

Chapter Fifteen

In Chapter Fifteen of **Allegiant**, Tris confronts a moment of emotional reckoning as she meets David, the leader of the Bureau of Genetic Welfare. Holding a photograph of her mother and David, she grapples with the absence of her loved ones, realizing they are likely dead. David begins to unravel the truth behind Edith Prior's message, revealing that the information given to Tris and her peers was deliberately incomplete and misleading. The chapter sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the Bureau's experiments, as Tris and her companions brace for unsettling revelations about their world.

David explains that the Bureau's experiments stem from a centuries-old government initiative to manipulate human genetics, aiming to eliminate undesirable traits like violence and dishonesty. He describes how this effort backfired, resulting in "damaged genes" that exacerbated societal flaws rather than correcting them. Tris reflects on how this mirrors the faction system's philosophy, where each group's strengths come with corresponding weaknesses. The narrative underscores the theme of unintended consequences, as David's exposition hints at the catastrophic Purity War, a civil conflict sparked by these genetic manipulations.

The chapter delves into the ethical and practical failures of the genetic experiment. David reveals that altering traits like fear or aggression inadvertently stripped people of compassion or motivation, creating a society more fractured than before. Tris recognizes the parallels to her own experiences within the factions, where Dauntless bravery breeds cruelty, and Erudite intelligence fosters vanity. The discussion highlights the complexity of human nature, challenging the simplistic notion that virtues can be isolated or perfected without cost.

As David recounts the devastating Purity War—a conflict between those with "damaged" and "pure" genes—the scale of the Bureau's miscalculations becomes

clear. The war decimated half the population, leaving a legacy of destruction and mistrust. Tris and her friends react with a mix of skepticism, anger, and hunger for answers, their expressions mirroring the chapter's tension between revelation and disillusionment. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, poised to explore the personal and societal ramifications of these revelations, as Tris and her peers confront the unsettling truth about their identities and the world beyond the factions.

