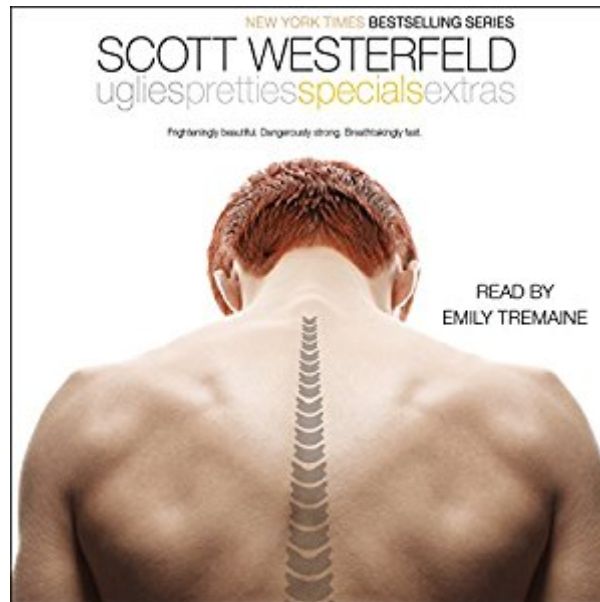


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Specials: Uglies, Book 3



Synopsis

"Special Circumstances": The words have sent chills down Tally's spine since her days as a repellent, rebellious ugly. Back then Specials were a sinister rumor - frighteningly beautiful, dangerously strong, breathtakingly fast. Ordinary pretties might live their whole lives without meeting a Special. But Tally's never been ordinary. And now, in the third book in the series, Tally's been turned into a Special: a superamped fighting machine engineered to keep the uglies down and the pretties stupid. The strength, the speed, and the clarity and focus of her thinking feel better than anything Tally can remember. Most of the time. One tiny corner of her heart still remembers something more. Still, it's easy to tune that out - until Tally's offered a chance to stamp out the rebels of the New Smoke permanently. It all comes down to one last choice: listen to that tiny, faint heartbeat or carry out the mission she's programmed to complete. Either way, Tally's world will never be the same.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Specials is the final book in Scott Westerfeld's Uglies trilogy (after Uglies and Pretties). In this installment, Tally wakes up from surgery and finds herself part of an ultra-cool team of Specials (bio-engineered, covert law enforcement personnel) called the Cutters. She has snazzy techno-features, like embedded computer chips, unbreakable ceramic bones, and razors that come out of her fingernails. She's the ultimate weapon. It's a bit disturbing to read a book in which the heroine of the series has been essentially co-opted by the bad guys. Tally now works for Shay, her

complex best friend, and is expected to find and betray the New Smokies (her friends of the first book). But she does maintain traces of her former self, and she is particularly motivated to find Zane (her now brain-damaged love from the second book), and convince Dr. Cable to transform Zane into a Special, too. However, when she does find Zane, she is revolted by his weakness, by his not being "special" like she is. She struggles with herself, knowing deep inside that she loves him, but programmed to see the world so keenly that his imperfections grate on her, and so sure of her own superiority that she can't really imagine being with him again. A series of adventures follow, during which Tally and Shay pull a stunt that turns out to have disastrous consequences, and then set off on the trail of the New Smoke. Tally re-encounters David (her love from before she met Zane), and has to go up against the seemingly invincible Dr. Cable. The ending is satisfying in many ways, although the resolution of the Zane vs. David choice is a bit of an anti-climax. Overall, I found it a fascinating story, full of unexpected twists, chases, and cool special effects. I think that the Westerfeld says some interesting things about what constitutes beauty, about making up your own mind vs. letting others tell you what to do, and about the balance between governmental protection and control. Tally's changing personality makes this series a bit tough, however, after the first book. You like her. You dislike her. You pity her. You don't know what to do with her. For me, I prefer to have a main character that I can identify with more. Tally's evolving personality makes that a bit difficult. I'm left feeling that Scott Westerfeld presents some intriguing ideas with this series, and that teens will enjoy it, but that I didn't love it the way I do when I identify with the main character. Still, it's a fun ride. And I'll definitely see the movies if there ever are any. This book review was originally published on my blog, Jen Robinson's Book Page, on June 11th, 2006.

'Tally- your special' Tally can still remember the haunting words of Shay's that have destroyed her life a pretty forever. Even the days when she was and Uglie- specials seemed like legendary figures, myths, something people talked about but never saw- Tally would never have guessed in her wildest-dreams that she would become one. And now she was. Being a special, bring a new and beautiful aspect to the life of Tally. She feels abnormal, everything she sees has a simple and somewhat- crystallic beauty to it. Everything shimmers with loveliness and grace and beauty- life is unreal now, that Tally's a special. Then Tally is given an offer- to stamp out the rebels of the New Smoke- once and for all- whether she does or whether she doesn't, darkness has crept into Tally's life- like a dangerous fume, like pure hatred from a bleeding heart. Whatever she chooses, Tally's life will never be the same now that she is a special. The third and final book to this amazing trilogy had a beautiful shade of darkness to it. The characters were well-developed, personality changes

occured, and the readers grow close to Tally like a weed entwining a fern that had gone from pretty and bonny- to breathtakingly beautiful with a hardness to it. I have enjoyed reading Scott Westerfield's other books to the series: Uglies and then Pretties. The originality to both of them is wonderful and creative, and over-all adds up to a great teen read, that depicts an amazingly modern world- perhaps the future, for us humans.

Tally has been forced into yet another cruel surgery. And now she is a Cutter (a new kind of Special with flash tattoos, super-fast reflexes, and wolf-like eyes). Tally can think more clearly than ever, but her memory has once again been altered. She now thinks of David and the rest of the Smokies as enemies, and she wants nothing more than to end the Smoke forever. Well there is one thing she wants more.....Zane, now severely effected by the brain lesion nanos, is entirely weak. Tally can't even look at him and won't rest until he's a Cutter, too. Shay comes up with a plan to make Zane a Cutter, so that Tally will be happy, and the same plan will end the Smoke forever. What could be more perfect, right? Wrong. Their innocent plan evolves into something much bigger. Someone will die, many will question who they are, and the world will change, forever. *Specials* is a brilliant end to the Uglies trilogy. It had many of the same themes seen in the last books, along with a few new themes. The story of the Rusties, billions of people that died from a human-made virus, is told in both Pretties and Uglies. Few of the Rusties survived, all because they went too far environmentally. *Specials* increases the importance of this small theme from the last two books. It reminds us what happens when we take the environment for granted, and this is the base for the fabulous, unexpected ending to *Specials* and to the Uglies trilogy. I encourage everyone to read these books. They are wonderful and do not let you down.

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