

Shadow and Bone Book Club Questions

1. We meet Alina when she is a map maker in the Ravka second army, about to cross the Shadow Fold for the first time. If you lived in this fantasy world, what part would you be playing? Would you be a soldier in the army? Would you try and live as far from the Fold as possible?
2. The Grisha are feared but mostly mistreated in the story. What do you think it is about them that makes people treat them as less than people, even when they are important in the fight?
3. Alina turns out to be the Sun Summoner and the potential savior of her people. If you had the potential to magically make that big of an impact on the world, would you take it? What power would you wish for?
4. Alina is in love with her best friend Mal and has been since they were kids. Why do you think she never told him? Was there anything about their situation that frustrated you or you wished she had handled differently?
5. The book makes the true feelings of the Darkling for Alina somewhat unclear. Do you think the Darkling truly loves Alina? Why or why not?
6. This is a young adults novel, but it's been thoroughly embraced by adult fantasy readers as well. Why do you think this book resonates just as much with grown-ups as it does with younger readers?
7. Alina undergoes a transformation once she stops fighting her magic and starts letting it "feed her". What do you think of the theme by Bardudgo that it takes so much effort to not be who we are? Why might that message be important?
8. Most people are afraid of the Grisha (even those who work closely with them in the army). What do you think it is about them that makes people fearful of them? Are they right to be scared?
9. Alina and the Darkling share a bond. How does that bond change and evolve throughout the novel?
10. Grisha magic has a lot of scientific elements to it, and they need to train hard to wield it. In what ways is their magic different from usual fantasy novels? How does that influence the story with respect to Alina?
11. Through much of the book, Alina is confused about her feelings towards Mal and the Darkling. Who did you see her with? Did your opinion change throughout the book?
12. As with a lot of fantasy novels, things are not always quite as they seem. What was the biggest surprise in the book you didn't see coming (or maybe you did)?

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13. This is Leigh Bardugo's first-ever novel. What do you think of her writing style?
14. Shadow and Bone was published in 2012 and then made into a Netflix series in 2021. Do you feel like shows can fully capture the same effect as books? In your opinion, what have been the most successful fantasy adaptations to film or television? The least successful?
15. Did the book want to make you read the other two books in the trilogy, Siege and Storm and Ruin and Rising? What questions are you hoping will get answered?