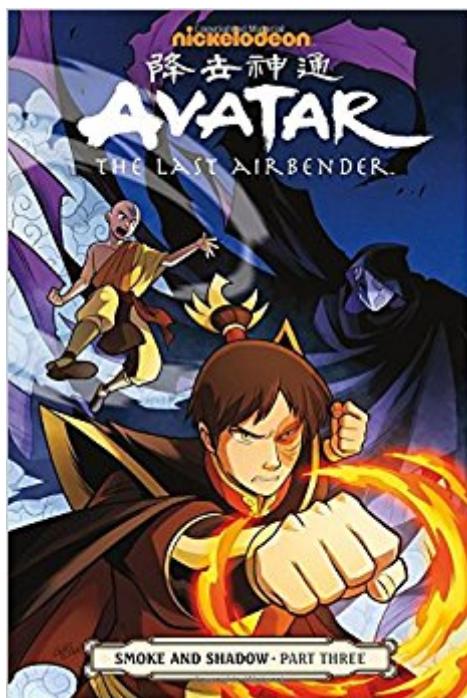


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# Avatar: The Last Airbender-Smoke And Shadow Part Three



## Synopsis

Children are disappearing in the Fire Nation capitol! Avatar Aang and his friends are doing everything in their power to save them--but will it be enough?! What's worse, when Azula--the mad sister of Fire Lord Zuko--appears on the scene, Zuko locks down the capitol to catch her, igniting fear and riots in the streets! Will Zuko follow in his evil father's footsteps in order to save those he holds dear?! Written and drawn by the creative team behind the best-selling *The Promise*, *The Search* and *The Rift*, Gene Luen Yang and Gurihiru, in collaboration with *Avatar: The Last Airbender* and *Legend of Korra* creators Michael Dante DiMartino and Bryan Konietzko, this is the ultimate continuation of *Avatar* and the perfect companion to *Legend of Korra*!

## Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 11 years

Grade Level: 3 - 6

## Customer Reviews

Gene Luen Yang began making comic books in the fifth grade. He has since written and drawn a number of titles. His 2006 book, *American Born Chinese*, was the first graphic novel to be nominated for a National Book Award and the first to win the American Library Association's Michael L. Printz Award. It also won an Eisner Award for Best Graphic Album - New. His 2013 two-volume graphic novel, *Boxers & Saints*, was nominated for both the National Book Award and the LA Times Book Award. Gene currently writes the graphic novel continuation of the popular Nickelodeon

cartoon, Avatar: The Last Airbender. The Shadow Hero, his comic book series with Sonny Liew, revived the Green Turtle, an obscure 1940s character who is arguably the first Asian American superhero. The Shadow Hero is now available as individual digital issues via Kindle. The author lives in San Jose, CA.

I said five stars cause of the great story telling, great character growth. Especially Aang and Toph because their both very different characters. Yet they learn from each other, they still remaining friends and not enemies. It teaches the reader that we need all kinds of kinds people things activities and so forth. This story also makes it clear to the reader why they made The Promise and The search! When I look back at those stories I feel The Promise was about certain change and looking forward to New things in the future with different race living together. The Search was about certain things staying the same and excepting it. Like Zuko staying firelord and Ozai still being Zuko's biological father. It make sense why they keep mentioning the past and the future in this book! Genius!!! All I can say is that we need more fight scenes and maybe better villains in the next story of Last Airbender but other then that keep up the good work.

Zuko has always been my favorite character and I love how this continues his arc. The difficulty of running the Fire Nation in its present state is really explored and handled well. You can see the mistakes Zuko is making, but you also understand why he's making those mistakes. I would argue that he had the biggest character arc in the entire series and it's nice to see that the development didn't stop at the end of Sozin's Comet, but continues on through his young adulthood. There is a sub-plot involving Ursa and the emotional baggage she's been carrying around with her. The moments are scattered in throughout the story and are handled really well. It's not just Zuko's story, but it's one about the entire royal family. There is one scene, where the main character's end up in a sacred place for the Fir Nation. It is eerie, but still oddly filled with hope and a great use of visual symbolism. Without a doubt, a must have for any ATLA fan.

If you don't want to read my long raving over this part, here's a quick summary. I love this book. Not only did it give me everything I wanted to see, like Ursa confronting Ozai, but it gave me things I didn't even know I wanted to see. The political situations are intense, the artwork brilliant, and every line spoken by the characters sounds like them. Even the love triangle (which I did not like) was handled well enough. It's a very satisfying conclusion on pretty much every level. Now for the lengthy part: In The Promise, we saw Avatar trying to branch out from the adventure storytelling and move

into a more political setting, which sort of worked, but it kind of lost the fun adventure which made Avatar Avatar. In The Search they returned to their traditional story telling. It was an excellent story, but it didn't really evolve the world because it was so much like watching the original series. In Smoke and Shadow, they finally got it right. This series delves into the struggles of restoring the world order while also keeping the spirit of the original tale. When I finished the second book, I felt very iffy about it. I wanted to see them deal with Ursa's fear of Ozai . . . they didn't. I wanted to see the Fire Nation unraveling before Zuko's eyes . . . it sort of did. I wanted them to keep Azula out of it so that she could have an entire trilogy devoted to her . . . they didn't. So, a lot was riding on this book convincing me that everything they did or didn't do in Part 2 was a good idea. As indicated in my 5 stars, they were very successful. Azula was handled brilliantly. I dare not give away what happens with her, but by the end I was actually happy that they brought her back. Her motivations are very different than what they were before, and what they do furthers both her character and changes the nature of her relationship with Zuko, and I'm really looking forward to seeing how that develops in subsequent stories. The drawing on her in particular is flawless. Every look she gives, every line she says is just so, Azula. I also like seeing the political situation escalates. It moves from mild unrest to full out riots, and the way Zuko handles the situation is very interesting. I like seeing this series challenge its characters with real problems of being in power and trying to find the best way to solve them and struggle to do what is right. It's a great way to evolve the story from the simple adventure we saw in the TV show to young adults trying to rebuild a broken world. Ursa was also handled very well. In Part 2 she was shoved to the background and mostly a worrying mom, which I didn't like. However, the transition between her worrying about Kiyi to facing her greatest fear - Ozai - is so good that it actually makes me glad she got so little focus in Part 2. Again, this story did a great job of not giving me what I wanted, but instead showing me what I didn't realize I wanted. I do have two complaints it would be that Ursa's confrontation with Ozai feels rushed. It played out the way it should, but it was only a few panels long. I felt like that really deserved an extra page or two. Even so, it's satisfying, and the ending, which focuses on Ursa, still feels very earned. The second has to do with the love triangle. Let's just say, I pretty much hate them on principle. I actually like Kei-Lo and Mai together and think Zuko should just get over her, but they have to keep throwing this forced drama in my face. I mean, it's not terrible. It doesn't ever feel like Mai is leading Kei-Lo or Zuko on, it does seem that she is legitimately confused, so it doesn't ruin her character for me, and the fact that Kei-Lo is useful beyond being a plot device is good. I just wish they could move beyond this stupid cliche and quit trying to force us to care about characters we already care about. In spite of those two complaints, I think this is a wonderful conclusion for the story. It evolves Avatar universe, gives

fantastic character development (Ukano is done very well, too), and still has a nice level of humor. If Part 2 left you on the fence, but this, because it certainly makes everything in Part 2 worthwhile.

If you were hoping that this series would have you loving Zuko's dear mother even more than you already loved her from the show, prepare to be disappointed. I'll try not to spoil it too much, (though with that said, spoiler warning anyway) but I will say that despite the fact that in the TV series she appeared to have made some kind of completely selfless sacrifice to save Zuko, that wasn't \*quite\* the case. In fact, in the 3-part series "The Search", Ursa is quite a cowardly, spiteful, and most of all selfish woman. Her self-centered actions resulted in her own children's suffering while she went off and lived her lifelong "dream". Many of the Fire Nation's royal family struggles were actually almost as much her fault as they were Ozai's. This is a bit of a disappointment since she was supposed to be the one member of the family who really loved young Zuko, but after reading this it seems she didn't quite care about him \*that\* much. (End spoiler content) The more I read about Ursa's past, the more and more I came to dislike her. I just felt like the story was trying way too hard to get the audience to feel sympathy toward her, and yet as much as I wanted to, I just couldn't. Well, I know one thing now. Zuko didn't inherit his ability to be kind even to those who would kill him from his mother. That being said, I did enjoy the story. It wasn't quite what I expected, which is a good thing.

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