

Atlantia book review by Emily MAR 2025

Summary:

Atlantia, a novel by Ally Condie, features the siren Rio, who has lived underwater in the city Atlantia all her life and wishes to escape to go to the Above on Earth. Rio's mother and a beloved former minister of Atlantia had recently passed away, leaving many citizens to be in mourning and Rio clueless on decisions regarding her future. Bay, Rio's twin, violated a mutual promise they shared to both choose to remain in Atlantia, leaving Rio utterly alone and surprised as to the reasoning behind why Bay would choose to leave without informing or confiding in Rio. While underwater without her sister or mother, Rio develops skills and habits to maintain and empower herself utilizing her innate powers as a siren while also discovering the secrets, atrocities, and corruptions of Atlantia and their government. Moreover, she learns about life as a siren from her aunt, Maire, who was alienated from society as all known sirens were. Rio also learns of the innards of the city from and forms a friendship with True. True also experienced an unexpected loss, for his best friend left for the Above without acknowledging or informing True. Together, they all uncover surprising truths about their world, society, and government while working to reach the Above.

What I liked:

I enjoyed how this book was very detailed and insightful. Ally Condie gave a great amount of detailed and specific imagery, allowing for the reader to notice aspects of symbolism within descriptions of the setting. For example, different settings had individual symbols that resembled a form of social commentary or signified character development.

Furthermore, *Atlantia* is very insightfully written and may require a higher level of comprehension and analysis to understand the novel to its full extent. Similar to a Disney movie, there is a general surface-level storyline while also having multiple underlying, obscured meanings. There is a general plot that is simple and easily comprehensible along with hints of themes such as loyalty towards family; identity and self-discovery; how sacrifice resembles what people value; and government control.

What I disliked:

In my opinion, *Atlantia* lacked an element of captivation and had certain portions of the book that could have easily incorporated points to spark interest in readers. The author's tone and the atmosphere of the novel are continuously very calm and the writing is very in-depth. Nevertheless, additionally vivid or unique dialogue or descriptions of actions or behavior may have been helpful in allowing the readers to find the novel more intriguing.

Recommended for people who:

In my opinion, this book should be recommended to those who enjoy books with mild amounts of analyses required and an interesting plot. It is not difficult to spot the symbolism, underlying societal critiques, and other concealed components; however, the novel does require some higher-leveled comprehension to understand it to the fullest extent.

In addition, the writing style of Ally Condie and organization of thoughts of Rio in *Atlantia* is comparable to the author's other series *Matched*. For readers who enjoyed the *Matched* trilogy, the organization of Rio's thoughts are quite similar to that of Cassia, and the writing style is consistent in the author's books.