

Synopsis

The blood fever strikes the nation, killing many and changing lives. Labeled as malfettos and segregated from society, the children who survive the illness come out with strange markings, and a rare handful - including Adelina Amouteru - possess supernatural abilities.

Escaping from her father, Adelina crosses paths with the Dagger Society - a group of Young Elites. During their journey together, her powers grow rapidly stronger, as well as the darkness inside her.

Against her will, Adelina is unexpectedly thrown into a difficult position between the Daggers and her sister by the Lead Kenettran Inquisitor, Teren Santoro. Will Adelina choose to betray the Daggers, her only hope to a better life? Or will she let her sister be tortured to death?

Setting

This novel opens in the mythical country of Kenettra on the date of 13 Juno, 1361. Inside Kenettra are various cities, including Dalia - Adelina's home city - and Estenzia - where the Dagger Society is based. The setting holds elements of medieval Italy and which can be observed through various structures, including one of the main settings: The Fortunata Court.

The Fortunata Court is the safehouse of the Daggers, primarily known as a "pleasure court" to the public - where clients visit for music, conversation, and laughter. Situated on the side of a rolling hill, with a breathtaking outlook of the city below, the court consists of gloriously decorated chambers and a lush courtyard of fountains. Vivid paintings of the gods adorn the walls and silver chimes carol in the breeze. Solid walls are pushed aside to reveal new halls, and underground of the Fortunata Court are secret catacombs only accessible to the Young Elites.

Author

Marie (Xiwei) Lu is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Young Elites* trilogy. She writes young adult and dystopian fiction novels and is best known for the blockbuster *Legend* series.

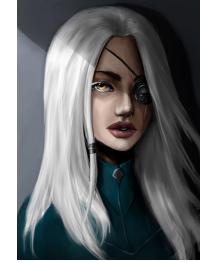


Born in Wuxi, China on July 11, 1984, Lu moved to Texas at age 5. She currently resides in Los Angeles, California with her husband, son, and cats.

Lu graduated from the University of Southern California and first began her career as an art director at a video game company. She has shared in interviews that certain elements of her works were inspired by her interest in gaming.

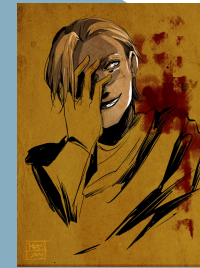
Characters

Anti-heroine



Adelina Amouteru, also known as the "White Wolf" is the main character of *The Young Elites*. Survivor of the blood fever, 16-year-old Adelina possesses the power of illusion. She is Tamouran, and has silver hair, dark olive skin, and a scarred left eye. Due to her dark past, Adelina has a twisted perception of the world around her and struggles with her inner cynical self.

Antagonist



Teren Santoro is the Leader of the Kenettran Inquisition. He is 19 years-old, has wheat blonde hair, a lean chiseled face, and very pale blue eyes - caused by the blood fever. Teren is a Young Elite with the ability to instantly heal himself. Devoted to the queen, he bears the mission of ending the world of malfettos - ironically his own kind.

Other Characters

Enzo Valenciano

Leader and founder of the Dagger Society, Enzo Valenciano has the power to create fire. His deep blood red hair and scarred hands come from the blood fever. To hide his identity as the crown prince of Kenettra, he uses the alias "The Reaper". One day, he hopes to reclaim the throne for malfettos to no longer live in fear.

Raffaele Laurent Bessette

Raffaele is a consort at the Fortuna Court, otherwise called as "The Messenger". With the ability to sense and maneuver threads of energy, he helps the Daggers recruit Young Elites. Raffaele's flawless beauty is described as "one kissed by moon and water" (62). He has a flirtatious and charismatic personality but is guarded of his heart.

Significant Events

Father's Murder

On a rainy night, Adelina overhears her father agreeing to sell her off as an underage mistress and decides to escape. Collecting silverware stolen around the house and minimal necessities, she departs through the window. However, Adelina is caught by her father, who violently forces her to return. In downright fear, Adelina's inner powers emerge, unintentionally creating frightening illusions. Her father is alarmed and runs the other direction, only to smash into and be stepped on by his horse, leaving him dead. This is an important event which first showcase Adelina's powers and its potential. It also reveals Adelina's dark tendencies, observing that she was shocked but "had enjoyed every moment" (19) of her father's death.

Gemstone Test

One of the significant events of *The Young Elites* is the first test Adelina takes to become a member of the Dagger Society.

Underground of the Fortunata Court, Adelina is circled with 12 kinds of raw, unpolished stones. 5 begin to glow as the gems' energy flows through Adelina. Vivid memories linked to each stone rush through her mind.

- Diamond: Fortuna, goddess of Prosperity
- Veritium: Sapietus, god of Wisdom
- Roseite: Amare, god of Love
- Amber: Caldora, angel of Fury
- Nightstone: Formidite, angel of Fear

I interpreted this scene as the result of Adelina's harsh childhood. As Raffaele states, "Something blackens your heart, something deep and bitter . . . I've never felt anything like it" (76). Adelina thinks, "My father was the one who nurtured it" (76).

This event is an important stage of the story, because the Daggers grow distrust for Adelina after observing the danger in her powers, which feed off fear and fury.

Using her powers for good or bad is now up to Adelina.



Things I liked about the writing style/novel

An interesting factor I liked about *The Young Elites* was how the characters in the novel were not fixed to a certain type of traits or a label of "protagonist" or "antagonist", making the novel unpredictable and intriguing. For instance, I categorized Adelina under "Anti-heroine" instead of "Protagonist", because she was a blend of heroic and villainous attributes.

Also, the narrator and point of view shifted back and forth, providing readers with diverse perspectives of the story - continuously engaging the reader. I could truly understand and empathize with each character's complicated feelings and intentions.

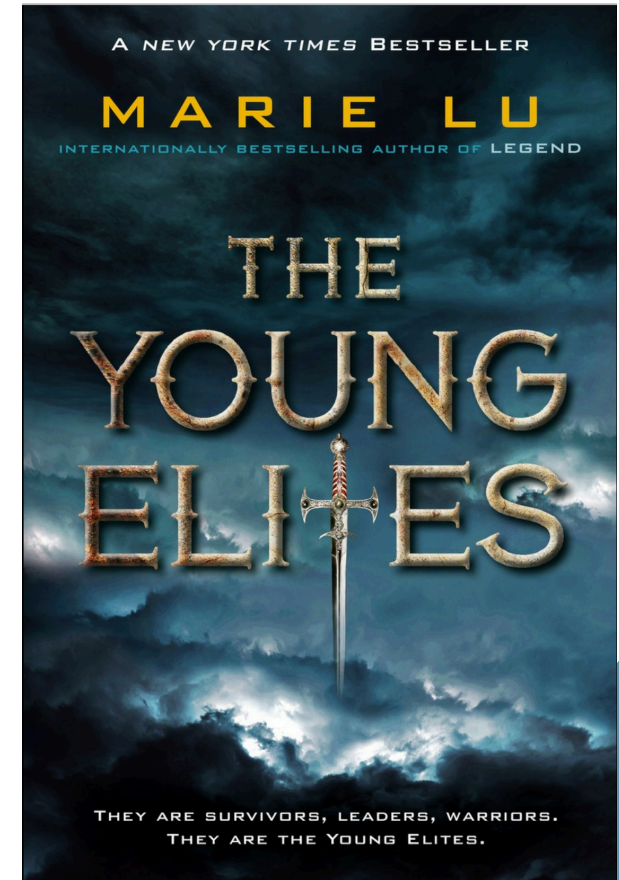
The writing style was rich in visual imagery, supported by intricate descriptions. The author utilized this language to build up tension, thrilling the readers. As expressed by Adelina, "The anger fills me, seeping its blackness into my chest until I can feel it spilling out of every fiber of my body, every energy string pulled so tight, they might break" (177).

The use of quotes at the beginning of Adelina's chapters was a unique point of the book and a way of foreshadowing. For example, on the chapter of Adelina's execution day:

"They think they can keep me out, but it does not matter how many locks they hang at the entrance. There is always another door."

—The Thief Who Stole the Stars, by Tristan Chirsley

The Young Elites



Author: Marie Lu

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