



And Now for  
Something Completely  
Normal...

To understate: this has been a bad month. January is not, even at best, a time of cheer. Stuck at home, with the threat of death on the streets, it's very possible to slowly sink into a gloom.

The world appears to have gone mad, and it's depressing to think about.

We're here for you. A spot of escapism and normalcy in the storm. We have your game review, your travel destination suggestions, some relationship advice and – as always – a page of fiction (this time written by the editors.) These may be bad times, but don't let the fear of violence keep you in its grip. We are all still here, and there's life that needs living.

Happy reading.

– Zoheb Mashiur, Sub-editor, SHOUT

## This Week's Horoscope

### ARIES

Just because I say this horoscope is blue doesn't make it blue.



### TAURUS

The blue ink in the industrial printer makes it blue.



### GEMINI

The same blue ink harvested from the fresh, warm bodies of Smurfs.



### CANCER

Smurf farming is a morally corrupt and financially rewarding activity.



### LEO

In the time it takes for you to change your clothes, your whole family could have gone on a picnic and come back already.



### VIRGO

You will get a bad deal if you try to trade your experience points in for money.



### LIBRA

Hard work pays off when it comes to ironing clothes.



### SCORPIO

If you need to be forewarned against scams, then boy have I got an offer for you!



### SAGITTARIUS

Are you sure your significant other's university actually exists?



### CAPRICORN

Someone close to you will try and steal your wallet.



### AQUARIUS

Why did the Aquarius cross the road? Because she was blindly following her Horoscope.



### PISCES

Have you tried free-lancing your video game playing skills to people who lack the ability?



## BOOK REVIEW

RATING: 4/5

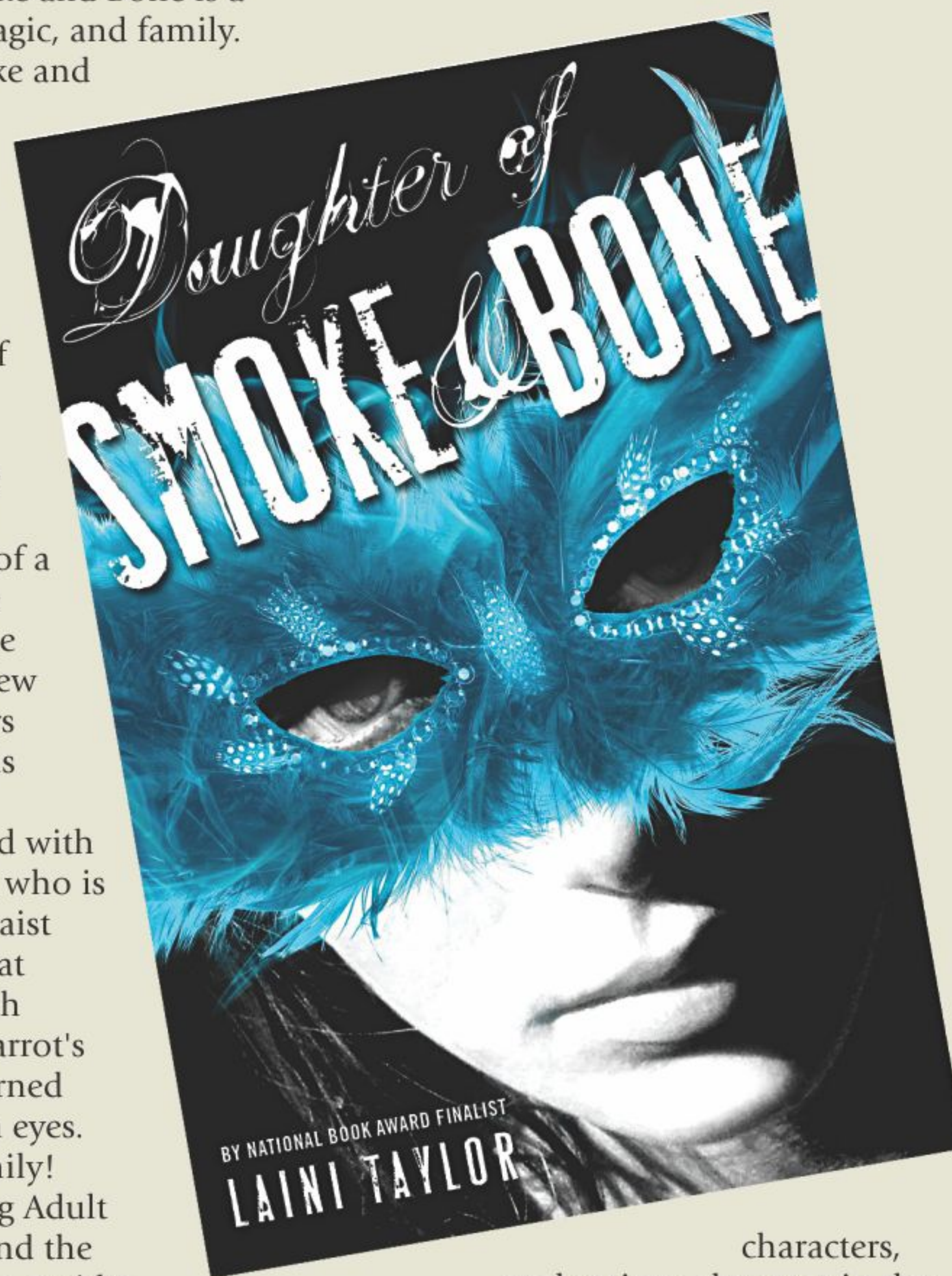
FATIMAH AKHTAR

In a time when the trend in Young Adult literature was dystopia, there rose a book that's both unique in its setting as it is familiar. *Smoke and Bone* is a story of love, war, magic, and family.

Daughter of *Smoke and Bone*, the first book of the series, tells the story of a seventeen year-old Karou against the backdrop of gothic Prague. Karou herself is distinctive – her tresses are aquamarine, and the pimples on her face vanish at the sound of a wish. Her friends are unaware of where she disappears to every few days, where the doors lead to, and what this "Elsewhere" is. Her sketchbooks are filled with pictures of a woman who is a serpent from the waist down, a crow with bat wings, a monster with human eyes and a parrot's beak, and a stern horned monster with golden eyes. And they are her family!

Just as most Young Adult books are built around the coming-of-age theme, amidst the chaos of war and struggle for survival *Smoke and Bone* is a story of longing and self-actualization. It's Karou's story, but it's also her people's story. And Laini Taylor's lyrical and witty writing style highlights those very aspects. The first book mostly focuses on one or two perspectives, while the

last two books focus on multiple – and it is to Taylor's credit that she pulls it off. If anything holds back the story from becoming a magnum opus it's the unrealistic attractiveness of the



characters, and various elements in the third book that weaken the plot.

Laini Taylor has a gift for world building and character-writing, and turning a story that should've been another predictable romance – into something so much more. If you are one for love stories, magic, mystery, and poetic prose – this might be for you.



## MIXTAPE

### FEEL BETTER

The Flaming Lips

Fight Test

Survivor

Eye of the Tiger

Manic Street Preachers

Tsunami

Marianas Trench

Lover Dearest

Anathema

Lightning Song

R.E.M

The Great Beyond

Blackmill

Miracle

Cee-Roo

John Lennon

Asian Dub Foundation

Rebel Warrior

The Stone Roses

I Am the Resurrection