

## TOBIAS EATON- BEING DAUNTLESS IN THE DAUNTLESS SOCIETY-A critical Study of male protagonist in Veronica Roth's Short Stories.



### Literature

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper explores about the protagonist Tobias Eaton's state of being Dauntless in the Dauntless society. It also traces the life of Tobias as he goes through his aptitude test and a peek into the relationship he has with his father. It is incredibly heartbreaking to watch the relationship between Marcus and Tobias. It also covers his journey to make the decision of choosing Dauntless as his faction. During the initiation training he discovers that he will succeed in Dauntless and eventually he chose to work in the intelligence sector of Dauntless and began to train the transfer initiates in the dauntless faction. Here he will not be called the name his parents gave him. This paper also adds more insight into how his character operates feels and views the world. Each brief story explores the world of Divergent series through the eyes of Tobias Eaton revealing previously unknown facts of his personality, back story and relationships. Dauntless changes Four and makes him bold and courage.*

Veronica Roth is an American Novelist and short story writer currently living in Chicago. She is popularly known for her debut New York Times Best Selling *Divergent* trilogy, consisting of *Divergent*, *Insurgent* and *Allegiant*. Her novels and short stories have been greatly appreciated by most of the critics as well as the readers. *Divergent* has won numerous awards since its publication in April 2011, and was voted number one in the Teens' Top Ten sponsored by YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association) has been widely well received by the readers.

The central theme of Veronica Roth's works focuses on five factions mainly used to classify the citizens based on their aptitude tests and values. On an appointed day of every year all the sixteen year olds must select the faction that will decide their future and it is the customary of American tradition. After taking a placement test they will be allowed to proceed as per their own choice of faction for the rest of their life. Based on the following famous quote, 'If a character is lost, everything is lost' a person who failed to choose the right faction or failed to survive in what they chose for their future would become faction less. Those who are not able to get the proper faction for themselves will get meaningless life. Choosing the right faction alone is not enough it is even more important to overcome all the struggles within it.

Veronica herself admitted that after the publication of famous trilogy collections she still wanted to write more and more about her characters thereby she chose to write short story collections from the *Divergent* trilogy. Initially the stories are sold separately as e-books and also bound together under the title, 'FOUR: A Divergent Collection'. It is a collection of four short stories namely, The Transfer, The Initiate, The Son and The Traitor. These short stories retell the events of chapter thirteen of *Divergent* written from the perspective of Tobias Eaton.

According to Roth, these stories serve as a prequel to the *Divergent* trilogy. She said that

"The e-shorts will address Tobias's back story and some of the mysterious things going on in the world before Tris chose Dauntless. Together, they form a kind of Tobias-centered *Divergent* prequel, though there is some overlap".

In Veronica Roth's both short stories and novels the protagonist's society is divided into five factions. These are: Abnegation (the selfless), Erudite (the intelligent), Dauntless (the brave), Candor (the honest) and Amity (the peaceful). Abnegation is

the faction that highly values the needs of others and takes over the public services in the society. Erudite is the faction that was formed in order to vanishing the ignorance and darkness from the human mind. Dauntless is the faction that was formed by those who blamed cowardice for society's problems. Dauntless members are generally brave and seeming almost fearless. Amity is the faction which wanted to avoid war. Candor is the faction that value honesty and cannot tell lie. Candor faction members are trained to speak only the truth even if gets them into trouble. Veronica used these faction systems in all her works in order to criticize the social structures in the Chicago society where she resides.

Tobias Eaton more prominently known as 'Four', is one of the main protagonists in the *Divergent* trilogy and also the protagonist in Veronica Roth's short story collections. He was born to Marcus Eaton and Evelyn Eaton in the Abnegation faction. His father noticed Tobias Eaton state of divergence at a young age and become observant of him since then. Evelyn died when Tobias was young, leaving him alone with Marcus Eaton. Eventually Tobias became a victim to his father's cruelty.

During the aptitude test, Tori a woman administer from the Dauntless faction who examined Tobias Eaton and declared that his result was Abnegation. This result never brought smile at his face instead he gets disappointed. He doesn't want to belong in Abnegation because he strongly believes that it will not lead him to a life of ecstatic happiness. At the same time he does not want to be recognized as faction less. On the day of choosing ceremony he has to choose his own faction for the rest of the life. He puts himself at the state of confusion either to stand on his father's Abnegation based on his aptitude test result or to choose on his own choice. He himself says that, 'I am not in order, I am in constant disarray' (FOUR 25).

On the day of choosing ceremony he chose Dauntless as his own faction instead Abnegation which surprises everyone including his father Marcus Eaton. Tobias became the first Abnegation-Dauntless transfer in more than a decade. He chose Dauntless in order to escape from his father. In Dauntless, he feels free, free to snap at people, free to refuse them and free even to say lie which never occurred to him when he was in Abnegation with his father. He also thinks that he could construct a new identity for himself.

The initiation tests began as soon as the choosing ceremony gets over. All the initiates were asked to board into the moving train

which really sounds horrible for Tobias and he says, 'I came here to escape, but this is not an escape, it's just a different kind of torture and it's too late to get out of it. My only hope, then, is to survive it' (FOUR 39). At the beginning he seems to be more afraid but then gradually he adopts the new faction system and prepared himself to face all the tests without fear.

In Dauntless he does not want him to be recognized as Tobias Eaton which sounds very much like Abnegation because of his father Marcus Eaton. He hides his name from his fellow Dauntless members thereby he introduced himself as Stiff. During his initiation training at the dauntless faction when he went through his fear landscape it was discovered that Tobias had only four fears. On observing this his instructor Amar stated calling him "FOUR". After choosing Dauntless as his faction at the choosing ceremony Tobias started performs well and finished first in his initiation class with flying colours. Eventually he chose to work in the intelligence sector of Dauntless and also decided to train the transfer initiates in the dauntless faction. Dauntless members always dress in Black and like to tattoo and pierce their bodies.

This faction mainly focused on preparing its members for violence and murder. All the dauntless born initiates are trained by Eric and all the transfers are trained by Tobias including Beatrice Tris. Any initiates who do not qualify after each round are kicked out and become faction less. Dauntless members alone will be allowed to handle the weapons like gun, knives etc. Even though Tobias does not belong to born dauntless initiates he eventually develops his ability to handle all the weapons to train the transfer initiates and became their leader.