

## Six of Crows

By Leigh Bardugo

Reviewed by: Puneet Gill, 17

Star Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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The thrilling heist of the Grishaverse lies in this fantasy thriller with leader Kaz Brekker and his team. His allies include Inej Ghafa—a stealthy Wraith, Nina Zenik—a Heartrender with magical abilities, Matthias Helvar—a former Fjerdan soldier, Jesper Fahey—a sharpshooter with a gambling addiction, and Wylan Van Eck—son of Jan Van Eck, who ordered the heist. The six teens endure the harsh streets of Ketterdam into the Ice Court, where they must rescue Bo Yul-Bayur, a scientist who created a highly addictive drug *jurda parem*. As they confront their past selves and stand loyal to one another within a prejudiced society, this compelling story keeps readers on their toes and engage them in their world of crime and corruption.

I adored the complexity and high stakes all the characters experience and the multiple perspectives featured for this first part of the duology series. Matthias as a former Grisha hunter has complicated feelings for Nina, who reveals herself as a Grisha: the one thing he despises. However, their growing companionship rather than continuing conflict demonstrated a well-developed plot among various others. The characters also have major changes among themselves instead of remaining static and flat as most novels do with secondary characters. Nothing vaguely made me resist reading or state negatively about the pace or development, giving a positive outlook and promising readers for adventure that awaits them. Kaz's brilliance shines all the way, yet his setback of using a cane to walk highlights that everyone is imperfect. That is the beauty of his gang.

The general age of the audience may sit well with teens as they can explore this action-packed experience to buckle up to. The moral ambiguity envelops at every corner of each page and creates suspense within each character's roles and duties. Every life-and-death situation featured pushed the main six to their limits and tested their strengths and weaknesses that better understand their motives. Themes such as identity, betrayal, and violent content remain potent for audiences younger than 13, especially as it conveys a deeper message as a young adult thriller fantasy rather than placing drama or romance in the spotlight. The book may pose as a gift for young readers that read Leigh Bardugo's additional work with the Shadow and Bone trilogy.

Recommended Titles:

**Shadow and Bone, by Leigh Bardugo**

**The Lies of Locke Lamora, by Scott Lynch**

**The Bone Season, by Samantha Shannon**

**The Shadow of What Was Lost, by James Islington**

**An Ember in the Ashes, by Sabaa Tahir**