

# All aboard the Steampunk Train

FARAH MASUD

Ever heard of steampunk bands? Me neither, until very recently. Steampunk is a sub-genre of science fiction that is set in a historical period, usually featuring steam powered machines. *Steam Powered Giraffe* is one such band that incorporates steampunk not only to its music but also to its performance.

The band consists of three singing automatons played by twins Isabella "Bunny" Bennett and David Michael Bennett and Bryan Barbarin, who refer to themselves as Rabbit, The Spine and Zero on stage respectively. Hailing from San Diego, the band started out in 2008 and has made quite a splash with its unique performance style.

The thing that makes Steam Powered Giraffe so intriguing is the fact that they combine humour, robot pantomime, story-telling and music in their performances. Their stage names are more than just names - they are characters with individual background stories. Their songs have distinct themes and narratives that are usually introduced to the audience with the help of skits and sketches at the beginning of their performance. All three of the members have a background in theatre arts and pantomime, which makes their acts extremely believable.

A common factor in their music is the use of multiple harmonies and counter melodies that weave together seamlessly. The rare mixture of high and low scales by the different singers is delightful to hear. It is also a lot of fun to sing along with their songs - they range from upbeat tunes to slow, melodious ones. They use acoustic guitar, keyboard, melodica, and create numerous quirky sounds for their music. One of the songs that introduces most people to the band is a heart-warming track titled "Honeybee". Other notable ones include *Captain Albert Alexander* (pirate themed), *Rex Marksley* (western styled), *Brass Goggles* and *Ice Cream Parade*.

Although they started out by performing in local fairs and conventions, Steam Powered Giraffe gained quite a huge amount of its success from YouTube. In fact, they have such a good connection with their fans that every



time there is an album release or concert, they do live stream countdowns. They even live stream concerts on YouTube. The band also has its own webcomic. And one of their members, Rabbit, does a lot of the band's art. All these little details add to the uniqueness of the band.

However, the most fascinating aspect by far is the band's lore which you can find on their website. They have a full-fledged sci-fi story that tells you exactly how the band got its name and how it all came to be.

Steam Powered Giraffe is definitely worth hearing (and watching), if you're looking for an unconventional and imaginative experience.

So without further ado, I would urge you to "attune your ears to the grinding gears!"

*Farah Masud is a humanbean and that is all you need to know about her. Please don't try to contact her anywhere, especially not in person.*

## BOOK REVIEW

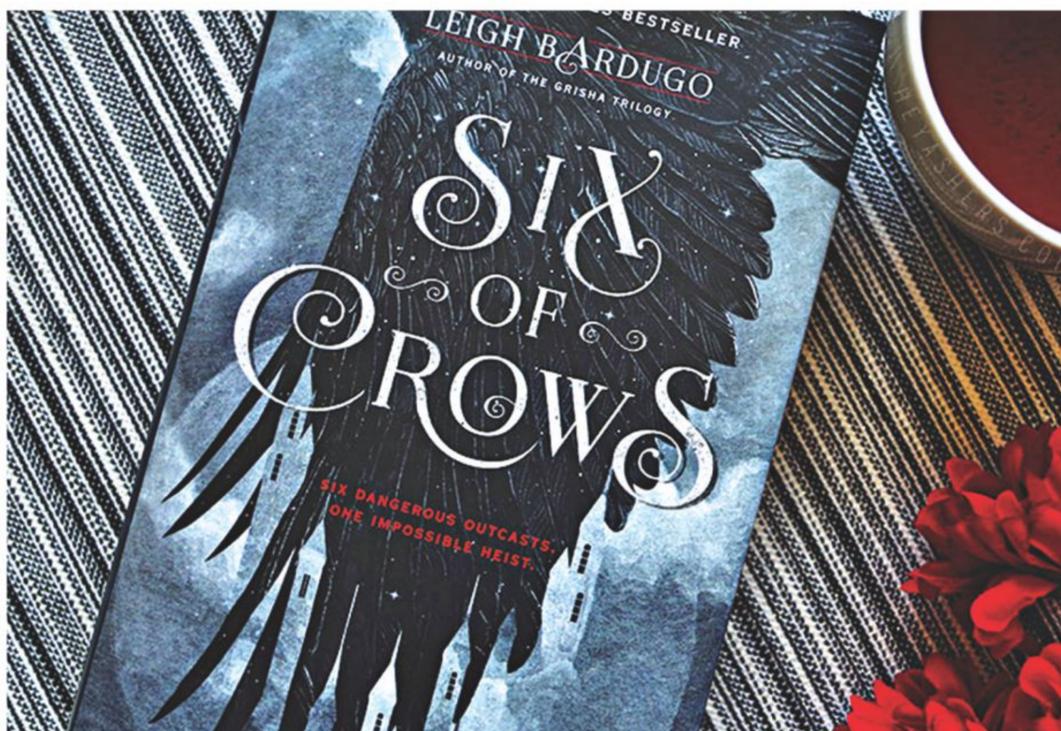
# OUTCASTS ON A MISSION

SANJIDA SAMIHA

*"The heart is an arrow. It demands aim to land true."*

Six of Crows is the one of the fewest books I have read so far that is actually worth the hype and high ratings surrounding it. What I loved the most about the book is how promptly the author depicted the harsh realities of life. The story basically deals with trust, love, vengeance, betrayal and most importantly, survival.

Authored by Leigh Bardugo, the story is set in a Game of Thrones-like fantasy world, there are 6 main characters with 5 perspectives. Along with his crew, Kaz Brekka, the scheming criminal prodigy, is offered a seemingly impossible task - to break into the impenetrable Ice Court, retrieve a hostage and get their hands on a substantial amount of money after handing him over. Even though Kaz is the main lead, the other characters are equally skilled and given the same prominence



and limelight. But all these characters have their ulterior motives for carrying out the task too.

All the characters in the book are outcasts - a convict, a thief, a spy, and so on. From time to time, flashbacks to the

characters' history are provided which aids to connect closely with them. The author takes out the real factors in life and infuses them with supernaturalism. Also, the alterations in the POVs work a great deal in the book's favour, making the plot more intense and at times, humorous.

The female characters, Inej and Nina, are legit badass. They don't hesitate in annihilating their opponents, or in Nina's case - stopping their blood flow with a snap of her fingers. And to make matters more holistic, there's a small hint of romance which feels natural when it surfaces, but that isn't often. Still that didn't stop me from rooting for Nina and Mathias. *Gaah.*

Action-packed and beautifully written, the book will make you rush for its sequel, *Crooked Kingdom*, as soon as you have completed it.

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