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The Selection #2: The Elite

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Book Review

The Selection #2: The Elite

Author

Kiera Cass

Reviewer

Brooklynn Marshall

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Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

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Pages

323

Year

2013

ISBN

9780062059963

Publisher

Harper Teen

In this second installment of the Selection series, seventeen-year-old America Singer continues to participate in a competition for the hand and heart of the prince. As this book begins, the competition group has been narrowed down from thirty-four girls to only six—the elite. America's heart is split between a new life and love with Prince Maxon and remaining true to her roots and first-love Aspen. This conflict of interest places her at a serious disadvantage compared to the other participants, and although Maxon has repeatedly shown patience and mercy, her chance to choose her own future is quickly slipping away. In the midst of her rollercoaster of emotions, America makes a public decision that causes disastrous results. However, this serves as a wake-up call to her true feelings and renews her dedication to remain in the selection competition.

This novel continues to explore previous ideas in the series of power, freedom, and choice. Questions are presented on how much control individuals (or organizations) should be able to exercise over others. This is seen through the tense relationship between Prince Maxon and his father the king, the complications of the caste system, and even the unorthodox relationship between America and her maids. America demonstrates particular feelings of distress over the way power is exercised—especially in the form of punishment. In addition to this, the ability to choose is an extremely prevalent idea as readers are encouraged to embrace opportunities to control their own fate. This message is reflected through Prince Maxon's frustrations with his situation, America's issue with determining the extent of her desire to participate in the competition, and even in Aspen's struggle with the inequality of opportunities provided through the caste system. Ultimately, these characters teach the reader the importance of valuing and defending freedom. They promote the idea that as we recognize the value of freedom, we must simultaneously take advantage of opportunities we have to choose.

*Contains moderate language, mild sexual content, and mild violence.