

Shadow and Bone

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*S*hadow and Bone,” the engaging Netflix adaptation of the book of the same name by Leigh Bardugo was released April 23, 2021. It held one of the top ten show spots as viewers eagerly clicked “next episode.” Eight episodes are currently available, with each episode lasting between 48 and 55 minutes.

The series begins in the Fold, a dark area filled with pterodactyl-like monsters known as volcra.

No one has ever gone through the Fold and survived to tell the tale. Alina Starkov (Jessie Mei Li), a cartographer, spent most of her youth in an orphanage after her parents braved the Fold and never returned.

There she meets Mal (Archie Renaux), a loyal friend and excellent tracker. Years later they leave the orphanage and are drafted to be in their home nation’s first army, Ravka’s first line of defense against external threats composed of non-Grisha.

A Grisha is a human who can manipulate matter in its most basic form. Grisha Fabrikators, Grisha who have special powers, have designed a ship they believe is strong enough to go through the fold.

Mal is one of the soldiers chosen to go on this voyage, which surprises him and terrifies Alina. Not wanting Mal to go on this dangerous journey unaccompanied, Alina sets fire to the army’s maps of West Ravka, which compels her commanders to send her cartographer unit on the trip.

They enter the creepy, gloomy Fold. Despite being ordered to remain silent and in the dark, a boy lights a lantern, which attracts the volcra. Many crew mates are severely injured, one of whom is Mal. Before a volcra attacks Alina, she creates a blaze of light and kills it, surprising herself.

Meanwhile, in Ketterdam, Kaz Brekker (Freddy Carter) is taking on a quest. Dressen (Sean Gilder), a wealthy tradesman, is looking for people willing to cross the Fold. If Kaz and his team can come up with a plan to voyage through the Fold, he will be hired for the job.

If he is not successful, the job will go to another who de-

sires the prize. The prize for this job is worth \$1 million, and the task sounds like a simple one. All Kaz has to do is bring Alina Starkov to Dressen.

The actors all do an excellent job portraying the characters from the books. Alina was the only point of view in the book series, but the TV series screenplay goes into many character backstories and points of view.

Because of the excellent acting, set designs, and special effects, the show seems superior in comparison to the books.

Jessie Mei Li does an exceptional job delivering an intriguing performance as the main character Alina. Jesper Fahey (Kit Young) was another character who was well-presented. He did a fantastic job depicting Jesper’s outgoing and humorous personality.


The character relationships in “Shadow and Bone” are similar to that of ABC’s “Once Upon A Time.”

Over the years, Mal and Alina have grown a strong relationship and care for one another. “Once Upon A Time’s” Snow White (Ginnifer Goodwin) and Prince Charming (Josh Dallas) share a similar bond. Both Mal and Alina and Snow White and Prince Charming have made it clear that no matter what separates them, they will always find their way back to one another.

Some scenes, in particular, were reminiscent of scenes from “The Hunger Games.” Just as Katniss

feels a wave of fear pass through her when one of the people chosen to participate in an annual fight to the deaths was her younger sister, Mal is chosen to ride aboard on the Ultraviolet, the ship going into the Fold, and Alina, too, threw herself into a dangerous situation to protect the people she cares for.

Overall, the plot is excellent and accurately depicts the novel’s characters. The only flaw in this series is how quickly it moves. Audiences have many characters and story lines to keep track of in eight episodes, which can sometimes make it hard to keep up.

Nevertheless, the world-building and characters are what make the show what it is: a phenomenal, captivating story. 

“When I was young, I was afraid of the dark. When I got older I learned that darkness is a place, and it’s full of monsters.”

-Alina Starkov

