

*The Selection*

Kiera Cass

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A dystopian romance, *The Selection*, takes place after repeated conflicts with other nations has left the United States in shambles. Years later, the country is now a Monarchy called Illéa. The novel begins by introducing America, a musical performer from the fifth level of Illéa's 8 level caste system. In the beginning of the story, America is very happy preparing for a future with her boyfriend, Aspen, a servant who is an 8 in the caste.

However, when America is given the opportunity to enter The Selection, a competition among 35 young women to win the prince's hand in marriage, Aspen leaves her. He is unwilling to stand in the way of a better future for America. When she arrives at the castle, heartbroken, America is jolted into a new existence with more opulence than she could ever imagine. As she tries to stay afloat in this new world and keep her mind from wandering to Aspen, America discovers there is much more to Prince Maxon than her pre-conceived ideas had her believe. As her friendship with the Prince grows, she also realizes that her government and its people are much more complicated than she's been led to assume as well.

Review:

This was a fun, quick read. Unlike many dystopian novels set in the United States, *The Selection* references a few other nations and some of the ways that they are different in this new society as well, which I found really intriguing. At times the novel felt too light-hearted, perhaps if both the conflicts with other nations as well as the attacks by the rebels had been given a little more attention or explained a bit more, it would have given the novel more gravity. Although it was obvious as the novel progressed that Prince Maxon and America were developing romantic feelings for each other, I really enjoyed their conversations as their friendship first developed. This is when I felt the most connected with America's character. It was also interesting how The Selection competition mirrored current reality dating shows, and provided a slight variation to the tribute battle scenario as seen in *The Hunger Games* or *Battle Royale*, as a way of entertaining the masses in an imperfect dystopian society.

I borrowed this book from the County Library System. I would recommend this book for readers 13 and up.

Other Suggestions:

*The Jewel* – Amy Ewing

*The Goddess Test* – Aimee Carter

*Delirium* – Lauren Oliver