

Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi

Orisha used to be full of magic, but Zelig barely remembers it. She mostly remembers the day that magic died-- the day her mother died. Soldiers dragged her away in chains, helpless, and strung her up for all the world to see. But since that day, Zelig has been growing stronger and more stubborn, ready to fight back. One day, the stars align, and Zelig gets the chance to show exactly what she's made of-- the same fierce stuff her mother had in her.

Most of the YA fiction I read has always been fantasy, but *Children of Blood and Bone* is unlike any fantasy I have read before. It holds a rich world shaken by tragedy but full of magic, like many fantasy stories, but the cultural traditions and inspirations from this book come from Africa, which lends it a depth and uniqueness very much untouched in any of the fantasies I have read. It was refreshing to get something so familiar, yet so new.

One of my favorite things about this book is that it switches perspectives frequently, which lended the book a lot of its strength. The characters are fierce, and you want to cheer them on, but they aren't always likable from the perspectives of the other narrators; the choice of Adeyemi to write this way gave Zelig and her companions a fullness of character that would have been hard to achieve otherwise. I also have to commend the author for taking some real issues our nation is having to confront over and over again and putting them into a fantasy world.

That being said, this is one of the more graphically violent fantasies I've read in awhile. Because it's free of other mature content, I'm going to place it at a B-14, teetering on the edge of a B-MA. If graphic descriptions of violence bother you, please be careful reading this book.