

The League of Elder: Sygillis of Metatron

Ren Garcia

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Historical fiction and futuristic star-battle fantasy are combined in this debut novel by Ren Garcia. The book's hero is Captain Davage a Lord of the League of Elders who commands the Stellar Fleet vessel *Seeker* dressed in military regalia from a bygone era. His mortal enemy Princess Marilith is also his deepest love. She is a Xaphan a member of the tribe of Elders who "betrayed the League and became their enemy long ago."

Marilith and Davage "both enjoyed the benefits of the ancient Gifts: lifelong youth freedom from disease and a series of powerful mental skills." They are each more than 100 years old and were engaged to be married 80 years prior in hopes of ending the warring feud between their peoples. Davage's sister prevented the wedding because she couldn't bear to see her brother married to a Xaphan. They are still deeply in love and share long intimate conversations during respites between the battles in which Marilith valiantly endeavors to capture and kill the Captain.

While Marilith and Davage are engaged in their love-hate cat-and-mouse struggle they are vaguely aware of a dark threat an amorphous demonic presence trained on them seeking them out with malevolent intent. The novel follows this epic conflict which features a multitude of other characters including Vith Lords Black Hats Sisters of the Light Captain Hathaline Lieutenant Kilos and a Black Hat named Lady Sygillis of Metatron who figures prominently in the story as it unfolds.

The author is a graduate of the Ohio State University literature program. He has created a meticulously detailed fully conceived world complete with histories nations and races populated by well-developed characters who participate in an engaging plot.

Garcia's writing style effortlessly blends modern contemporary language with the stiff formal wording of a translated ancient manuscript. For example after his failed wedding Davage is accepted into the Stellar Fleet because of his royal heritage but no one actually expects him to succeed. However "Those regal hands of his—hands that could properly hold a fork after years of drill hands that could flatten a roughneck in the bars hands that could write out a letter in flowing exquisite script—could turn a mean wheel could fly a wicked starship."

Fans of romantic galactic sagas will devour *The League of Elder: Sygillis of Metatron* and hope that a sequel will soon appear on the horizon.

KAREN MCCARTHY (August 5, 2009)

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