



YA Café Podcast

Episode 9: *Children of Blood and Bone*

19 April 2018

- Danielle: [00:02](#) Welcome to the YA Café where we share conversations about books for teachers, readers, and caffeine addicts everywhere. On today's episode, we'll be talking about *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi. Grab a mug of your favorite beverage friends and let's talk books.
- (ad) [00:17](#) This podcast is made possible by Nouvelle ELA Teaching Resources. Find Secondary ELA resources to engage and inspire like Creative Reading Task Cards. Nouvelle ELA, something new.
- Amanda: [00:34](#) Welcome y'all. As always, our first segment will be spoiler free so you can stick around even if you haven't checked out the new novel yet. I'm Amanda Thrasher
- Danielle: [00:43](#) And I'm Danielle Hall, an 8th and 9th Grade English teacher and I blog [teachnouvelle.com](#), and we have two guests today from the Bookstagram community. Courtney has the Bookstagram [@coco_chasing_adventures](#). Hey Courtney.
- Courtney: [00:43](#) Hi everyone!
- Danielle: [00:57](#) And Anna has an Instagram [@hayinas7](#). Hi Anna!
- Anna: [00:57](#) Hi!
- Danielle: [01:08](#) In Tomi Adeyemi's debut novel "*Children of Blood and Bone*", we meet Zélie who is only five years old when King Saran ordered the raid that wiped out the Magi and killed her mother. Now Zélie has a chance to bring magic back to all of Orisha and strike at the monarchy, and realize the power flowing in her own veins. OK, start us off Amanda, what did you think?
- Amanda: [01:24](#) So, I thought that this book was really incredible, particularly in the beginning. I was so sold from the world building, from this seething rage of the main character that I thought was incredibly useful and valuable. Especially considering that the author has stated from the outset that this book was largely inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, and the fingerprints of that are just all over the book, and it's really great. What about you, Courtney?
- Courtney: [01:51](#) I really enjoyed the book, specifically because the author took a lot of time to research the subject material. She wrote the book well, the prose is good, um, I also like her character development. She didn't just give us a mythology or a fantasy book, she gave us a book with purpose, meaning, and good writing.
- Danielle: [02:10](#) How about you Anna?

- Anna: [02:11](#) This has to be, such an amazing book. It's like one of my top reads of this year. The writing was really good it, captivated me like, from the beginning and then just understanding where the author was coming from, just it had deeper meaning for me.
- Danielle: [02:28](#) So Anna, one of your Instagram posts was about that deeper meaning for you, and how much this book touched you. Do you want to get a little more personal here?
- Anna: [02:28](#) Sure.
- Amanda: [02:28](#) Just bare your soul, no big deal.
- Anna: [02:42](#) Yeah. *laughter* Um, for me, like the book represented, it reminded me a lot of Black Panther. When I saw Black Panther, everybody went there and saw, you know it was action, it was Marvel, but for me I saw Black beauty. I saw us Black people being held high. Um, gosh I'm getting chills just talking about it. Um, this book really just presented us in a different way. Um, showed us as being heroes and fighters and people that were proud of who we were, not ashamed. So that to me was huge, like I literally cried in some parts of the book.
- Danielle: [03:18](#) I really loved it too, but I think you've really said it all, so, let's move on and dig a little deeper. So Courtney, one of the things I wanted to ask you, in one of your Instagram posts about this book, you say "Tomi Adeyemi does not create perfect characters. She makes characters that are human, flawed and relatable." So do you want to jump in and talk about some of these characters and what you liked about them?
- Courtney: [03:44](#) So what I liked about the author is that she doesn't give you any opportunity to rest and relax, or settle into the book. She hits you with action from the very beginning, introduces you to this powerful character Zélie. What's great about Zélie as the heroine of the story is she's not perfect. You can feed yourself within her. She is rash and impulsive and she has feelings and emotions that cause all kinds of trouble throughout the book, but in a way she proves that even that person can be a hero. So I think at the beginning she introduces you to a really great character, especially one that's relatable to any minority or person of color.
- Amanda: [04:30](#) Yeah, and one of the things you said about Zélie that I really liked, um, was that yes, she did have all of these flaws and all these problems going in, but we saw very early on what kind of person she was because she had the chance to like, get everything she ever wanted and walk away, and as soon as somebody needed help, somebody who she had never met or heard of before, she immediately put herself in harm's way just to help that person. Even though then she left and her brother said, "You always screw everything up". She still just has this core of, 'I'm going to stand up for people. I'm going to help people,' and this is what informs like, all of her decisions through the novel that she's always going to be this person who stands up for people, even though she has all of these other character flaws.
- Danielle: [05:02](#) This novel is told in multiple perspectives, for people who haven't read it; We have Zélie who is like, strongly our protagonist and the most awesome

character. We have Amari who grows up in the palace and then runs away after her tyrant father kills her handmaiden. And we have Inan who is the Crown Prince, and ready to continue his father's work to eradicate magic. So how did this multiple perspective story work for you, Anna?

- Anna: [05:37](#) It actually flowed very well. The fact that, you know, they went back and forth and you got to see different points of view on what was going on. So I thought it was perfect. I had no problems with following the story. I never got lost. It was on point.
- Danielle: [05:53](#) One of the other things that this multi perspective triple character thing does for the book is that it presents us with three different visions of the world.
- Courtney: [06:07](#) I mean, it's just from different walks of life, approaching a world in privilege differently, right? When I get to read each one of these characters, each one of these perspectives, we see every person's view. We see all these multiple persons view. You can see something from a place where you're wealthy or you have more privilege or you have those things that set you apart from someone of a different economic status or minority group. You have someone from a minority group, and you have someone who's also from a minority group who may be your ally or your friend or someone who thinks like you or sympathizes with you, and how that person walks in a world of privilege. So I think that was awesome of the author to consider as she wrote the story.
- Danielle: [06:46](#) Yeah, I really loved that, and I loved that the mark of being a Diviner, (a Diviner would be an unawakened Magi) and the mark of a Diviner was this like shock white hair, and so it wasn't something that people could just pretend they didn't have. And so the king would readily round these people up and subjugate them, and torture them simply because of the way that they were born.
- Anna: [07:13](#) That really stuck out to me because I saw it in a different way, as in the Magis couldn't change who they are. That's, that's what's symbolized them, as in, us people of color, we can't change our skin color to be anything but what it is.
- Danielle: [07:13](#) Right.
- Amanda: [07:27](#) One thing I wanted to talk about, we started at the beginning of this book from Zélie's perspective. I didn't realize that it was going to be multiple perspectives until we went to Amari's perspective. In Amari's very first chapter she has this experience of, you know, she goes to breakfast, she gets chastised by her mother and then she walks into a room and her father murders her, like childhood friend, who she considers a childhood friend, but in reality is also her servant, and maid. And throughout the novel, like Amari's connection to her seems to remain unwavering. Uh, but I, I thought that she never really came to terms with, like, the fact that the only reason that her friend was in her life was because she was a servant. Like, because she was part of like, the subjugated class and I feel like Amari never really came to terms with, like, her own role and her own benefiting from the system. And she only felt, like, the sting of loss because her friend died.
- Courtney: [08:22](#) Yeah. So the entire book is that Tomi addresses, like, very, very complex issues in a very simple way, right? So in this case, you know she's a princess

and in a lot of ways she's another heroine in the story, but by her not even really understanding her own place and privilege, her own place in society, that disconnects her from Zélie eventually, eventually, that is the thing that that will always separate her from any person that is in a minority group or who is being subjugated towards systemic issues, in this case, a form of racism. She does not understand that no matter how much Binta was your friend, she was your servant and she served you.

- Danielle: [08:22](#) Yeah
- Courtney: [09:06](#) And only when she's hurting and only when she dies, do you feel something. And hopefully you will feel something before someone has to die.
- Amanda: [09:13](#) Definitely. So even though like from the beginning Amari is clearly supposed to be a sympathetic character, I hope that they go more into that in future books.
- Danielle: [09:22](#) So, we mentioned this book's kind of common DNA with Black Panther. It's got some other really important shared DNA that Tomi Adeyemi has said, which is Avatar: The Last Airbender
- Amanda: [09:22](#) yeah.
- Courtney: [09:22](#) Woohoo!
- Anna: [09:22](#) Mhmm
- Danielle: [09:37](#) And we are huge Avatar fans here, and we just love this. We saw all of the obvious and more subtle parallels and we just loved it. Have y'all seen Avatar?
- Courtney & Anna: [09:37](#) Yes
- Danielle: [09:37](#) Yay! Best ever!
- Amanda: [09:51](#) What was almost my thing? I like a latte. I think it happened a couple months ago, but it was where uh, Serena Williams had this huge, uh, like Twitter conversation with somebody about Avatar: The Last Airbender. And it was like, "Oh my God! Serena Williams watches Avatar! I watch Avatar!"
- Danielle: [10:08](#) So if you haven't seen Avatar, definitely go watch Avatar. Um, and not the movie with the blue people, although that, you know, has it's own conversations. But we're talking about The Last Airbender, and also not the movie version of this, but the Nickelodeon series version of this. So to get really specific, go watch the Nickelodeon series version of Avatar: The Last Airbender. The common DNA here is, you know, a magical, awesome girl with her non-magical older brother going to save the world before the deadline of a celestial event. And we also have a Prince who was torn between his duty to his nation and his family and, uh, doing the right thing. Right? So we'll talk more about Inan and his quest for, whatever he's questing for in the spoiler section.
laughter
- Danielle: [11:03](#) And with that friends, we'll take our first break and when we come back we'll share about Things We Like A Latte, then we'll return to our

discussion of Children of Blood and Bone and dig a little deeper.

- Amanda: [11:27](#) Welcome back y'all, it's time for Things We Like A Latte. Danielle, what's your brew of choice this week?
- Danielle: [11:31](#) Well, in the last episode we talked about karaoke and our love of Karaoke, or more particularly your love of karaoke, Amanda
- Amanda: [11:31](#) It's true.
- Danielle: [11:41](#) So my Thing I Like a Latte is this video that went viral of this family doing "One Day More" from Les Mis. And I love this video because it's clear that this family, the LeBaron family from Utah has singing training. Like, they're awesome and it's clear that they've practiced this thing, but the whole video takes place in their living room and has like three generations, including two babes in arms, and two toddlers who run around during this video. And at one point the woman's singing Eponine is like singing and her baby is pulling on her hair, and she's still singing beautifully. So I just love this video, found it absolutely charming. How about you Courtney?
- Courtney: [12:35](#) What I Like A Latte is Justina Ireland's newest book, "Dread Nation". It is a story about Jane McKeene, who was born two days before the day began to walk the battlefields of Gettysburg and Chancellorsville derailing the War Between the States, and changing America forever. It's a book that combines a little west African mythology, um, some Civil War history, and fantasy. So, newest book that came out in the street, check it out.
- Danielle: [12:53](#) Awesome! How about you Anna? What's your Thing You Like A Latte?
- Anna: [12:57](#) Ok, so I know it's kind of cheesy, but like
- Danielle: [12:57](#) We love cheesy.
- Amanda: [12:57](#) No, apologies.
- Anna: [13:03](#) *laughter* Three months ago I was introduced to almond milk. I have this weird thing with dairy. I, for two and a half years, have been unable to consume it because it would literally make me throw up. I didn't know, I haven't been diagnosed or anything, but when I was introduced to almond milk, I went bananas on cereal. Like I had it for like a whole week for every meal. So for me right now it's,
- Danielle: [13:03](#) And a banana?
- Anna: [13:27](#) *laughter* yes, with bananas. So for me right now it's definitely almond milk. That is my love right now.
- Amanda: [13:33](#) Awesome. Thank you for sharing your joy of almond milk.
- Danielle: [13:33](#) And Amanda, how 'bout you?

- Amanda: [13:41](#) Uh, so my Thing I Like A Latte is this Mashable article. It is pretty short and it is called "Millennials Destroyed the Rules of Written English, And Created Something Better" and it is nice to see something about Millennials that isn't just 'Millennials have murdered napkins' or whatever it is.
- New Speaker: [13:41](#) *laughter*
- Amanda: [13:56](#) And this is talking about how Millennials have changed the meaning of written language. Things like writing 'Yes' with no punctuation is very different from writing 'Yes.' with a period, or the use of capitalization to emphasize words as opposed to just using them for proper nouns or beginning of the sentences. Basically the article goes into how the changing written language adds nuance to the language, while disregarding these older rules, and I was really interested in it. I think that Internet language has a lot of unwritten rules and it's cool to see people starting to dig into that, so I thought to this very short article was a really interesting for that, and that's on Mashable and it's called "Millennials Destroyed the Rules of Written English, And Created Something Better" by Rachel Thompson.
- Danielle: [14:40](#) Awesome. We're going to take a quick break and when we come back we'll return to our discussion of Children of Blood And Bone. The rest of the show may contain spoilers, so if you're leaving here, keep in touch on Instagram and Twitter @yacafepodcast. We'll be back after this quick break.
- Ad: [15:14](#) Do you have a product you'd like to get in front of teachers, librarians, and other book lovers? If so, email us at yacafepodcast@gmail.com.
- Amanda: [15:25](#) Welcome back, y'all to the YA Cafe. We're continuing our discussion on Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi. If you haven't read this yet, we want to warn you again that this segment will contain spoilers and magic and stuff,
- Danielle: [15:35](#) and pirates,
- Amanda: [15:35](#) No pirates.
- Danielle: [15:37](#) No pirates. All right, so Courtney, one of the things I really wanted to talk to you about and just talk in general about what allyship. Um, you mentioned loving the representation and discussions around allyship in this novel.
- Courtney: [15:57](#) Um, what I liked is, when the author wrote the book, I think it's of course for, you know, a person like me, right? It's for some minority group or some person of color to read and find empowerment in it. But she also left a lot of room for others to read this, read the book and find their place in the movement, and then she sort of challenges each one of those who finds themselves in a ally position to consider not only the perspectives, but their role in institutionalizing or their role in furthering any systemic prejudice. In this case, Amari sort of is the face of that. She's someone who is an ally, she feels moved by the movement and the tragedies that are happening around her, but she's still in a position where she lives by that, she survives by that. She almost counts on that for her all movement in space and so Tomi sort of challenges her and she challenges the reader to think about what that means. Everyone's in love with her as a character, she's a great character, she's great Princess, a

great arc, but there's so much about her that is problematic that the reader has to point those out if they want to read the book.

- Danielle: [17:09](#) Right, at one point Zélie and Zane are talking, and Zane defends Amari, (Zane is Zélie's brother), and he says "She hasn't done anything wrong" and Zélie says "She hasn't done anything right, either".
- Amanda: [17:09](#) Mhmm
- Courtney: [17:09](#) Right.
- Danielle: [17:15](#) And I think that it's really important for, you know, a reader like me who's a white reader to understand that just because you don't do something wrong, doesn't mean that you've done anything right. And if you are benefiting from the system and you're not reckoning with that and working to end your own benefit from systemic racism, you need to like, check yourself and start doing the right thing.
- Amanda: [17:43](#) Yeah, I mean, I think that in this particular instance and in, in our lives too, like, not doing anything right **is** doing something wrong. Like, just the fact that Amari is a person of privilege means that her every action contributes to the oppression of this, this group of people, and you can't get away from that. Like, so, Zane saying that she didn't do anything wrong is like, really just getting rid of the fact that she's still benefits from all of these things.
- Amanda: [18:09](#) There's one more thing that Zane said too, or that Zélie said about Zane, uh, that I think also really informs why he is able to have this sort of relationship with Amari. Um, in the very beginning Zélie says about her brother "He wants to believe that playing by the monarchy's rules will keep us safe, but nothing can protect us when these rules are rooted in hate". So, that quote to me was like a very direct echo of 'the master's tools will never dismantle the masters house', right? Like, Zane believes that if he plays by the rules and, like, does the right thing eventually things are going to work out. And I think that's part of why he is able to have this connection to Amari pretty quickly because he sees her as someone playing by the rules and trying to be a good person within those rules and within that framework.
- Courtney: [18:53](#) Yeah, I think this is one again, one of those other complex discussions, um, that Tomi has in a very elegant and soft-handed way. There's this idea of respectability politics. There's this idea that a person could be so good that they won't get in trouble, that things won't happen to them. But then you see things like Stephon Clark, you see things like Trayvon Martin where they are seemingly acting in appropriate manners, or there's nothing about them that should get them troubled or killed, but they find themselves in that situation anyway. Um, and so here's an example of Tomi sort of taking, sort of a nod to that, saying that you cannot be so respectable that you're going to walk out of being a victim of racism. But because he believes that it does make them easier to, um, connect with Amari. And I think that same thing is what disconnects Zélie from her, she, she, she can't relate to that.
- Amanda: [19:46](#) Yeah. Not until it's Inan, that is. **laughter**

Anna: [19:46](#) Mhmm

Courtney: [19:49](#) Yep. Right. Cause you know, love ... love. *laughter*

Amanda: [19:55](#) I gotta say, I didn't buy that. I was like "Really, Zélie?! You're gonna flip just like that?" I wasn't sold.

Courtney: [19:55](#) Yeah.

Anna: [20:01](#) Yeah, I had a big issue with that too.

Danielle: [20:03](#) If you are bravely endeavoring to listen to the spoiler section and you haven't read the book yet, we are referring to the "romance" quote unquote ...

Amanda: [20:03](#) Vom *laughter*

Danielle: [20:15](#) ... between Inan and Zélie. He has this awkward, like, Kylo Ren relationship with her at the beginning, where like, the literal first look into each other's eyes they feel like lightning has struck and,

Amanda: [20:15](#) Gross

Danielle: [20:15](#) it's nonsense.

Courtney: [20:32](#) *laughter* Yeah. This particular romance is, is not the one I like. I don't 'ship' this relationship.

Danielle: [20:32](#) Mmm, nope.

Courtney: [20:38](#) *laughter* But what are understand here is that, you know Inan, he has a relationship with a freedom that he will never have. Uh, a person who could be wholly themselves. So, if more than anything, it's what relationship represents that I like

Danielle: [20:38](#) Hmm

Courtney: [20:54](#) Inan wants that, and being with her represents that. But in the end it's not something he can have.

Amanda: [20:59](#) Do you think that your perspective of their relationship would be different if Inan did not wind up having magical powers, and suddenly like developed this connection with Zélie without that landscape?

Courtney: [21:11](#) Mmm, I don't know.

Anna : [21:14](#) I mean, there was a little bit of a connection because of the powers, I don't think that ...*sigh* ... that's such a hard question to answer. It's like, without the powers would he still feel the same way towards her? Maybe, a sense of freedom? She was out there fighting for what she believed in and he was sitting there trying to please his dad. You know. So I , I don't know.

- Courtney: [21:39](#) I don't think it was specifically the power, per se. I just think who she was and how she moves in the world is what he liked. I mean, he was very constrained. He was living under his dad's rule, under this big burden of masculinity that sort of, kept him from doing things that he might enjoy better or treating people differently, or with more empathy. And somehow in her he saw, something he could be, a place he could go, a world he could live in, and then it all fell apart.
- Danielle: [22:06](#) Because of his choice. It fell apart because of his choice.
- Courtney: [22:11](#) Yes, and you know what? You're right. Like, it's important to understand that it wasn't magic that stopped that in the end, that was a choice.
- Amanda: [22:18](#) Yeah, I thought it was a really brave and interesting choice for Tomi to make, to write Inan so that in the end he winds up still siding with his father and wanting to destroy magic, even after seeing everything, just because of that real fear when he saw the Magi defending themselves against the guard attack. And I thought that was really interesting about how, how Inan turned away from his relationship with Zélie, not only because of his father, but because he was genuinely afraid of power.
- Danielle: [22:49](#) Magical power. He wasn't afraid of the power power that he got from being the Crown Prince.
- Amanda: [22:49](#) Well yeah. You can have *other* people have power, Dani. That's a problem.
- Courtney: [22:58](#) I think that's what's interesting about the book. It's like, you know, him seeing that power, and the fact that there was going to be a way for that group of people to take them over, or overpower them. That was enough for him to want to strip away their power. And again, talk about allies, sometimes that is the response of an ally. They agree that what people are doing to a minority group is not right, but the idea that the other group might have more power than them, they don't want that either.
- Amanda: [22:58](#) Right
- Courtney: [22:58](#) So, they're silent.
- Anna : [23:27](#) I saw it more of as a self hate, because he had power, and he went to the point to covering up, you know, dying his hair. So to me, I saw that as, you know, those are your people, but you're going to, you hate them so much that you'll go to the extent of covering up your hair, so nobody knows who you truly are. I, I didn't like that.
- Danielle: [24:01](#) Right, because his father was so, like his father had ingrained in him this 'magic is terrible, Magi are terrible, any hint of magic is terrible'. And so when Inan found out this part of himself, he hated that about himself because of his desire to please his father.
- Anna: [24:08](#) Right, I remember growing up, a lot of people would say the whole 'paper bag' thing. If you were darker than a paper bag, then you weren't considered beautiful. And that was one of the things that I picked up when I read that part.

Amanda: [24:24](#) So the Magi ... I thought that like the Diviners had all white hair, and then Inan just had that one writes white streak. Is that right? Did everybody else read that the same way? And then at the very end Amari had the same white streak that Inan had, and that was like the visual signifier for them.

Anna: [24:24](#) Right.

Danielle: [24:24](#) So, did you interpret that as, like, 'I have magic, but non- magical parents?'

Courtney: [24:49](#) I, I don't know, because at some point, I don't, I'm trying to recall what it was, where they talked about, um. 'Cause didn't it say something in the book where the ...

Anna: [24:58](#) Didn't the father already have another family?

Amanda: [25:02](#) Well he definitely was sleeping with the commander.

Danielle: [25:04](#) So, before that he did have a family and they were murdered by Magi, and that was kind of the

Anna: [25:04](#) trigger

Danielle: [25:14](#) well, the justification for the father's hatred.

Anna: [25:14](#) Mhmm

Danielle: [25:18](#) I mean, it was presented as a trigger but I don't know how authentic that was.

Anna: [25:18](#) Right

Courtney: [25:23](#) Yeah. I guess I'm, I'm interested to see how she plays with that in the following books. I'm sure that she's going to have further explanation and world building to explain that more. I think there's definitely a lot of symbolism with the idea of having just this white streak.

Anna : [25:39](#) 'Cause it did make me think, 'well, if the kids have it then does the father have it? Or is it coming from the mom?' like I didn't, I wasn't really too sure about that.

Amanda: [25:47](#) Or maybe it meant, like, that she was running around on him or something.

Anna: [25:47](#) Right

Amanda: [25:50](#) I don't know either.

Anna: [25:50](#) but I don't know, yeah.

Courtney: [25:56](#) And another part, is this, is this whole idea of 'Maybe everyone has a little bit of magic in them, a little bit of power in them somewhere that's hidden deep'.

Anna : [25:56](#) Maybe, yeah.

Courtney: [26:03](#) I don't know. So I'm, I'm, I'm really interested in seeing how she with that, um, in the following books.

Danielle: [26:11](#) Me too. And I am super excited that there will be two more books, and I am super excited that they're already in talks for a movie, and I'm super excited she got a seven figure advance, that is rocking, like

Anna: [26:11](#) Yeah

Amanda: [26:30](#) It's terrifying. *inaudible* I cannot imagine, like, getting a seven figure advance and being like "Alright now you have to sell seven figures worth of books, or you're never going to sell another book, like

Danielle: [26:30](#) And she's, she's 24, right?

Courtney: [26:30](#) And she's well her way

Danielle: [26:30](#) Yeah, you go girl.

All: [26:30](#) *laughter*

Amanda: [26:43](#) No, I didn't realize, I didn't realize what a push this book was getting, but we went to Barnes & Noble yesterday and there were like, two shelves that were just Children of Blood and Bone and I was like, "What?" So it's awesome.

Danielle: [26:54](#) So, one of the things I wanted to talk about was the difference between Inan's reaction, and Zélie's reaction to their magic. Zélie says it's like 'breathing for the first time' and Inan says it's like 'a thousand spiders'. Did that like, strike anybody else?

Amanda: [27:09](#) I mean I thought it was a good bit of description. I'm not, I'm not sure what you mean by strike, like, in what way? How did it strike you? Because if you're bringing it up, you feel things.

Danielle: [27:20](#) Like, I guess we mentioned his potential self hatred, and his father's kind of influence on how he interpreted everything, but did you entertain the possibility that it, it really did like, feel physically horrible to him?

Courtney: [27:40](#) I guess, I mean that's what ... The potential of the loss privilege does feel horrible, right? The idea that he's going to look and be different.

Danielle: [27:40](#) Mmm

Courtney: [27:44](#) The magic, everything about what taking on that cloak means, makes you feel different. It's a burden, you're carrying a new load,

Danielle: [27:55](#) Right, so it was like, an anxious reaction to this new truth about himself.

Amanda: [27:59](#) It could also just be that this is something that Zélie has always wanted and worked towards, and for Inan it's this horrifying thing. So, I don't know if this is like an appropriate metaphor, but it kinda makes me think of, like, the day after

working out. If you're a person who likes working out, you might be like, "oh, I'm really sore. That means I'm getting super swole", but if you're a person who doesn't like working out, all your stuff just hurts. Like, you know. *laughter* So I don't know if that's similar at all, but I mean, I think that people can feel things in very different ways based on their thoughts going into it.

- Danielle: [28:32](#) Yeah, that makes sense.
- Amanda: [28:35](#) So, at the end of the book, Omari kills her father. Uh, that happened. And she tells him "I'll be a much better queen than you ever were", and that's one of those things that when she said it, I was like, "oh, Amari, I still don't think you get it". Because like, there's still, like, a fundamental power structure problem in your country where one person can order the mass slaughter of thousands of people. One person being a good person in charge isn't going to fix that, you have some more steps to take. So I'm, I'm looking forward to seeing how she digs into that in the next couple of books
- Anna: [28:35](#) Yeah
- Courtney: [29:09](#) The only other thing that's, I guess is ummmm ... The part that I cried the most on is when Zu died. Like reading that scene, because I read, like re-read it before I came for this discussion, but like when I read that, that was a lot. I have a three year old son, and I live in suburbia, so my child is the one black child in every classroom, every place we go. And I, that's like one of my deepest fears is that one day he's going to walk down the street, you know, like again, I have a high income, I live in a very high income area, and you know, one day they're going to see my son walking down the street and say 'who's that kid?' or whatever, and he's going to raise his hand and he's going to get shot because he's going to look like a threat to somebody. When I read that scene, I just kept seeing my sons face over and over again. Like Tomi did a excellent job in writing the scenes to create emotion.
- Amanda: [29:09](#) Yeah
- Danielle: [29:55](#) And she even says it, like, in her acknowledgements, she names all the names. Not even all the names, like who are we kidding? It's not all the names, but she named some names of kids that have died too soon
- Amanda: [30:07](#) And their ages, which I think is really important, especially because some of the younger kids reading this, like if someone's reading this and they're fourteen, they might not remember Tamir Rice, you know,
- Danielle: [30:07](#) Mmmm
- Courtney: [30:07](#) Right
- Amanda: [30:16](#) Or whoever it was like six or seven years ago. So having those, those names and ages there really drove home, like, why this book is so important.
- Courtney: [30:28](#) Right. You know before Inan and King Saran, I think they didn't have faces to the magic. It was just some, the magic was an evil thing that killed a prior family, that was something to be scared of. There was no face to

the magic, so Zélie, Zane, Zu, Kwame, all those guys become faces that someone should connect to and say, "Hey, this is what happens when, when this type of tyranny exists."

Anna : [30:28](#)

Right.

Amanda: [30:50](#)

So, one thing we didn't talk about very much, but we mentioned it early in the beginning and how this has been compared to Black Panther, is that she did a lot of study and research on West African mythology and built all this around this somewhat Nigeria place. Like uh, it's sort of a fantasy Nigeria, it doesn't quite line up, obviously. And that really made the story come to life a lot more. I think, um, just having this background, building it up, and it just gave it such a rich background and it gave it so much more depth, I think, having like, this history of her knowledge and her research that she has dug into, it, like it really showed them the book, and I think that it all came together really well for her.

Danielle: [31:30](#)

That's our show for today, friends. Thank you Anna and Courtney for being with us.

Anna: [31:30](#)

Thank you.

Courtney: [31:30](#)

Thank you.

Amanda: [31:30](#)

.Yes, thank you, this was really great.

Danielle: [31:38](#)

And thank you to our listeners. You can find a, like, "What Clan Are You?" quiz on [ChildrenofBloodandBone.com](#) that we'll link in the show notes, and you can find us on Instagram and Twitter [@yacafépodcast](#). We'd love to hear from you, and if you're enjoying the show, please consider leaving us a review on iTunes. Happy reading!