

Prodigy: A Legend Novel Study Guide

Prodigy: A Legend Novel by Marie Lu

(c)2016 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Prodigy: A Legend Novel Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Chapter 1 - June.....	5
Chapter 2 - Day.....	8
Chapter 3 - June.....	11
Chapter 4 - Day, Chapter 5 - June.....	13
Chapter 6 - Day, Chapter 7 - June.....	16
Chapter 8 - Day, Chapter 9 - June.....	19
Chapter 10 - Day, Chapter 11 - June.....	23
Chapter 12 - Day, Chapter 13 - June.....	26
Chapter 14 - Day, Chapter 15 - June.....	29
Chapter 16 - Day, Chapter 17 - June.....	31
Chapter 18 - Day, Chapter 19 - June.....	34
Chapter 20 - Day, Chapter 21 - June, Chapter 22 - Day.....	37
Chapter 23 - June, Chapter 24 - Day.....	40
Chapter 25 - June, Chapter 26 - Day.....	42
Chapter 27 - June, Chapter 28 - Day, Chapter 29 - June.....	44
Characters.....	47
Symbols and Symbolism.....	51
Settings.....	54
Themes and Motifs.....	56
Styles.....	60
Quotes.....	62



Plot Summary

While the Republic continues to war with the Colonies, June Iparis and Day Altan Wing ride in a cargo train into Las Vegas after escaping Day's attempted execution. With a heavily injured leg, Day tries to stay upright on the streets while June watches for Patriots disguised as Republic soldiers and the announcement of the late Elector Primo's death broadcasts overhead. When Day falls, the pair narrowly escapes arrest with the help of Kaede. She leads them to a Republic military apartment where they reunite with Tess and meet the Patriot leader, Razor, formally the Republic Commander Andrew DeSoto. They beg for his help to find Day's brother, Eden, and pledge allegiance to the Patriots, who plan to kill the new Elector, Anden.

June helps Day bathe and the two kiss passionately. Day tells her he loves her, but she does not respond. June fights to earn trust from the Patriots while Day undergoes an advanced surgery to replace his injured leg. Razor puts an elaborate plan into motion in which June will lead Anden into a trap while Day reveals himself to the public and causes a revolution. Disguised as a soldier, Day boards a ship to Colorado with Kaede while June intentionally gets arrested by Thomas. Worried, Day leaves June behind while Thomas takes her to a Las Vegas penitentiary.

Day lands in Lamar, Colorado and Kaede leads Day to the Patriot base, repurposed from a series of tunnels below the city. He meets a group of other Patriots including Baxter and Pascao, two other Runners. He watches June over security footage and reconnects with Tess. Meanwhile, June convinces Thomas to take her to Denver, where she meets Anden. The two have dinner in an elaborate dining hall and she warns him of a false assassination plan. He asks for her trust and tells her that he wants to change the Republic for the better. She takes a lie detection test and, despite lying about the true assassination plan, passes. She struggles to remain loyal to the Patriots and questions her own intentions. Anden tells her that he is going to free Eden and eliminate the Trials, and she signals to Day to stop the assassination plan.

Day struggles to reform his relationship with a jealous Tess, who among other Patriots distrusts June. He sees June's signal on the security footage and wonders what it means while he and the other Runners leave the base to bomb a railcar and steal supplies. The raid goes according to plan until Day finds a train car marked with an "X", designating plague experiments and likely a relationship to Eden. Inside the car, Day finds a young boy in a glass cage who reports that he is being used as a biological weapon on the warfront. Civilians and soldiers recognize Day, and rumors that he is alive spread through the Republic. Convinced the bombing was an attempt on his life, Anden reroutes his planned speaking tour from Lamar to Pierra, Colorado

June begins to feel sick before she arrives at the courthouse where the Elector will pardon her for helping Day escape execution. She instructs the Elector to follow her instructions without question, and then pretends to faint in the courtroom. Anden instructs her guards to take them both to the hospital, but Razor, acting as Commander DeSoto, instructs them to continue towards Pierra as planned. The Patriots make their



move, but Day deviates from the plan and saves the Elector. He and June run to the Patriot base, accompanied by Tess, who refuses to enter. Day and June seal off the tunnel entrance with an explosion and she tells him about Anden's desire to change. Feeling betrayed, Day yells at her and tells her that Anden cannot be trusted. She gets increasingly sick, and Day takes care of her until they realize someone is coming down the tunnel for them. He picks her up and they walk through the rest of the tunnel.

The pair emerge in the Colonies city of Tribune, and they marvel at the pervasive advertisements and corporate influence. They are soon caught and taken to a hospital. The guards recognize Day and crowds of excited Colonies citizens gather outside the building. Day spots Kaede in the crowd with a sign warning him to go back to the Republic, and throws rocks at his window until he comes outside. She shows him the dark side of Tribune, where homeless and poor people are harassed and arrested by privatized police. She tells him that Razor was hired by the Republic Senate to kill Anden because he was too progressive, and Day sees Eden's release on a newsreel. They decide to go back.

While Day talks with Kaede, June talks to Metias in a dream. He guides her through the assassination attempt and she realizes that Razor is working for the Republic Senate. She wakes up to a group of Colonies soldiers, who recognize her as the Republic's prodigy. Day and Kaede come back just in time to help her escape the guards, and the three of them head to the roof to steal a jet. Engulfed in gunfire, they take off from the roof. Kaede maneuvers the jet first away from Colonies jets, and then Republic defenses. They fly through a train tunnel in the Armor and land in the streets of Denver. Day runs through crowds of soldiers and rioters to the Capitol Tower, where Anden stands on a balcony, attempting to calm the rioters. Day climbs to the adjoining balcony and addresses the crowds. He tells the Senate to release arrested Patriots, and he asks the crowd to trust in Anden. The crowd responds in cheers.

Day and June are both taken to a hospital to be tested for Colonies mind control. Cleared of Colonies influence, June is discharged and Anden asks her to train as the next Senate Princeps. Day is reunited with Eden before speaking to his doctor, who tells him he has a brain tumor and will soon die. Two days later, he arrives at the apartment June now resides in, paid for by the Republic. He gives her a ruby pendant and tells her to accept Anden's offer. Realizing the implications of his words, she asks if they can find a way to be together. He tells her that too much has happened, but does not tell her he is sick. He turns to leave but she calls out to him. He turns and kisses her, then walks out the door.



Chapter 1 - June

Summary

June Iparis wakes in the back of a railcar en route to Las Vegas and proceeds to wake Day Alton Wing from an apparent nightmare. Narrating from a first-person point of view, June reminisces on the assassination of their respective families at the hands of the Republic, the military government currently in control of what used to be the western United States, and the several anxious days following their escape from Los Angeles. June shifts between recounting memories and the present dialogue with Day, which centers on his desire to find the Patriots, the rebel group that facilitated their escape.

Day is determined to find the Patriots for personal and political reasons, in particular to see Tess, his close friend from his days of living on the streets, while June's interest lies primarily in getting medical care for Day's infected leg wound. Although she admits that the Patriots have resources the need, she fears that they will be rejected by the rebel group for their lack of funds, as has occurred in the past. She also expresses her fear of being "stuck in a military city" (6) with no allies. She questions her own identity as well, wondering if she is at heart still faithful to the Republic, with which she spent most of her life as a wealthy soldier.

June and Day enter Las Vegas by way of the Main Strip, which increases June's anxiety. She describes it as swarming with searchlights, troops, and airships – "a military city, a world of soldiers" (8). Dressed in military disguises, the two fugitives attempt to blend in with the crowd. Day's injury prevents him from walking without June's assistance, so they attempt to portray themselves as a drunk soldier and his hired escort. Using the signal of pressing two fingers to the brow to communicate trouble, they navigate encounters with actual drunk soldiers and "escorts."

June describes the unique dress of the escorts, tattooed and glimmering, covered in charms and feathers, and examines her own disguise. It is a perfect match to the real escorts with the addition of a "chain of thirteen little glittering mirrors" (11) she wears as a signal to the Patriots. The reader is unsure what the escorts do.

The JumboTrons that line the streets are due to project the national pledge, and June once again shifts into describing a memory of her life in the Republic. She reminisces on reciting the pledge, before she discovered the link between politics and the deaths of her family. She again questions her faithfulness to the rebellion. A newsreel projects that a quarantine has been extended into upper-class sectors in Los Angeles, which leaves both June and Day shocked. The upper-class has been excluded from quarantines and protected by vaccinations until now, and June wonders about the ramifications of the news.

June and Day participate in the pledge until it is strangely interrupted by a broadcast of Anden Stavropoulos, the current Elector Primo's son. He announces his position as the



new Elector Primo, implying his father's death, and the pledge finishes. Now increasingly nervous, June and Day continue walking to a safe location. Day is no longer able to stay upright, however, and collapses in the crowd.

Analysis

The author, Marie Lu, builds a tone of fear and paranoia in this chapter. June identifies multiple sources of her fear, the most obvious of which is the military. Both she and Day are likely to be killed if found by the Republic, but the obvious consequence of discovery is only one part of June's anxiety; she also identifies multiple fears concerning her and Day's relationship. She worries about his physical wellbeing, particularly his infected wound, as well as his emotional wellbeing. She wonders if he is "hanging on to his sanity" (2), fearing that losing him would leave her "no one left to protect" (2). June and Day appear to depend on each other, and June feels like it is her duty to protect him.

Much of June's anxiety comes from the class difference between her and Day, and she fears his judgement. Her upbringing in an upper-class military family is radically different than Day's impoverished roots, and she is acutely aware of the distance it creates. Although she tries to communicate with him carefully, she still slips up. She refuses fried dough, a lower-class food, even when there are few other options available, and immediately becomes self-conscious about the impact it may have on their relationship. She thinks to herself, "poor little rich girl, with her posh manners. She can afford to dislike food" (4), projecting her own insecurity as Day's thoughts.

June questions her own identity and her shift from loyalty to the Republic to rebellion. While Day considers the Patriots allies, June distrusts them. Day points out that she has only recently come to believe that the Republic is not trustworthy, and she wonders if her conditioning in the Republic has clouded her judgment. She finds comfort in reciting the national pledge with the JumboTrons because it brings her back to the comfort and stability of her previous life (11-12). Leaving them behind brings her a sense of emptiness, "as if I miss being the Republic's darling. Maybe I do" (7). She aligns herself with Day and the rebellion, but the nostalgia she feels for the Republic makes her question her loyalty. She goes on to express her uncertainty with her new identity; "If I'm not the Republic's darling anymore, then who am I?" (7). Constructing a new identity out of an unfamiliar lifestyle and worldview is a daunting task, and June fears she will be unable to complete it. Lu further builds June's conflicted identity by contrasting her trust and distrust for the Republic. When the JumboTrons announce the quarantine in Los Angeles, she assures herself that "the plague will die down, just like it always does" (13), even though the facts tell her otherwise. She trusts the Republic. She meets the next announcement, however, with suspicion. The newsreel claims that June is missing and implies that it wants her safe return. She believes that this is a lie and that they want her dead (14). June's search for a stable identity highlights her constant shifting between trust in herself and distrust.



Discussion Question 1

How does June's opinion of the Republic shift throughout Chapter 1?

Discussion Question 2

How do the questions June poses to herself function to build the plot in Chapter 1?

Discussion Question 3

What is the dynamic of June and Day's relationship, from June's point of view?

Vocabulary

equilateral, lusting, battalions



Chapter 2 - Day

Summary

Chapter 2 begins with the announcement of the new Elector Primo. Narrating from a first person point of view, Day is immediately skeptical of the Republic's message and surprised that the death of their leader is not accompanied by more of a show. He is soon distracted by shooting pain in his leg and struggles to stay up, even with June's assistance. A corporal stops the pair to question them, but Kaede (a Patriot the pair worked with previously) appears just in time to keep them from being discovered.

Kaede makes her dislike for June clear, but invites her and Day to her home to rest anyway. The trio make their way to large military barracks. The apartment is upscale and equipped with full electricity, furnishings, and a television monitor. Day notices Tess and they share an emotional moment together. The final person in the apartment comes forward and tests June by asking her to throw a knife at a target without looking. She passes.

Day pleads with the man, whose identity remains unclear, to help him find his little brother Eden and provide medical attention for his leg. The man introduces himself as Razor, the leader of the Patriots, and confronts Day about his refusal to join the Patriots. He tells Day that they do not need him as much as they used to, and that there is a price to pay for their help. He proposes safety and medical care, help finding Eden, and eventually escape into the Colonies, the nation that was once the eastern United States, for June and Day in exchange for a blind pledge to the Patriots and help with an unknown project. The fugitives pledge their allegiance and Razor announces that they are going to kill the new Elector Primo.

Analysis

The characters' distrust of June serves to build June's unstable sense of self. June's history as a highly esteemed member of the Republic makes her untrustworthy to everyone she encounters outside of the military. Kaede makes her distrust, as well as distaste, clear in every interaction with June. She refers to June as a "play thing" (21) and makes jabs at her appearance, and while she is not polite in general, she specifically targets June. Tess also expressed discomfort around June, mostly ignoring her except exchanging "an uncomfortable smile" (24). Although Day trusts her enough to travel with her and confide in her, even he feels some passing anxiety towards her. He still refers to her in his head as a "good Republic soldier" (23), believing that she still retains much of her Republic training. He is surprised by her ability to play the role of escort on the street, and while it works to his advantage in their current situation, he worries that she might be playing another role now. He thinks, "I find myself amazed – yet again – at how smoothly she can become another person. The same way she fooled



me on the streets of Lake” (19). There is always an underlying fear that she is fooling him again.

June’s actions work to build trust and counteract the way others see her. When tested by Razor, she performs perfectly and without hesitation. She displays her Republic military training, but she also shows that she is willing to take orders from the Patriots. Razor, Day, and Kaede are impressed by June’s skill and the way she acts without question. She pledges allegiance to the Patriots before Day, who hesitates. He is surprised by her action and “hadn’t expected her to agree so quickly – I’d thought she would need some persuading before she committed herself to a group that she so obviously hated just a few weeks ago” (30). He begins to believe that she is committed to the rebellion, despite the conflict that it creates for her identity. He also develops trust in June when her fears about the Patriots are proved true. She warned Day about the possibility of being denied help or asked to pay, and when her expectations are met Day realizes that her distrust of the Patriots was rooted in reasoning, not her leftover allegiance to the Republic.

Class is a salient factor in Day’s identity. His lower-class upbringing is a prominent influence in his narration. Unlike June’s narration which is collected and proper, Day’s is full of slang, sarcasm, and incomplete sentences. For instance, he is surprised by the lack of response to the Elector’s death and thinks that it should be accompanied by “an enormous banquet, flags flying low, white banners hanging over every building. Something cracked like that” (18). He uses curse words as well – an indicator of lack of intelligence, education, and class. His reactions reflect his class as well. For instance, he is impressed by his first ride in an elevator because he has never had access to a building with full electricity. This identity is most obvious in contrast to June’s. He notices her lack of excitement at the upscale apartment and remembers that she had access to similar, if not better, accommodations at home. When Razor introduces himself to June, she “inclines her head in a gesture that oozes high class” (25). He picks apart her mannerisms for hints of her wealthy upbringing. Lu draws attention to the ways that class is represented in the reader’s world through mannerisms and language.

Discussion Question 1

How does Day’s speech indicate his class background? How is it different from June’s?

Discussion Question 2

Why might Day focus so heavily on class in his interactions with June? Does June have the same attention to class?



Discussion Question 3

Day draws attention to details of Razor's physical appearance like the "crooked bump of his nose" (28) and his eyes that are "warm as honey" (29). What do these physical descriptions say about Razor's character?

Vocabulary

anticlimactic, ambivalent, winsomely, façade, aristocrat



Chapter 3 - June

Summary

June wonders how the Patriots can afford to stay in high quality quarters and is suspicious of Razor. She theorizes that he is either a double-crossing Republic officer or that the Patriots are funded by the Colonies. She and Day are given access to the luxurious bathroom and she helps him bathe. They discuss their options and the plan to kill the Elector.

June undresses Day and feels embarrassed by her sexual attraction. Day tells her that he loves her, and she responds with disbelief and wonders if she loves him or if she is with him because she “owe[s] him” (37). He kisses her, but quickly stops due to the pain in his leg. June helps him finish bathing and they return to the living room to eat with the others.

Razor asks June about Anden Stavropoulos and explains that he is a weak leader. June questions him back and discovers that he is actually a Republic officer by the name of Andrew DeSoto and that he has been working as a double agent with the Patriots for a decade. He explains the organizational structure and history of the group. He explains the plan to kill Anden in more detail. Anden is interested in June and wants to train her as the new Princeps, or leader of the Senate. June will go back to the Republic and use her influence to alert Anden of a decoy assassination plot while the Patriots prepare for a real attempt. Day will use his celebrity to “work the people up into a frenzy” (47), making way for a full revolution. Day declares that a better life is worth dying for. June feels uncertain and guilty.

Analysis

Lu continues to use June’s identity to build a sense of uncertainty for the readers. June’s personal uncertainty about her ethics and the proper course of action causes a feeling of guilt, and her lack of trust in herself and others creates a sense of insecurity in her own actions. She questions her decisions, particularly when faced with emotional reactions that are inconsistent with her new political beliefs. She watches Day’s excitement over the prospect of a revolution and thinks, “I should be excited too. But somehow still, the thought of the Republic crashing down sends a pulse of nausea through me” (48). Her instinctive reaction challenges her conscience, followed by a “flood of shame and self-hate” (48). She knows that the Republic has caused large scale suffering and is aware of her own role in its actions, for instance how she caused the separation of Day and Tess (33). Despite this, she still feels some loyalty to the Republic – and she feels guilty for her loyalty. She questions her own motives and her loyalty to Day – “am I here because I love him, or because I owe him?” (37). She wonders not only if her actions are right, but if she is acting for the right reason.



June alleviates her guilt and uncertainty by downplaying the role of her free will. Throughout the chapter, she justifies her decisions because she feels she has no other choice. She justifies aligning with the Patriots because Day needs medical help that they cannot find alone and because she is “not even sure we could have turned down [his] offer. He certainly hasn’t threatened us in any way, but I doubt he’s just let us walk back out onto the streets, either” (32). She expresses this to Day multiple times, but he never explicitly agrees. Focusing on her lack of choice alleviates the guilt and confusion she feels by passing the responsibility for her actions to an outside party.

June and Day’s sexuality reflects societal expectations of modesty and aggression. While the attraction between them is mutual, both play much different roles in their sexual relationship. Day initiates sexual contact, sometimes aggressively, and June reacts with modesty – a dynamic that mirrors the traditional roles of male pursuit and female resistance. June feels that it is her duty to resist Day’s advances, but when faced with sexual tension “the corners of [her] logic become fuzzy” (36). She attempts to cut him off because she fears they may get caught, but he responds by kissing her more. She describes him as “overwhelming” (36), his kisses “each... rougher than the last” (38), and herself as “helpless” (37) against him. She does not let Day know that she desires him sexually, and instead ‘gives in’ to his advances. This dynamic is reminiscent of traditional gender roles.

Discussion Question 1

June believes she has no choice in her situation. Does lack of choice mean that she is not responsible for her actions? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 2

June worries that even if her actions are morally right, her motivation is not. Does the end justify the means in June’s situation?

Discussion Question 3

After bathing, Day and June return to the living room where Tess watches them with “a guarded expression” (40). Why might Tess be guarded in this situation?

Vocabulary

undercurrent, hierarchy



Chapter 4 - Day, Chapter 5 - June

Summary

In Chapter 4, the Patriot's medic enters the apartment late at night and preps Day for surgery with Tess's help. He talks to June about the Elector and worries that she does not and cannot love him. He reverses his thinking before going unconscious.

Day dreams about John, his now deceased older brother. He helps John read by candlelight and work through difficult words. A military patrol with June at the lead bursts into the house and shoots John, then Day's mother. His dream shifts to in the Los Angeles Central Hospital, where he undergoes painful procedures. He escapes and discovers June waiting for him. They walk through the streets where every door is marked with a red X, indicating the plague. He walks back to his house and finds it empty except for Eden, whose eyes are bleeding.

He wakes up and sees Tess. His knee has been replaced by a mechanical joint and is now painless. The other Patriots discuss their plan to kill Anden while Day asks Tess to escape to the colonies with him, June, and Eden. Tess warns Day about June and reminds him that she cannot be totally trusted yet.

In Chapter 5, June thinks about the plan to kill Anden. She wonders if she will be able to follow through, and thinks about Metias. She wonders if she is plotting to kill the Elector for the "right reasons" (63). She watches the newsreel and Anden appears on screen. He gives his first live speech to the Republic. He speaks about the Republic's coming victory over the Colonies, and June reminds herself to stay distant so that she can kill him.

June goes into the bedroom to see Day. She examines his new leg and he reveals that it is his birthday. He gives her a ring made from paperclips. She likes it, but Day is embarrassed that he cannot give her something of higher quality. They talk about the plan and decide to signal each other if they need to get out. Razor enters and tells June she is leaving in an hour.

Analysis

Class continues to be a dividing force between June and Day, creating conflict between the two characters. Day is very aware of the differences between him and June, and it brings him a sense of insecurity and distrust. He feels inadequate as a partner for June due to his lower class status, and jealous of the wealthy men that June has been acquainted with in the past. For instance, he pictures her with Anden and compares himself to the Elector: "and what am I, some dirty street con with two Notes in his pocket?" (51). He fears that his class status will prevent June from loving him, and when she does not tell him she loves him in return, he misattributes it to her desiring a



wealthy partner. June, however, has other motives for staying silent – she is struggling with an internal conflict unrelated to Day’s poor upbringing.

June’s awareness of class is much less prominent than Day’s, reflecting real life class dynamics. When Day wakes up from surgery, his first thought is the price of his new leg: “it can’t be a cheap operation, and from the appearance of my leg, the doctor used military-grade healing salves” (58). He has never had access to expensive medical care, and the price of his new luxuries is always on his mind. June, however, thinks much less about cost. She was raised with easy access to high-grade care and luxury, and easily identifies it. When she sees Day’s new leg, she analyzes it, thinking “there are plates of smooth metal (steel and titanium) where his wound had been” (66). She knows what kind of metals make up his new leg because she has seen them many times before, but she neglects to think of the cost. While both characters indicate their class in their thoughts and actions, Day is much more aware of it because wealth has been a limiting factor in his life. For June, wealth is less salient because it has never caused her hardship.

Lu uses traumatic memories to develop the characters’ morality. Day’s nightmare is a combination of real and imagined events. The assassination of his family, Eden’s infection with the plague, and Day’s experience in the hospital are all based in real traumatic events. He relives these experiences constantly through nightmares and flashbacks, and they hold much influence over his actions. When he agrees to help kill Anden, he thinks about these events and his emotional response overpowers his moral opposition to killing. June also changes her actions based on emotional responses to memories. She leaves the room during Day’s surgery, for instance, to avoid showing weakness. She knows that “the image of Day lying unconscious on the table, face pale and blank, head turned ninety degrees to the ceiling, would remind me a little too much of the night I’d hunched over Metais’s dead body in the hospital alley” (62). She tries to be aware of her emotional reactions and avoid them, but she still wonders if they affect her judgment. She wonders if aligning with the Patriots is the morally correct decision, or if she is only acting out of grief for her dead brother.

Discussion Question 1

What is the possible symbolism of the red X?

Discussion Question 2

What literary devices does Lu use to indicate June’s class? Day’s?

Discussion Question 3

What is the significance of Anden using the phrase “manifest destiny” (64)? What historical comparisons is Lu drawing?

Vocabulary

jarring, sabotage, incredulously, bashful



Chapter 6 - Day, Chapter 7 - June

Summary

In Chapter 6, Day narrates from a first person point of view. Kaede disguises Day as an air force recruit and changes his physical appearance to hide his identity. She and Razor both wear full Republic uniforms, and all three wear hidden microphones and earpieces. June does not wear a disguise or an earpiece. They drive to the loading dock where their transport is waiting, and June leaves.

Kaede and Day walk through the crowded landing dock towards the garbage chutes. They notice a soldier named Thomas with a large dog questioning soldiers below them. Day recognizes Thomas, but the reader is unsure of the nature of their relationship. Kaede assures Day that he is there to find June. Thomas leaves in a hurry and Day assumes that the soldiers have discovered June. He and Kaede slide down the garbage chute into their ship, the Dynasty.

Day and Kaede lie to a guard to get into the engine rooms. Day sees that the ship is headed to Lamar, Colorado, "one step closer to Eden" (83). They enter Razor's office and see Commander Jameson, which makes Kaede noticeably nervous. Jameson and Day have met, but the reader is given no more detail on their relationship. Jameson stares Day down but does not recognize him. She leaves and Day worries about June's safety.

Chapter 7 begins with June narrating from the point that she separates from Day. She follows an unnamed Patriot guide into the loading dock towards a secure room where she is told to wait to be discovered by the Republic patrols and then run. Her guide disables the security camera above them, which disables all of the cameras in the hall. He reveals that he is a "Hacker," and she thinks to herself that her big brother Metias would make a good Hacker if he was still alive. She enters the room and waits.

June measures the distance from the doorknob to the ground in the dark. She hears a dog bark and recognizes it as Ollie, her dog from before she left the Republic. She puts together that Thomas would be the only one to bring her dog, and reveals that Thomas is the soldier who killed her brother. He and a patrol of four soldiers enter the room, and June jumps on him. She is overpowered by the other soldiers and placed under arrest by Thomas for "assaulting Republic soldiers, for creating a disturbance in Batalla Hall, and for abandoning [her] post" (93). She is taken to High Desert Penitentiary, a prison in Las Vegas, and learns that all of Los Angeles is under quarantine.

Thomas interrogates June and she wonders why he does not use physical force. She questions him back about the quarantine in Los Angeles and Metias's death. He reveals that Commander Jameson is his direct superior and has ordered him to keep June safe. He tells June that he had no choice but to kill Metias, and she calls him a coward before narrating memories of her brother. She realizes that Metias and Thomas were



romantically involved and questions him about it. Thomas reminisces on the night of Day's failed execution, and explains how he tried to kiss June to try and protect her. She becomes angry and tries to attack Thomas. The next morning, she is told she will be transferred to the Colorado State Penitentiary.

Analysis

Lu raises questions about the role of emotion in decision-making. Both June and Day react to their situations with heated emotions related to their histories. When Day sees Thomas in the landing dock, he is overwhelmed with memories of the soldier. He envisions him pointing a gun at his mother and beating him in Batalla Hall, and his "vision swims in red" (77). His reaction is so intense that he feels physically weak. He calms himself, however, and thinks that if he focuses on Thomas, he "won't be able to concentrate on anything else" (78).

June has a similar reaction to Thomas. When she sees him, her hands begin to shake and she thinks about Thomas killing her brother. When Thomas enters the room where she hides, she is taken by "blind rage" (93) and thinks about breaking his neck. Her anger intensifies when Thomas interrogates her. Her heart races and her breathing becomes unsteady, and she is "blind, smothered by my anger and confusion" (106). Like Day, however, she fights to control her emotion, realizing that it will not help her situation to deviate from her plan. When Thomas tells her that he "did what [he] had to do" (106) when he killed Metias, June forgoes her emotional control and lunges for him. Although the attempt to harm Thomas fails, she fights effectively and thinks of "every attack [she has] ever learned in school" (106). Both she and Day emphasize the importance of emotional control in making effective decisions, but June fights most effectively when influenced by her anger. Lu creates uncertainty for the reader on whether emotion is a positive or negative influence on the character's actions.

June and Thomas create a dichotomy between individual choice and obedience. June takes note that Thomas does not harm her and thinks that it must be an order from Commander Jameson. She thinks, "it doesn't matter how much Thomas cares for me – if his superiors order him to use physical force, he'll do it" (97). Because of his military training and loyalty to the Republic, he will act outside of his desires to meet the demands of his officers. Thomas admits to this when June accuses him of killing Metias. He tells her that he was ordered to kill him and that he cannot disobey a direct order. He tells her that he took an oath to follow orders and that even though he cared for Metias, he is "also a soldier of the Republic. I did what I had to do" (106). Thomas believes that the military is good, and is determined to uphold its values even when he is uncomfortable with his actions. June, however, disagrees. She accuses Thomas of being a coward for following the orders of a broken state and "leaving Metias at its mercy" (102). She believes that a military with the best intentions would not ask a soldier to carry out unethical orders, and that it is an individual's responsibility to disobey. For June, the ends do not justify the means if the means are immoral, while Thomas believes that the ends always justify the means.



Lu normalizes homosexuality in the text by focusing on the dynamics between Metias and Thomas, rather than their homosexuality itself. When June realizes that Thomas and Metias had a romantic relationship she reacts with surprise, but not because of their sexuality. She is surprised because Metias kept it a secret from her. She realizes that he had to keep his love for Thomas a secret, not because homosexuality is unacceptable in the Republic but because “officer and subordinate relationships are strictly forbidden” (103). By focusing on the other factors at play in their relationship, June draws attention away from their sexuality and places the importance on the military dynamics. This serves to normalize homosexuality and encourage the reader to think of it the same as the heterosexual relationships in the novel, which are also heavily influenced by political and military dynamics.

Discussion Question 1

When Kaede and Day see Commander Jameson in Razor’s quarters, they both become visibly anxious while Razor remains calm and relaxed. Why does Razor stay relaxed? Why might Lu point out this difference?

Discussion Question 2

How are June and Day’s decisions in Chapters 6 and 7 influenced by their histories? How are their choices influenced by rational thought?

Discussion Question 3

When Thomas says that he had “no better choice” (101) than to shoot Metias, what might he be referring to? What were his other options, and what consequences might he have faced if he refused the order?

Vocabulary

marquees, insignias, synthetic, unceremoniously, indefinitely, snide, exasperation, oscillating



Chapter 8 - Day, Chapter 9 - June

Summary

In Chapter 8, Day narrates from the first person point of view as the Dynasty lands in Lamar, Colorado. He observes the warfront city and the crumbling military buildings that “loom in front of us” (109). Kaede tells him that the Republic has been lying about the war, and that the Colonies have actually pushed much farther into the Republic than they tell the public. The pair pass a man dressed as a soldier who makes a symbolic “V” with his fingers, and the reader is given no more explanation of the event. Kaede and Day enter a secret tunnel underground.

Kaede and Day walk through the tunnel and she tells him that the Patriots are funded by the Colonies. Day tells her about his father, who he suspects worked for a resistance. Kaede talks about her life in the Colonies before she joined the Patriots. She tells him she was raised on the far eastern side of the Colonies and was trained as a top pilot. She was kicked out after another pilot damaged her eye and she retaliated, accidentally killing him. She tells him that she joined the Patriots to make money and to “get people living normal lives again” (115). Kaede then tells Day that Tess was locked out of her house at nine years old because her family could not take care of her. Day thinks of Tess and then June.

Kaede stops at a door and knocks a code. She and Day enter the room and three people point guns at them. They question Kaede for a password and to confirm Day's identity and are allowed to pass into another room. There are dozens of people in the new room, as well as electric lights and television monitors. Day notices a “silver star, with three silver V stripes below it” (119) on the wall – the Patriot insignia.

A boy confronts Day and accuses him of abandoning Tess. Kaede interrupts him and reveals his name is Baxter. Kaede tells Day that Baxter is also a runner and that Day once ruined Baxter's mission without knowing it. She gives Day a lesson in world geography because he has never seen a world map in the Republic. She describes the world as a futuristic version of the world in real life, with technological advancements in Africa and Antarctica, floating Chinese cities on the oceans, and a divided Europe. She explains that the geography of the world shifted due to global warming and melting ice caps.

Kaede introduces Day to Pascao, who he recognizes as the man they passed at the beginning of the chapter. Pascao flirts with Day before explaining the Patriots' plan to broadcast the Elector's assassination with Day at the lead. The chapter ends with Pascao telling Day that Razor wants him to shoot the Elector.

In Chapter 9, June narrates her arrival in Denver, the Republic Capital. She is greeted by a crowd of poor Republic residents and one of them shouts at her to ask if Day is still alive. She responds with a smile as he is knocked down by a soldier and the crowd



begins to chant “Day lives!” (130). She is escorted into a jeep and observes the city as she and the soldiers drive. She notices “the Armor,” the wall that surrounds Denver. Thomas tells her she is being taken to Colburn Hall, “a dining hall in the Capital Plaza where the Senators sometimes convene for banquets” (131), where she will meet the Elector.

June’s narration shifts to Colburn Hall, marked by a header that introduces the new setting. She sits in an upscale dining room and describes her surroundings and the expensive dress she has been given by the Capital soldiers. A soldier enters and announces the Elector’s arrival, and Anden enters. She considers that he is treating her well to win public appeal, and wonders to herself what he thinks of Day. Servants bring her and Anden dinner, and one breaks a champagne glass. June is surprised by Anden, who does not react with anger, but instead helps the servant up from the floor and helps clean the mess.

Anden asks June about Day’s execution, and she starts to tell him the fake story that the Patriots have given her. She tells him that she was held captive by the rebels and that Day has joined them. He flirts with her, and she pretends to reciprocate. Anden goes on to tell her that she has avoided execution because of her prodigy status within the Republic. He tells her that he was secretly a student at her university while she attended, and that he noticed her often. They reminisce on pranks they played in school. She reminds herself to stay focused on her task.

A soldier interrupts the dinner to deliver a message to Anden, which he tries to keep June from hearing. Anden tells the soldier it is “impertinent” (142), and tells the soldier he will remember his favor. June thinks to herself that this exchange is a tactic to form trust and loyalty with the military. June tells him that the Patriots are planning to assassinate him and tells him the details of their fake plan. He brings up his mother, the last Senate’s Princeps or leader of the Senate, her death, and how alone he feels. He asks June if he can trust her, and she replies yes. She thinks that he needs her to win over the people of the Republic. She spends the night in an upscale apartment surrounded by guards, one of whom reveals herself as a Patriot.

Analysis

Lu uses Day’s surprise at the Patriot’s information to demonstrate the depth of the Republic’s propaganda. When he enters the Patriot base, Day is shocked by access to information that the resistance has. He is first surprised when Kaede tells him that the Colonies are, and have been, winning the war with the Republic. He understands why the Republic would hide information about losing the war, because it might lower soldier morale and support from citizens. However, when he sees a world map for the first time he realizes that the Republic has been hiding not only information about the war, but information about the world. He learns that the many other countries in the world are flourishing and questions why the Republic never talks about other nations. Kaede tells him that “all it takes is one generation to brainwash a population and convince them that reality doesn’t exist” (125), and Day realizes that by teaching pro-Republic propaganda



that omits global issues, the Republic can convince the population that their nation is the best. Even when they identify issues with the Republic, the people are given no knowledge of other options for life, encouraging them to remain compliant. Kaede seems unsurprised by this knowledge because she was raised in the Colonies, where global news is available. However, even as a rebel against the Republic Day has never had access to this information. Despite his questioning attitude, his ignorance demonstrates the difficulty in accessing information in the Republic and the completeness of the Republic's propaganda campaign.

Lu continues to build class tension between Day and June. Even though he and June are no longer physically together, Day continues to reflect on the way that class influences his relationship with her and with Tess. Kaede tells Day about Tess's background, in which she was abandoned by her parents because they could not afford to take care of her, and tells him to "stick by her – you two are a good match" (116). Day agrees, thinking that Tess "understands intimately where [he] came from" (116), while June does not. While Day actively thinks about their class difference, June thinks about class in less direct ways. When she gets off the train in Denver and sees the crowd in "threadbare clothes... wearing shoes riddled with holes" (129-130), she feels guilty for being treated so well. She meets the Elector for dinner and admires the expensive dress she has been given until she remembers the poor citizens outside and once again feels guilty. June starts to identify class in her interactions more often and is beginning to feel conflicted about the class divisions in the Republic. However, she still maintains her upper class mannerisms. While she observes her surroundings, Lu makes a point to write in details that Day ignores. For instance, June describes the table she sits at in the dining hall as "twelve feet of dark cherrywood, hand-carved legs, ornate gold trim probably painted on with a fine-detail millimeter brush" (132). June does not attribute these observations to her upbringing, but they indicate a high level of education and art appreciation that accompany wealthy status. Although June is beginning to consider class more deeply, Day still finds it a much more pervasive factor in his life.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Day feel uncomfortable with the Patriot morale-boosting propaganda?

Discussion Question 2

How does the Elector's reaction to the broken champagne glass influence June's opinion of him? What purpose does it serve in the text?

Discussion Question 3

Why might Anden reveal that he broke the rules and got in trouble in school to June?

Vocabulary

squalor, nonchalant, isolationist, indebted, etiquette



Chapter 10 - Day, Chapter 11 - June

Summary

Chapter 10 is narrated from Day's point of view and begins with a dream. Day is in his old home where John, Eden, and his mother are asleep but his father is missing. He goes outside, sees his father in the shadows, and begins chasing him. When he catches up to his father, he tells him it is his birthday. His father tells him he has to return to the warfront. Day recalls that it was "the last time I ever saw him" (153), shifting from dream to memory.

Day's narration returns to the present, where he sits in his room at the Patriot base. Tess knocks on the door, but Day sits and thinks about his family and Pascao. She knocks again and he lets her in, and she tells him that there is a "live feed" of June in the main room. They head towards the main room where they are joined by Baxter, Pascao, Razor, and Kaede, who teases Tess. A monitor in the room shows security camera footage of June in the dining hall with Anden. He watches the footage and feels upset that June is being treated so well and seems to be enjoying Anden's company while the other Patriots comment on how well she seems to be tricking the Elector. He is upset and leaves the room.

Tess catches up with Day in the hallway. She asks if he is okay and his mood improves. She tells him that the rumors that he is alive "are spreading like wildfire" (159) throughout the Republic. She tells him that Los Angeles has been quarantined due to riots, not plagues. Her excitement fades and she brings up June. She yells at Day and accuses him of caring more for June than her. She tells Day that she thinks he likes June because she arrested him and he has a psychological complex, and reminds him that June played a major role in his mother's death, although the reader is unsure how. Tess asks Day who he would choose if he had to save her or June, and Day reassures her he would save her, not June. He then tells her that he would save her because June "wouldn't need my help" (164). Tess leaves upset.

Chapter 11 begins with June narrating her dream from the night before. She dreams that Day is murdered by the Patriots, who accuse her of working with the Elector. She shifts to the present, in which she is being led to a lie detector room in the Capital Tower. On the way, she observes the soldiers on the streets and the Capitol Tower, which has balconies covered in protective glass. She sees a JumboTron projecting the news that Day is dead and wonders why they continue to broadcast a lie. She notices another JumboTron that says the Elector is going to announce a new law. She arrives at the Tower and sees a large group of protestors outside with signs proclaiming her innocence.

June is escorted into the lie detector room by guards and is strapped to a lie detector machine. She notices 20 soldiers, six of them with arm bands that mark them as the examiners for the lie detector test. The lead examiner introduces herself as Dr.



Sadhwani and explains the test to June. She begins asking June questions about her identity, and June tries to change her breathing to create fluctuations in her physical rates to trick the examiners. Dr. Sadhwani asks June if she has ever lied to her brother, and June hallucinates that Metias is in the room asking the question. June asks the examiner about it and discovers that while the test induces hallucinations, it cannot control what June sees. After many more questions, Dr. Sadhwani asks June if Day is alive and why she helped him escape. June says that he is, and she helped him escape because he is innocent.

The exam continues with questions about the Patriots and their plan to assassinate the Elector. June lies and tells the examiners about the fake plan, but the machine fails to recognize that she is not telling the truth. Dr. Sadhwani calls an end to the test, but Anden steps in and asks June if she is loyal to the Republic. June hallucinates the assassination of Day's mother, which the reader learns was committed by Thomas, and questions her loyalty in her own head. She answers yes, and the examiners declare that she is telling the truth.

June's narration resumes later that night as she sits in her room. She begins to feel feverish and wonders jokingly if she has the plague. She thinks about Metias until Anden enters the room. He tells her that two soldiers in his personal guard went missing, and Commander DeSoto is assigning new soldiers. June pretends to be relieved but thinks to herself that the assassination plot is proceeding as planned. Anden leans in close to June and pretends to kiss her while asking for her help finding Day so that he can "win over the people" (181). He then tells her that he is going to release Eden and other individuals infected with the plague who have been taken by the Republic as biological weapons. Anden finally kisses June and leaves. She considers that the assassination is unnecessary and that Anden can restore the Republic. She presses her fingers to her forehead, the same signal Day used in Las Vegas in the first chapter, hoping that Day will notice and stop the plan.

Analysis

Lu uses dreams to compare and contrast June and Day and create rising tension. Both Chapter 10 and 11 begin with their respective narrator having a nightmare and although the content of their dreams is different, both revolve around concern for others. Day dreams about his family, his main motivation for joining the Patriots and rebelling against the Republic, and June dreams about Day – her motivation for joining the Patriots. Both characters' dreams reflect their motivations, but June's dream revolves around anxiety and distrust while Day's focuses on past events. Her dream reflects her guilt for beginning to trust Anden and her fears for repercussions from the Patriots. Day, on the other hand, remains ignorant of Anden's intent to change the Republic and instead focuses on redeeming injustices of the past. The divide in the character's states of mind creates rising tension, furthered by their inability to communicate.

Day's relationship with Tess creates tension in his and June's relationship. Day has a long history with Tess, one that was built through mutual aid on the streets. Day often



thinks that Tess is a good match for him as a partner because she understands his background – she has experienced it herself. He thinks of June in a different light, and feels frustrated by her lack of understanding for his background. Watching June on the security footage, he feels bitter over the way she relates to Anden: “She almost seems to be having a good time. She’s on par with men like him: aristocrats. Made for the Republic’s upper-class life” (158). He wonders how they could ever be together, when he has nothing tangible to offer her but “a handful of paper clips” (158). Tess points out the ways in which June has taken advantage of Day, and the stress it has put on their relationship: “June can do whatever she wants to you, and you’d still take her back” (162). She reminds Day that June is responsible for his family’s death, and has done nothing to help him that Tess has not done herself. Although he argues against her, he reflects on her words and wonders if he is “just deluding [himself]” (165). Tess’s distrust and jealousy towards June creates conflict for Day, as he is fiercely loyal to Tess. His view of June shifts, and she is unable to regain his trust from afar.

Discussion Question 1

Day seems less enthusiastic about the rebellion than Pascao and Tess. Why might this be?

Discussion Question 2

When Anden says he is going to change the Republic, do you think he is being honest? What motivation might he have for telling June his plans?

Discussion Question 3

June tells the examiner that she is loyal to the Republic and her response appears honest, even though she is certain she will not pass the question. Is June loyal? What is the purpose of this exchange in the text?

Vocabulary

scrutinizes, fluctuations, deliberations, paranoia, quelling, proximity, catalyst



Chapter 12 - Day, Chapter 13 - June

Summary

In Chapter 12, Day picks up his narration from the end of the previous chapter and his fight with Tess. He goes to the main room with many other Patriots to hear about the next part of their plan. Tess approaches him and acts like she is no longer upset. She gives him a bandage and two pills that she explains will “warm you up if it’s too cold out there” (187). He tries to apologize, but she forgives him before he can. Razor addresses the room and tells the Patriots that their plan is falling into place, and that the Elector has re-routed his speaking tour from Lamar to Pierra, a neighboring city. Pascao approaches Day and asks to give him a briefing, but Day is distracted by footage of June on one of the television monitors. Pascao gets Day’s attention again and tells him that the two of them and a few other Runners will steal a shipment of weapons and supplies from a railcar that night. They will then blow it up to look like a failed assassination attempt while Day distracts the Republic soldiers and alerts the public that he is alive. Pascao finishes describing the night’s plan and Day is once again distracted by footage of June. He sees Anden kiss her and feels jealous. He sees June put two fingers to her brow and recognizes the gesture as their signal.

Day continues to narrate later that night as he, Pascao, and three other Patriot Runners leave the underground base in military uniforms. He thinks about the footage of June and wonders what the signal could mean. He wonders why there was no sound on this video when the others has clear audio. Pascao tells one of the other Runners, Iris, and Baxter to come with him and the third Runner, Jordan, to go “pinpoint the right railcar” (193). Day clears his mind of June and observes his surroundings, which are full of slanted roofs and metal beams. He climbs the roof of a nearby building, hides behind a chimney, and throws a “dust bomb” next to the train station which covers the area in a cloud of dust. He jumps down among the soldiers and yells at them to follow him under a Commander’s orders. He leads them down an alley and jumps onto a balcony out of sight. A soldier spots Day and they all begin shooting at him. He runs between rooftops to get away and a railcar explodes, as Pascao had warned him. He hides behind the train and lets his hair down from his military cap.

Day observes the markings on the train and notices a red X on one of the cars. He associates it with Eden and wonders if his brother may be inside. He jumps inside and discovers a glass cylinder with a boy he thinks is Eden inside. He tries to break the glass and realizes that the boy is not his brother. The boy squints at Day, and he thinks that he must be blind. The boy comes closer, and Day notices that his irises are half filled with blood, when Eden’s were completely full. The boy introduces himself as Sam Vatanchi and becomes excited as Day tries to get him out of the cylinder. The boy tells him that he has been infected with a dormant virus, and that the soldiers have taken him to various warfront cities and drawn his blood. Day hears soldiers approaching but cannot get the cylinder open. He is forced to leave Sam and returns to the streets with Pascao.



Chapter 13 is narrated by June from the first person point of view as she and the Elector get on a train headed to Pierra. June is given her own car on the train and the soldiers that accompany her treat her like a high class guest. She worries that some of the soldiers on the train might be Patriots in disguise, and that they might “suspect my shifting loyalties” (209). The train passes the Armor wall, where other trains are being stopped for inspection. June considers ways that she can warn Anden of the real assassination plot without the Patriots knowing, but concerns for Day’s safety keep her stuck. June notices that she feels sick, but does not ask for medicine because it “inhibits the real immune system” (210).

June sees Anden arguing with an older man about the use of military force to suppress rebellion as they walk towards her car. Anden refers to him as Senator Kamion and tells him that force is not necessary. Senator Kamion warns him that leniency will make Anden look weak. Anden stands his ground and asks the Senator to help him win over the rest of Congress. He ends the conversation and enters June’s car. He tells June about the Patriot’s attack on the railcar the previous night, and assures her that she will be released and her record cleared. He tells her she will be assigned to a Denver patrol before sending the guards out of the car and turning off the security cameras.

With no guards or security footage running, Anden tells June about his father and the Trials, the system in place for assigning citizens of the Republic to the military. He tells her that the Trials were voluntary in the beginning, unlike the present mandatory participation. He goes on to tell her that the Republic was formed in the midst of a flooding crisis which displaced many citizens on the United States coasts. A military officer seized power as the first Elector and claimed the Republic as a separate nation under martial law. The military killed many civilians until the Republic was in complete control of the military. Anden explains that the Trials were instated to “encourage hard work and athleticism... but they were also used to weed out the weak – and the defiant. And gradually, they were also used to control overpopulation” (218), implying that children who fail the Trials are killed. Anden expresses his uncertainty about the morality of the Republic’s policies. June asks Anden to follow her instructions when they arrive in Pierra, although she does not tell him her intention of avoiding his assassination.

Analysis

June struggles to remain loyal to the Patriots as she develops her relationship with Anden, creating a sense of uncertainty for the reader. During her imprisonment, June feels a shifting sense of loyalty towards Anden, one that causes her to feel conflicted about Day and the Patriots. She rides in a luxurious railcar to Pierra, dressed in warm, soft clothes and is treated by the guards as an elite member of the Republic. She feels guilty for her treatment “while Day is probably on the run with the Patriots” (213) and rubs the paper clip ring, a gesture that represents her devotion to Day. However, the more she interacts with Anden, the more she thinks that perhaps she has chosen the wrong side. At first, she thinks of ways to signal Day and stop the assassination attempt. Soon she starts to think about leaving Day behind completely. She fantasizes about a world where she reveals the plan to Anden, “without caring whether word will get back



to the Patriots or whether they'll hurt Day because of it – and return to living a wealthy, secure life as an elite government worker” (220). She quickly pushes the fantasy out of her mind, however, and reminds herself of Day's importance in her life. Her inner conflict creates a sense of uncertainty for the reader in where June's intentions lie.

Lu creates a historical comparison between the Republic and Nazi Germany. Anden's oral history of the Republic shares many features with that of Germany during World War II. He tells June about his father, a “charismatic” (215) and authoritative leader who ruled over the people with martial law, using a phrase associated with the German fascist leader, Adolf Hitler. He goes on to describe the formation of the Republic during a national crisis in which many people were made homeless. The government could not afford to maintain control, so an officer seized control and instilled military rule. The rise of fascist power in Germany came during a financial crisis created by the losses in World War I in which the German currency was reduced so heavily the government had little power to intervene in the displacement of its citizens. Anden goes on to discuss the Trials. Initially optional, they were designed to “encourage hard work and athleticism” before being utilized as a tool for population control by killing “weak” citizens. Nazi propaganda was well known for emphasizing athleticism and patriotism, and eugenic experiments and violence towards “weaker” races is a pillar of Nazi history. By creating this historical comparison, Lu encourages the reader to think about the novel's themes outside of the context of a far-off dystopia and apply them to the real world, in which the policies of the Republic have existed throughout history.

Discussion Question 1

Is June “brainwashed” by the Republic, as the Patriot's seem to think? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 2

Why might the Republic hide information about its formation and past from its citizens?

Discussion Question 3

What historical comparisons does Lu draw with Anden's explanation of the Trials and martial law in the Republic?

Vocabulary

salivating, crevice, bewildered, ricochet, coax, exasperation, upheaval, sullenly, delegates, rhetorical, anarchy



Chapter 14 - Day, Chapter 15 - June

Summary

In Chapter 14, Day narrates from the present tense as him, Pascao, and the three other runners hide after blowing up the railcar. They return to the Patriot's base, where the rebels are packing up their items and destroying documents. Pascao shows Day footage of a city square with "Day lives!" spray painted on the wall. Day approaches Tess, but Baxter shoves him in the shoulder. The situation escalates and Baxter taunts Day about June and the Elector's apparent relationship. Tess steps in and Baxter insults her. Day loses his temper and punches him, and the two fight. Pascao pulls Baxter away, and Tess takes Day into a room to examine his injuries.

Day apologizes to Tess again for their fight, and Tess kisses him. He pulls away, and Tess becomes upset. She reminds him that June is responsible for his mother and his brother's deaths and that he should not be in love with her. She tells him that June has hurt him and never worked to make it up. She warns Day that June will "shatter you into a million pieces" (230) and leaves the room.

Chapter 15 begins with June narrating the day that Anden is going to be assassinated. She recounts the night before when a Patriot disguised as a guard approached her and tells her that the assassination will take place after she is pardoned at Olan Court Hall, when she and the Elector drive back to the Pierra military base. She shifts to present tense and observes her surroundings, looking for Day or other Patriots. Guards escort her to a courtroom in the Hall, and she notices that she still feels dizzy and sick. Anden enters the courtroom with a group of others, including Senator Kamion, a woman June recognizes as Senator O'Connor, and two journalists. Anden pardons June for helping Day escape execution and tells her she will be under surveillance until she is approved to rejoin the military.

Soldiers escort June and the officials towards a series of jeeps waiting outside. June stumbles and falls as if she is fainting, hoping to divert the Elector away from the assassination. Anden orders the soldiers to take June to the hospital and they carry her to a jeep. The driver of the jeep does not drive towards the hospital, however, and tells the passengers that Commander DeSoto has instructed him to proceed to the Pierra base as planned. June realizes that Razor is going to continue the assassination plan.

Analysis

June deceives the people around her, leaving the reader unsure whether or not she is loyal to the Republic or the rebellion. In Chapter 2 when Day and June are stopped by a soldier in Las Vegas, Day is "amazed – yet again – at how smoothly she can become another person" (19). He reflects on how she deceived him to get to close to him before his assassination, pretending to be a poor street kid like him. In Chapter 14, Tess asks



Day how he can trust her, especially when she is seen kissing Anden. He responds that “June is playing a role” (229) just like she was before. Meanwhile, June tricks both the Anden and the Patriots when she pretends to faint in the courthouse, letting both of them think that she is ill and unintentionally diverting the Elector away from his assassination. While Day feels confident that he understands June’s intent for now, the reader cannot be sure who June is loyal to – herself, Anden, or Day.

Tess continues to warn Day against trusting June, causing the reader to question June more deeply. Tess’s extreme distrust of June comes to the forefront again when she kisses Day. She tells Day to stay away from June, and that “she’ll shatter you into a million pieces” (230). She clarifies that her intentions are protective, not motivated by jealousy even though she has shown her romantic feelings towards him. Additionally, both June and Day describe Tess as reliable and selfless, designating her as a character that the reader can trust at face value. Other characters seem to have alternative motivations for disliking June, like Baxter, who dislikes Day for his popularity and for ruining one of his missions and may dislike June as an extension. Tess’s feelings of distrust towards June, however, seem honest, creating a further sense of distrust in June for the reader.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Day compare Baxter to Thomas?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Day ignore Tess’s warning, despite his trust in her?

Discussion Question 3

June uses her illness to her advantage. How does this reflect on her personality?

Vocabulary

unceremoniously, indignant, chauffer



Chapter 16 - Day, Chapter 17 - June

Summary

Chapter 16 is narrated from Day's point of view during the assassination day. He sits on top of a roof dressed as a Republic soldier but wearing his white armband on his left arm instead of his right, as is usual of real soldiers. He thinks about June's signal and wonders what it means. He wonders if June has betrayed the Patriots, as Tess warned, or if the Patriots are hiding something from Day and June is trying to warn him. He turns his thoughts to the hope for a new Republic and finding Eden. Pascao reviews the plan with Day via a hidden earpiece, and Day counts down the minutes until the Elector's caravan will pass.

At eight minutes, Pascao tells Day that June has fainted and there will be a delay. Day interprets her illness as an intentional move to stop the attempt, and becomes anxious when he learns that the plan is still underway. A grenade explodes a few blocks away from where Day waits to block off the Elector's escape route and create a diversion for the Republic soldiers. Two more explosions go off and the jeep caravan comes into Day's view. He watches June jump out of one of the jeeps and wave her hands. Pascao tells him over the earpiece to ignore her and continue the plan, and he tries to decide whether or not to trust her. He tells himself to "trust her" (244) and throws a grenade into the street where the Patriot's had planned for the Elector to go. The jeeps come to a stop and June runs to the Elector's vehicle.

Day jumps off the roof and finds Tess. He tells her to run and hide in the Patriot base underground. Other Patriots, hidden nearby, continue to throw grenades and Day thinks to himself that "they're literally going to kill me for what I did" (246). He runs to the Elector's jeep and covers June as another grenade goes off and launches debris at his shoulder. He sees the Elector through the window and thinks briefly that he should kill him. He then thinks of June, and yells for the soldiers to barricade the street to protect him. The Elector gets out of the car, gets shot in the arm, and escapes with a group of soldiers. Day takes June's hand and they run from the scene. Baxter stops them and grabs June, but Kaede appears and knocks him out. She tells the pair to get to safety and Day wonders why she has turned on the Patriots to help them. He and June run towards the Patriot base, chased by a number of Patriots.

Day and June reach the tunnel entrance to the Patriot base and find Tess waiting. She appears upset, but Day grabs her hand. He blows the entrance open with a grenade. June enters and Day motions for Tess to follow. Tess refuses and runs back towards the pursuing Patriots. Day is shocked and realized that he has let her down, just as Baxter had predicted. He enters the tunnel and runs. He hears Patriots entering behind them and throws a grenade in hopes of blocking off the tunnel. He succeeds, but "all [he] feels is emptiness" (252).



Chapter 17 begins with June narrating an event from her past in which Metias takes her to her parents' graves. She thinks of Metias's sad expression and returns to the present tense to compare his expression to Day's. She runs through the tunnel with Day until they reach a wall, feeling feverish. She wonders why Tess turned back and if she is okay. Day pulls a hidden lever and the wall opens into a large room. There are two hallways at the back, and she explores one while Day checks the other. The hallway contains bunk beds and opens to a "dark, endless tunnel" (256). She returns to the room and embraces Day and is surprised when he pulls away before kissing her.

She tells him that Razor is lying about why he wants to kill the Elector. She thinks about Tess again and wonders what happened between her and Day, but she decides against asking him. She speaks to Day again, telling him that Anden released Eden and is opposed to the Republic's policies. Day responds harshly and asks June if she has any proof. She says she does not, and Day tells her she was tricked. He tells her about finding Sam in the train and interrogates June on why she trusts Anden so much. She tells him that Anden has the power to change the Republic. The topic shifts to Tess, and Day tells June that Tess kissed him and now feels betrayed. Shifting the topic back to the Elector, Day asks her how she feels about Anden personally, and she tells him that she "think[s] he's real" (263) and that they should help him more. Day becomes more upset and claims that along with the Elector, he's "be glad to see every single person in his government dead too, if it meant I could have my family back" (264). June tries to defend the Republic, but Day argues back, claiming that there is no justification for the government oppressing the poor. June argues that class is not relevant, and Day rebuts that "money means everything" (265). Day and June continue to argue until Day blames June for his family's death and leaves the room.

Analysis

Day uses specific, overarching language to refer to the Republic, allowing him to ignore the individuality of the Republic leaders and soldiers. Throughout the novel, Day uses "the Republic" to refer to both the state and the individual soldiers and leaders that maintain its power. For instance, he explicitly links the individuals in the Republic to the oppression in the nation when he sees Anden, thinking "this guy is the Republic" (247). He also assures himself that June has not betrayed him because she "would never do that. Not after what the Republic did to her brother" (239). While June blames Thomas specifically for her brother's death, Day attributes it to the nation as a whole. June points out his language use and tells him that he "can't lump everyone into the same category, Day. Not everyone working for the Republic is evil. What about me? Or my brother and parents?" (264). Day ignores her point and continues to refer to the Republic as the monolithic cause of their suffering. With the exception of June, every member of the Republic's forces that he has met has caused him and his family harm. He assumes that anyone loyal to the Republic is the same, and does not consider that individuals within the government and military have unique lives and motivations. This viewpoint creates conflict with June, who has spent her life around individuals in the military and government. Her experience allows her to see that there is diversity within the Republic, and some are working to change the systems that cause suffering.



Day and June also use different terms to refer to the Elector, further highlighting the difference in their politics. Day refers to him as the Elector, while June uses his first name, indicating a personal relationship. June notices the difference and feels uncomfortable with the divide: “I don’t like the way he calls Anden my Elector, as if Day and I were still on opposing sides” (261). June has developed a personal relationship with Anden, and this informs her decision to protect him. Day, however, still views him as not an individual, but as a piece of the Republic machine that continues to oppress the poor. The only time Day refers to the Elector as Anden is when he states he wants him dead, acknowledging his personhood only long enough to express his mortality. Coupled with the language used to refer to the Republic, this language highlights the difference in opinion that Day and June still hold, as well as the mounting feeling of betrayal by June for him and the reader.

The class division between June and Day comes to the surface in Chapter 17, forcing June and the reader to reconsider her choices. Although Day has refrained from using class identifiers explicitly in his conversations with June to this point, he now focuses on them. He refers to Anden as a “goddy rich stranger” (263), and June is shocked by the negative emphasis he places on the word rich. She feels defensive of her own class, and when Day uses the term “rich” to describe Anden for a second time, she confronts him in anger. By the end of the argument, however, she considers that Day is correct for bringing class into the discussion. She finally admits that he is right, and wonders if she is, in fact, still loyal to the Republic. By challenging her on her experience as an upper-class citizen, taken care of by the Republic, the reader questions whether or not she truly wants to change the nation.

Discussion Question 1

Besides “the Elector” and “Anden,” what other language do Day and June use that shows the difference between the characters opinions?

Discussion Question 2

How does June’s class inhibit her from understanding Day’s point of view? How does her class expand her perspective?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Day feel empty when he reaches the Patriot hideout?

Vocabulary

precariously, sentimental, deviate, mistimed, silhouettes, mirthlessly



Chapter 18 - Day, Chapter 19 - June

Summary

Chapter 18 begins with Day ruminating on his argument with June and her comments on money. He remembers a day when he found Eden eating a half-empty can of beef hash that his mother was saving for dinner and took the blame for him. He shifts back to the present and searches the main room for food. He thinks about his situation and wonders if he will be accepted by the Colonies. June enters and tells him that one of the tunnels likely leads to the Colonies. She critiques his fighting style and offers to teach him better technique. He accepts, thinking that it is her attempt at an apology, and she coaches him on how to stand and punch.

The fighting lesson ends and June almost falls. Day realizes that she is sick and takes her to a bed. He wonders if the illness is a plague virus, but remembers that she has been vaccinated. He falls asleep next to her and awakes to a beeping sound. He investigates and discovers a beacon flashing above the room's door warning him of someone approaching. He grabs a small supply of food and picks up June, who is too weak to walk. He starts down the tunnel that June thought leads to the Colonies. After a while he feels safe to stop and tries to get June to eat. She refuses, and asks him to tell her about his first kiss. He obliges, and then describes his first kiss with her. He picks June up and continues down the tunnel, becoming more and more tired. He thinks that they must have entered Colonies land by this point and hears an airship from outside the tunnel. Day spots a grate overhead and pushes it open. He helps June through the grate and follows into a narrow alley. He looks around and sees bright posters.

In Chapter 19, June narrates her arrival in the Colonies with Day. She is getting sicker, and can no longer determine specific details like the time and temperature. With Day's help, she walks towards the city and observes the Colonies flags on the buildings and the strange fighter planes painted with golden birds and a symbol she does not know. She notices that there are civilians on the street, all wearing clothes with unique designs and words, and advertisements on the buildings for things she has never heard of, like Christmas. She notes that the advertisements appear to be created by several independent groups rather than one central body, as in the Republic. She sees advertisements for the police department requiring a 500 note deposit to report a crime, sponsored by something called the Descon Corp. Another advertisement concerns something called an EHL check, which she reads stands for Employee Happiness Level. A third ad shows a group of young children and offers to help individuals find their "perfect son, daughter, or employee" (286). Each advertisement has a small symbol in the corner with accompanying text that reads, "The Colonies of America. Cloud. Meditech. Descon. Evergreen. A Free State Is a Corporate State" (286).

Day whispers to June that a girl is following them, but when she looks, the girl is gone. As she turns back around, a woman with an embroidered jacket that says "Street Proctor" stops them, tells them that they do not show up on her tablet and asks for their



corp. The reader is unsure the meaning of the encounter, but June responds with one of the names she saw on the advertisements and the woman continues on. She and Day continue walking but she soon stumbles and blacks out.

June awakes on a cot with her head resting in Day's lap. She sees three other people in the room wearing Colonies soldier uniforms. She starts to regain alertness and realizes that the soldiers are interrogating Day. They ask if they are part of the Patriots, but Day refuses to answer and asks to be taken to a hospital. The soldiers tell Day that they will be taken to a prisoner of war compound and interrogated. June hears Day refer to her as Sarah to the soldiers before passing out again. She comes back into consciousness in time to here Day reveal his identity to another soldier and leave the room, but the reader is unsure if he leaves willingly or is taken away. She passes into unconsciousness once more.

June continues to narrate in the present tense from her apartment in Los Angeles and realizes that she is dreaming. Metias wipes her forehead with a damp cloth. She asks Metias about his relationship with Thomas, and asks if he loves him. He responds that he thought he did. She wakes up next to Day, who calls her Sarah and tells her she is safe. He goes on to tell her that they were taken to a hospital once he revealed his identity. June continues to think about Metias and tells Day that she is "so sorry for everything" (294).

Analysis

Day and June's initial reaction to the Colonies city shifts the tone of the novel and builds a sense of hope for the reader. Both characters describe other settings in the novel with negative connotations. For instance, June describes Las Vegas with "the desert air reeks of smoke and feels painfully dry" (8), Denver as "shrouded in a permanent sea of smog and haze" (332), and Day describes Lamar as looming (108). Words like "reek," "shroud," "looms" and more create an image of toxic and industrial cities that feel dangerous and inescapable. When Day sees the Colonies city, however, he describes "tall, shining skyscrapers... and delicate snow, and each building illuminated by beautiful blue lights" (281). June narrates her first impression of the city as well, and describes it using words like "sparkling" (283). Both characters are amazed at the extent of the lights in the city, as well as the diversity of the people. The stark difference between this and the Republic cities creates a major shift in the tone of the novel from dreary to hopeful.

Lu parallels the events in Chapter 1 to those in Chapter 19, which foreshadows the direction the narrative takes. Day supports June as they walk through the Colonies city, and while their roles are reversed from the first chapter, the events play out similarly. They are stopped by a Street Procter, the Colonies version of a street patrol, and despite her illness, June uses her wit to avoid danger. The events of the first chapter pave the way for the events that follow. The parallel between the two chapters forces the reader to consider that there is still danger despite the initial hope created by the characters reaching the Colonies.



The unfamiliarity of the corporate Colonies to Day and June demonstrates the isolation of the Republic. Both characters are confounded by the advertisements that line the city streets, which, unlike ads in the Republic, are diverse and scattered, “as if they weren’t made by any sort of central government, but by a number of smaller, independent groups” (285). June is unfamiliar with most of the content, including Christmas. By pointing out Christmas, a popular tradition known globally, Lu demonstrates the extreme depth of the Republic isolationism and the complete lack of access to global knowledge in the nation. Further, June questions “what kind of government runs a place like this” (285), again emphasizing the lack of alternative education in the Republic. The Republic withholds information regarding other nations and other forms of government to keep its citizens from realizing that alternatives to a militarized state exist.

Discussion Question 1

Though the events in Chapter 19 closely resemble those of Chapter 1, Day and June’s roles are reversed. What implications does this role reversal have on the developing plot? The developing characters?

Discussion Question 2

What are the differences in Day’s narration of Chapter 18 compared to previous chapters?

Discussion Question 3

How does the Colonies city differ from cities in the Republic?

Vocabulary

critique, peripheral, impromptu, wan, sporadic, subsidiary



Chapter 20 - Day, Chapter 21 - June, Chapter 22 - Day

Summary

Chapter 20 begins with Day watching June come in and out of sleep in the Colonies hospital, which the reader learns is in a city called Tribune. He thinks about her grief over Metias and compares it to his own. He watches the television monitor in the hospital room which shows warfront news interspersed with commercials. A soldier, whom Day identifies as the one who recognized him, comes into the room and bows to him. She offers him another room, sponsored by DesCon Corp, but Day and the reader are unsure what DesCon Corp is. She tells Day about his celebrity status in the Colonies, but he is distracted by thoughts of John. She goes on to tell him about the flooding that created the division between the eastern and western United States, the creation of the tunnels initially for migration to the west and their subsequent use for war, and the creation of the Colonies. She tells Day that the Colonies are winning the war and that it will be over soon. Day notices a growing noise from outside the building, and the soldier leads him to the balcony where hundreds of people are gathered below, cheering. He notices Kaede in the crowd with a sign that says, "You have to go back. Now." (300).

Chapter 21 begins with June narrating another dream. She is walking with Metias in Pierra amongst the shrapnel and explosions from the Patriots' attack on the Elector. Metias tells her she looks bothered and asks what is wrong. She tells him that something is off about Razor, who is standing on a roof watching the scene. With Metias's encouragement, she reasons out that by Razor insisting on taking the assassination route instead of the hospital route, he would have outed himself as a Patriot. She continues to reason that if Razor was being sponsored by the Colonies, the Colonies soldiers would have taken her and Day to talk with someone in power when they arrived in Tribune. She wakes up and realizes that Razor was not hired by the Colonies. He was hired by the Republic to kill Anden.

In Chapter 22, Day continues to narrate as he comes inside the hospital from the balcony. He is shaken by Kaede in the crowd and requests guards outside his door. He wonders if Kaede wants to trap him or help him. He hears noise on the balcony and goes outside to discover two rocks with a note from Kaede that reads, "Come outside. I'm alone. Emergency. Here to help. We have to talk" (305). Kaede throws a third rock with another note that says Day will regret not talking to her. Day decides to talk to her and climbs down the balcony. Kaede emerges from the shadows and they begin to walk through alleyways together. He scans the streets for signs of an ambush, and realizes Kaede also looks anxious.

Kaede tells Day that she followed him and June through the tunnel alone after the failed assassination. Many Patriots were arrested but Tess, Pascao, and Baxter got away.



Jordan discovered a computer drive with hidden information on it that revealed Razor was working with the Republic. She tells him that Razor was caught working with the Patriots and made a deal with the Senate to help them kill Anden in exchange for immunity. She tells Day that Anden is losing control of the government and that Razor and Commander Jameson are trying to take it over. Kaede admits that while she initially joined the Patriots for money, she hopes for a “nobler goal” (311). She and Day continue walking and see two Colonies soldiers run by. She stops Day in front of a large abandoned building and tells him that the Patriots stand to re-create the United States, not let the Colonies take over.

In front of the building, Day watches as two men interrogate a woman in ill-fitting clothing about missed payments. She begs with them to help her and explains her home has been robbed and her door smashed in. The men leave and Day asks Kaede about the incident. She explains that “the working class get shafted everywhere” (314) and that the utopia Day has been looking for does not exist. They continue walking and see a television broadcasting Republic news in a store window. The caption proclaims that Anden has released Eden, and the accompanying footage shows Eden emerging from a courthouse in nice clothes, smiling. Day sees two more Colonies soldiers running by and realizes they are going towards the hospital for June.

Analysis

June’s dream highlights the role of emotion in knowledge and reason. Throughout the novel, June tries to keep her emotions under the surface. She views them as a weakness, as something that distracts from her reasoning and results in ineffective choices. She has initial instinctual reactions to Razor that inform her distrust from the beginning, but she tries to rationalize them away. When she becomes too ill to resist her emotional reactions, however, she dreams about Metias and grieves his loss. It is because he appears as a guide in her final dream that she realizes Razor’s association with the Republic. The fact that one of June’s most important realizations comes completely from her emotional self demonstrates that emotion is, in fact, a valuable tool for June.

Lu uses both Day’s own voice and his language choice to designate a major shift in his thinking. After Kaede shows him the negative aspects of the Colonies and he sees Eden’s televised release, Day realizes that he has been fighting against the wrong enemy. Up until this point, he understands the Republic as a single entity in which all the soldiers and government officials make up a piece. He refuses to acknowledge members of the Republic as individuals despite June’s best efforts. He even goes as far as to tell June that he wants Anden dead, and that he’d “be glad to see every single person in his government dead too, if it meant I could have my family back” (264). Upon seeing that Eden has been released, however, he realizes that “The Republic” is not truly what he wants to fight. He thinks, “I despise the Republic’s laws, but I love the Republic itself. I love the people” (318). This represents a major shift in his thought. A more subtle indicator of this shift occurs in Day’s use of language. Day refers to Anden as “the Elector” until he sees Eden’s release, and finally uses the leader’s first name as



he comes to his realization about the Republic. Although Day does not notice the shift himself, the transition from the title of a figurehead to an individual name represents a complete change in Day's understanding of the rebellion.

Kaede's conversation with Day in Chapter 22 reveals the depth of her character as well as the disillusionment she faces as Patriot. Kaede's usually stoic demeanor prevents her from forming deep emotional connections with most other characters. She is regarded by most as selfish, part of the rebellion only for money. Day is confused by her return to the Colonies to find him, and questions her motives. She responds that "I was in it for the money – I admit that... maybe I was hoping that the Patriots could give me a nobler goal than making money. Joining these two cracked nations back together. That would've been nice" (311), showing that she is not the completely selfish character that the reader has been led to believe. She goes on to tell Day that the utopia he had hoped for does not exist. Her experience in the Colonies was as negative as in the Republic, and her disillusionment reflects in her decision to seek financial gain instead of dedicating herself to a cause she believes will fail.

Discussion Question 1

What do the rumors about Day in the Colonies say about the Colonies' perception of the Republic?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Day feel suspicious of Kaede when she shows up at the balcony?

Discussion Question 3

Kaede says that her actions were initially motivated by money. Why did she come back to the Colonies to tell Day about Razor?

Vocabulary

lax, aglow, blindsided, spitfire, dilapidated, utopia



Chapter 23 - June, Chapter 24 - Day

Summary

In Chapter 23, June wakes up from her dream and realizes Day is gone. She looks around and sees a group of Colonies soldiers pointing guns at her. They identify her as June and ask her where Day is. They handcuff and gag her, and she fights to keep her head clear from her illness. She takes her ring off behind her back and bends the paperclips into a Z shape. She hears a gurney down the hall and assumes the soldiers will use it to take her to a prison cell. She uses the paperclip to pick the lock on the handcuffs and one of the soldiers notices and reaches for her arms. She escapes his grasp but another soldier takes her down and tries to reapply the handcuffs. Day and Kaede break through the balcony door and fight off the remaining soldiers. They run back to the balcony, but June is too weak and falls. Kaede runs back inside to distract the soldiers while Day picks up June and starts climbing the building towards the roof, where June remembers a fighter jet is parked. They reach the roof as Kaede, followed by Colonies soldiers, bursts out of the roof entrance door.

In Chapter 24, Day narrates as he reaches the roof with June. Kaede gets into the large jet parked on the roof and starts it. He lets June go and she climbs into the cockpit. Day follows but a soldier grabs him. Day fights him, remembering June's lesson, and knocks him to the ground. June takes a gun from Kaede and starts shooting at the remaining soldiers while Day climbs aboard. Kaede complains that the soldiers "got me in my side" (326) as they take off and flies away from the hospital. Another jet pursues them, and Kaede flies with extreme skill to avoid it before shooting at it with the jet's guns. Day tells June that they are heading towards the Capitol Tower in Denver so he can publicly announce his support for Anden.

Analysis

The language used by the Colonies soldiers reflects the capitalist nature of the Colonies's culture, and Day abandons his hope for a utopia. When the soldiers identify June, they comment that she will be "worth a lot of money" (319), and later comment to not shoot her, Kaede, and Day because they are "valuable property" (323). These statements show that the Colonies regard their citizens and prisoners as property, rather than people. Rather than being concerned about June's role in the Republic, they choose to focus on her value, demonstrating that their values lie in capital as opposed to political power. These examples of the Colonies culture show that, despite what Day initially believed, the Colonies do not regard their citizens more highly than the Republic and it is not, after all, a perfect alternative. Day notes as they fly away from the hospital that Tribune is "so lovely from a distance" (327), noting that while at first the Colonies appeared to be a flawless escape from the military state of the Republic. However, upon closer inspection, the eastern country is as flawed as its neighbor.



Discussion Question 1

Why does Kaede put herself in danger to help Day and June back to the Republic?

Discussion Question 2

Why might Day feel “strangely calm” (328) as he returns to the Republic?

Discussion Question 3

Why is June so surprised to see Kaede come through the hospital door?

Vocabulary

unfurl, outcropping



Chapter 25 - June, Chapter 26 - Day

Summary

In Chapter 25, June narrates from the first person point of view as she, Kaede, and Day fly into the Republic. As they cross the warfront between the Republic and the Colonies, Kaede joins a formation of Colonies jets. June looks below her and sees airships firing at each other. A voice comes over the radio that she identifies with a Colonies accent and tells Kaede to land. Kaede points out two jets following them and tells them over the radio that she is going to “shoot [them] out of the sky” (331). Kaede kills the jet’s engines and it dives towards the ground. June briefly blacks out and then thinks to herself that they are going to crash. Kaede restarts the jet and flies upwards, losing the pursuing airships. Republic jets begin to follow the ship as they approach Denver and the Armor wall, and Kaede slows the ship down. She flies through one of the train tunnels in the Armor and crashes in the streets of Denver.

June opens the hatch to get out and calls to Kaede. She sees a gunshot wound in Kaede’s torso and realizes that she is dead. She climbs out of the jet and finds Day. Republic soldiers line the streets and barricade the crash site. June and Day hide under the wreckage and see rioters on the street throwing explosives. She and Day run from the crash and several soldiers and civilians recognize them. June realizes she is still too weak to continue and tells Day to run to the Capitol Tower alone. He kisses her and departs. June makes her way through the rioters while footage of Anden plays on the JumboTrons overhead. She stops a few feet from the Tower entrance and looks up to see Day on the Tower balcony across from Anden.

In Chapter 26, Day narrates as he reaches the Capitol Tower. He sees Anden’s image on the JumboTrons around the city, asking the citizens to stop rioting and telling them he is eliminating the Trials. The rioters ignore the message and Day thinks that they do not trust him. Day climbs onto a ledge on the Tower and checks the wiring on the speakers mounted on its exterior to make sure they will broadcast to the entire capital city. He looks down and sees that most of the rioters have a red streak painted in their hair – a style Day wore the last time he addressed the public. He climbs another ledge onto a balcony, lets his hair down, and grabs one of the rewired speakers to use as a megaphone.

Rioters slowly begin to notice Day’s presence and start chanting his name. He speaks into the makeshift megaphone and addressed the Congress, telling them to release the Patriots under arrest or face a revolution. He then addresses the people below. He tells them about his family and about the assassination attempt on Anden. He tells the crowd that Anden is not their enemy and asks for their trust. The crowd responds with cheers.



Analysis

Day's return to the Republic to see riots gives him new hope for change. When he and June arrive in Denver, they witness hundreds of citizens rioting, decorated with a red streak in their hair. Day notes in surprise that the soldiers are not shooting the rioters, and realizes that it must be an order from Anden. The solidarity from the citizens on the street, signified by the red streak in their hair, and the lack of fatal force encourages Day to trust Anden and helps him refocus his thoughts from the Republic to the people of the Republic. He reminds himself that "behind some of those faceless Republic masks are good people, with parents and siblings and children" (342), further demonstrating his newfound appreciation for the individuals within the corrupt Republic's systems.

Day's speech demonstrates the importance of shared experience in trust. Day attempts to bring his message to the public, and makes a personal appeal to the rioters. He expresses his gratitude for what he sees as a mutually beneficial relationship between him and the people of the Republic, and most importantly relates to the rioters by telling them that he has been "starved, beaten, and humiliated. I've been tortured, insulted, and suppressed. I've lived in the slums with you" (344). His appeal to shared experience does what the Elector's speech could not, and wins the crowd's trust.

Discussion Question 1

Does Kaede achieve her "nobler goal" before her death? Is her death in vain or redemptive?

Discussion Question 2

Why do the rioters ignore Anden's speech?

Discussion Question 3

What is the significance of Day's statement that he is "tired of running" (343)? What are the literal and figurative meanings of his phrase?

Vocabulary

maneuver, impenetrable, siphoning, ultimatum, fruitlessly



Chapter 27 - June, Chapter 28 - Day, Chapter 29 - June

Summary

In Chapter 27, June begins her narration two days after Day's speech. She is in a hospital room where she is undergoing several tests to check for Colonies devices in her head and to confirm her health. Day is in a separate room under similar circumstances, and both are being filmed and broadcast to the public constantly. She watches Day on a monitor in her room. A doctor greets her and puts a mask over her face. She remains in the mask for several hours and is cleared by the doctor to discharge. She asks him about Day and he hesitates before telling her that he will be discharged soon after seeing his brother. June feels suspicious as he leaves.

Anden enters the room and tells June she will be reinstated as a Republic agent in Denver. The quarantine in Los Angeles has been lifted and Razor and Commander Jameson have been arrested. Anden speaks again and tells her that he wants to give her a different position. He sits on the edge of her bed and asks her if she would like to train to become Princeps, the second position to the Elector himself. She weighs the implications, knowing it means she would have to give up her relationship with Day and spend years at Anden's side. She begins to decline, but Anden interrupts her and tells her that "there is no one better" (353).

In Chapter 28, Day narrates from two days after his speech. He recounts how he was taken down from the balcony by soldiers and tied down at the hospital while he fought and yelled for Eden and a proper burial for Kaede. A doctor assures him that he will see Eden soon and that he has been pardoned by the Elector for his crimes. He tells Day that there is something in his X-ray images that he needs to know about, but the intercom in the room announces Eden's arrival and Day bursts out of the room to find him. He sees Eden on a bench, healthy and well-dressed but wearing thick glasses and partially blind. Day embraces him and Eden cries. The doctor interrupts and asks Day to talk privately.

Day follows the doctor back to his room suspiciously and the doctor turns the sound on the security cameras off. He casts an image on the wall using a small device and shows Day and image of his brain. He points out a dark spot in the bottom and asks Day if he has ever had headaches. Day tells the doctor he has, and the doctor explains that after he failed his Trial, the Los Angeles Central Hospital experimented on his brain. He tells Day that the tumor is inoperable and that he will soon die.

In Chapter 29, June narrates from two days after her discharge from the hospital. After three failed attempts, she finally gets in contact with Day and he asks to see her. She cleans her new apartment and thinks about what Day wants to talk about. She grooms her dog, Ollie, who was saved by Anden after her arrest in Las Vegas, and wonders if



Thomas is under arrest with Commander Jameson and Razor. She thinks about Kaede's burial, which took place the previous day, and blames herself for her death. Day rings the doorbell 15 minutes late and June opens the door to find him in a full Republic soldier uniform. He gives her a ruby pendant on a silver chain, and she remarks that she "still liked my paper clip ring best, though" (363).

Day tells June that he has heard about Anden's offer to make her Princeps. She tells him the details of the offer and that she has not yet made a decision. Day does not respond at first, and June expects him to protest. He interrupts her thoughts, however, and tells her to take the offer. They sit in silence and she feels confused. He speaks up and tells her that she has the power to make change and should not hold back because of him. He tells her that "it will never, ever work out between us" (369), and that too much has happened for them to be together. She decides to accept the Princeps training offer. Day starts to leave but June stops him and he kisses her.

Analysis

Both June and Day's actions at the end of the novel signify a shift in their characters. June is unsure about Anden's offer to train as Princeps, although she spent most of the novel desiring her old life in the republic. Anden's offer represents everything that she initially sought – comfort and a return to her lifestyle, and a chance to change the Republic from the inside. She wavers, however, and this indicates a shift in her thinking about politics and class. She further shows this shift by expressing discomfort with her new apartment and the "luxurious items" (360) that fill it. June is thinking about class on a deeper level than before, and despite her confidence in Anden, feels that she cannot live up to the expectations now placed on her. In regards to helping him change the Republic, she tells Anden, "you need someone so much better than I could ever be" (353). Her confidence in her military ability and usefulness to the Republic wavers for the first time. Day, on the other hand, shifts into an uncomfortable position as a member of the Republic. He gives June an expensive pendant, signifying his transition into an upper class lifestyle. He is finally able to provide June the lifestyle he believes she wants and deserves, but he leaves her. He also finds himself unable to live up to his new expectations, albeit not for lack of confidence but due to the fact that he is terminally ill. June's transition from a fugitive, still loyal to the ways of the old Republic into a class-conscious agent unsure of her own abilities, and Day's transition from a poor criminal into a wealthy, prized member of the Republic mark a radical conclusion to the novel, and leave the reader anticipating further exploration into their new lives.

Discussion Question 1

Why does June think of Metias when Anden enters her room?



Discussion Question 2

Does Anden offer June the position of Princess based on his feelings for her, as she suspects? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Day not tell June that he is dying?

Vocabulary

claustrophobia, hippocampus, myriad, devouring



Characters

June Iparis

June is one of the main characters in the novel and narrates roughly half of the narrative. She is young and attractive, with brown hair and eyes. She was raised in an upper class military family and was prized in the military as the “Republic’s darling” (7). She betrayed the Republic to help Day escape execution and spends most of the novel as a fugitive and member of the Patriots. She is highly popular with the public for her role in Day’s escape, and both the Patriots and Anden attempt to use her celebrity to their benefit.

June is a skilled fighter with a high level of training and extreme attention to detail. Most of her observations include minute details about materials, cost, and time elapsed which she keeps track of effortlessly. These observations help her and Day escape numerous dangerous situations. As part of her training, she is also able to deceive those around her. Day remarks on her ability to “play roles” multiple times throughout the novel, and she easily passes the lie detection test by altering her own emotions to trick the sensitive machine. Her ability to deceive creates distrust among all the other characters except Anden and Day, and the Patriots and government alike question her motives.

June struggles to adjust to being a criminal, and questions her identity throughout the novel. She feels devoted to Day and angry about the assassination of her brother Metias, but nonetheless feels conflicted about betraying the Republic. She wonders if the conflicted feelings arise from her desire to return to her comfortable lifestyle in the Republic, or because she distrusts the Patriots. At the beginning of the novel, she asks herself, “if I’m not the Republic’s darling anymore, then who am I?” (7), and this question never fully resolves as she continues to question whether or not she is still loyal.

June has a sexual and romantic relationship with Day. They kiss multiple times throughout the novel, and she fantasizes about him when he is physically out of reach. She feels devoted to him, but cannot tell him that she loves him because she questions whether or not she is good enough. Her fear that their relationship is unsustainable intensifies when Anden kisses her and she realizes that she is also attracted to the Elector.

Daniel "Day" Altan Wing

Day is the second main character in the novel and narrates roughly half of the text. He is tall, lean, and of Mongolian descent with white blond hair. He was raised in the slums of the Republic, stealing to feed his family and avoiding the military. He watched soldiers kill his mother and his older brother John and take his younger brother Eden captive. He avoided his own execution and has become a celebrity in both the Republic



and the Colonies for his rebellion against the government. He joins the Patriots to find Eden and disrupts their assassination attempt on the Elector. He is diagnosed with a terminal brain tumor at the end of the novel.

Day's identity centers on his lower-class status. He identifies himself throughout the novel with phrases such as "dirty street con" (51), drawing attention to his upbringing and the popular portrayals of poor people. He speaks using slang and curse words which indicate that, despite his intelligence, he does not have upper-class education or etiquette. He argues with June over the importance of class and forms close bonds with other lower-class characters over their shared background. He attributes his loyalty to Tess to their mutual upbringing.

Day is in love with June and demonstrates his devotion in words and actions. He gives her a handmade ring to express his love, kisses her passionately throughout the novel. June describes him as "exotic, unique, overwhelming" (36), but he feels insecure in their relationship. He worries that he is not wealthy enough for her and feels betrayed by her apparent affection towards the Elector and remaining loyalty to the Republic. He leaves her at the end of the novel, saying that "too many things have happened" (369).

Through the course of the novel, Day develops a deepening understanding of the Republic and his own reasons for rebelling. He initially hates the Republic and all things associated with it and wants the nation to topple. His motivation for rebellion is largely driven by his desire to find Eden, and he cares little about restoring the Republic. After witnessing injustice in the Colonies, however, he realizes that while he is not loyal to the government, he loves his nation and wants to see it changed, not destroyed. Even after being reunited with Eden he hopes that Anden will make positive changes, and even accepts a position in the Republic military.

Kaede

Kaede is an ex-Colonies pilot now aligned with the Patriots. She is gruff, sarcastic, and bossy but occasionally shows a softer side, especially around Tess. Kaede is skilled at hiding her emotions from others and rarely shows any anxiety, even under the most extreme circumstances. She treats most others with sarcastic detachment, but becomes closer with Day by the end of the novel and begins to confide in him as a friend.

Although she claims that her motivation for joining the Patriots is purely financial, she tells Day that she hoped they could give her a "nobler goal than making money" (311). However, she is disillusioned with the Colonies and the Republic, and holds little hope that the countries will unify. When Day offers her a nobler goal of helping him change the Republic, she accepts without question and dies while flying him and June back to Denver.

Tess

Tess is a close friend of Day's and a Patriot Medic in training. She is a young girl with short hair and a sweet demeanor who grew up on the streets after her parents



abandoned her at nine years old. She is well loved by the other Patriots, who view her as healing and kind. She is mature for her age and her dynamic with Day has shifted from needing his protection to independence. She is loyal to the Patriots and does not trust June – additionally, she has romantic feelings towards Day which cause her to be jealous of June. She and Day argue over June, and although she feels betrayed by him her forgiving nature allows her to move on. When Day asks her to come with him and June after disrupting the assassination attempt, she again feels betrayed but does not forgive Day. Instead, she returns to the Patriots.

Razor/Commander Andrew DeSoto

Razor, or Commander Andrew DeSoto, is the leader of the Patriots posing as a Republic officer. He is in his forties, tall, and muscular with light brown skin and curly hair. He has an upper-class and authoritative demeanor, but eyes “as warm as honey” (29). He earns all of the Patriot’s trust except June’s by claiming to be hired by the Colonies to start a revolution. At the end of the novel, the reader learns that he was once a true Patriot but was arrested. He made a deal with the Republic’s senate to trick the Patriots into killing Anden to prevent him from changing the Republic’s policies and maintain the militarized state, in exchange for his freedom. After the assassination attempt, he is discovered by Anden and placed under arrest.

The Elector/Anden Stavropoulos

The Elector, Anden, is the new leader of the Republic and the son of the previous Elector Primo. He is young, attractive, and sophisticated, with green eyes and dark hair. June believes that he is of Latin and Asian heritage. He is charismatic, but is disliked by both the government and the citizens. The Senate believes that he is an incompetent ruler and a “young revolutionary spitfire” (309) who will destroy the Republic’s way of life. The citizens believe that he is “a wealthy man who has no idea how to heal their suffering” (41). He is opposed to many of the Republic’s policies and is eager to show the public that he is not like his father. He fights to earn June’s trust and maintain peace in the Republic, and releases Eden from the biological warfare experiments. Day and Kaede eventually decide to trust him and protect him from Razor’s assassination plan.

Eden Bataar Wing

Eden is Day’s younger brother and the only remaining alive member of the Wing family besides Day. Like Day, he has white-blond hair, though his is curly. He is engineer-minded and intelligent for his young age. He was infected with a mutant plague by Republic scientists and taken captive to be used as a biological weapon on the warfront. His rescue is Day’s major motivation for joining the Patriots, and he is eventually released by Anden and returned to Day’s care. At the end of the novel, he is free from the plague and healthy, but has lost most of his sight.



Thomas

Thomas is a Republic soldier in Commander Jameson's patrol. He is a childhood friend of Metias and developed romantic feelings for him after joining the military. He is usually clean-cut and strong, but appears gaunt and disheveled when he finds June. He is intelligent and fiercely loyal to the Republic, so much so that he was willing to kill Metias when ordered. He once was close friends with June, but she now despises him.

Metias

Metias is June's older brother and Republic officer. He was killed by Thomas for breaking into the Republic's Deceased Person Database and telling June to be suspicious of the Republic. He is caring, protective of June, and intelligent. He is responsible for getting Thomas into the military and had romantic feelings towards him. He is often associated with the color white in many of June's memories.

Pascao

Pascao is the lead runner in the Patriots. He has "dark skin and light eyes" (125) and a graceful manner. He is an enthusiastic and light-hearted character who acts more upbeat and happy than most of the other Patriots. He sees Day as a role model and a crush, and flirts with him in the Patriot's base.

Baxter

Baxter is a runner with the Patriots. He has dark skin, blond hair, and "a slight hunch to his broad, hulking shoulders" (120). He is arrogant and rude and distrusts June and, by extension, Day. He fights with Day in Chapter 14, after insulting Tess.

John

John is Day's older brother. He was killed by Republic soldiers along with Day's mother. He is uneducated and struggled to pass the Trials before his death. He is loyal to his family and patient.

Symbols and Symbolism

Red "X"

In the overarching themes of the novel, the X is a visual representation of the unethical and subhuman treatment of the poor by the Republic. It acts as a marker to segregate the sick from the healthy, which in the case of the Republic cities serves to segregate the poor from the wealthy. It also holds historical symbolism, as a red X was used to mark plague victims' residences in Europe during the epidemic of the Black Plague.

In the narrative, the red "x" literally symbolizes biological experimentation and danger, not unlike a biohazard symbol. The red "X" in the novel is a marking painted on the doors of plague victims in the slum sectors of the Republic. Republic patrols painted the X on Day's door before they killed his family and took Eden, and he comes to learn that it signifies biological experimentation.

Quarter Pendant

The coin Day keeps as a pendant symbolizes a unified nation, free from civil war, in which the citizens are treated properly by the government. The coin was given to Day by his father.

Paperclip Ring

Day makes the paperclip ring and gives it to June as a token of his love. He explains that while rich people have their own "fancy traditions, but in the poor sectors, engagements and gestures of affection usually go like this" (67). Though it is not an expensive piece of jewelry, June prefers it to other gifts she has received because it is handmade. The ring represents the class difference between them and symbolizes the class gap being overcome through love.

The Armor

The Armor is the wall that surrounds Denver, the capital city of the Republic, and it represents the isolationism of the Republic and the paranoia the government feels of invasion. It represents a need for protection, created by the discord among the citizens. It further symbolizes the Berlin Wall, which during the Cold War divided Berlin, Germany into two sections controlled by the militarized German Democratic Republic or East Germany, from the Federal Republic of Germany, or West Germany. The Berlin Wall, like the Armor, represents militarism, segregation and displacement of citizens.



Elector Primo Portrat

The requirement that every home in the Republic hang a portrait of the Elector Primo in it represents the absolute power of the Elector as well as the government's control over its citizen's daily lives. It further represents the constant surveillance in the Republic, as the Elector personally watches over every home in the nation.

The Color White

The color white is used in association with lightness and hope against a dark, dystopian world. Metias and Day both physically wear white, and both characters encourage hope for June.

The color white is mentioned throughout the novel, particularly in reference to Day and Metias. Day has "white blond" hair that makes him instantly recognizable to the people of the Republic. When he addresses the public from the balcony at the Capitol Tower, he lets his hair down and June describes it as "gleaming like a beacon of light against the night" (347), and the novel ends with June describing Day as her light in darkness. June also associates white with Metias and remembers wearing all white at his funeral.

Golden Bird

The Golden Bird symbolizes access to information and the Colonies hope for unification.

The Golden Bird is a depiction of a "falconlike" (281) bird that makes up the Colonies insignia. It is the same symbol on Day's quarter dollar pendant, which the reader assumes is a bald eagle. The bird represents what remains of the United States, and the Colonies's acknowledgment of its history. In contrast, the Republic has eliminated the eagle from its symbology, denying its citizens access to the nation's own history.

Red Streak in Hair

The streak of red in one's hair represents the brutality and violence of the military against its own citizens, but also the solidarity of the people; it represents the spread of hope and information, and the willingness of the citizens to rebel against their government despite the risk of punishment.

Before his attempted execution in the first novel, Day was beaten by Republic soldiers and blood streaked his hair. Citizens around the Republic, seeing the wound, started streaking their own hair red in a show of solidarity. As Day addresses the public from the Capitol Tower in Chapter 26, he sees rioters below with the red streak in their hair again, despite the Republic's attempts to outlaw it.



Electricity

Electricity is a determinate of class in the novel. Only the wealthiest members of the Republic have access to electricity around the clock, while those who live in the slums only have it on occasion. Day is often surprised by his surroundings when electricity is available, for instance when he rides the elevator to Razor's military quarters: "I've never ridden in one, because I've never been in a building with full electricity" (22). June, however, never makes note of the power in a building because she has always had access to it. When they reach the Colonies and see the city of Tribune fully illuminated by blue light, Day thinks that he must have reached a utopia. Electricity symbolizes wealth, as well as the unequal distribution of that wealth in the Republic.

The Plagues

The plagues represent the Republic's disregard for the poor and its willingness to use unethical means to achieve militaristic ends. The plagues are a series of engineered illnesses that the Republic has unleashed in the poor neighborhoods of the Republic. While illness runs rampant in the slums, killing many of the infected, the government uses infected citizens to create biological weapons.



Settings

Las Vegas, Nevada, Republic

Las Vegas is the military city where June and Day arrive at the beginning of the novel. June describes it as dry, industrial, and “dominated by towering skyscrapers and enormous pyramid-shaped landing docks” (8). Several of the landing docks are adapted from casinos that exist in Las Vegas in the real world. June and Day join the Patriots here, and June is arrested by Thomas’s patrol in one of the city’s landing docks.

Denver, Colorado, Republic

Denver is the capital of the Republic. It is a large military city that June describes as intimidating, forbidding, and “shrouded in a permanent sea of smog and haze” (332). It is surrounded by a large cement wall called the Armor. The bulk of the narrative takes place here – June meets the Elector and warns him of the false assassination attempt here. After returning from the Colonies, Day addresses the public from the Tower. Both he and June are given apartments in Denver at the end of the novel.

Lamar, Colorado, Republic

Lamar is a Republic warfront city on the border of the Colonies. Day describes it as looming and dilapidated, reduced mostly to rubble by Colonies attacks (108). There is a network of tunnels underneath the city that the Patriots use as a base. Day meets most of the other Patriots here.

Pierra, Colorado, Republic

Pierra is a Republic warfront city nearby to Lamar. The Patriot’s assassination attempt on Anden takes place here.

Tribune, Colonies

Tribune is the city in the Colonies where Day and June escape to after the assassination attempt on Anden. Day describes it as beautiful, shining, and glittering (287-282) initially, but later as only “lovely from a distance” (327). Unlike the cities in the Republic, it is full of diverse people and every wall is covered in advertisements sponsored by four major corporations – Cloud, Meditech, DesCon, and Evergreen. Day and June reunite with Kaede here before returning to the Republic.

Los Angeles, California, Republic

Los Angeles is the city in the Republic where June was born and raised. No part of the narrative takes place in Los Angeles, but Lu references the city a number of times in the text. June describes it as industrial and drab, and divided into wealthy “Gem Sectors” and slums. The city is entirely quarantined for most of the novel for rioting, although the Republic claims the quarantine is for plagues.



Themes and Motifs

Individual Choice Under Authority

The novel raises important questions regarding free will and an individual's ability to act according to their own ethical code under authoritative rule. From the very beginning, June feels that she is forced into the Patriots because of her personal debt to Day. She thinks that Day's life depends on her compliance with Razor's assassination plan, and she feels obligated to protect him for the role she played in his family's death. She thinks that she is "the reason Day lost everything that matters to him" (266), and her guilt dictates her actions, even when she believes assassinating Anden is unethical. While she justifies her own choices, however, she questions those of the people around her.

June questions Thomas's motives in killing Metias, and demands accountability from him. Thomas acts according to his orders, regardless of how harmful he believes they may be. For instance, June states that "it doesn't matter how much Thomas cares for me – if his superiors order him to use physical force, he'll do it" (97). When accused of murdering Metias, he claims that he acted on the only option available to him: "It was a signed order from the state of California... I had no better choice" (101). June does not accept his excuse, as she would have broken the law and refused the order. June has suffered immense consequences for disobeying government orders – the loss of her lifestyle, money, friends, and home.

Day also questions the role of individual choice in the Republic. He knows that June has taken great risks to disobey orders, and his own rebellion led to the government attempting to execute him. He believes that the consequences members of the Republic face for choosing to act outside of orders excuses their actions. He tells June, "I never saw the point of killing Republic soldiers. I mean, I hate them, but they're not the source. They just obey their superiors" (35). While not a justification for their actions, the pressure placed on soldiers by their government to comply and the fear of negative consequences makes their actions understandable. He understands that as a poor person with his family mostly dead, he has little to lose in rebelling against the Republic. For those who rely more heavily on the government for their safety and comfort, however, the choice becomes less clear. June, on the other hand, feels that all soldiers have a choice, a viewpoint informed by her decision to rebel and face the consequences. These viewpoints interrogate whether or not choice truly exists when the consequence for disobedience can be exile or even execution.

The Moral and Social Influence of Class

There is a prominent class divide in the Republic, one that creates difference in the character's social relationships and moral codes. The poor characters in the novel have much different social interactions than those of an upper class background. For



instance, Day and Kaede speak using insider language that has evolved from the streets, referring to each other as “cousin” and using words such as “trot,” “con,” and “Skiz,” all of which come directly from their experiences as poor people in the slums. Class provides a significant barrier in Day and June’s relationship, and he constantly feels misunderstood by and inadequate for her. Around Tess, however, he feels complete comfort and understanding, which he attributes to the fact that they grew up in the same circumstances.

Lower-class characters tend to put much more emphasis on their class than the upper class characters. For instance, Day’s identity centers heavily on his poor upbringing. He refers to himself as a “dirty street con” (51), and thinks pervasively about June’s upper-class status. He thinks of her as “made for the Republic’s upper class life” (158), and wonders, “how can she be happy with someone like me, someone with nothing but a handful of paper clips in his pocket?” (158). While he wears his class with pride at times he worries that he can never fit in with upper-class society, most importantly with June. June, on the other hand, never belittles Day based on his class. She often thinks of him as stubborn, but does not think of class as a factor in their relationship until it is explicitly pointed out to her.

Although June’s attention to class difference is initially much more limited, the more time she spends with and around lower-class people and exposes herself to their world views, the more she thinks about it as a salient factor in her life. Because she has been raised in privileged circumstances, she does not think of class as a pervasive factor in her life (as Day points out, she only thinks money does not matter because she has “never been without it” (265)). She only thinks of class when it is pointed out to her, and she feels guilty for her background when Day and the other Patriots point it out. For instance, she feels guilty for being a “little rich girl” (4) when she rejects Day’s offer of fried dough, and becomes acutely aware that she has the privilege to reject food she does not like, one those in lower classes do not have. Her view of Anden is informed by her view class, or rather her view that class is not important, and she chooses to focus on his personality and relationship with the Senate, instead of his power as a wealthy leader. By the end of the novel, however, she starts to think about class more pervasively. She witnesses the struggles of the working class first hand, and it forces her to consider her own role in the class divide. Her shift shows that although class status can create differences in worldview, it does not prevent individuals from different classes from understanding each other.

The Role of Propaganda in Social Control

The Republic limits access of knowledge and uses a deeply integrated campaign of propaganda to control its citizens and attempt to prevent rebellion. Throughout the novel, characters struggle to unlearn the values of the Republic – that it is good, trustworthy, and that its policies are the only way the nation can succeed. June struggles constantly to understand what parts of her opinions are formed by her experience and logic, and which are formed by Republic propaganda. For instance, when she hears of the widespread quarantines in Los Angeles, she tells herself that “the



plague will die down, just like it always does” (13). The Republic has told its citizens that the plagues are controlled, when in reality they are rampant and out of control. June remembers Metias’s words of wisdom, explaining the reality of the plagues, and she questions who to believe – her brother with his insider knowledge, or the propaganda she has been taught since birth. She is shocked to learn the history of the Republic from Anden, remarking “I’ve never heard any stories about the Republic that weren’t filtered through the country’s school or public messaging system” (215). As a fully integrated member of the military complex since birth, it makes sense that June would trust the propaganda dished out by her country. However, the propaganda affects even the most rebellious citizens.

Even Day, who is deeply opposed to the policies of the Republic and actively fights against them, is surprised by the completeness of his brainwashing. When he enters the Patriot base, he is surprised to learn about the outside world for the first time. When he sees a world map for the first time he understands just how much knowledge the Republic hides from its citizens and the extents to which they go to prevent outside learning. It is only when Kaede tells him that “all it takes is one generation to brainwash a population and convince them that reality doesn’t exist” (125) that Day realizes that the government has completely brainwashed the public. By denying citizens knowledge of other governments, they feel powerless to change their situation – they believe that no alternatives exist. The spread of misinformation and the lack of unfiltered, objective information to the citizens of Republic allows the government to maintain complete control of its citizens for decades. It is only when Day addresses the public after escaping execution that rebellion starts to spread.

The Role of Emotion in Decision-making

The characters in *Prodigy* have traumatic histories that result in extreme emotional reactions to their situations. Lu interrogates the importance of emotion in how the characters choose to act, and the pros and cons of using emotion to inform decisions. Day tends to use his emotional reactions to inform his decisions. For instance, while he is usually opposed to killing as a tactic in rebellion, he agrees to help kill the Elector when he thinks about the murder of his family. He reconciles his decision to kill another human being based on his emotional response to him. When he faces Anden directly, he has an intense emotional reaction based on his history: “So, this is the guy who kissed June... he’s the boy king who symbolizes everything the Republic is; the war with the Colonies that led to Eden’s illness, the laws that put my family in the slums and led to their deaths, the laws that sent me off to be executed because I’d failed some stupid goddy test... I should kill him right now” (247). Another emotion overpowers the first, however, when he thinks of June. His trust in June itself is informed by his romantic feelings towards her, and he supports her despite the warnings of Tess, Kaede, and Baxter.

June’s emotions also affect her decisions, but in a different way. She believes that emotion is a weakness and that she has to remain clear headed to make decisions effectively. For instance, she leaves the room during Day’s surgery because she worries



that it will remind her too much of Metias's dead body and she does not want to show weakness to the Patriots. When she interacts with Thomas for the first time since her brother's death she is taken by rage and considers breaking his neck. She becomes so overwhelmed by emotion that she eventually lunges at him, hoping to harm him. She tries to be aware of her emotional reactions and avoid them, but she still wonders if they affect her judgment.

Finally, June's dream in Chapter 21 demonstrates the importance of emotion. Although her gut tells her that Razor is untrustworthy, she ignores her feelings until she is too sick to ward off her emotions. Metias comes to her in a dream and helps her to realize the Razor is working for the Republic. Without her emotional connection to Metias, she may never have figured out the truth for herself. While this example shows that emotion can be a powerful tool for June, Day's blind faith in the Patriots due to his anger against Anden demonstrates that without some reason, emotion can be a dangerous thing to rely on.

The Instability of Identity

Lu uses Day and June's experiences to demonstrate how identity changes over time. Throughout the novel, June struggles to understand her identity. She feels emotional reactions to her surroundings that are inconsistent with her conscious beliefs, and wonders where her loyalties truly lie and why. While Day gets excited over the prospect of a revolution, June is less certain: "I should be excited too. But somehow still, the thought of the Republic crashing down sends a pulse of nausea through me" (48). While she knows first-hand the damage and suffering that the Republic can cause, she feels nostalgic for her life as the "Republic's darling" and longs for a return to her comfortable lifestyle. When Anden asks for her trust, she envisions returning to the Republic: "I could just tell Anden everything about the Patriots' plan right now—without caring whether word will get back to the Patriots or whether they'll hurt Day because of it – and return to living a wealthy, secure life as an elite government worker" (220). She feels guilty for these thoughts when she thinks about a life without Day, and rubs her paper clip ring as a reminder of his importance to her. Her conflicted outlook demonstrates the instability of her identity, both as a member of the Republic and of the Patriots.

Day's identity also changes throughout the novel. Day, once fiercely opposed to the Republic and everything it stands for, adapts to life as part of the nation's leadership at the end of the novel. He expressed discomfort in his new position, as well as uncertainty in his decision to side with Anden. When June tells him that the public wants him as the new Elector, he remarks, "Day for Elector? Right. I don't even like the Republic yet. That'll take some getting used to" (362). He recognizes that his identity is changing, even if it's not in the direction he expected and even it goes against what he has believed for years. The shift in the characters' self-understanding demonstrates that our identities are shaped by our experiences, and our growth often takes unpredictable directions.



Styles

Point of View

The novel is narrated from two points of view; Day's and June's. The chapters alternate between the two and stay in the first person present tense exclusively. Both characters narrate events and dialogue as well as inner thoughts, memories, and reflections. The narration is not omniscient, and one character's narration often reveals facts about previous events that were not available from the other character's point of view.

Language and Meaning

Lu uses distinct language to designate the history and class of the characters. The characters with lower-class backgrounds, including Day, Kaede, and Tess use informal language, curse words, and slang in their speech. For instance, Kaede and Day use the words "goddy" and "trot," as well as curse words like "hell" and "damn." Slang and swearing have historically been used as indicators of low educational and class status, and Lu uses them with these characters to build the sense of underclass. Additionally, Day and Tess use the word "cousin" to refer to each other and select other characters – but only those of similar, poor backgrounds. This creates a sense of in-group camaraderie for the lower class characters.

Upper class characters, like June and Razor, do not use slang or in-group language. Razor's dialogue and June's narration consist of complete sentences and formalities that indicate an understanding of upper class etiquette. June also describes her surroundings using technical details that indicate a formal education. For instance, while Day describes his leg after his surgery as simply consisting of metal sheets, June describes it as "plates of smooth metal (steel and titanium)" (66) indicating her military education and ability to identify specific metals. She uses similar technical descriptive language throughout the novel. When she meets Anden at the dining hall, for instance, she describes her situation as sitting "alone at one end of a long table (twelve feet of dark cherrywood, hand-carved legs, ornate gold trim probably painted with a fine-detail millimeter brush)" (132). This detailed description requires some amount of education about fine art and craftsmanship, and it comes for June as an afterthought, indicating that this education is ingrained and almost innate.

The characters shift between referring to the Elector as "Anden" or "the Elector" depending on their experience and level of trust. Day refers to him as "the Elector" throughout most of the novel, until Kaede reveals the Patriot's alignment with the Senate. He switches to using "Anden," demonstrating gained trust for the leader. This shift also illustrates Day's shift into thinking of injustice as caused by a broken state rather than the individuals within it. He begins to think of Anden as an individual instead of a figurehead. Kaede makes a similar shift at this time and switches from "The Elector" to Anden when she finds Day in the Colonies. June refers to the Elector as "Anden"



throughout the entire novel, except for where formality dictates using his full title. She has more sympathy for the Republic from the start of the novel than the other Patriots and uses his name in an attempt to humanize him to the rest of the resistance.

Structure

The novel is divided into chapters of varying lengths that alternate between Day's point of view and June's. There are no distinct parts, but major shifts in location are designated in June's chapters by headings. The chapters most often proceed into each other chronologically, but some narrate the same period of time from the character's differing points of view.



Quotes

I hadn't expected her to agree so quickly – I'd thought she would need some persuading before she committed herself to a group that she so obviously hated just a few weeks ago. The fact that she said yes tugs at my heart. If June is giving herself to the Patriots, then she must realize that we have no better choice. And she's doing this for my sake.
-- Day (chapter 2)

Importance: This quote, a thought from Day as he and June join the Patriots, establishes a feeling of guilt for Day in his relationship with her.

I try to force myself to say the same back to him, but the words freeze on my tongue. How can he be so sure of this? I certainly don't understand all these strange feelings inside me – am I here because I love him, or because I owe him?
-- June (chapter 3)

Importance: This quote, in which June tries to tell Day she loves him, shows June's uncertainty in her own motives and her uncertainty in her relationship with Day.

We also have Fighters, Runners, Scouts, Hackers, Escorts, and so on... the two of you should technically be a new category altogether. Celebrities."
-- Razor (chapter 3)

Importance: This quote draws attention to the importance of fame in political action in the war-torn Republic.

I should be excited too. But somehow, still, the thought of the Republic crashing down sends a pulse of nausea through me. I don't know if it's brainwashing, years of Republic doctrine drilled into my brain. The felling lingers, though, along with a flood of shame and self-hate. Everything I am familiar with is gone.
-- June (chapter 3)

Importance: In this quote, June continues to struggle with her own identity and insecurity in her betrayal.

The Republic took Metias away from me. I think of the Trials, the lies about my parents' deaths. The engineered plague. From this luxury high-rise I can see Vegas's Trial stadium behind the skyscrapers, gleaming, off in the distance. Few people kill for the right reasons, but if any reason is the right one, it must be this. Isn't it?
-- June (chapter 5)

Importance: In this quote, June recognizes the unethical policies of the Republic and uses them to justify her alignment with the Patriots. She also continues to show uncertainty in her decision.



The state is broken.' I take a deep breath. 'And you're a coward for leaving Metias at its mercy.

-- June (chapter 7)

Importance: This quote, in which June confronts Thomas about killing Metias, shows that she prioritizes individual ethical choices in the face of state influence.

Suddenly the Republic doesn't seem so powerful, does it? Puny little secretive state, groveling for international aid? I'm telling you, Day – all it takes is one generation to brainwash a population and convince them that reality doesn't exist.

-- Kaede (chapter 8)

Importance: This quote emphasizes the power of propaganda and brainwashing in the creation of a militarized state.

When I'd been the Republic's prisoner, they'd beaten me to a pulp and thrown and thrown me in a dirty cell. June's incarceration seems more like a vacation. I'm relieved for her, but at the same time, I'm a little bitter. Even after betraying the Republic, people with June's pedigree get to coast, while people like me suffer.

-- Day (chapter 10)

Importance: In this quote, Day reflects on the class tension between him and June, particularly on how class affects their respective treatment in the penal system.

The Patriots are trying to start a revolution. That's what this country needs – not a new elector, but no elector. The Republic is broken beyond repair. Let the Colonies take over.

-- Day (chapter 17)

Importance: This quote highlights the initial difference between June and Day's political opinions, in which June advocates for reform while Day advocates for revolution.

And now you think Anden can fix us with his half-wit ideas? This rich boy's going to save us all?" "Stop calling him that! It's his ideas that might do it, not his money. Money doesn't mean anything when – " Day points a finger right at me. "Don't ever say that to my face again. Money means everything.

-- Day and June (chapter 17)

Importance: This dialogue between brings the class tension between the characters to the surface by exposing their differing thoughts on the importance of wealth.

The working class gets shafted everywhere, don't they? My point is this: The Colonies are better than the Republic in some ways. But believe it or not, the reverse is also true. No such thing as the stupid Utopia you've been fantasizing about, Day. Doesn't exist.

-- Kaede (chapter 22)



Importance: This quote is the first time the phrase “utopia” is used in the novel, and introduces the idea that a utopia cannot be found, but must be built.

...only now do I make the distinction – I despise the Republic’s laws, but I love the Republic itself. I love the people. I’m not just doing this for the Elector; I’m doing it for them.

-- Day (chapter 22)

Importance: This quote is the first time that Day makes a distinction between “The Republic” as the overarching militarized state, and the individuals and features within the state. It also notes a major shift in Day’s motivation for revolution from self-centered to altruistic.