabling poor story-telling, this is going to be a problem.

Part of me kind of wondered if the publication of CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE may have been rushed so the release date coincided with that of *Black Panther*. That could explain some of the problems. I wondered the same thing about CARVE THE MARK (a book that was seemingly inspired by Star Wars) and the closeness of its release date to *Rogue One*. For reference, CARVE THE MARK was published January 17, 2017 and *Rogue One* was released on December 10, 2016. Likewise, *Black Panther* came out on February 16, 2018 and CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE was published on March 6, 2018. From a marketing perspective, it's a brilliant move, but a rushed release date could explain some of the pacing issues and the not-so-great writing.

I apologize if this seems harsh, but I am a book blogger who has *always* tried to be 100% honest even if that opinion is not popular. I have had people tell me that they will or won't buy books based on my reviews because they know I won't deceive them or sugar-coat. I rate on a purely entertainment-based rubric and

don't take things like literary merit or the author's intentions into account. CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE had wonderful intentions... but I thought it was a really sloppy, generic fantasy novel, and I am rating it as such. Maybe you'll get the "good" version everyone's raving about. ;-)

1 star

Emily May says

“No matter how much I crave peace, the gods have other plans.”

4 1/2 stars. Wow, I have had quite a week. I started Children of Blood and Bone last Thursday as I was going into labour (because, why not?). Normally, I would devour a book like this in a day or two, but those of you with kids will know that's just not going to happen with a newborn.

Instead, this book rode with me through the hospital stay, sleepless nights, and postpartum weepies. It kept my eyes open on those long, long nights. It picked me up and threw me into another world of action and magic right when I needed it. All I can say is: Thank you, Ms Adeyemi.

Oh okay, that's not *all* I can say. Though hopefully I don't sound too delirious.

Children of Blood and Bone is a West-African inspired fantasy set in the fictional land of Orïsha. It takes all the best bits of YA fantasy - princesses, tormented soldiers, the battle to restore magic vs suppress it - and does something completely new with these familiar elements. At its core, it's an **action-packed, fast-paced adventure** to restore magic to the world and complete a ritual before the approaching solstice is over and magic is lost forever.

Beneath that, though, there are many darker themes. **The plot is intense and steeped in racially-charged violence.** Adeyemi draws many parallels with our own world, forcing the reader to pause and consider systemic racism and injustice in prison systems. And Zélie remembers the genocide executed on King Saran's orders all too well. The "Raid", as it is known, took her mother from her. Now, Zélie is a divîner - a maji without magic, though her abilities lie dormant, waiting for the missing scroll that can return her power.

The book is told from alternating perspectives. One is Zélie, another is Princess Amari who Zélie reluctantly saves from the King's men, and the third is Amara's brother, Inan, who is sent to chase down and stop his sister and Zélie. With complex characters who naturally change and grow as the story progresses, I was hooked. I cared what happened to all three of them. There was never a boring moment.

It is always risky to step into a book as hyped as this one, but I, for one, think it very much deserves it. A compelling, exciting plot, a completely non-white cast of characters, AND a thoughtful consideration of race, skin colour, and prejudice... impressive, to say the least. Though that cliffhanger is EVIL. How will we cope until the next book?

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Roxane says

This was a gripping read. The world building here is phenomenal. The main characters are richly drawn and I was invested in each of their struggles. This book is very action packed. So much is happening! The ending is such a cliffhanger and I want to know what's next. This is well worth reading and such a strong debut. Tzarín could be more developed. Who is he beyond his sister's protector? At times the story felt overly dramatic. Zélie and Inan were deep in their feelings all the time and it became frustrating. Like calm down teens. Get ahold of yourselves! Amari is the only one with any sense. They should just listen to her tbh.

Hailey (Hailey in Bookland) says

4.5*

I'm definitely going to have to reread this, but the audiobook was an awesome introduction to this story!

Lola says

I want to join Zélie and Amari's squad badly.

When you're a university student, it's very hard to finish a 500-page book in less than two days and not be five assignments behind, especially this close to the end of the semester.

But here we are, with me still alive and breathing and on track, as impossible as this may seem. I have to thank the author for making this a fast-paced story that does not include a guessing game in every new chapter – otherwise I wouldn't have been able to read this one on the bus and between classes.

Surprisingly enough, *Children of Blood and Bone* is one of those impressive stories that the more you read, the more important it becomes to you. It's also one that has an intense progression, so much that when you look back at the first chapter, it's as though you are in another story entirely.

This also means that the characters warm up to you gradually – they are not ones that you can automatically imagine yourself being best friends with. Even now, I admire Zélie and Amari profoundly, but I do wonder what we would talk about in real life, seeing that the girls' minds are almost entirely on the issues to be solved. They do not discuss trivial matters, between themselves or with other characters, thus contributing to the sober atmosphere of the tale. But if I were in this world, I would do everything in my means to be part of their group. Together, they can truly move mountains.

The writing does, however, pull you in in a matter of seconds. It's very focused on describing the actions and emotions of the protagonists from the first person point of view but without overdramatizing the situation. Getting inside the characters' heads is important because they not only have to deal with external battles, they must extinguish internal ones, too, at times.

And since you're dying to know why I dared take off a star, it's simple enough: The magic in this world disappeared eleven years ago. I didn't think it would make a difference if it disappeared a year ago or a

hundred years ago, but the protagonists remembering what it was like to have magic made me feel like I wasn't one hundred percent in sync with them. Not only that, but it would have been more powerful if Zélie had discovered magic after centuries of not having it around.

But it really is an astounding debut novel. After that ending, I am all the more intrigued to see where this series goes.

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***?Nani*? says**

An oversimplified extra-tropey YA on steroids.

Hmm, where does one begin?

Sooo, does the book that made headlines well before it was even published live up to its hype? It truly saddens me to say this but unfortunately, no. It absolutely does not and I'm pretty certain I'm in the minority.

At its core, this book was supposed to be about Institutional racism and oppression so I loved the message it was trying to relay but I hated the execution. What could have been an epic fantasy was ruined by its poor writing, immature characters, repetitive and cringy passages and incredibly inconsistent pacing. In fact, the longer time passes and the more I think about it, the angrier I get.

I loved the west African setting and the overall point of the story, had it been written in a manner that had depth to it would've touched a chord with me. Explorations of social power, the deft portrayal of racial tensions and persecution, the prejudice and structural inequalities that resonate with our own world/time, all of which should have been enough for me to give this all the star rating in the world but I had so many other issues with it that I found too hard to overlook.

Let's put aside the overly recycled plot and start with my three biggest problems: the romance, the magic system and the characters.

- The magic wasn't as firmly defined as I would've liked and there were so many inconsistencies and discrepancies there.

It was written as if I was expected to know everything as to the machinations without any explanations whatsoever. None. Just throw in some elemental magic BS and voilà. Call it a day.

- The characters, however... oh, the characters. The gift that kept on giving. On and on and on for over 500 pages. ????

Probably the biggest downfall of this novel (and there are many). They're so painfully bad they're in the league of their own badness.

Save for Tzain, Zalie's brother, I didn't like any of them, or I did at the start and all went downhill toward the end. So many of their childish and immature actions kept pulling me out of the story and at a certain point it became too hard to enjoy the book for what it was, especially where Zélie was concerned. I mean, how immature and STUPID could a 16/17 year-old be?

And that sentence she kept repeating: *'I let out a breath I didn't know I was holding.'* I just... how do I even express my rage??

I hated the romance. I HATED IT. It was incredibly unnecessary, overly contrived and it blossomed literally in a matter of hours.....HOURS, people.

It wasn't just that it was the definition of insta-love, it was also... so uncomfortable to read about and I found myself continually fuming at what I was reading, screaming at the book: how do you not... how does this not....!! (spoilers). Not to mention cringing at every turn.

Inan, though his POV was my favourite out of the three, his character was aggravating to say the least. His indecisiveness, his murky sense of logic and the way he'd decide on one thing then change his mind literally the next page (over and over and over again) was....oh so tiring.

Overall, his state of change was too abrupt to be believable and very, you guessed it, inconsistent.

Yet another problem I had was Amari's unnecessary chapters. She spends the vast majority of the book accompanying Zélie, therefore making her chapters so overly repetitive.

The two narrating characters were restating their motivations and rehashing events that happened just pages before.

I love multi-perspective fantasy books but a multiple narrators technique only works well when characters are in different places or doing very different things and TELLING US DIFFERENT THINGS.

And last but certainly not least, the ending. I mean, what the bloody f was that? Obviously I can't go into details so as not to spoil anything but to say I was extremely aggravated at the events that lead up to the ending would be a gross understatement.

It felt like certain things that a certain character did were so irritatingly and utterly dumb and completely out of left field that one could literally sum up the entire ending with: THE FUCK!? THIS!? THIS IS THE EPIC CONCLUSION WITH WHICH ONE IS REWARDED AFTER ENDURING A GRUELLING 500+ PAGES OF HORNY, TEMPERAMENTAL TEENAGERS?? ?

Not to mention you could tell from a mile away that everything was done for no other reason than a simple shock value which, by the way, wasn't even that shocking since it was too busy being so embarrassingly stupid.

Couldn't there have been a better way? None at all??

All in all, honestly, I don't even know. I'm no stranger to failed expectations when it comes to overly hyped books but the sting of this particular disappointment... ah, what's the point. I'm out.

Buddy read with Yusra?

C.G. Drews says

Children of Blood And Bone is such a rich and excellently built fantasy world my opinion is just:

WOW. I also feel like this book is most definitely mega-hyped but worth it, ohhh so worth it. The writing is stunning, but we just need to all sit down in a bucket and admire the world building. And the characters go from headstrong-little-stubborn-darlings-making-bad-decisions to headstrong-little-stubborn-darlings-making-bad-decisions-BUT-WITH-MAGIC-AND-EMOTIONS which is excellent development.

So the world building was definitely masterpiece here for me. I always get so disgruntled when fantasies presented half-baked worlds. NOT HERE. I also think it did a great job building the world as you go instead of info-dumps. Although there are a lot of characters (and I mean, like MORE THAN 3 which is intense omg

hold me) so it took me a long time to get everyone straight. But this is coming from someone who also can't remember their siblings names. So.

It actually has 3 POVs! We have **Zélie, Amari, and Inan**...and then are FABULOUS. **Zélie** is the headstrong magical child who was my absolute FAVOURITE for her character development, badassery, and raw emotion. **Amari** is the naive princess who ends up being super fierce. (Also she and Zélie fight a LOT because they're enemies at the beginning...BUT THEN THEIR FRIENDSHIP IS SO POWERFUL AND EXCELLENT.) And **Inan** is the misguided prince who spends the whole book being an ass but then I felt bad for him. SO. INAN.

And the plot is all action and finding magical objects and running for your freaking life. As it should be in a fantasy. Basically these troubled threesome (along with Zélie's brother Tzain) are trying to bring magic back but they're also messy teens who make mistakes and I loved watching them grow!

OTHER THINGS TO LOVE

- epic female friendship that is actual goals
- the ending was an absolute riot of a ride
- mY heART GOT LOST WOW
- character development is A+
- lots of emphasis on glorious hair which is what I'm here for
- no one is ever what they seem
- slightly absolute dire need for the next book has hit me

Definitely one to keep your eyeballs on, people! It's a not-to-be-missed epic fantasy.

(Also I'm interviewing the author and giving away a copy of the book here!!)
