

= Catching Fire =

Catching Fire is a 2009 science fiction young adult novel by the American novelist Suzanne Collins , the second book in The Hunger Games trilogy . As the sequel to the 2008 bestseller The Hunger Games , it continues the story of Katniss Everdeen and the post @-@ apocalyptic nation of Panem . Following the events of the previous novel , a rebellion against the oppressive Capitol has begun , and Katniss and fellow tribute Peeta Mellark are forced to return to the arena in a special edition of the Hunger Games .

The book was first published on September 1 , 2009 , by Scholastic , in hardcover , and was later released in ebook and audiobook format . Catching Fire received mostly positive reviews , with reviewers praising Collins ' prose , the book 's ending , and the development of Katniss 's character . According to critics , major themes of the novel include survival , authoritarianism , rebellion and interdependence versus independence . The book has sold more than 19 million copies in the U.S. alone .

A film adaptation , The Hunger Games : Catching Fire , was released on November 22 , 2013 .

= = Plot = =

After winning the 74th Hunger Games in the previous novel , Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Mellark return home to District 12 , the poorest sector in the country of Panem . But on the day that Katniss and Peeta are to start a " Victory Tour " of the country , President Snow visits unexpectedly and tells Katniss that he is angry with her for breaking the rules at the end of the last Hunger Games , which permitted both Peeta and Katniss to win . Snow tells Katniss that when she defied the Capitol , she inspired rebellion in the districts .

The first stop on the Victory Tour is District 11 , the home of Katniss ' deceased friend and ally in the Hunger Games , Rue . During the ceremony , Katniss delivers a speech thanking the people of District 11 for their participants in the Games . When she finishes , an old man whistles the tune that Rue used in the arena to tell Katniss that she was safe . The song acts as a signal and everyone salutes Katniss , using the same gesture that she used to say farewell to Rue . To the horror of Katniss , the old man and two others are executed .

Katniss and Peeta travel to the rest of the twelve Districts and the Capitol . Hoping to placate the growing rebellion and settle the dispute between Katniss and President Snow , Peeta proposes to Katniss during an interview . Despite this , Katniss learns that their attempt to avert revolt in the districts has failed .

Shortly after returning to District 12 , Katniss discovers on the mayor 's television that District 8 has had an uprising , and she fears that what she has done to placate the crowds is not enough , as there may be uprisings in other Districts as well . She then meets two runaways from District 8 , Bonnie and Twill . They explain their theory which contradicts what the other districts have been led to believe : District 13 was not completely wiped out by the Capitol , and its residents survive in underground shelters .

Later , it is announced that , for the 75th Hunger Games , twenty @-@ four victors from previous years will be forced to compete once again . This is the third occurrence of the " Quarter Quell " : an event that occurs every 25th year of the Games and allows the Capitol to introduce a twist . Knowing that she and Peeta will be competing in the Games a second time , Katniss decides that she will devote herself to ensuring that Peeta becomes the Quarter Quell 's victor and convinces their mentor , Haymitch , to help her . Likewise , Peeta is devoted to protecting her , but Katniss and her mentor are determined that only Peeta returns home safely .

During the Games , set in a jungle with a saltwater lake , Katniss and Peeta join up with two other previous victors : Finnick Odair , a 24 @-@ year @-@ old man who survived the Games at the age of 14 , and Mags , Finnick 's 80 @-@ year @-@ old mentor , both from District 4 . The party encounters poisonous fog in which Peeta comes into contact with the gas and cannot walk . Mags sacrifices herself to save Peeta and dies in the poisonous fog . After Mags 's death , Katniss , Peeta , and Finnick join forces with Johanna Mason , a sarcastic and often cruel victor from District 7 , and

Beetee and Wiress , an older couple from District 3 who are said to be " exceptionally smart " . Wiress soon proves her genius by revealing to Katniss that the arena is arranged like a clock , with all of the arena 's disasters occurring on a timed chart . After Wiress is killed in a battle with the Careers (tributes from the first three districts who train all their lives for the Games and are usually the winners) , Katniss learns of Beetee 's plan to harness lightning in order to electrocute Brutus and Enobaria , the two remaining Careers Tributes from District 2 . In the final chapters , Katniss instead directs the lightning at the force field that contains the arena , thereby destroying the arena and resulting in her temporary paralysis .

When Katniss wakes up , she is being transported to District 13 , joined by Finnick , Beetee , and her mentor , Haymitch Abernathy . She learns that Peeta , Enobaria , and Johanna have been captured by the Capitol and is informed that there had been a plan among half of the contestants to break out of the arena ? Beetee had been attempting to destroy the force field in the same way that she did . The book ends when Katniss ' best friend , Gale , comes to visit her and informs her that , though he got her family out in time , District 12 has been destroyed .

= = Themes = =

The main themes of *Catching Fire* include survival , sacrifice , and the conflict between interdependence and independence . As reviewer Margo Dill noted , " In [*Catching Fire*] , Katniss and Peeta are definitely interdependent . They are both helping each other to survive . As a matter of fact , they want the other one to survive more than they do themselves . " Dill goes on to explain how this likely increases the chances of each character dying .

Government control is another important theme , both within the book and throughout the entire trilogy . After suppressing the first rebellion , the Capitol establishes rules in order to restrict and control the citizens ' lives . Examples noted by Dill include that , " the 75th annual Hunger Games have ' new ' rules that cause Katniss and Peeta to be in danger once again . More ' Peacekeepers ' are placed in districts to diminish any hope that the citizens started to have after the last Hunger Games . " Another major theme throughout the trilogy is the media and the influence or power that popular culture has over the emotions , wishes and views of society . Other themes in the book include morality , obedience , sacrifice , redemption , love , and law .

= = Publication history = =

Catching Fire had a preliminary hardcover release date of September 8 , 2009 , which was moved up to September 1 in response to requests by retailers to move the release to before Labor Day and the start of school for many readers . It was also published as an audiobook on the same day . Advance reading copies were available at BookExpo America in New York City , and were sent out to some booksellers , and offered as prizes in Scholastic 's " How Would You Survive " writing contest in May 2009 . An eBook version was also published on June 3 , 2010 . *Catching Fire* had an initial print of 350 @, @ 000 copies , a number which had grown to over 750 @, @ 000 by February 2010 . The release of *Mockingjay* , the third novel of the series , followed on August 24 , 2010 . As of March 2012 , the book has sold over 10 million copies .

= = Critical reception = =

Catching Fire received mainly positive reviews from critics . Publishers Weekly wrote , " If this second installment spends too much time recapping events from book one , it doesn 't disappoint when it segues into the pulse @-@ pounding action readers have come to expect . " Booklist commented on how the " unadorned prose provides an open window to perfect pacing and electrifying world building " . The New York Times also gave a positive review , writing , " Collins has done that rare thing . She has written a sequel that improves upon the first book . As a reader , I felt excited and even hopeful : could it be that this series and its characters were actually going somewhere ? " The review also praised Collins ' development of the character of Katniss . The Plain

Dealer wrote , " The very last sentence of Catching Fire will leave readers gasping . Not to mention primed for part three . "

However , not all reviews were positive . The same review from The Plain Dealer expressed displeasure at how , " after 150 pages of romantic dithering , I was tapping my foot to move on . " A review from Entertainment Weekly opined that the book was weaker than the first and wrote , " Katniss pretends to be in love with her sweet @-@ natured Games teammate Peeta Mellark , but she secretly pines for brooding Gale , a childhood friend . Except ? why ? There 's little distinction between the two thinly imagined guys , other than the fact that Peeta has a dopier name . Collins conjures none of the erotic energy that makes Twilight , for instance , so creepily alluring . "

In addition , Time magazine placed Catching Fire at number four on its list of the top 100 fiction books of 2009 , while People magazine rated it the eighth Best Book of 2009 . It also won the Publishers Weekly 's 2009 award for Best Book of the Year .

= = Film adaptation = =

Lionsgate announced that The Hunger Games : Catching Fire was to be released on November 22 , 2013 , as a sequel to the film adaptation of The Hunger Games . In April 2012 , it was announced that Gary Ross , director of The Hunger Games , would not return due to a " tight " and " fitted " schedule . Francis Lawrence was officially announced as the director for Catching Fire on May 3 , 2012 . The film 's cast includes Jena Malone as Johanna Mason , Philip Seymour Hoffman as Plutarch Heavensbee , Lynn Cohen as Mags , Alan Ritchson as Gloss , Sam Claflin as Finnick , and Jeffrey Wright as Beetee . Production officially began on September 10 , 2012 and concluded on December 21 , 2012 . Shooting first took place in and around metropolitan Atlanta . Several District 11 scenes were also filmed in the rural areas of Macon County , Georgia , and the rest of production took place in Hawaii . Some of the wooded scenes were filmed in Oakland , New Jersey .

The film was successful , grossing more than \$ 800 million to become the fifth highest @-@ grossing film at the box office in 2013 and receiving positive reviews from critics .