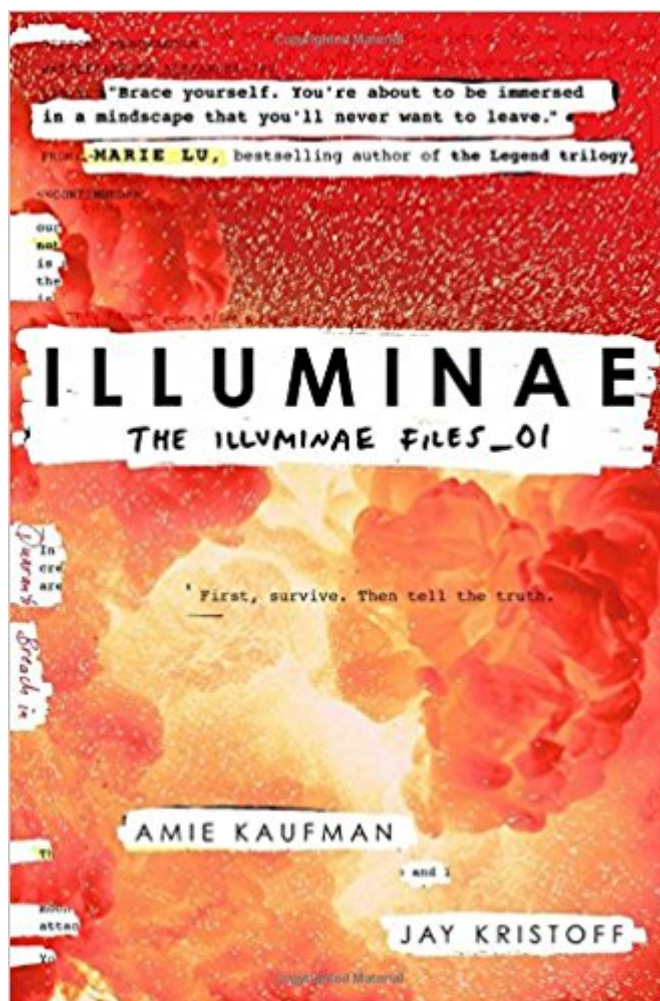


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# Illuminae



## Synopsis

For fans of Marie Lu comes the first book in an epic series that bends the sci-fi genre into a new dimension. "A truly beautiful novel that redefines the form." —Victoria Aveyard, bestselling author of *Red Queen* This morning, Kady thought breaking up with Ezra was the hardest thing she'd have to do. This afternoon, her planet was invaded. The year is 2575, and two rival megacorporations are at war over a planet that's little more than a speck at the edge of the universe. Now with enemy fire raining down on them, Kady and Ezra—who are barely even talking to each other—are forced to evacuate with a hostile warship in hot pursuit. But their problems are just getting started. A plague has broken out and is mutating with terrifying results; the fleet's AI may actually be their enemy; and nobody in charge will say what's really going on. As Kady hacks into a web of data to find the truth, it's clear the only person who can help her is the ex-boyfriend she swore she'd never speak to again. Told through a fascinating dossier of hacked documents—including emails, maps, files, IMs, medical reports, interviews, and more—*Illuminae* is the first book in a heart-stopping trilogy about lives interrupted, the price of truth, and the courage of everyday heroes. "Prepare yourselves for *Illuminae*." —EW.com "You're not in for an ordinary novel experience. . . ." —Bustle.com "A truly interactive experience. . . . A fantastically fun ride." —MTV.com "... [O]ut-of-this-world awesome." —Kirkus Reviews, starred "... [s]tylistically mesmerizing." —Publishers Weekly, starred "... [A]n arresting visual experience." —Booklist, starred "... [A] game-changer." —Shelf Awareness, starred "Brace yourself. You're about to be immersed in a mindscape that you'll never want to leave." —Marie Lu, bestselling author of the *Legend* trilogy "Genre: Undefinable. Novel: Unforgettable." —Kami Garcia, bestselling coauthor of *Beautiful Creatures* & author of *Unbreakable* "An exuberant mix of space opera, romance, zombies, hackers, and political thrills." —Scott Westerfeld, bestselling author of *Zeroes and Uglies* "Stunningly creative. Smart, funny, and romantic." —Veronica Rossi, bestselling author of *Under the Never Sky* "This is one of those rare books that will truly keep your heart pounding." —Beth Revis, bestselling author of *Across the Universe* "This book is xxxing awesome." —Laini Taylor, bestselling author of *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*

## Book Information

Series: *Illuminae Files* (Book 1)

Hardcover: 608 pages

Publisher: Knopf Books for Young Readers; 1st Edition edition (October 20, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0553499114

ISBN-13: 978-0553499117

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 1.8 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 577 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #17,967 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Space Opera #96 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Action & Adventure > Survival Stories #173 in Books > Teens > Romance > Science Fiction & Dystopian

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Gr 7 Up "Kady Grant has typical problems: school, parents, and a boyfriend she just dumped. But life spirals out of control when Kady's planet, Kerenza, is attacked by an unknown enemy. As destruction unfolds around her, Kady manages to escape her planet on one of three ships. Kady is considered lucky, with her mother on one ship and her ex, Ezra, on another. As the convoy flees Kerenza with the enemy close behind, it is clear that the problems have just begun. A deadly virus is spreading through one of the ships; AIDEN, the onboard computer of the lead ship, has gone rogue; and the enemy is in close pursuit in an attempt to destroy the last witnesses of the Kerenza catastrophe. Using a nontraditional writing style, Kaufman and Kristoff craft the narrative using illustrated screen shots of spaceship blueprints, interviews, data, and messages that make up the "Illuminae Files." Despite the minimal presence of conventional paragraphs, there is a surprisingly natural flow as elements are seamlessly woven together to create a satisfying dossier-style reading experience. The characters are immediately real and with harrowing accounts, unexpected twists, and gut-wrenching selflessness, they become even more endearing over the course of the book. While reminiscent of the works of Isaac Asimov and Orson Scott Card, this work is a distinct piece that stands alone. VERDICT A great recommendation for middle and high school science-fiction fans." Paige Rowse, Syosset High School Library, New York

"Prepare yourselves for Illuminae."--EW.com "One look at a hard copy of Illuminae and you know you're not in for an ordinary novel experience. . . . Illuminae is a wholly ambitious

work that never sacrifices emotion or story for its unique form." --Bustle.com "A truly interactive experience for the reader. . . . A fantastically fun ride." --MTV.com "Hints of romance and references to Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey interweave with the text, itself an arresting visual experience that weds form with expression and content." --Booklist, starred review "Stunningly creative. Smart, funny, and romantic. This is the book I've been waiting for." --Veronica Rossi, bestselling author of *Under the Never Sky* "...a stylistically mesmerizing tale, where story and art are interchangeable, and words act as pictures." --Publishers Weekly, starred review "Nervy chicks, cute fighter pilots, lots of heart, lots of heartbreak, a mentally unstable battleship, and even pink hair! This book is xxxing awesome." --Laini Taylor, bestselling author of *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* "The characters are immediately real and with harrowing accounts, unexpected twists, and gut-wrenching selflessness, they become even more endearing over the course of the book. While reminiscent of the works of Isaac Asimov and Orson Scott Card, this work is a distinct piece that stands alone." --*School Library Journal* "This is one of those rare books that will truly keep your heart pounding and the pages turning as you peel back the layers--and you hope that the characters you love survive." --Beth Revis, bestselling author of *Across the Universe* "Brace yourself. You're about to be immersed in a mindscape that you'll never want to leave." --Marie Lu, bestselling author of the *Legend* trilogy "An edge of your seat thrill ride that left me breathless. Genre: Undefinable. Novel: Unforgettable." --Kami Garcia, bestselling coauthor of *Beautiful Creatures* & author of *Unbreakable* "Alternately humorous, charming, horrifying and electrifying, *ILLUMINAE* is unforgettable and a game-changer for its genre." --Shelf Awareness, starred review "You'll cheer, you'll gasp, you'll hang on for all 600 pages." --*Romantic Times*, Top Pick Gold "Not only is *ILLUMINAE* a twisting, heart-pounding story moving at the speed of light, but it is a truly beautiful novel that redefines the form. I have never read anything like it. And it certainly filled the *BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* shaped hole in my heart." --Victoria Aveyard, bestselling author of *Red Queen* "An exuberant mix of space opera, romance, zombies, hackers, and political thrills, told with eccentric aplomb. *ILLUMINAE* is both the weirdest and most heartfelt thing you'll read this year." --Scott Westerfeld, bestselling author of *Uglies* and *Zeroes* "Ambitious, heartbreaking, and out-of-this-world awesome." --*Kirkus Reviews* starred review "Kaufman and Kristoff have created a fast-paced, quasi-political sci-fi thriller that is completely unique." --*Booklist* starred review

I chose this book based on co-author Amie Kaufman, who is also co-author on the *Starbound*

series, which I love. When I received the book, two things shocked me: its size and the strange format. But neither of these things should put off a potential reader. Instead of narrative, this book is presented through transcripts of interviews describing events, email conversations, reports, graphic elements—it's very odd. At first I found it intimidating, and wondered if I would be able to read a book in this manner, but after maybe 30 pages, you're well into it. Because of the format, it's not truly like reading a 600-page book. The copy is very loose, since it mimics the format of the communication type instead of being running body text. As for the story: Kady and Ezra have just broken up when their planet is attacked. As their ships attempt to escape from their long-term pursuers, Ezra is drafted into becoming a fighter pilot, and Kady becomes a hacker. They're trying to put together what is happening, why the artificial intelligence seems to have gone haywire, and a deadly disease is spreading among the survivors. Can two teens save them all, while getting their romance back on track? You may be thinking, "This sounds like every sci-fi movie I've ever seen rolled together. Why should I read it in book form?" I promise, the story is really, really exciting the way it's told. Also, there are some twists and turns along the way. I went from "What IS this book?" to "Yep, get me the sequel, NOW!" once I had finished. Sequel will be an auto-buy, and can't come fast enough.

*Illuminae* is one of the best books I've read recently. The authors created such an amazing story and had me completely in love with the main characters, Kady and Ezra, within 15 pages. I think *Illuminae*'s biggest strength is its characters. Kaufman and Kristoff did such an amazing job making you care about Kady and Ezra very early on. By the end of the first interview, you have a very real sense of who they are as characters. The fact that Kaufman and Kristoff were able to fully define them so early on is a testament to what great writers they are. Kady is deeply loyal and will go to any lengths for the people she loves. She has an amazing strength and is able to accomplish so much over the course of the book. She's also sarcastic and witty and an absolute badass. Ezra is quite charming and his love for Kady is simply amazing. The format to which *Illuminae* is told, through classified documents, reports, IMs, pictures, etc., is so unique and I enjoyed it immensely. It was so interesting to experience the story as if it was a file someone gave you. This definitely made for a unique reading experience and I don't know that I'll ever find something quite like it again (with the exception of the sequels in this series). A few spoilery thoughts, but nothing too specific. Kady and Ezra's relationship was fantastic (and I majorly shipped them), but I wish we would have seen more time with them together. They spend roughly 90% of the book not actually with each other and only communicating through IMs. It would have

been nice to see more of their interactions in person. AIDAN was an absolutely fascinating character and I loved how you could tell he cared for Kady by the end of the story even if he didn't know what that meant. I am so excited to read the sequel, Gemina, and see where this story leads. Also, I got a lot of Firefly vibes from this book and would definitely recommend the book to fans of the TV show.

What an interesting format for a story! I really liked it, it was so interesting! As a note, I found some of the images difficult to zoom into on my Kindle for iPhone App. I have read really wonderful things about the images in the printed format, so this book might be better read on paper. Having said that, I don't feel like I missed any parts of the story by skipping the small amount of images I couldn't zoom in on. Maybe I would have had better luck on my Kindle Voyage? It took me a while to get into this story, but once I did, I was really hooked. The beginning felt kind of slow, when Kady and Ezra are dealing with the fallout of their planet being invaded and them being refugees on some space ships. Once Kady started to dive more deeply into what was going on with the commanders and the artificial intelligence AIDEN on the Alexander, things definitely picked up. I liked how, even when things were going really terribly badly, Kady and Ezra still found time to flirt with each other and argue over things that happened in their relationship. It was a nice reminder that they were only teenagers. This story is a part of a series, but once I finished Illuminae, I didn't feel compelled to start Gemina right away. I'll probably get around to it eventually, but it's not something that I feel like I need to start immediately. Which is nice, because I usually have no patience and end up devouring a series in a few days!

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