

I Am Number Four by Pittacus Lore

When the planet of Lorien was destroyed by the Mogadorians, only eighteen people (aliens?) escaped: nine toddlers and their guardians. Fleeing to Earth for safety, their singular protection-- at least until they gain powers of their own-- is a charm that makes sure they can only be slain in an order. So far, Number One, Number Two, and Number Three have been hunted down across the globe and killed. John is Number Four, and this is his story.

Before you get too caught up thinking of this as an alien story, *I Am Number Four* is better described as a teen superhero we-may-accidentally-start-a-war-to-save-lives type book. Beyond otherworldly superpowers, constant fleeing for their lives, and special space guardians, the Lorien teenagers are pretty normal, and they're just trying to navigate normal life. John Smith is no exception. He's struggling to fit in at high school, manage his emerging gifts, and keep Henri, his guardian, and his new friends safe in the chaotic world he clearly didn't choose for himself.

My brother and I read these books at the same time, and we would fight over who got to the next one first. They are gripping, exciting, and you pull you in so far you won't want to put them down! A solid mix between *Hunger Games*, *Michael Vey*, *Animorphs*, and *Sky High*, *I Am Number Four* is a hero's tale that takes its story seriously without losing the teenage spirit. It's a fresh take on dystopian heroes, a new type of coming-of-age story, and relatable even within a predominantly alien cast of characters. It checks every box.

I Am Number Four was clearly written for teenagers, so readers can expect realistic teenage language (yes, cussing) as well as some suggestive (though not overtly sexual) content. I've recommended it to plenty of people and absolutely will continue to do so. Sitting happily at seven novels, it's the perfect series for any teen to dive into if they've got time on their hands.

Katie Kruger