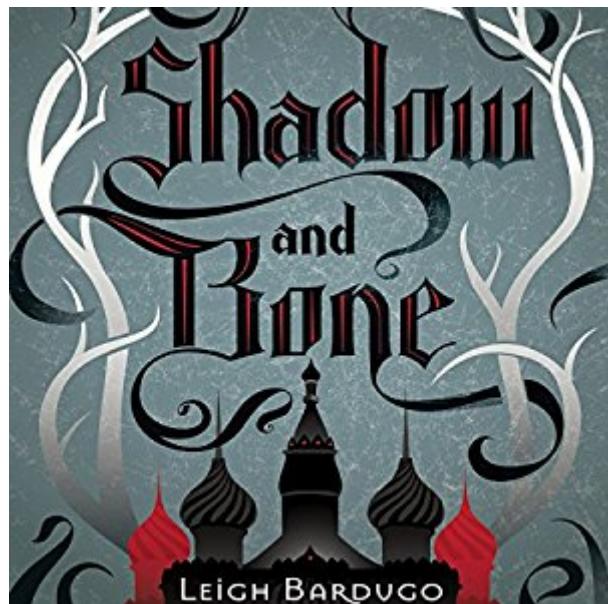


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# Shadow And Bone



## **Synopsis**

Surrounded by enemies, the once-great nation of Ravka has been torn in two by the Shadow Fold, a swath of near impenetrable darkness crawling with monsters who feast on human flesh. Now its fate may rest on the shoulders of one lonely refugee. Alina Starkov has never been good at anything. But when her regiment is attacked on the Fold and her best friend is brutally injured, Alina reveals a dormant power that saves her life-a power that could be the key to setting her war-ravaged country free. Wrenched from everything she knows, Alina is whisked away to the royal court to be trained as a member of the Grisha, the magical elite led by the mysterious Darkling. Yet nothing in this lavish world is what it seems. With darkness looming and an entire kingdom depending on her untamed power, Alina will have to confront the secrets of the Grisha... and the secrets of her heart.

## **Book Information**

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 9 hours and 20 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Audible Studios

Audible.com Release Date: November 30, 2012

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00AFPQQE4

Best Sellers Rank: #40 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Fairy Tales & Folklore #94 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy #143 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction

## **Customer Reviews**

I felt that this book started off slowly. It took a while to get into the storyline, but after a few chapters I was completely involved in the story. I wasn't sure that I was going to like the story, but I ended up falling in love with the concept and can't wait to read the other books. The world and character building was a little sparse considering that the reader is going into these novels without any idea about the world, the rulers and rules, or the Grisha. I do wish we were given a chapter or so to really explain the Grisha as they are the most fascinating part of the novel. There are these people with powers and you're introduced to what they can do as you see them, but I feel like a reader would

connect with the novel more if you understood the heirarchy of the Grisha, the way they categorize powers, and what those powers could entail before we are introduced to the multitude of abilities and fringe characters. The novel progressed at a good pace until it came to the end and then it seems like a number of plot points were just jammed into the conclusion. It felt like the author wrote 87% of their novel and then said, "Shoot. We need the bad guy to accomplish x by the end of the novel, mess up the good guy's life, and then have the good guy come up with a plan that allows them to segue into the next novel... and I've only got 13% of the book left to accomplish it." It just seemed to jump around too much and I would have preferred it if the book was lengthened so that the storyline could be fully fleshed out. Other than those concerns, I did really enjoy the book and look forward to reading the rest of the series. Definitely give it a chance if you like YA and unique magic series like *Sword of Truth* or *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*.

5 outstanding stars!!! One of the more original and fresh books I've read in a long time. *Shadow and Bone* is the story of two orphans, childhood friends, who only had each other in the world. Now semi-grown up (hence the young adult genre) Alina and Mal are traveling across their country when something happens that will change the course of their lives forever. "I pressed my forehead to Mal's and heard him whisper, 'I'll meet you in the meadow'." Alina is whisked into the world of the Grisha, where she meets the mystifying Darkling. Alina learns she contains the ability to save the world and to help her country win a war that has lasted for over a hundred years. She now has this grand new life presented to her, but Alina wishes to return to her old one with her best friend Mal. This new standing in life has Alina confused as to where she belongs, despite everyone around her insisting they know she is among the elite. "It would have placed you high above the others." "Well, I don't want to be high above all the others." The Darkling is a mystery to Alina, and she does not know what to think of him most of the time or understand his motivations. Despite this, the Darkling wants to and tried to gain Alina's trust. "You're the first glimmer of hope I've had in a long time." Not to spoil too much, but as could be guessed, not everything in Alina's new world is as great as it seems. The court at which she resides is full of secrets and lies, yet surprisingly Alina does not let this ward her off, but just withstands it (in my opinion). What I liked best was the development of Alina's character over time and how she began to understand she needed to unlock secrets and fears within herself to truly grow into what she needed to be. Alina went from being a timid sickly girl into someone who was strong and willing to work hard to obtain great things. Laced with wit and a little humor, *Shadow and Bone* is easily one of those books where I am mentally kicking myself for not having read it sooner. "Where did you learn to fight like that?" "Grisha training," I whispered dramatically. "Ancient

secrets of the groin kick."

This book was better than I expected! I heard mixed reviews, but after finishing I can say that this is undoubtedly a fun read. The story opens with Alina and Mal, both growing up together in an orphanage. They are tested for Grisha abilities, but are deemed normal and join the army. The Grisha are basically magic wielders, although they explain it more like manipulating elements rather than creating magic. I personally love reading anything to do with magic and abilities, so I enjoyed learning about the different types of Grisha. Some summon elements, some manipulate matter and some can even change their appearance. Alina lives in a world where the Shadow Fold has split Ravka in two. The Shadow Fold is basically this huge area of complete darkness that breeds some pretty evil creatures. When Alina is in the Fold she finally discovers a dormant Grisha power. Alina, unfortunately, bothered me at first. She was so insistent on denying her Grisha abilities that it became annoying. She constantly reminds us how unattractive and unremarkable she is. As the story progressed I did like her more, but never felt a strong connection to her as a character. I do wish the world-building was more developed. We did not get to see much of Alina's world other than the fold and Os Alta until the last 20% of the book. Although I did enjoy the scenes after Alina left Os Alta and we got to see more through her travels. I don't know much about Russian history and culture, but I didn't feel the Russian influence in the book other than the fact that everyone had a Russian name and they drank a lot of kvas. That is just my opinion! From my perspective, it didn't feel different than any other YA novel. I keep thinking of another favorite series- The Girl of Fire and Thorns. In this series, the Spanish influence in the language and culture was obvious to me and gave the book a different feel. I really enjoyed some aspects of the book. Alina has some great sarcastic and witty dialogue. I also love the scene when Alina finally recalls the memory of her being tested for a Grisha ability as a child. This is a great scene and helped me better understand her character. There are also some exciting fight scenes- I loved seeing Alina utilize her training. I also loved watching Mal's character progression. I hope to see more of him in the series. The ending was honestly very abrupt for me. I was starting to think, "Wow this is getting good!" Then it ended. I will read the next book eventually, but for now I will move on to other books. A fun read, but I didn't love it.

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