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Pandemonium (Delirium Trilogy)



Synopsis

The second book in Lauren Oliver's™ New York Times bestselling trilogy about forbidden love, revolution, and the power to choose. Now with a brand-new cover and an exclusive-to-this-book sneak peek at her next novel for teens: the ambitious, wholly original masterwork *Replica*. In this electrifying follow-up to *Delirium*, Lena is on a dangerous course that takes her through the unregulated Wilds and into the heart of a growing resistance movement. This riveting, brilliant novel crackles with the fire of fierce defiance, romance, and the sparks of a revolution about to ignite. Supports the Common Core State Standards

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have been a huge fan of Lauren Oliver since her debut novel, *Before I Fall*, which remains in my top five favorite works. Because of my high regard for that book, I eagerly blazed through her dystopian novel, *Delirium*. There were several reasons why I was let down by that book, possibly mostly due to high expectations. It was much slower paced, possibly because it was spread into a trilogy, and I was not as invested in Lena (to me, she was almost too innocent and uncertain) and did not feel very attached to Alex, her love interest. I felt he was too straight of a character, without the many layers and depth that I was used to in *Before I Fall*. I bring this up in this review because the second novel in this trilogy, which so often ends up being the "filler" book in many trilogies, surpasses the first in all of these areas and more. *Pandemonium* picks up right where *Delirium* ends

in the aftermath of Lena making it to the Wilds, with Alex presumably left behind and killed. This book is composed as a series of flashbacks of her life in the Wilds and her present time as an active part of the Resistance. This book again showcases Lauren Oliver's gorgeous prose. She writes so beautifully and poignantly in a way I have not seen matched currently. Furthermore, the pacing of this book is much better than the first. We are immediately thrust into the dangerous Wilds and the difficult life that Lena is now adapting. Lena has developed into a much more interesting character, with hardened edges from the terrible tragedies she has experienced and the difficult life she now leads. Then, we are introduced to Julian, the head of the Cured activist group. I immediately was drawn to him in ways that I was never with Alex. Instead of a straightforward protagonist, Julian is multifaceted; a character with depth, feeling, and emotion, who changes with experience and develops meaningful relationships. I also want to mention that while I was never surprised by any of the secrets revealed during this novel (and there are several), I welcomed all of them. I thought they were well thought out and necessary-- the exact right moves. When I was in my fiction writing class at Stanford, my teacher once told us to trap two very different characters in a place and just see what happens. I imagine that might have been exactly what happened for Julian and Lena. A gorgeous book, well written and another amazing success for Lauren Oliver. I was unsure if I would read the final book in this series, but now that doubt has completely fled. I eagerly await the thrilling conclusion to this trilogy, and know that Lauren Oliver has an amazing career ahead of her as one of the most promising YA authors to date.

SPOILERS AHEAD!!!! Like so many other reviewers, *Delirium* was one of my favorite novels of 2011 and I couldn't wait for 2012 when *Pandemonium* would come out. *Delirium* spends the whole novel getting the reader invested in Lena, her transformation, and her falling in love with Alex. The end had me dying for the next book so I could see what happened to Lena and Alex. *Pandemonium* opens with Lena escaping in the Wilds, leaving Alex behind, presuming him dead. She stumbles upon a group of the resistance and integrates into their society. Unlike many of the other reviewers, I like the "Then" segments. I thought that it was necessary to show the completion of Lena's transformation from "Zombie" to the hard, practical, strong member of the resistance she becomes. It is also the only time we really see her grieve for Alex. The "Now" segments follow Lena as she is sent on a mission to follow the prodigal son, Julian, of the Pro-Cure leader. This irked me because there is obviously something going on but Lena doesn't question it or push the matter. I found the fact that her resistance "mentors," Raven and Tack, are a part of a scheme that paid Scavengers to abduct Lena and Julian is ludicrous. I find it hard to believe that they would employ the aid of a

faction that is so reviled and hated by the resistance. Plus, Raven and Tack left a great deal up to chance. I found it unbelievable that Lena was able to A) make her way to Julian through the crowds, B) keep track of him once she had found him, C) find him once he had been abducted, and D) manage to make it to him without becoming a casualty herself. I thought it was unnecessary that Raven and Tack kept her in the dark when she could have performed her task so much better with more knowledge. They didn't even have to reveal everything. It could have been "We heard a rumor that Julian would be abducted by the Scavengers at the rally - keep an eye on him" and we could have still had the OMG moment later on when we discover that the resistance paid the Scavengers. And it was irritating that Lena spent so much of the novel passive, helpless, dirty, and/or passed out. We were treated to a few scenes, but I wanted to see more of the fighter she had become! It was entirely predictable that Lena would fall for Julian. "Oh my God, we're stuck in a room together and I hate you and everything you stand for but your whining and naivete are so attractive that I can't help myself." I didn't connect with Julian at all. I hated that I constantly felt sorry for him because of his father, his brother, his cancer, etc. As a reader, I don't want to pity the male love interest in a novel. I especially didn't connect with his and Lena's "love." She flipped from one extreme to the other so quickly and he just seemed like a horny teenage boy who got to touch a girl for the first time. (BTW, his peeping while she took a shower didn't seem sexy to me, it was creepy.) Everything between them felt forced and contrived. Maybe it was because I was so invested in Lena and Alex's relationship that this book just didn't do it for me. Now, I don't know about you, but from watching a lot of TV and reading a lot, I KNOW that when a character "dies" - unless you see the person die and then witness them being buried or burned - you can pretty much guarantee that there's a good chance you'll be seeing them again. That for me was predictable and I was not at all surprised when Alex showed up on the last page, interrupting a lovey-dovey moment between Julian and Lena. I am so tired of the teenage love-triangle in YA novels. Just because it worked in Hunger Games doesn't mean it's the best plot direction for this series. While I loved Delirium, and this series had the potential to become the next HG for me, this second book ruined it by forcing a triangle. I feel like this book would have been better without the love-triangle set up. However, with all that said, I *will* be reading the third book to find out what happens with Lena and Alex and to see if, hopefully, it can redeem the disappointment of this book. :(

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