

= Mockingjay =

Mockingjay is a 2010 science fiction novel by American author Suzanne Collins . It is the last installment of The Hunger Games , following 2008 's The Hunger Games and 2009 's Catching Fire . The book continues the story of Katniss Everdeen , who agrees to unify the districts of Panem in a rebellion against the tyrannical Capitol . The hardcover and audiobook editions of Mockingjay were published by Scholastic on August 24 , 2010 , six days after the ebook edition went on sale . The book sold 450 @, @ 000 copies in the first week of release , exceeding the publisher 's expectations . It received a generally positive reaction from critics .

The novel was adapted into two films , with The Hunger Games : Mockingjay ? Part 1 released in November 2014 and The Hunger Games : Mockingjay ? Part 2 released a year later .

= = Inspiration and development = =

Collins has said that the main inspiration for The Hunger Games trilogy came from the classical account of Theseus and the Minotaur . In Greek mythology , as a punishment for the killing of King Minos 's son Androgeos , Athens was forced to sacrifice seven youths and seven maidens to Crete , who were then put in the Labyrinth and killed by the Minotaur . After a while , Theseus , the son of the Athenian king , decided to put an end to the Minotaur and Minos 's terror , so he volunteered to join the third group of victims , ultimately killing the Minotaur and leading his companions out of the monster 's Labyrinth .

Collins has said that there are also many parallels between the Roman Empire and the fictional nation of Panem . She describes the Hunger Games as " an updated version of the Roman gladiator games , which entails a ruthless government forcing people to fight to the death as popular entertainment . " Collins also explains that the name " Panem " came from the Latin phrase " Panem et Circenses " , which means " Bread and Circuses " and refers to the strategy used by Roman emperors to appease the masses by providing them with food and entertainment .

As with the previous books in the trilogy , Mockingjay contains 27 chapters , with nine chapters in each of the three parts . This structure , which Collins had previously used in her series The Underland Chronicles , came from Collins 's playwriting background . This " three @-@ act " structure is also apparent in the trilogy as a whole ; Collins stated that she " knew from the beginning " that she was going to write a trilogy .

The cover and title information was revealed by Scholastic on February 11 , 2010 . The cover continues the previous books ' theme on the symbol of peace . The novel 's title comes from the hybrid birds of the same name that feature in the novels ' storyline . As Publishers Weekly has stated , " the hybrid birds that are an important symbol ? of hope and rebellion ? throughout the books " . Collins likens Katniss to a Mockingjay because both " should never have existed " .

= = Plot = =

Katniss , her sister Prim , and her friends Finnick and Gale all reluctantly adjust to a highly structured life in the underground District 13 , which has been spearheading the rebellion in Panem . Feeling manipulated , Katniss eventually agrees to act as " the Mockingjay " ? a poster child for the rebellion ? but only on the condition that District 13 's President Alma Coin vows to grant immunity to all of the past Hunger Games tributes , including Katniss 's friend Peeta Mellark and Finnick 's lover Annie Cresta , and to reserve for Katniss the right to personally murder Panem 's President Snow once he is captured .

Katniss and the rebels learn that Peeta is alive and is being tortured at the Capitol in an attempt to demoralize and control Katniss . When a rescue team succeeds in extracting him , they discover that Peeta has been " hijacked " ? a brutal form of brainwashing involving the use of Tracker Jacker venom that induces extreme fear . Peeta has been programmed to hate and fear Katniss . After he attempts to kill her , he is kept restrained under heavy guard at all times as the rebel medics seek a way to restore him to sanity .

A controversial strategy proposed by Gale wins a decisive victory at District 2 , readying the rebels to launch a final campaign against the Capitol itself . Katniss and her propo team (a film crew recording her squad for rebel propaganda) are deployed on a trivial assignment to the Capitol . President Coin has sent Peeta along on the mission even though he is still dangerous and unpredictable . Katniss believes Coin wants her dead because she is impossible to control .

While filming in a purportedly safe Capitol neighborhood , the team 's commander , Boggs , is killed . Subsequently , during intense violence and urban warfare that involves Hunger Games @-@ like monsters , most of Katniss ' team mates , including Finnick , are killed . Katniss presses on alone towards President Snow 's mansion . As Katniss reaches the mansion , a hoverplane drops parachutes carrying bombs that explode among a group of trapped children . The rebel medics (including Katniss ' sister Prim) rush in to help the injured children but , in a deliberately inhumane strategy , a second wave of firebombs explodes , taking out the medics . Prim is killed and Katniss sustains severe burns , but the rebels succeed in taking the Capitol .

During her recuperation , Katniss is deeply depressed over her sister 's death and confronts President Snow . Snow claims that Coin orchestrated the bombing that resulted in Prim 's death , persuasively arguing that Coin made it appear to be Snow 's work to turn his supporters against him and that , if he had a hovercraft at his disposal , he would have escaped , rather than bomb the Capitol . Knowing this to be true , and acknowledging the previous agreement not to lie to one another , Katniss realizes in horror that the strategy used to kill the medics had been developed earlier by Gale . When Katniss confronts Gale about his possible involvement , he merely expresses uncertainty . Katniss becomes convinced that , rather than establishing a republic governed by representatives from each of the Districts , Coin intends to assume Snow 's power and maintain the status quo .

On the day Snow is to be executed , President Coin asks the remaining Hunger Games victors to vote on punishing the Capitol just as the Capitol punished the Districts : by holding a final Hunger Games that will target the children of the Capitol 's leaders . Katniss silently reflects that this is exactly the same evil the Capitol committed when the last rebellion failed . Then , she votes " yes ? for Prim . " Haymitch is the only one who understands her hidden meaning . They proceed to the execution , where Katniss is to shoot Snow . As she readies her bow , Snow flashes her one last smile , reminding her of his promise to always be truthful to her . Katniss silently agrees and , making her decision , she raises her bow and shoots Coin instead , killing her . Katniss immediately attempts suicide , but Peeta stops her , and she is arrested during the ensuing riot . After the riot , Snow is found dead . Katniss is acquitted of Coin 's murder by reason of insanity , and she is relocated to the ruins of her home in District 12 .

Months later , Peeta and some other District 12 natives also return there . Peeta has gradually recovered the memories of his love for Katniss . Katniss embraces her love for Peeta , recognizing her need for his hope and strength . Together , they write a book to preserve the memory of those who died . Peeta still suffers flashbacks from being hijacked , and Katniss still wakes up screaming from nightmares . By helping to overthrow Snow and assassinating Coin , Katniss has preserved the possibility that Panem will transition to a representative form of government , but at a tremendous personal cost .

In the epilogue set 20 years later , Katniss and Peeta have two children . The Hunger Games are over for good , and the children represent hope that future generations will benefit from the sacrifices of their parents . Katniss dreads the day her children learn about their parents ' involvement in both the Games and the war . When she feels distressed , Katniss plays a comforting but repetitive game : reminding herself of every good thing she has ever seen someone do . The series ends with Katniss ' somber reflection that " There are much worse games to play . "

= = Themes = =

Reviews have noted many themes in the previous books that are also explored in " Mockingjay " . A review from The Baltimore Sun noted that " the themes of the series , including physical hardships , loyalty in extreme circumstances and traversing morally ambiguous terrain , are continued at an

even larger scale . " In the book , Katniss must deal with betrayal and violence against people . At the same time , while she was symbolically touching thousands of lives , she must also lead those people into war . Finally , Katniss realizes she cannot even trust President Coin , leader of District 13 .

In an interview with Collins , it was noted that the series " tackles issues like severe poverty , starvation , oppression , and the effects of war . " Collins replied that this inspiration was from her father , who , when going to war in Vietnam , made sure that his children understood the consequences and effects of war . Yvonne Zipp of The Christian Science Monitor noted that it was " the most brutal of the trilogy " and that " Collins doesn 't take war lightly ? her characters debate the morality involved in tactics used to try to overthrow the rotting , immoral government , and they pay a high cost for those tactics . " Katie Roiphe of The New York Times wrote that " it is the perfect teenage story with its exquisitely refined rage against the cruel and arbitrary power of the adult world . " In a review for USA Today , Bob Minzesheimer pointed out that the novel contained optimism : " Hope emerges from despair . Even in a dystopian future , there 's a better future . "

Minzesheimer also noted a central question of " Real or not real ? " which was asked throughout the novel by Peeta . Susan Carpenter of the Los Angeles Times also pointed this out , writing , " Mockingjay takes readers into new territories and an even more brutal and confusing world : one where it 's unclear what sides the characters are on , one where presumed loyalties are repeatedly stood on their head " .

= = Publication history = =

Mockingjay was first released in the US and Canada on August 24 , 2010 . The UK , New Zealand and Australia received the book one day later , on August 25 , 2010 . The audiobook was released simultaneously on August 24 , 2010 by Scholastic Audio .

= = = Sales = = =

The book had a 1 @. @ 2 million @- @ copy first printing that was bumped up from 750 @, @ 000 . In its first week of release , the book sold over 450 @, @ 000 copies . Following this , Scholastic printed an additional 400 @, @ 000 copies , bringing the initial print run up to 1 @. @ 6 million . Scholastic Trade president Ellie Berger said that sales " have exceeded all expectations " . The book has also been released in e @- @ book format and topped sales in the week ending with August 29 , 2010 , beating out The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo , which had held the top spot since April . The other Hunger Games books have also made it in the top ten , with the first book at fifth and the second book taking eighth . As of March 2012 , the book has sold over 9 million copies .

= = Release = =

= = = Promotion = = =

To promote the release of Mockingjay , many bookstores held midnight release parties . The official event in New York City was attended by Collins , and included many activities such as a tarot card reader , a magician , jugglers and face @- @ painters . Prizes such as signed copies of Catching Fire and Hunger Games @- @ themed cups were raffled . Once Collins arrived , she read the first chapter of the novel , explaining that she would read with an accent since Katniss , the narrator , is from Appalachia . By midnight , copies were being sold with a signature stamp since Collins had a hand injury and was unable to sign .

Before the release , Scholastic also released a trailer for the book , launched a Facebook page that gained over 22 @, @ 000 fans in 10 days , and held a contest for booksellers to win a visit from Collins and an online countdown clock to the release date . There were also advertisements for the book on websites such as Entertainment Weekly and Romantic Times . National Entertainment

Collectibles Association also sold other goods such as T-shirts, posters, games and bracelets. Collins also held a "13 District Blog Tour" where 13 winners received a free copy of Mockingjay on August 24, 2010. A tour was also scheduled, starting at Books of Wonder in New York where the official party took place. The tour ended on November 6, 2010, in the Third Place Books store in Lake Forest Park, Washington.

== Critical reception ==

Mockingjay has received generally positive reviews from critics. Some noted that there was a suspense drop between *Catching Fire* and the start of *Mockingjay*. Nicole Sperling of *Entertainment Weekly* gave the book a B+ and said, "Collins has kicked the brutal violence up a notch in an edge-of-your-seat plot". *Publishers Weekly* gave the book a starred review, calling it "the best yet, a beautifully orchestrated and intelligent novel that succeeds on every level". The review went on to praise the "sharp social commentary and the nifty world building". *Kirkus Reviews* gave *Mockingjay* a starred review, saying that the book is exactly what its fans are looking for and that "it will grab them and not let go". Susan Carpenter of the *Los Angeles Times* compared the battlefield to Iraq and said that the book is every bit as original as the first in the series, ending the review with "Wow".

The *Baltimore Sun*'s Nancy Knight commented that the book "ends on an ostensibly happy note, but the heartbreaking effects of war and loss aren't sugar-coated" and that it will have readers thinking about the effects of war on society. Katie Roiphe of *The New York Times* said it is "the perfect teenage story with its exquisitely refined rage against the cruel and arbitrary power of the adult world". However, she criticized that it was not as "impeccably plotted" as *The Hunger Games*. Bob Minzesheimer of *USA Today* gave the book three out of four stars. The *Christian Science Monitor* reviewer Yvonne Zipp described it as "an entirely gripping read".

While a review from *The Sacramento Bee* praised the action scenes and the battle in the Capitol, the reviewer also criticized Collins for not giving enough time to finish all the loose ends, writing that "the disappointment with *Mockingjay* hits primarily as Collins starts her home stretch. It's almost as if she didn't allocate enough time or chapters to handle all her threads".

== Film adaptation ==

The *Hunger Games* trilogy was adapted into a series of films, with the stars of the 2012 film *The Hunger Games* signed on for all four movies. *Mockingjay* was split into two parts; Part 1 was released on November 21, 2014, and Part 2 was released on November 20, 2015. Francis Lawrence, director of *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*, returned to direct the two final movies in the series. Julianne Moore played President Coin.