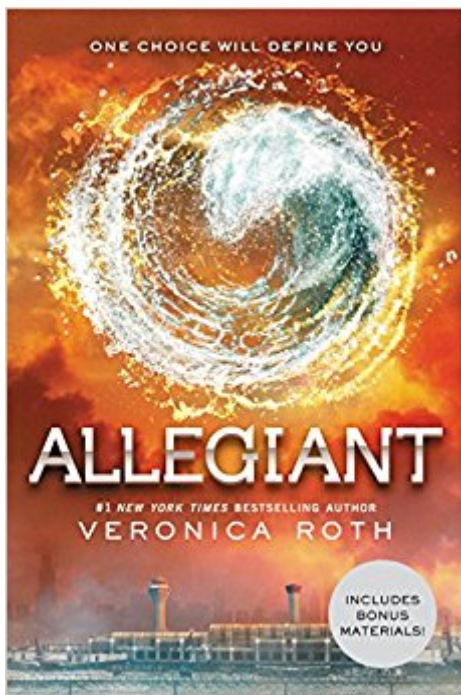


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Allegiant (Divergent Series)



Synopsis

The explosive conclusion to Veronica Roth's #1 New York Times bestselling Divergent trilogy reveals the secrets of the dystopian world that captivated millions of readers and film fans in Divergent and Insurgent. This paperback edition includes bonus content by Veronica Roth! One choice will define you. What if your whole world was a lie? What if a single revelation—like a single choice—changed everything? What if love and loyalty made you do things you never expected? Told from a riveting dual perspective, this third installment in the series follows Tris and Tobias as they battle to comprehend the complexities of human nature—and their selves—while facing impossible choices of courage, allegiance, sacrifice, and love. And don't miss Veronica Roth's thrilling novel Carve the Mark.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An Best Books of the Month, October 2013: Veronica Roth had her work cut out for her, ending a trilogy that had fans rabid for the final book, and she pulled it off like a champ. Allegiant kicks off right where Insurgent ended, so if it's been a while since you read that one you might want to re-read the last couple of chapters to orient yourself. The first surprise in Allegiant is that Roth has switched to using alternating narratives of Tris and Four. At last readers get to see Tris as Four sees her and if, like me, you've been dying to get inside his head, you finally get your chance. One of the best things about this trilogy is the messy, passionate, and wholly authentic love

story between these two. For Tris and Four, there is no love triangle, there are no sides to take--as in life, it's only a matter of how their relationship will play out. Allegiant answers a lot of questions and also delivers some jaw-dropping twists--readers will go outside the fence, learn the origin story of the factions, and, of course, see how it all ends in a finale that packs a wallop and confirms Roth as a writer to watch for a long time to come. --Seira Wilson --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Gr 9 Up • Tris and Tobias and their friends and enemies continue their Chicago-area adventures, 200 years in the future, in Roth's trilogy closer (HarperCollins, 2013). Edith Prior's tape blew the lid off the secret history of the factions and how they evolved to be the organizing force in society. Now, one group shouts "Death to the factions!" while the other writes the Allegiant Manifesto, declaring that factions are the way society was meant to be. Divergents like Tris are no longer considered rejects, but instead are declared Genetically Pure. Tobias, once a proud Dauntless leader, now struggles with the knowledge he is Genetically Damaged and a second-class citizen in the eyes of many. The chapters switch points of view between Tris and Tobias as each struggles to come to terms with their respective family histories and their love for each other. Like the previous books, this story involves gun play, deaths, loyalty, forgiveness, romance, and lots of intrigue and double crossing. The powers of faction serums and vaccines, gene manipulation, and specific technologies expand to cover some gaps in the story line, but these leaps of imagination keep things moving along. The author's choice to kill a major character will shock some listeners. Narrator Emma Galvan returns as Tris, and Aaron Stanford voices Tobias with earnest and measured tones that complement Galvan's deliberate style. Listeners will fully believe these teens could outsmart self-centered and power-hungry adults to give society a brighter future. A must where the first books are popular. • Maggie Knapp, Trinity Valley School, Fort Worth, TX --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

****SPOILERS! RUN AWAY!****First, let's address the elephant in the room that is the topic of most discussion about this book: The ending. I want to make very clear that I am not a person who needs a happy ending in a book, nor did I even really expect one in this series. I don't read books because I expect to see "...and they lived happily ever after" on the last page. In fact if this book had ended with some flash-forward to the house and kids like certain other series did, I would have been just as annoyed. That's lame. I don't need happy. What I do need and expect, from any book, is an ending that makes sense and satisfies the story. This ending was not that ending. But I'm getting

ahead of myself. The real reason I give this book one star is because the book, as a whole, was awful. I'm sorry, but this is one of the most shoddily written books I've ever read in my entire life. And I say this as someone who absolutely adored the first two books in this series. I say this as someone who read *Fifty Shades of Grey* ... and *Allegiant* has officially taken that book's place as the worst book I've ever read. And I debated somewhat on that, but I decided that *Allegiant* wins because, while *Fifty Shades* was an affront to literature indeed, I don't actually wish I could go back in time and unread it. I wish to the heavens that I had never read *Allegiant*. Let me first talk about the writing style. Roth employs the use of a dual narrative in this book, a departure from the first two books. I am not opposed to this style at all - in fact, I welcome it, as I find that a single-person narrative can sometimes be restricting. When done right, a dual narrative can allow a book to tackle parallel storylines and provide insights that you wouldn't get from following the story from one person's perspective. This dual perspective was a mess. When you use two first-person narrators, you have to (a) give them different perspectives to justify the use of this gimmick in the first place, and (b) make sure the voices are distinct so readers can actually tell who is speaking. *Allegiant* fails on both counts. The only reason this style was used is because of how the book ends, because beyond that there was simply no purpose for it. We did not get any new perspectives on either the story or his personality through using Tobias as a narrator. Whatever new information he learned without Tris being present, he passed it on to her anyway so it became repetitive. Outside of those moments, the two were pretty much in the same place the entire time, so we had no real parallel storylines going on, and having them in the same place made it very difficult to tell who was actually talking. And this is the real failure with the dual narrative: Tris and Tobias were written identically. I, along with every single person who has reviewed this book, found myself constantly flipping back to check the chapter heading to remind myself who was talking. They were written like they were the same person, which is a shame because one of them is supposed to be a dude. What happened to Four the badass, the Dauntless legend, the one who was sensitive but tough, the one who took charge rather than let other people lead him? Well, apparently he was out buying tampons, because *Allegiant* turned Tobias into a 15-year-old girl. And a damn annoying one that I wanted to slap. With dueling angst-ridden girl voices, it was impossible to tell Tris and Tobias apart because they sounded exactly like each other. Actually, Tobias didn't sound like Tris in this book because Tris didn't even sound like Tris. Both characters were wildly different from how they were written in the previous books - Tobias becoming a whiny pansy and Tris a nagging know-it-all shrew. This made it that much harder to tell who was talking, since they weren't even the same people we knew. It was like they were both replaced by a third person who inhabited their bodies simultaneously. Roth

simply does not know how to write in another voice than, presumably, her own. I predict that the narrator in her next book will sound suspiciously like Tris even if it's a 75-year-old Japanese man. Now that that's out of the way, let's get down to the meat and potatoes of why this is one of the worst books I've ever read: The plot. This entire series has been building up to the Big Reveal: What is outside the fence that surrounds Chicago? Why were these people placed here? Why was the faction society really created? Now we're finally getting our answers. And it's even dumber than I ever could have imagined. The series' premise was pretty flimsy. How could human beings be broken down by a single trait? Why would anyone think that segregating people based on their differences would be conducive to maintaining peace? Clashing ideals and competing belief systems have been the cause of mankind's wars since the beginning of time. And most of all, why is it no one apparently leaves the city, never even seems to occur to anyone to try? These plot holes were apparent from the beginning, but until now the story still worked mainly because it wasn't self-conscious about the premise. The previous books focused directly on the plot, not back story, and so you could ignore the "Why"s and just assume it would be addressed at the end. This book not only addresses the premise at last but brings it front and center. Roth has said that she didn't really know where this story was going when she first started the series. This obvious fact finally catches up with her in *Allegiant*, as the entire premise completely falls apart with the most illogical, nonsensical, scientifically bogus back story that was ever pulled out of a person's ass. Here's the skinny: Many years ago, in order to cure people of undesirable traits such as cowardice, selfishness, aggression, low intelligence and dishonesty (sound familiar?) - which were believed to be the cause of all of humanity's problems - some moron scientists figured out how to remove the specific genes that caused these traits. The alterations began to take effect after a few generations, and what they discovered was that removing the gene for one trait just enhanced another bad trait (um, duh), leading to a war between those who had been genetically altered and those who hadn't. The morons sought to correct their mistake by rounding up scores of genetically damaged people, sticking "corrected" genes in them, and locking them up in a controlled environment to wait for them to reproduce enough times for the bad genes to heal and return to a state of genetic purity (aka divergence). What??? First off, any genetic manipulation, whether removing or adding a gene, would manifest right in the subject being altered. It does not take multiple generations to appear. And so, if these people had the technology to remove a gene at one time, they can use that technology to put that same gene right back where it came from - and fix it at one time. But even if the scientists were unaware of this, why would they put everyone in the experimental cities? If the goal is for these people to pass on these "corrections" for their descendants to be "fixed," they could do that

anywhere. And, in fact, should - reproduce with the genetically pure people so the damaged genes will be watered down. But isolating them and forcing them to interbreed will only create a founder effect: with no variation in this small genetic population, the damaged genes they carry will only become prevalent over time. They will just as likely make the defect stronger and eventually create new and perhaps even screwier genes through mutations as they would achieve any imaginary genetic "healing." If these people are such a scourge on society, the only reason it would be prudent to round them up in one place is so they could blow them all up at once. This also doesn't work as an explanation for the society being divided into factions. They say they added this "nurture" component to some of the cities to see if it would help. How would encouraging their inborn behavior help? How would this aid the goal of "genetic healing" to isolate the people even further by keeping like aptitudes together so they end up reproducing with people with the same strain of genetic damage they have? The bad genes will get even worse. And it still doesn't explain why no one ever leaves the city. So they were being watched. So what? These people were trapped for some 200 years with no idea what they were doing here, and no one in that time ever thought, "Hmm, I wonder if there's anything outside. Let's go find out"? Human beings are curious animals. If we were not inclined to explore our surroundings and push past barriers, most of the planet would be uninhabited. And Roth expects me to believe that an entire population stayed where they were, for that long, not knowing why they were here or why they couldn't leave, because of a fence and some guards with memory serum? How would that stop anyone? How does that explain why they never even tried? Unless the manipulations also involved removing the common sense gene, these experiments wouldn't have lasted eight weeks, never mind eight generations. Was this really the best she could do? It's like she just ran with the first dumb idea that popped into her head without thinking it through or doing any research despite basing the ENTIRE PREMISE around a researchable topic. Honestly, just five minutes on the Wikipedia would have told her why it wouldn't work. Science fiction needs some level of plausibility. It doesn't have to make complete sense to OUR world logic as long as we are shown why it should make sense to the story's world logic. But this doesn't even hold up within the logic of the story - the experiment is inherently counterproductive to its purpose and an unrealistic waste of time with no context provided for why anyone would be so stupid, and retroactively applying this explanation to the story presented in the first two books just creates more plot holes. But the worst offense is that this backstory is just anticlimactic and LAME. "Guess what, kiddies? Your lives are really a science project, there are cameras everywhere and people have been watching you Truman Show-style this entire time from a command center literally right down the street and yet somehow none of you ever figured this out

for 200 years." Great idea. That's totally believable and doesn't make everything that happened in the series feel pointless AT ALL. Please. And throwing this nonsense in at the last minute? Might as well just say the whole thing was a dream. Suspension of disbelief can only go so far, and then a story is just too dumb to take seriously. Sometimes a wacky concept only works if you accept it as is. She should have just left the premise alone and not tried to explain anything. A lot of people say the ending ruins the series. For me, it's this backstory that ruins it because I now feel like I've been led on a wild goose chase as it is clear that Roth had no real plan for her story and was making it all up as she went along. The whole thing has the agonizingly awkward feel of an author who realized too late that she wrote herself into a corner and then half-assed her way out. Here's what I think: She had this idea for this funny little city with people living a funny sort of way and wrote a book around this idea with no intention of having any larger story behind it, but then she had to write two more books and realized she needed to come up with one after all. And so she crammed a series' worth of explanations into one book to make a "real story" out of it - and somehow ended up writing a completely different story altogether. I think the moment she decided to find a scientific reason for divergence was the death knell for the story, and not just because her decision to have divergence be nothing makes the whole series feel like a waste of time. It seems she couldn't think of a "larger story" that worked to this angle AND stayed in line with the plot points she already wrote, so she opted for Biology For Dummies over continuity and twisted the story right out of coherence. The radical shift in story direction from ideological warfare between factions to science run amok and civil rights, taking the characters completely out of the current plot and inserting them into a new story so random as to be irrelevant - it feels like a book out of a totally different series rather than the conclusion of an existing one. It's all too far removed from the current story, like Tris and company crossed the fence and accidentally walked into the wrong book - one with choppy writing, characters who either fade into the wallpaper or undergo lobotomies, nonexistent worldbuilding, themes as subtle as a two-by-four and plot holes the size of minivans. And worse, it's boring. Once the characters arrive at the Bureau the story comes to a halt and the book becomes one big infodump, but rather than making discoveries everything is just thrown at them. The big revelation felt very forced, like the author was saying to the reader, "Okay, this is what I came up with..." Just explanations upon explanations that somehow never really explain anything. And retcons! Oh, the shameless retcons. Remember when Edith/Amanda said she was a leader of an organization fighting for justice and peace and the Divergent were the signal for the people to come out? No, the video was a lie and they never wanted them to come out at all. Um, why would the video even exist, then? Am I not supposed to notice that Roth was just dropping this cliffhanger because she decided

to switch tactics after Insurgent? The Bureau supplied Jeanine Matthews with the simulation serum to lead the attack on Abnegation so they wouldn't reveal this video. Um, if the Divergent are so precious, wouldn't it have made more sense to slip memory serum to the Abnegation so they wouldn't release the video, rather than instigate the slaughter of a high proportion of genetically pure people in the faction? And the big one, Natalie Prior was working for the Bureau and was inserted into Dauntless as a spy. Um, if she knew what was really going on and that the Bureau was saving Divergents, why wouldn't she help her own daughter escape? Why would she give her own life to save this video and reveal the "truth" if she knew it was a lie? Anyway. It's at this point that we abandon the old premise and become immersed in a flimsy new construct where people are labeled by their genes and we are served an after-school special about prejudice so preachy and obnoxious that half the time I felt like the book was yelling at me. The world outside the fence, a paint-by-numbers mashup of every dystopian cliché ever written, is never fully fleshed out and so the reader can't connect with any of it. The trips to the Fringe serve very little purpose in advancing the story, and Tobias getting involved in their "uprising" was mind-bogglingly stupid. Why in the world would Tobias, who intrinsically distrusts people and expects the worst of them, accept Nita's plans on face value when he barely knows her? Because he's bothered by the fact that he's "genetically damaged"? The Tobias we know wouldn't have even cared about that. It made sense for him to fall for Evelyn's lies in Insurgent because she was his mother and he was desperate to believe in her, but he knows nothing about Nita or any of these people and has no loyalty to them. Total character assassination for the sake of an utterly random plot point. Seriously, why is this story suddenly all about a battle for genetic equality? And you know the whole factionless/Allegiant war, the thing the series used to be about? That all pretty much takes place offscreen and is barely even included in the book. And don't get me started on how it ends. Big Bad Evelyn, hellbent on world domination, plans to just kill everyone as the final step in said world domination plan. And she throws that all away because her son says pretty please with sugar on top. What??? Evelyn was never portrayed as anything other than a cold, calculating megalomaniac. But the son she never gave a crap about begs her to be his mommy again and, poof, she's not evil anymore? Give me a break. I might have forgiven the lack of buildup if she at least didn't cave so easily. Because it was Too Damn Easy. So easy that I wonder why Tobias didn't just do that 400 pages ago and saved me the trouble of thinking this story was going somewhere. And to top it off, Marcus just accepts her peace treaty and agrees to leave, just like that? Who are these people and what happened to the real Eatons? I actually don't mind that Marcus slinks off to who knows where and nobody even cares. It's a fitting end for a terrible man who only cared about how much he mattered over others.

But I don't buy that he would cave so easily, either. What a lazy cop out. And speaking of crap, let's discuss the ending. From cheap racism allegory to cheap religious allegory. Tris's sacrificial death. Like I said earlier, I don't need a happy ending in a story. I am not even opposed to the main character dying. I'll let you in on a little secret: I was spoiled on this detail prior to reading the book, and my reactions were, in order: annoyance that I had gotten spoiled; sadness that Tris dies; excited curiosity for the story; and then sadness again as Tris's death sunk in and I actually cried for a half hour - and I hadn't even read the book yet. I cried because I grieved this character, not because I was angry or disappointed about her death. I thought the idea was actually pretty cool. I never would have guessed that Tris would die. How many times in these books do the heroes miraculously survive against all odds? Every time. How refreshing, in theory, for the hero to actually not make it out. I was intrigued. And then I read the damn book. I think most people who do love this ending only look at the situation within the actual moment of sacrifice: The idea that Tris would take her brother's place. I agree with this. It is literally the only authentic or believable moment in the entire book. Of course Tris couldn't let Caleb die for the reasons he said; she is way too selfless slash stupid to let someone throw their life away when she could step in for them. The theme of this whole story, as the book repeatedly tells us, is about sacrifice. Tris was Abnegation at heart, and so her actions make perfect sense in the situation. She did what she had to do. The problem, though, is why she had to do it in the first place - how the situation came about. When Tris offered to sacrifice herself in the previous books, it was because she found herself in a situation to do so due to circumstances beyond her control. But here the characters go out of their way to create the situation for absolutely no reason whatsoever. The entire storyline was contrived just to shove the sacrifice in her lap. The plan to release memory serum onto the people at the Bureau was totally arbitrary. They make no effort to come up with another plan to stop the Bureau from resetting the experiment, and there were much more logical options available to try. Why not work toward a plan to sabotage the vessels deploying the memory serum over the city? Why not try to evacuate everyone? Why not beg for a temporary stay of execution while Tobias talks his parents down from their war plans, since that's precisely what he ended up doing anyway? That was the reason David ordered the reset to begin with, so if they'd just done that in the first place they could have nipped the reset in the bud right off. But somehow the only thing they can think of is a mass memory wipe. Here is where the story lost me: They learn the Weapons Lab is rigged with death serum, but rather than set out to try to get the passcode or hack into the system or disable the trigger somehow or just THINK OF ANOTHER IDEA, they immediately elect someone to go on a suicide mission. This attack wasn't going down in the next five minutes. They had 48 hours and they make NO effort

to think of a plan where someone wouldn't have to die. Well. That's conveniently stupid. And that death serum trap - can you say "random plot device"? Roth uses a slew of these to basically deus ex machina her way through the plot. Evelyn wants to kill everyone with death serum. The Bureau wants to stop this with memory serum. Our heroes want to stop THEM with more memory serum. It's all artificial conflict; it's contrived. Somehow there's a serum to magically fix any problem and yet the gang ignores all the myriad ways they could use them. Why not get truth serum from the Candor, since evidently it's very easy to drive in and out of the city all of a sudden, and coax the passcode out of David? Why do they need to release the memory serum en masse? Why not just get some from the Amity using it to keep people in the city and use it directly on the folks in charge of the reset? Or take the sample Tobias planned to give to one of his parents and use it on David? It is unfathomable that they wouldn't even think to try anything else with someone's life on the line. Logic, schmogic - gotta work that sacrifice thing into the story somehow! Amazingly, it's Tris who proposes this foolish plan in the first place. Tris can be tough and unforgiving, and I get that she would want retaliation against the people responsible for the attack that killed her parents (Retcon alert!), but she is not evil, or stupid. It was glaringly out of character for her to denounce the Bureau's plan to erase people's memories as wicked and depraved, a fate worse than death, only to then suggest doing the exact same thing to them - even though most of the Bureau workers were innocent. Why is this a better option? Her answer: It isn't, but this one saves the people THEY care about. What? Who is this person? Dismissing one group as expendable to save your own interests. The Abnegation would be proud. This moral relativism might work in another context, but it's counterintuitive to Tris's death as a testament to her selflessness for her to die committing an ultimately selfish act. The others even acknowledge what a questionable plan this is but concede that they don't know what else to do. That's not an excuse. It's not okay just because you can't think of a better idea, and for them to act like it is was also out of character. And in what world would Tobias think that Tris would EVER stand by and watch her brother walk to his death? She's pulled this crap before and he's always called her out on it. Maybe getting his period interfered with his radar. It would be different if the plan was a last-minute, last resort idea; if all alternatives were proven inaccessible and there was just no other way; if the characters had been established as morally bankrupt morons prone to jumping to extreme worst-case scenarios before working through problems rationally. But none of these is true. In her last moments, Tris says true sacrifice comes from necessity and not without exhausting other options. Exactly which options did they exhaust? This situation was not necessary; it was impulsive, irrational and just plain idiotic. And for what? Since this book did such a good job of effectively reducing the city to pointlessness, I actually

wondered why it even mattered if the reset happened or not and why I was supposed to care - especially since literally none of the characters we cared about were in any danger. I get that they care and they need to stop it, but the larger issue of reprogramming the Bureau's agenda was laughably absurd. So they tricked one building full of people into believing in genetic equality. So what? The rest of the world still doesn't. Nothing changed beyond Chicago, and what happened here was ludicrous. They all just accepted the lies they were told? Nothing contradicted them? These people answer to a higher authority overseeing the experiment in other cities. The government would just replace these workers with new ones who hadn't lost their minds. The idea that they would let them stay in charge and turn Chicago into some GD/GP utopia wasn't believable either. THIS is what our hero's final moment is built on? I would have no problem with Tris dying, would even applaud it, if the circumstances truly called for it. As I said, I knew her fate going in, and so I anticipated a good story, an epic death for a truly epic character. A hero's sacrifice. But there are way too many holes in this story to justify a sacrifice by anyone. Roth needed to deliver Tris to her destiny but failed to create a believable, organic or even vaguely logical path to take her there, instead using cheap plot devices, actions with no logic and characters behaving woefully OUT of character to force the story into its prearranged conclusion. And while one might blame this on a lack of creative skill, truthfully I believe the problem is simply that she rushed through this book and did not take time to properly think out the plotline for her ending. The unfortunate result is a hastily put together concoction that is too flawed to support its goal. It rings false, and it is very jarring to place such a "real" moment at the end of what feels like a fake story. Even if we accept the nonsense that put Tris in the Weapons Lab in the first place, her death was still unnecessary. She survived the death serum by sheer force of will, proof that she did not want to die - but now the plot officially no longer required her to die. I admit I am not opposed to the irony of Tris the Invincible being taken out by something as mundane as a couple of bullets, but the scene in which David confronts and shoots her felt too convenient and contrived just to ensure her death. The actions, once again, did not feel organic to the story or the characters, and so I was acutely aware that it was not David's hand pulling the trigger, but Roth's. She was forcing the story to kill her. But why? When the main character dies, it should be integral to the plot. Either it was the unavoidable result of preceding actions, or the required catalyst for later actions. We know the former is not even remotely true, but what about the latter? What did her death create? If Tris could have carried out the mission without dying but was killed some other way anyway, it had to be because her death was needed to move the story forward - her death, and not the mission itself, was an instrument of change on its own. But her death didn't do anything. It didn't move the plot. It didn't motivate the

other characters into actions that moved the plot, nor did it change them in any way. Her death didn't save the city. The memory serum would have worked the same way even if David hadn't shot her as she was setting it off. Nothing that took place in the aftermath of her death was actually the result of her death. Tris's death was meaningless from a plot perspective and served no purpose beyond the thematic point of sacrifice. And while the relevance of this theme to her character is clear, the failure to incorporate the necessity of her death into the narrative makes it seem merely arbitrary. I read Roth's blog where she explains Tris's journey in trying to understand sacrifice. The first time Tris attempts sacrifice, it's for love but unnecessary so she lives; the second time it's necessary-ish but not for love so she lives. But this last time she got it right, love AND necessity, so she dies. Congrats, Tris, you did it for the RIGHT reasons this time! You know what you believe in now! Your search for identity is over and so you've no need to traverse this earthly plane anymore. And so you shall die, because you earned it! I find it disturbing that this story about a girl's quest for identity, which speaks to the reality of so many young readers, ends by basically saying that since she has found her sense of self she no longer needs to go on. Becoming whole doesn't mean your job is done now! That's when the real test begins - true, honest and certain of who you are and what you want to do. This is when you start living. What does Tris gain by dying? This final act is meant to be the culmination of Tris's story of growth and discovery, but she achieves her growth when she realizes why she must take Caleb's place. Her understanding of sacrifice is satisfied in her willingness to die for him, because she loved him, because there was no other way; actually dying neither added to that point nor made the sacrifice any more real, and her actions don't tell us anything we didn't already know. We always knew she was selfless and brave and willing to sacrifice herself. Even though she wasn't "trying" to be sacrificial this time - she was just trying to do right by her brother - she is still doing the same thing she always does, because this was always who she was. It doesn't add to our understanding of her for her to do it again. I am also alarmed by Roth's logic that Tris's death honors her parents, who died for her. Her mother's ghost/hallucination even appears to tell her how proud she is of her. (Whatever.) Yes, when I sacrifice myself for my child, I don't want her to honor my beliefs by living a good selfless life. I want her to go out of her way to risk her life in the name of selflessness just to prove herself to me. Sure. Tris found her way back to Abnegation when she decided to take the risk for her brother. She did not need to die to do so UNLESS DYING WAS THE ONLY WAY TO DO IT. But it wasn't; she was able to survive this. Forcing her death is just forcing the point for its own sake, as all story outcomes would have been exactly the same if she had lived. The story did not need Tris to die. She only died because the author felt that she should, because "her journey was over." That is contrived. That is dying for the

sake of dying. That is pointless. When you do something as controversial as killing off the main character, even if it was planned that way all along, you absolutely must execute it properly. The story must be tight, the writing flawless - otherwise it falls flat. This was not executed well at all. It was not fulfilling; it was empty and unsatisfying. There was no emotional payoff, no promise of hope, no real resolution. A book with a devastating ending can leave a reader emotionally spent but satisfied, if there is some purpose to it. But this ending came off as too senseless, and so, like most senseless tragedies, it just leaves you feeling traumatized. And angry. Writers should not tailor their stories a certain way purely to appease the audience - that would be pandering - but a published author has a certain responsibility to take their readers' expectations into consideration. Roth once stated that she felt the Harry Potter series would have been better if Harry died - that it would have been the most powerful moment in the story and an incredible act of heroism. In explaining Tris's death, she says that Tris had earned an ending as "powerful" as she was. I am a little disturbed by her romanticized notions about sacrifice and death, obvious Christ parallels and all, in books aimed at young audiences. J.K. Rowling has said she did consider this ending for Harry, but she knew that such a twist, "powerful" or not, was just not what her audience wanted. Roth would do well to learn this lesson in understanding your audience. Her idea was fine in theory, maybe, but probably not for a YA fantasy series. I suspect this is why so many readers complained of feeling "cheated" by this ending - this isn't what they signed up for. Personally I love the idea of Tris going out in a blaze of Abnegation-style glory, but I'm several years outside the target market and so that may be why this type of ending doesn't bother me in principle as it does others. What does bother me, though, is how horribly executed it was. The whole affair was crap. The whole BOOK was crap. Now, I don't think all the blame for the abysmal nature of this or any book falls squarely on the author. I think when a series is an established success, the editors and publisher likely don't feel the pressure to crank out a truly quality product since they know it's going to be a bestseller regardless. This book really needed three or four more rounds of rewrites before it should have ever been allowed to go to print. It reads like a rough draft. Guaranteed moneymaker or not, I can only assume the editors were drunk when they let this through.

I finished this last night and afterwards I felt just dead inside. I absolutely hate when a series ends leaving me feeling unsatisfied and even, in this case, angry. I feel kind of betrayed by the author. I loved *Divergent*. The book had its faults, but I really fell in love with the whole story, the characters, the romance between Tris and Four, the Factions, etc. I read and re-read *Divergent* probably 8-10 times. I bought the audio book version as well. I was SO PSYCHED about the movie! I bought

Insurgent and devoured it as well. It didn't have quite the same magic for me that Divergent did, but I still loved it. So I was REALLY psyched to read Allegiant. And maybe my hopes were too high. I don't know. That doesn't change the fact that this book utterly and completely disappointed me. SPOILERS AHEAD For real, SPOILERS! READ AT YOUR OWN RISK! [**What's outside the fence?]** I was really excited, after reading the 'cliffhanger' ending to Insurgent, to find out what was outside the fence. I had my theories, and I was right about some, wrong about others. I was expecting the cameras and Truman Show-esque thing, but I was not expecting all the genetic manipulation crap. As soon as our heroes get outside the fence, there are chapters and chapters of info dumping and, to be honest, it's kind of dull. We learn that Chicago (and some other cities) were created as 'experiments' because of genetic manipulation gone wrong. Supposedly these cities were an attempt at creating more 'genetically pure' people (aka Divergents). This is so far-fetched and bizarre, but I was willing to go along with it. **Tris and Four** I wasn't against the dual perspective, though once I finished the book I realized why she HAD to write it in a dual perspective. However, I don't think it was done well. There were several times where I would get halfway through a chapter and not remember who I was in the head of at the time, mostly because the two narrators had identical voices. Tris has always been an interesting character to me. I really liked that she was tough, but a little vulnerable and naive. I liked her progression through Divergent and Insurgent. She doesn't really progress much here. We've always known Tris is a selfless person who is more than willing to sacrifice herself for the greater good, or for her loved ones. That doesn't change here. More on that later. She does become kind of arrogant and holier-than-thou here, and it really started to bug me. She's 16, but she often acts (and everyone treats) her like a grown-up. She is pretty much always right in Allegiant and she makes sure everyone knows it. Four was awesome in Divergent. He loses all of that awesomeness in Allegiant. He becomes quite whiny and pathetic to the point where I actually wanted Tris to break up with him. She probably should have, considering some of the stupid and completely out of character stuff he does. I really hated seeing him reduced to this quivering mess of a boy who does nothing but wax poetic about his mommy and daddy issues. Four was always strong, and he is the polar opposite of that here. I did enjoy the progression of their relationship though. Some people have complained about the scene where Four accuses Tris of being jealous, but I actually liked it. I like that they, FOR ONCE, acted like TEENAGERS. Unfortunately that was a tiny part of this book, and for the rest of it they act like 30-40 year old worldly adults. **THE END OF THE CONFLICT** So we have Four's mother Evelyn running Chicago like a factionless tyrannical dictatorship. Johanna and Marcus running the Allegiant, trying to reinstate the factions. Evelyn has been portrayed as a nearly heartless person, hell bent on making

all the Factioned people clean toilets like the Factionless had to do for so many years. At the height of the conflict, she is willing to allow a "Death Serum" to kill pretty much everyone in Chicago in order to avoid going back to the Factions. This is when Four arrives and says "Hey Mom, I'll be your son again if you stop acting like a monster" and she goes "Okay." She then negotiates with Marcus and Johanna. Marcus wants to take over as evil dictator and Johanna says "Nah, you're not gonna do that" and Marcus just says "Okay." Conflict over. WHAT? WHAT????????????????**Mass Murder** Roth has not shied away from killing off characters in the first two books, but I felt like most of that had a purpose. Tris' parents in the first book, Al (due to the guilt over his own actions towards Tris), Jeannine in *Insurgent*, and more. Deaths in *Allegiant* come just as rapidly and have even less meaning. Tori dies in a very sudden manner, and then is mostly forgotten about. She was referred to as the leader of the Dauntless, but she is killed and then is nothing more than an afterthought for the rest of the book. Uriah's death is given a lot more page time, but only as a way to make Four feel like total garbage for getting involved in the rebellion and to make Tris "right" once again. The biggest death of all was Tris, and this was the biggest disappointment to me. I will be straight up honest - I LIKE a happy ending. I read YA because I like knowing that things will most likely end up happy overall. I read romance because I know there will always be a happily ever after. HOWEVER, I can deal with a bittersweet ending so long as it feels satisfying and feels like closure. Tris' death was NOT that ending. Caleb's betrayal was a huge part of *Insurgent*, and that continues on in *Allegiant*. He has a LOT to atone for in *Allegiant* and when he volunteers for the suicide mission to help save everyone, he does it because he wants Tris to forgive him. And he doesn't want to live with the guilt of what he did. Instead of letting him, Tris forces him to let her go instead. I understand this. Tris forgave him and doesn't want him to die because he feels guilty. I get it. HOWEVER Caleb doesn't get that opportunity to redeem himself. While I understand that Tris acted the way she had to act, that doesn't mean Caleb can't take a bullet for her. That doesn't mean he can't force a redemption. Instead, Tris dies in a completely unsatisfying scene that left me going "WHAT THE HECK JUST HAPPENED?" Caleb lives and basically still is the coward and traitor. Caleb NEEDED to redeem himself. He needed to take that bullet for Tris and die. Instead, we get this messed up ending where Caleb lives. Peter lives (gets his mind erased BY HIS OWN CHOICE and gets to start over). Marcus lives (just disappears somehow). David (Tris' murderer) lives (also gets his mind erased and even though he's an evil murderer, no one cares because he doesn't remember). Almost all the bad guys live and get to have perfectly happy, normal lives. This is NOT SATISFYING. THIS IS POINTLESS. Sorry, but this book was awful. I wanted to love it. I REALLY wanted to love it. I was willing to deal with all the weird genetically damaged stuff. I was willing to

deal with the complete dismantling of Four's character. I was willing to deal with a lot, but Tris' pointless and needless death... NOPE. This death felt like it was here for shock value only. So the author could be "edgy" and "different." Unfortunately, all she did for me is ruin the entire series. I won't be re-reading Divergent or Insurgent anymore. I won't be re-reading Allegiant. And I definitely won't be seeing the movies that I was once so excited for. Knowing how depressingly it ends ruins it all for me

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