



## Days of Blood & Starlight

*Laini Taylor*

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**Days of Blood & Starlight** Laini Taylor

*Once upon a time, an angel and a devil fell in love and dared to imagine a world free of bloodshed and war.*

*This is not that world.*

Art student and monster's apprentice Karou finally has the answers she has always sought. She knows who she is—and *what* she is. But with this knowledge comes another truth she would give anything to undo: She loved the enemy and he betrayed her, and a world suffered for it.

In this stunning sequel to the highly acclaimed *Daughter of Smoke & Bone*, Karou must decide how far she'll go to avenge her people. Filled with heartbreak and beauty, secrets and impossible choices, *Days of Blood & Starlight* finds Karou and Akiva on opposing sides as an age-old war stirs back to life.

While Karou and her allies build a monstrous army in a land of dust and starlight, Akiva wages a different sort of battle: a battle for redemption. For *hope*.

But can any hope be salvaged from the ashes of their broken dream?

## Days of Blood & Starlight Details

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Author : Laini Taylor

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## From Reader Review Days of Blood & Starlight for online ebook

### Meredith Holley says

If there's one thing that makes my blood boil and my skin ripple with creepy crawlies, it's a story that disrespects real suffering. For me, this was one of those. Even though it started off really well, the second half majorly crashed and burned. Think there are two stories of suffering in this series: the teen-angst romance and the story of genocide and grief. This was such a huge fail for me in the way the grief story becomes an afterthought so the teen-angst romance can get back in the spotlight. This story is about how attraction to a hot guy molds a girl and changes her fibers, defines (in some undefinable way) who she is, and grief is something that, while uncomfortable, passes like a bruise. I think the opposite is true.

### Murder and the Manic Pixie

I googled "genocide statistics," and these are the numbers the internet came up with for me:

Armenia: 1,000,000 killed from 1915-1923

China under Mao: 58,000,000 killed

USSR under Stalin: 20,000,000 killed (Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror*)

Holocaust: 5,700,000 killed from 1933-1945 (Nuremberg Trial)

Khmer Rouge (Cambodia): 1,600,000 killed between 1975-1978

Bosnia: 250,000 killed from 1992-1995 (U.S. State Dept.)

Rwanda: 1,000,000 killed in 1994

Somalia: 300,000 killed from 1991-present (IRIN, a UN agency)

Darfur: at least 450,000 killed from 2003-present (UN High Commission on Refugees)

(<http://www.urbanministry.org/wiki/gen...>)

It is kind of interesting that when we talk about war and genocide, we round the numbers so cleanly. We shove individuals off the statistics because one million makes a catchier number than 999,876. Or, maybe, we just estimate because it's not possible to even *know* how many people died. It is certainly not possible to estimate how many survivors have been broken by genocide, not to mention the lives broken by racism and sexism, the slightly more chill siblings of genocide.

Chris Hondros, *Samar Hassan, 5, screams after her parents were killed in Tal Afar, Iraq*

I understand why Stalin's regime romanticized and justified genocide, and the same with Pol Pot, Hitler, and Mao. Propaganda is useful when you are clinging to maniacal power. And as Eddie Izzard says,

We think if someone kills someone, you go to prison, that's murder. You kill ten people, you go to Texas, they hit you with a brick – that's what they do. Twenty people, you go to a hospital, they look at you through a small window forever. And, over that, we can't deal with it. Someone who's killed a hundred thousand people . . . we're almost going, 'Well done! You killed a hundred thousand people? You must get up very early in the morning! I can't even get down to the gym.'

About this book, though . . . we see a lot of genocide in the world . . . and it seems disrespectful to me to romanticize a genocidal warlord, whether it is for the purposes of propaganda or for the purposes of a YA fantasy novel. Pushing Akiva's choices onto the Emperor, or whatever he was called, just doesn't ring true to

me. You kill the people you kill, even if someone else told you to. And I'm not saying that books for a younger audience can't talk about genocide. The Gregor the Overlander series blew me away when it went into genocide. Truly amazing. This book, though, was a whole book full of manic pixie dream girls dabbling in genocide and then gazing at each other.

Even the dudes in this book are manic pixie dream girls. And it's like, you know: genocide just gets so monotonous and tiring after a while. Genocide ennui is so *now*. You kill and kill, and at first it's fulfilling, but then you're like, "this really isn't getting me laid the way I thought it would, even though I got these eyes of fire and a dreamy widow's peak and, like, shawls fulla moth-birds I picked up at Hot Topic."

Then, you gaze across a crowded battlefield at this girl, and she's all, "OMG, all I want is hugs! And I know you (view spoiler), but I'm pretty sure it was just because you loved me sooooo much!"

And then her wise, exotic nanny is all, "Honey chile, you just gotta go get yo man! He only (view spoiler) 'cause he's a grievin' fo you. If you go back to him, maybe it will bring peace ta tha whole wide universe and tha moons'n stars."

Really? . . . Really?! It kind of highlights how convenient the resurrection convention of this series is. It's okay that he's a mass-murdering fuckhead! We'll just bring the people we cared about back to life, and no harm done!

### Romeo and Juliet

Partway through this book, Karou somewhat heavy-handedly reminds us that *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* was the story of Romeo and Juliet + genocide, which, duh. Thanks, Karou. I, um, read it.

Now, I love *Romeo and Juliet*. I love it a lot. When I was in college, my genius roommate used to convince guys hanging out at our house to perform the balcony scene with her as a comedy. The play makes this wonderful, sad-clown comedy. Juliet is a crazy person, wanting to pluck Romeo back to herself like a little bird on a string, bwuhaha. Romeo is a self-centered ass, in love with the idea of being in love and bragging about his girlfriends to his buddies. It is kind of hilarious, especially set to the backdrop of the plague breakout in Verona, which gives some perspective to the childish dramatics of our couple.

I have also seen one completely earnest, sad, beautiful production of *Romeo and Juliet*. The actors playing the couple were living together in real life, and they had this palpable spark between them that made the star-crossed fate truly tragic. The lighting was intimate, like the production in *Slings and Arrows* once it turns beautiful (here at 2:50) and the couple was still dumb and cursed, but I may have teared up a couple of times because they were beautiful and hopeful.

*Daughter of Smoke and Bone* caught elements of both comedic and tragic readings of *Romeo and Juliet* perfectly. The real tragedy in either reading is that the story of these lovers can only exist within this window of time. It can only exist with the suicide at the end. Like any romantic story, it only works if the sun sets at the appropriate time. Otherwise, you start to realize that he snores, and she chews too loud. He says all his sentences as a question; she can't *ever* remember to put the cap back on her toothpaste.

Or, worse than snoring, as Taylor so beautifully showed in *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*, he has the capacity in him to commit genocide and kill every one ever loved. It is beautiful because that changes the entire game; it changes the entire person he is. He is *not* the person dreaming of peace and respect for all creatures. He is the person killing them.

"Or is he?" *Days of Blood and Starlight* asks in its backwards bulldozing over the beauty of the first book. Maybe he was super provoked and it was okay that he killed and betrayed everyone because he was like,

really, really sad. Awww. Poor little mass murdering fuckhead. He was so sad!

### Romance and Grief

So, the thing that bothers me in the fallout in this book is Karou. This story assumes Karou's devotion to this dude, into whose eyes she's gazed for like twelve seconds, would be a strong enough feeling to overcome her grief for her family.

It creeps me out when women in real life blindly stay with men who make them feel terrible. It says something to me about the degradation of the soul. I think that plenty of smart and interesting women do that, but it is at its base a creepy choice to me. But, then, nothing in this story built up to Karou for that type of creepy choice, so her actions and feelings for Akiva just made no sense to me. There was this idea that it could be noble to go back to someone who made you feel the worst you could possibly feel. It's not romantic, but it's also confusing.

It also makes no sense to me because romantic feelings (especially early, fiery romance) are like a delicate collectible unicorn figurine, and grief is like a jackhammer. Sometimes romantic feelings can't survive someone's table manners and overuse of the word "absolutely," and it is beyond me to conceive of a situation, aside from being creepily insane sufferer of Stockholm syndrome, where romantic feelings could survive the murder of one's whole family.

### Other Miscellaneous Complaints

Am I wrong, or did all the hand-burning on the doors stuff happen when Karou was seventeen? But, I know Brimstone made her a baby because she has memories of her childhood, and it's never indicated that they are false. So, like, this book is trying to tell me that Akiva was the nicest guy ever, and dreaming of peace, but then he did all of the hand-burning stuff in reaction to seeing Madrigal get killed? But, he just waited seventeen years to express his heat of passion genocide? That makes no sense.

Also, if the hamsas work after you cut off a hand – so they have some kind of magic of their own aside from the soul inside of the body – why didn't they just burn hamsas into the outside of the walls of Loramendi? Further, how did the whole group of angel soldiers stand around holding the hamsa hands without also accidentally hitting each other with hamsa magic? Dumb.

And why be such an asshole to Ziri, book? Why be such an asshole to the ONLY actually badass character in this entire story? WHYYYYY????

### In Conclusion

Overall, I often don't agree with that advice to writers (I think from Faulkner) to "kill your darlings," and I feel like writers often misapply it because they have something to prove. But, in the first book, Taylor so boldly worse-than-killed Akiva by revealing him to be a mass murdering fuckhead. Trying to resurrect his character by romanticizing what he did felt cheap and disrespectful in this one. Hitler, Stalin, and Pol Pot, like Akiva, all had motivations for their mass murdering, but they were not romantic motivations. It is not romantic to commit genocide or kill your girlfriend's family. It is not romantic to make another person feel terrible. It's not romantic to want to make out with a guy who killed your family. It just isn't.

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I got a copy of this book from a friend, and nobody paid me anything to rip it to shreds with the crescent

blades of my keyboard.

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### **Claudia Ramírez says**

I think this is a 4.5...

Wow, just wow. \*switches to spanish\*

Les dije que mi GR era spanglish, y hoy se me antoja escribir en español. ES QUE A VER. No sé ni cómo expresar mi sentir sobre este libro, tuvo muchas cosas increíbles y pocas cosas que no me gustaron, así que empezaré con lo que no me gustó.

Creo que tuvo partes algo densas y aburridas, y las historias de algunos nuevos personajes no me interesaban para nada. Y otra cosa es que siento que le faltó esa MAGIA del primer libro. Yo me enamoré del mundo que Laini nos presentó en Hija de humo y hueso, con la tienda de Brimstone, los deseos, los dientes, la humana de cabello azul, ¡todo era tan místico y fantástico! Y este libro perdió todo eso: Se volvió oscuro y desolador, y aunque la trama se puso mil veces más intensa, extrañé mucho toda esa magia del primer libro.

Esas son mis únicas "quejas"... todo lo demás PERFECTO. WOW.

OH, y antes de que se me olvide, quiero hablar de: ¿SEGURO QUE ESTOS LIBROS SON YOUNG ADULT? He leído muchas novelas MUY fuertes, pero jamás había leído una novela JUVENIL así de fuerte. De verdad que hubieron dos escenas que me dejaron boquiabierta y que no podía creer que estuviera leyendo eso en un libro para jóvenes. Y no porque sean situaciones nuevas en un libro YA, sino por la forma en que Laini las contó. WOW. (view spoiler) Por si no quedó claro, SÍ, ME GUSTARON ESTAS ESCENAS FUERTES, aunque también me shockearon un poco.

Otra cosa que amé fueron MIK Y ZUZANA, ¡mis preciosos! Amenizaron mucho el libro. Me encantó leer todas las escenas en las que convivían con las quimeras :D. Gracias a ellos pudimos ver que las quimeras no son malas, es sólo que tienen un líder muy perverso.

También... creo que me encariñé un poco con Akiva. Jamás le voy a perdonar lo que hizo al final del primer libro, pero ow, yo tengo algo con los "chicos rotos", no que los quiera arreglar, sino que los QUIERO ABRAZAR, y Akiva está tan destrozado que sólo quiero estrujarlo bien fuerte entre mis brazos :C.

Y pues...

BRIMSTONEEEEEEEEEEE.

Ay.

Sigue siendo mi personaje favorito.

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### **Tatiana says**

*"Let's see. You know how, at the end of Romeo and Juliet, Juliet wakes up in the crypt and Romeo's already dead? He thought she was dead so he killed himself right next to her?"*

*“Yeah. That was awesome.” A pause, followed by “Ow,” suggested elbow punctuation on the part of Mik.*

*Karou ignored it. “Well, imagine if she woke up and he was still alive, but...” She swallowed, waiting out a tremor in her voice. “But he had killed her whole family. And burned her city. And killed and enslaved her people.” (Days of Blood & Starlight, chapter 47)*

This is approximately the circumstances in which we find Karou and Akiva at the beginning of Days of Blood & Starlight. All available blurbs and summaries are a little coy and vague about what this sequel has in store for its readers. Wonder no more. This is a dark, brutal novel with a war at its core. At the opening, Akiva just gave his seraphim brotherhood all the tools to destroy chimaera, and chimaera...well, they are almost completely eradicated as a nation. Karou is chimaera's only real hope of survival. No more talk of romance and love in this story. Akiva and Karou are in different camps now, with an abyss of resentment, guilt and disappointment separating them.

I have already heard a few voices upset by this almost-no-romance development. Not everyone wants to be torn away from the heavy romantic story line of Daughter of Smoke & Bone and face the ugliness of never-ending war where nobody wins. But for me this trilogy is better for it. I am not the sort of reader whose attention can be held for long by romantic angst. I love reading about love, but I am not of the opinion that just love can sustain a series of books. Something bigger than that has to be at stake. In this book, there is, and it pushes all romantic woes to the background. And understandably so, considering the nature and severity of the rift between the lovers. Can you continue loving someone who initiated genocide of your nation? Will you expect to be forgiven for killing off your beloved's entire family? Probably not.

Days of Blood & Starlight also gave me more in terms of storytelling than I had anticipated. I didn't expect at all to be so deeply submerged into the world of chimaera and seraphim, to get to know it so intimately. I remember getting only a glimpse of Eretz in Days of Blood & Starlight. This sequel is an adventure through the Emperor's harem, chimaera's tribal villages, seraphim barracks, ruins of Loramendi and excesses of Astrae, and then a look at what is BEYOND the borders of the land known to Akiva and Karou. It is such a pleasure to read something about a world that has so much depth to it, to feel like I will never know the full expanse of this world and every wonder it holds. The masterful twists at the end left me hungry for more and more, because as much as I know about Eretz now, I also know how much there is still left to explore.

Days of Blood & Starlight may be not as quirky and charming as its goulash- and skuppy mischief-filled predecessor, but it's a novel that encourages you to contemplate the consequences of war for both winners and losers and futility of revenge. Even though I missed Prague and ever annoying Kaz a little in Days of Blood & Starlight, reading it was still a pleasure, albeit a pleasure of a different kind.

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### **Samantha says**

4.5 stars!

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### **Hannah says**

IM A MESS THIS DESTROYED ME AND IT WAS AMAZING

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## Nataliya says

*"What are we fighting for? What are we killing for? What do you see when you look into the future?"*

Gone are the first book's spunkiness and lightheartedness, and (*thankfully!*) the annoying romance angle (*even though the deceiving and useless cover of this book may wrongly lead you thinking otherwise*).

**Instead the darkness and dirt and tiredness and betrayals and pain and weariness and hopelessness and violence and vengeance and grim determination set in**, and it is so much more realized and gripping and touching than I hoped - having lived up to the promise that the first book in the series was trying to set up.

*Days of Blood and Starlight* are filled with blood and not that much starlight, after all. **This book does not shy away from pulling gut punches, sometimes in a dirty way.** And I loved it.

*"A dream dirty and bruised is better than no dream at all."*

It's not often that a sequel is stronger than its predecessor, but it's the case here. Laini Taylor unflinchingly minimized the wonder and cuteness and romance and instead focused on creating a rich landscape devastated by war, and characters wounded and scarred by it, and yet caught in the relentless cycle of violence which breeds more of the same.

*"In the cycle of slaughter, reprisal begat reprisal, forever."*

.....

**Karou is hardly recognizable as the spunky blue-haired girl full of vitality that we came to love.** She lost everything she held dear and permanent in her life, and is barely a shell of her old self, consumed by regret and shame and guilt which, honestly, she really does not deserve (*and the frequently annoying in its persistent cheerfulness presence of Zuzana is a painful reminder of how different Karou's life has become*).

**She is a shell-shocked survivor, and she tries to navigate her way through this new world in a daze, relying on pain and wearing herself out.** The fire seems to be gone out of her for a while as she resigns herself to being a necessary albeit unwanted and resented player in the game - a puppet to be tolerated until she can be replaced. She does what she thinks needs to be done - and there is nothing warm and fuzzy or comforting about it. I have a soft spot for reading about those scarred by painful experiences, and Karou wins my heart with her plight. And yet she is determined and strong, with more steel in her backbone than I can imagine - because who could have doubted that she will eventually find her way?

*"Be your own place of safety, she told herself, straightening. No crossbar in the world could protect her from what lay ahead, and neither could a tiny knife tucked in her boot - though there her tiny knife would most certainly remain - and neither could a man, not even Akiva. She had to be her own strength, complete unto herself."*

Karou - resourceful, strong, level-headed, self-sufficient - you are still welcome to join my literary BFFs circle. Really.

And on the other hand, we have **Akiva** - the hated (at least by me) romantic interest from the first book, who

(and that's a tribute to Laini Taylor's skill, I must say!) unexpectedly has enough character development for me to come to understand him and even grudgingly respect him. Akiva genuinely is trying to set things right - and not only because of his love for Karou but also, it appears, because of realizing how little cruelty and vengeance are actually worth. He is allowed to develop on his own, and not just as a part of a standard cutesy couple that he almost became with Karou many moons ago.

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The big theme of this book, the one that kept resonating with me, was the **futility of violence and the longing for compassion and mercy and peace**. The uselessness of adhering to the '*eye for an eye*' approach to vengeance and violence is repeated over and over and over again. Because, as we have seen so many times in our real world, the natural compulsion is to answer violence with more of the same, to wreck vengeance, to make the other side feel your pain. Many seemingly 'righteous' wars, even recently, have been started on this idea, and the results of them have never been satisfying, have never been worth it; instead, only more suffering and pain was dealt to those caught in the middle of the fighting.

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**Breaking something is always easier than building something new - but it is rarely a sustainable solution to the problem.** It seems so devastatingly simple - but yet so often overlooked, so often trampled in the search of more rewarding 'justice' - which causes more pain. The vicious cycle, isn't it? The futility of it is so obvious in literature, like this book, but why are we so blind to it in real life?

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I can easily see this book not having such a following as the first book in the series did - because of the pronounced darkness of the tone and the decided lack of romance. The tensions are about the power, not about love. The conflict is not because of feelings but because of grim reality of war and power struggle. But this shift in tone and emphasis is what made me a fan of this book, and is what makes me really look forward to the next one in the series. Because sh\*t is getting more real, believe me. And I want to learn more.

**4.5 stars, without hesitation.** I will even round up to five, given how much I enjoyed it. So there.

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My review of the first book in the series, *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*, is over here, by the way. The third and final book, *Dreams of Gods and Monsters*, is reviewed here.

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## Whitney Atkinson says

I'm currently mourning that I don't own the third book :/

I like this series! I forgot how amazing the writing is and how much I love these characters. I'm really into this magic system with the animal hybrid characters; I think it's super neat. This one dragged a little, even though I like that it's set somewhere in the world that I've never read about before. It was just a little bit stagnant because pretty much this entire book was characters watching the war from the sidelines, whereas I think in book 3 they'll be more directly involved. I'm definitely interested to see how the series ends!

\*\*trigger warning for rape\*\*

## Giselle says

With it's amazing die-worthy gorgeous cover, how can this book be bad at all? Really? It would be a sin!

Days of Blood and Starlight is the fantastic sequel to the very well loved Daughter of Smoke and Bone, where we met the lovely Karou and her unimaginable surroundings. Both the characters and world building in this series are created wonderfully and incredibly vivid--which is surreal for such an imaginative fantasy world. While we are taken on a mind blowing journey when this world unravels in our minds in Daughter of Smoke and Bone, its sequel doesn't have the magic of learning the world, the fascination of experiencing for the first time what Laini has created. This is often the downfall of sequels; we know it, we want to move forward, and although this one didn't completely fall prey of such stalled sequels, it does take quite a while to get the ball rolling. The first half of the book, albeit still interesting, even a little nostalgic, feels like it will never end. This does happen to be about 250 some pages... Finally, when certain secondary character become a bigger part of the story the pace is, or at least feels, like it's finally moving forward. These characters really bring so much energy into this novel that it almost completely changes the tone of the book once they're in the picture. But it's not just them, so much stuff has started to happen all around. Now it's fun, exciting, intense, funny, emotional; all the reasons I loved the first in this series has come to the forefront.

The first part of the book may be slow, but the second half is full of wicked fight scenes and great plot advancement that make you forget it was even slow in the first place. I was especially taken by the abrupt plot happenings that Laini decided to add in this sequel. I think maybe I don't expect very important things to happen in the middle child of a trilogy, so I'm very happy when we actually get some things checked off the list!

Having learned who she really was, and what her world consists of, Karou is clearly not the same young, carefree teenager she once was. She has become tough, determined, with some very hard edges. The character growth is there and it makes complete sense with story developments we went through. I love how she becomes who she has to be to make things right for her people. Her loyalty is admirable and a great quality in a protagonist; you can easily understand her, root for her, and sympathize to her situation. The side characters, the monsters, the creations, everyone is so *alive* in this novel! One example of excellent writing!

The character voices, the incredible world, the fantastic fight scenes (especially in this sequel); it's elaborate without being overdone, it's pretty without being cliché. It's all so attractive! Obviously, I highly recommend this series, especially to fans of fantasy--in which I am not, so doubly great if you are!

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*An advance copy was provided by the publisher for review.*

For more of my reviews, visit my blog at [Xpresso Reads](#)

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## karen says

war.

just... war.

i have read plenty of books about war before. fiction, yeah, but fiction about wars that actually happened: conflicts in europe, america, africa... but i have never read another book that did what this one did for me - i have never felt the horror of war as much as i felt in this one. and that's a little messed-up, right? that it

would take a YA fantasy novel about imaginary battles between imaginary beings to bring the horrors of war and genocide into my emotional sphere?

in my defense, when i read or watch movies, it's like this asperger's cloak descends upon me, and i never really get emotionally invested, and usually it sucks because i don't get scared at books, and i don't get that nice cathartic crying-response that a lot of people do when they read. so it is usually unfortunate.

but here, i really felt something. i didn't cry or anything, but i frequently felt nauseous,angry, and so frustrated that i just wanted it to stop. not the book, just the bloodshed and the revenge and the political decisions that kept leading to such horrifying acts.

it's really powerful stuff, particularly for YA. but that's kind of what laini taylor does. she writes these incredibly sophisticated worlds with remarkable characters, and an incredibly subtle fantasy world. and in Daughter of Smoke & Bone she did the impossible for me in that she made me care about the romance angle of it, when usually i am reading these YA books and kind of enduring the heavy stares and kissing to get back to the action.

this one? there was so much horrifying action, i think i was probably praying for a kiss or two to relieve it. but no! no kisses for you, karen/karou!

that is not to say it is all one prolonged desperate howl. there is comic relief, and zuzana and mik provide a couple of kisses to remind the reader of the kinds of things that will be lost if this war continues.

and oh god, it continues.

i feel like i could write pages and pages about this book, but i also feel like a lot of it is better kept inside of me, and for you to discover for yourself. which is something of a cop-out, i understand, but if you read the first one, you are probably going to be compelled to read the second one. after that, it's all on you. do not be expecting any of the sweetness and light of the first book - this is a different and much darker story. this is fear and vengeance and emotional scouring and survivor's guilt. consider yourself warned, but don't stay away on those grounds, because the experience of reading this book is a very important one, and it has left me a little shaken, and that's worth a million love stories.

the projected date for the third part??

2014.

you have got to be kidding me.

come to my blog!

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## **Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says**

OMG! I can't believe my first review of this back in 2015 was 3 stars. I must have been on crack!

This book is amazing and it made me cry for really sad things and really good things and just OMG!

Once upon a time,  
an angel and a devil held a wishbone between them.

And it's snap split the world in two.

God!

Karou is living with the evil freaking Thiago and the other chimaera. They are all hateful and evil with the exception of a few. But I won't go into that without giving away some major spoilers that you need to read for yourself. OMG!

Karou is now the resurrectionist, she took over Brimstone's old job. But she is making things for Thiago that are horrific and more deadly. The war between the seraphim and chimaera is neverending.

Once upon a time, the sky knew  
the weight of angel armies on the move,

and the wind blew infernal  
with the fire of their wings.

There is blood and guts and savagery in this book. I mean why wouldn't there be in a war. And poor Karou is not where she wants to be, she's not in the life she wants to be in, she wants her friends back. The nicer chimaera, but we can't always get what we want, although, sometimes things do come back.

And poor Akiva. He's back with Hazael and Liraz fighting against the chimaera. He thinks Karou is dead until he finds out she's not. And one day she does forgive him for something he did, he didn't know, he just didn't know.

And then Zuzana (Karou's best friend) and Mik (Zuzana's boyfriend) show up at the creepy monster house to visit Karou. God, if they only knew what they were getting into and thank God at that time Thiago needed Karou or they would have been supper!

But it was so much fun with the days that Zuzana and Mik were there. There was so much laughter in with all of the horrific stuff. I really want those guys as my best friends too. Along with Karou and I want my own Akiva!

Thiago is doing horrible things to his people in order to make them stronger. He's also a jerk that does bad things to his people for other reasons too. But sometimes, a woman is just a bit smarter than the evil ruler. Stick that in your pipe and smoke it buddy!

I'm so freaking happy over this book! Well, okay accept of the crying and some other things. I am going right into the last book because pins and needles people. Pins and needles!

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

\*\*\*\*\*OLD REVIEW\*\*\*\*\* Read 2015

I didn't like this one as much as the first one =(

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## Lore says

Right

I mean reading this book was a hell of a ride. Taylor doesn't just like to rip things apart, she bloody well SHREDS them and scatters the remaining pieces into the wind.

Like, I mean this book is really not for the faint of heart. It brings back all the magic of *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*, but there's more pain involved in this one, both physical and emotional.

AND THAT ENDING

NO

I MEAN COME ON

STOP LEAVING ME HANGING LIKE THIS, TAYLOR.

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## Keertana says

If *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* was a dream, a mirage, a masterpiece of writing and phrases and words, overlapped and edited and fine-tuned to create a perfection of romance, snark, and pulsating chemistry, all tinged with a palpable undertone of bittersweet, *Days of Blood and Starlight* is like a hard slap, the cold splash of water, and the startled opening of one's eyes into the bleak, war-ridden, fragile, and bloody reality of life. Unlike most trilogies which follow in a steady rhythm of romance or action or paranormal mystery, Laini Taylor breaks all imaginary constraints and reveals to us the completely unexpected, for *Days of Blood and Starlight* is as far removed from its predecessor, *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*, as any novel could possibly be. In fact, the only similarities between the two lie in Taylor's atmospheric writing, her distinct characterizations, and the general plot continuation. In all other aspects though, Laini Taylor has surpassed my wildest expectations and written a novel that I can claim, in full confidence, that is far, far better than its predecessor. I gave *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* 5 Stars, just as I did *Days of Blood and Starlight*, but in reality, this novel deserves 500 Stars.

*Days of Blood and Starlight* picks up not long after *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* ended with Karou coming to the realization that the only family she's ever known has been murdered by the only man she's ever loved. Thus, the tone for *Days of Blood and Starlight* is set; one of revenge, grief, heartbreak, sorrow, despair, and yet, despite all that, hope. What stands out the most, to me at least, is how *real* Taylor's novel is. Both *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* and *Days of Blood and Starlight* unfold in a sequence of events driven by fate, by destiny, and not entirely by choice, much like our own lives. While we all do have a certain amount of say in the direction our lives lead us, it is only by fate that we meet the people who will change us or affect us in different ways and no one can deny that, at the end of the day, despite all the scattered events throughout our lives, everything comes together and makes a certain degree of sense. *Things happen for a reason*. For me, *Days of Blood and Starlight* seemed to echo that very same idea. All the events in Karou's life, first as

Madrigal and later as Karou, were leading her up to this point. In fact, nothing could have progressed in this manner if Madrigal had not fallen in love with Akiva, if she had not been beheaded by the Wolf, and later if Akiva had not destroyed Loramendi, the home of the chimeras.

*This*, I feel, is the magic of Laini Taylor's writing. Or perhaps it's the magic of her plot. Either way, her stories unfold in such a realistic manner and best of all, she ensures that all this is palpable to the reader. Karou already made a niche in my heart in *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* but with *Days of Blood and Starlight* my heart wept for her. We see Karou at her most vulnerable and, at the same time, her most strong - mentally at least. It can't be said that Laini Taylor doesn't allow her character to grow, for she does. Each and every character we come across, from Akiva to Hazael and Liraz, his siblings, to Zuzanna and Mik, all experience *some* type of growth and change throughout this book. Akiva, especially, becomes a truly fleshed-out being, one whose personality is no longer as flat or connected to Karou's love as it once was. Now, seeing him as an individual with regrets, grief, and aspirations of his own, it is far easier to grow to truly love him as another person and not simply as Karou's lover.

Furthermore, Laini Taylor simply outdoes herself with the world-building in this piece. Somehow, the battered, torn, and bloody land of Eratz has become such a real place in my mind that I wish to visit it and see it, for its simultaneous beauty and terror, all at once. Yet, for all its good qualities, I do have a *few* minor qualms with this novel, primarily, the set-up of the book itself. Unlike *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*, *Days of Blood and Starlight* flits between the perspectives of Karou, Akiva, Zuzanna, and a plethora of secondary characters we are unfamiliar with. While I enjoyed, for the most part, the round and full picture this type of storytelling provided us with, I also found that some small chapters could have been entirely done away with. I kept expecting them to play a greater role in the novel, and unfortunately, they didn't. In addition, the secondary (or quarterary?) characters we're introduced to have such little screen time that it's tough to feel anything much for them beyond fleeting thoughts.

Nevertheless, that is a small qualm to have with a novel so perfect in every other way. *Days of Blood and Starlight* exceeded all my expectations (and mine were HIGH!) and surprised me with an uncanny amount of depth and a shocking slew of plot twists that had me simultaneously thrilled and upset. Furthermore, the amount of emotion this novel inspires is noteworthy. Taylor makes you feel for Karou and Akiva and while their romance, and their interactions for that matter, is *extremely* minimal, the bittersweet tone of their love is still felt. Neither Karou nor Akiva is at fault here and Taylor makes us see this so clearly in this piece that now, it is impossible to know in what direction the story will head. It ends off, much like *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* did, with a bittersweet kind of ending that leaves you aching for more, worried for these characters, and at the same time, filled with hope. I doubt I'd trust any other writer to take on such a complex novel - for truly Taylor has transformed a simple love story and made it into an intricate piece that leaves me with the knowledge that I still haven't understood it all, not *fully*. Needless to say, I cannot *wait* for the final installment in this trilogy. If there's anything I can count on, it's this: Laini Taylor will not disappoint.

You can read this review and more on my blog, Ivy Book Bindings.

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**Nick says**

**5 SMOKING STARS!**

*Daughter of Smoke & Bone Review*

This is the best sequel I have ever read. The first book was great, but this one...perfection. Everything fits amazing, the characters had a truly development, they are perfectly explained and described, the background is smoky cool, and antique. The story is mind blowing, written so smart. There were some moments I was speechless, like what just happened.

*You can find the full review and more about this book on my blog*

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“Once upon a time, an angel and a devil fell in love and dared to imagine a new way of living—one without massacres and torn throats and bonfires of the fallen, without revenants or bastard armies or children ripped from their mothers’ arms to take their turn in the killing and dying.

Once, the lovers lay entwined in the moon’s secret temple and dreamed of a world that was a like a jewel-box without a jewel—a paradise waiting for them to find it and fill it with their happiness.

This was not that world.”

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The writing style as in the first book was classic and unique. It is what makes this book ever more special. The author has this way of twisting words. Confusing sometimes but it is so beautiful to read.

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“A dream dirty and bruised is better than no dream at all.”

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**(This may contain spoilers)**

There are some moments that got me, left me mouth opened like the scene with the white wolf and Karou in the court. The way Thiago turned the case on his side was mind blowing and so smart. Also the scene with Karou and Akiva and Thiago in the same room and the scene after that was awesome. I

don't even know how the author came with that idea.It was brilliant and wise!

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“I am one of billions. I am stardust gathered fleetingly into form. I will be ungathered. The stardust will go on to be other things someday and I will be free.”

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**(This may contain spoilers)**

What I can't get are the thoughts of Karou toward Akiva. Yes I know her family had died because of the angels but he was not the one to blame. Not alone. And yes he had broken the promise but he thought she was dead, and she would have done the same if she was in his shoes!

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“Your heart is not wrong. Your heart is your strength. You don't have to be ashamed.”

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**(This may contain spoilers)**

Also one of the hardest moments was when Hazael died. He was my favorite character. Such a cool person!

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“Nothing made you feel so useless as another person's grief.”

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And I would love if the author would write more about Mik and Zuzanna. Maybe a whole book just for them. They perfectly fit together and the conversations between them are so funny with dirty jokes and all that stuff.

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“It was interesting the way a small hate could grow inside a big hate and take it over.”

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The ending was hilarious and unexpected. The epilogue was beyond perfect and there was also a cliff.

***The story:***

This book follows the story of the first one. Now Karou left with only with rage decides to work with her kind to help them fight the angels. In the other side Akiva looks for her everywhere and he doubts she may be dead. So the both sides prepare for the war, angels with their king, and the chimaera with the white wolf. Karou is at her home now doing her job but is she really fighting the right enemy?

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“What can a soldier do when mercy is treason, and he is alone in it?”

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***The characters:***

**Karou**

In this book you can see a different side of Karou, a darker one. After what happened in the book, she has lost her ability to love. But behind her emotionless self she is still the girl who cared and loved.

**Akiva**

We can also see a different side of Akiva in this one. He is still the tough, smart angel and you could feel this need of lost love and its pain. Because there are a lot of emotion moments including Akiva we could spot some of his other qualities.

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“Once upon a time, an angel and a devil fell in love and dared to imagine a new way of living—one without massacres and torn throats and bonfires of the fallen, without revenants or bastard armies or children ripped from their mothers’ arms to take their turn in the killing and dying.

Once, the lovers lay entwined in the moon’s secret temple and dreamed of a world that was a like a jewel-box without a jewel—a paradise waiting for them to find it and fill it with their happiness.

This was not that world.”

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*I highly recommend this book to all the readers. Read the first one first. And I'm looking forward to read the last one. I heard it is even better!*

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## **Navessa says**

Only one word can describe my feelings about this book:

Fuck.

*Fuck.*

**FUCK.**

Don’t take that the wrong way. I mean it in a good way. *A very good way.*

You know why I love this series so much? Because it’s different. I’d previously rage-quit reading anything even remotely YA because I just can’t with the contrived drama, and the angst, and the dopey, sappy, first time love, and the Mary Sues. The goddamn Mary Sues.

Authors, stahp it with the goddamn Mary Sues.

And then there’s the love triangles. Anyone who’s spoken to me for a fraction of a second on here probably already knows exactly how I feel about love triangles because I carry a banner with me from thread to thread that announces my feelings on that subject. Its message is aided by the fifty megaphones I keep strapped to my person, the volume set to stun as they blare forth:

**“AUTHORS, STAHP IT WITH THE MOTHER FUCKING LOVE TRIANGLES.”**

But then there's YA born from the brain of Laini Taylor. I'll read it. Nay, I'll devour it. Breathe it in and hold it in my lungs for as long as possible before I'm forced to exhale or lose consciousness. I'm not saying that she's exempt from using some of the above themes and tropes. Hell, I think this book has *all* of them. You know what makes it so different? It's the beautiful writing, the pacing of the story, the incredible characterization, the depth to which she delves, the entire execution really.

Unlike so many others in this category, she makes these overused themes believable, relatable, and addicting as fuck. Therefore, she gets ALL THE STARS.

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**Cait says**

A-a whole *year* until the next book comes out?!

I can't.....I can't..... \*snaps\*

OHMIGOD I CANT W8 I CANT I REALLY CANT AHHHHH OMGOMGOMG THIS IS GOING 2 TAKE 4EVER ND I WANT IT NOW! I NEED MORE AKIVA AND KAROU! Y DOES THIS HV 2 TAKE SOOOOOOOOOOOO LIKE LONNNGGG!

*Woahhhhhhh. Did I just have a total trolly fan-girl rant... over a book? Taylor...*

I think....I think I just need to go sit down. I feel so *woozy*. This series just does such weird things to me  
\*looks at the release date again\*

*OoooooOoooOooohhhhhh.*

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