

The background features a complex network of white nodes connected by thin white lines, set against a gradient background that transitions from dark purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some forming larger, more prominent clusters or shapes.

Mockingjay

Written by Suzanne Collins

Published by sanmarco-sf

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Mockingjay

Mockingjay

By Suzanne Collins

Mockingjay Part 2

My name is Katniss Everdeen.

Why am I not dead?

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Mockingjay Part 1

I should be dead.

Mockingjay Cast

Katniss Everdeen, girl on fire, has survived, even though her home has been destroyed. Gale has escaped. Katniss's family is safe. Peeta has been captured by the Capitol. District 13 really does exist. There are rebels. There are new leaders. A revolution is unfolding.

Mockingjay Bird

It is by design that Katniss was rescued from the arena in the cruel and haunting Quarter Quell, and it is by design that she has long been part of the revolution without knowing it. District 13 has come out of the shadows and is plotting to overthrow the Capitol. Everyone, it seems, has had a hand in the carefully laid plans--except Katniss.

Mockingjay Pin

The success of the rebellion hinges on Katniss's willingness to be a pawn, to accept responsibility for countless lives, and to change the course of the future of Panem. To do this, she must put aside her feelings of anger and distrust. She must become the rebels' Mockingjay--no matter what the personal cost.

SPOILERS AHEAD!!

What. the. f***. Words can't begin to express my disappointment. I bought Mockingjay the first day it came out and I was preparing myself for a truly epic novel, one worthy of its predecessors. I loved The Hunger Games; it was fast-paced, thrilling, suspenseful. Catching Fire wasn't as good but it was still enjoyable (I was majorly impressed by the game arena). I wasn't let down by Catching Fire though; I figured it was just a transition novel, build-up to what would undoubtedly SPOILERS AHEAD!!

What. the. f***. Words can't begin to express my disappointment. I bought Mockingjay the first day it came out and I was preparing myself for a truly epic novel, one worthy of its predecessors. I loved The Hunger Games; it was fast-paced, thrilling, suspenseful. Catching Fire wasn't as good but it was still enjoyable (I was majorly impressed by the game arena). I wasn't let down by Catching Fire though; I figured it was just a transition novel, build-up to what would undoubtedly be a mindblowing, epic conclusion in Mockingjay.

Maybe I set my expectations too high. I do think Collins is a good writer; she definitely knows how to write and tell a story. But I feel like she lost her way in this book. Or maybe the only thing that made this series so great was the Hunger Games, and now that it's absent, there's nothing to drive the story.

The love triangle wasn't well played out. First of all, I'm getting a bit tired of reading about love triangles -- especially in novels where there's a much greater plot present. But I'll admit, I was on Team Gale throughout the series, because he was strong and resilient and resourceful and caring. There was this attractive manly quality about him and he was so in sync with Katniss, and hot to boot. But towards the end of this novel, I didn't give a flying fart about Katniss's love life and who she ended up with, because everything seemed like such a hopeless, depressing mess that there was no point. I also hated how she kept flip-flopping and toying with both Gale and Peeta (I've been bothered by this since CF). She should make up her mind about who she wants instead of leading them both on! Her fickleness is pretty inconsiderate to these two guys whom she supposedly cares about. And if she can't decide (I can see why, they both have great qualities), then she should give herself some space/time to decide, and in the meantime, don't go kissing or showing romantic affection to either one!

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She ended up with Peeta, which would have been fine if it had been executed properly. But even in this aspect of her life, she didn't get to CHOOSE, which is basically the story of her life. She just ended up with Peeta because he was the only one who stuck around. At the end, I found myself wanting her to end up alone, of her OWN choice. Heck, instead of spiraling into bleak depression and continuing life as a puppet, I would have rather seen her die for a noble cause and for doing the right thing. That would have been a more satisfactory ending, and that's saying something because I normally HATE when characters die.

I didn't like that we didn't get to experience the action close-up. As the war unraveled, I felt like Katniss was always on the sidelines, only called in when other people commanded her to. We didn't get to see Katniss kicking butt against her enemies, we got to hear from other characters about events that occurred, or watch them on the TV. It is so mindnumbingly dull to be watching a character watching something, instead of experiencing the action with the character. Everything she did was for show, for a propo or campaign or whatever. It was all so .. fake. Here they are in the middle of a war, people are dying left and right, and all they care about is filming and getting good shots and angles and putting on a pretty face! It felt so staged and it was boring and infuriating to read. The only real action is towards the end when she and her team are going on the assassin mission to kill Snow, and even THAT was originally only for a propo (that went astray).

The last third of the book (the assassin mission) was gorey and bloody, which I didn't mind. It's war after all. But many characters' deaths were so rushed and pointless. Prim's death didn't have the impact that I'm sure Collins was aiming for; I didn't feel sad when she died, as she's barely in the story as it is, so I didn't get to know her well enough and connect with her beforehand. She was absent for at least 100 pages before her death came out of nowhere, for God's sake, so her death felt like any stranger's death. (Although it seems her death kind of defeated the point of sparing her from the Hunger Games.) What DID kill me was Finnick's death. Finnick was one of the characters I loved most in this series, and call me petty, but I can't forgive Collins for killing him off after he'd been through so much and finally got to marry the love of his life. It wasn't even a death of purpose. He got eaten by mutts in a sewer, along with half their assassin team. It annoyed me so much because their deaths felt so UNNECESSARY, like they were just a way for Collins to emphasize that "this is a DEATHLY SERIOUS, VERY BLOODY BOOK!" It felt like she was just randomly and meaninglessly killing off supporting characters because she couldn't bear to part with her main ones. Deaths are fine when they're important to the plot, but this felt like death for the sake of death.

Okay, now on to the REAL disappointment of this book: Katniss herself. One of the reasons why I loved this series was because of Katniss. She was strong, resourceful, clever and cunning, she had an amazing survival instinct and she knew how to persevere. In *Catching Fire*, these qualities diminished; she was mainly a pawn, a puppet for others to use for their own objectives. But she still had some semblance of control and she was still Katniss. In *Mockingjay*, all these traits are scrapped and we get a Katniss-clone who is angsty and bitchy and whiny (wasn't Bella in *Twilight* bad enough?). Half the book, she's throwing herself pity parties in the closet (literally!). Sure, she definitely has reason to be sad and angry, and her

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life is full of hardships and tragedies. But I thought that the Katniss from the Hunger Games, the Katniss who had to keep her family alive since the age of 12, would be able to fight through and persevere. I guess I wanted a strong victor, a strong heroine, not a self-pitying victim who can't make her own decisions.

That's another thing that bothered me: throughout the whole book, she had no control over ANYTHING, not even her own life and actions. She was an empty, lifeless pawn, a zombie if you will, who didn't do anything that wasn't directed or commanded by other people. In this novel, I was expecting her to STEP UP, embrace her role as Mockingjay, use her power/influence to get involved in the rebellion, take control of her life, and make a difference in the outcome of her world. I was expecting to see her grow and change and I was excited for her metamorphosis. Instead, we get this weak girl who's shirking all responsibilities, addled on drugs half the time, and lashing out at people the other half. Not only did she not improve herself from the first book (she was kickass in the first book btw), she got WORSE, an empty shadow of her former self. At the beginning, I could understand her confusion, her pain, her reluctance to be the Mockingjay. It'd be weird if she DIDN'T feel this way, if she didn't have that time of indecision and unwillingness. But after, I expected her to be strong and work through it, to face her fears and obstacles and choose to do the right thing, to really fight for justice. The best things in life never come easy; anybody who's done anything has had to overcome obstacles to accomplish their goals. When she decided: "I must be the Mockingjay", my heart soared (cheesy but it did!) and I was rooting for her 100%. When I heard her inspirational words during the propos, the fire behind them, my heart soared because I thought Katniss was back. But as I kept reading, I realized .. even though she verbally accepted her role, her mind still wasn't in it and she wasn't in control of herself. She didn't grow and become stronger, that's what pisses me off.

The post-traumatic stress, the mental breakdowns, the self-pity, the self-loathing, the nearing of insanity .. all of these things are realistic, yes, but a bit tiresome and not very interesting to read when it's all the same and the narrator is drowning herself in it in the face of much greater things to the point where it detracts from the plot. These feelings shouldn't be the main focus throughout the ENTIRE novel. There has to be a turning point when she overcomes all of this and actively decides not to let these obstacles stand in her way. Now, many people will say her breakdown is more true to life, and it's what any normal 17-year-old girl would feel and go through. But, maybe I'm weird here, but for some stories, I don't WANT to read about the average, normal teenager. I want to read about someone who's a bit special, who's different, who displays traits (like courage, heart, perseverance) greater than the norm and accomplishes more than the "normal, average teen" even during the most difficult of times. Something that, when you close the book, makes you feel like "Wow, they're amazing. Inspirational. I want to be like that." & to be honest, I didn't sign up to read a war documentary or some nonfiction account of how war affects its victims. I came in expecting a break from reality, a fantasy sci-fi young adult novel about a girl who becomes a hero.

In trying to be as realistic as possible, I think Collins chose a pessimistic extreme of "realism" to portray. There are perfectly human people in real life in real circumstances who are able to fight through obstacles and hardships and come out on top without relying on drugs and hiding in closets. They can

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find more constructive and positive ways to deal with their problems. Sure, it obviously affects them (they're not invincible) but they don't lose themselves the way Katniss does. Those are the kinds of inspirational stories I wanna read when it comes to these kinds of novels, not this "Diary of an Emo Puppet."

This book was also REALLY anti-climactic. Whenever Collins finally gave us an exciting scene, as soon as it got intense, Katniss would get knocked out in the midst of things and we'd wake up to her in the hospital being treated. (MAJOR COP-OUT, in my opinion.) Then, of course, comes the inevitable centuries (that's what it felt like) of us hearing about her in pain and agony. Okay, we get it after reading about it the WHOLE novel! Now can she please pick herself up and make herself useful?

Katniss doesn't deserve the title "girl who was on fire" and to be the main character in such an epic setting and story. Sure, she can be on fire, but only when someone sets her on fire or directs her to be on fire, not of her own doing. She was soulless and indifferent and cared about herself and her own feelings more than anyone else's (seeing as how she spends most of the novel grieving for herself and almost never for anyone else) .. if the main character, the narrator, doesn't care about anything and has no passion, why should we? What's the point when the main character whose eyes we're seeing through has no heart and no passion? And what happened to the selfless girl who willingly sacrificed her life to save her sister?

The things I did like. I liked that Katniss had 2 seconds of mental clarity and shot Coin instead of Snow (the only time in the book when she was truly thinking clearly and acting of her own accord). I wonder if I'm giving her too much credit though; judging from her selfish one-track mind in this book, I fear that she did this only because Coin killed Prim, not because she saw the bigger picture. Worse yet, I fear this may just have been a result of Snow's manipulation, not her own decision. I also feel the significance and bravery of this smart moment was rendered meaningless by her immediate cowardly reaction: instead of having conviction in her action and facing the consequences, she scrambled frantically to find the most painless and quickest way to kill herself. She never once in the book acknowledges all she has to live for and all the positive things she still has in her life. When a character's will to survive is absent through a whole novel, I as a reader have no desire for them to live either; grant their wish already! But to continue on .. I liked learning about more of the characters in depth: Gale (who I grew to love even more in this book), Finnick, Annie, Boggs, Johanna, etc. I liked the ending passages (fitting and beautifully haunting) and I liked the songs (The Hanging Tree and the meadow one). There are probably some other things that I'll update this review with once disappointment and frustration are no longer clouding my brain.

I wouldn't have minded so much if it had been a page-turner that was exciting to read, but trying to finish this book felt like a chore. When reading for enjoyment starts feeling like a chore, that's the ultimate sign that I dislike the book. 90% of the book, Katniss was wandering aimlessly through hallways, drugged out on morphling, hiding in a closet, or lying in a hospital bed. I kept waiting, I was so sure it would happen any minute, for the story-changing moment when Katniss would pick herself up and say "Enough is enough." I kept waiting for the moment when the winds would change and she

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would decide with conviction to actively work through her problems -- but to my shock, that moment never came. This book seriously dragged and dragged and dragged, and just got slower and slower until everyone started dropping dead towards the last quarter of the book. The Hunger Games, I couldn't put it down; for this, I dreaded picking it up to finish it. I did tons of things in between reading this book (doing my nails, watching TV, taking a walk, etc) because I couldn't read it in one sitting without wanting to gouge my eyes out. It was the same reoccurring theme: Katniss was manipulated and controlled by everyone around her and she didn't think or do anything of her own will. It got old.

I read all this build-up and didn't get rewarded for it. And even though the rebels triumphed, I didn't feel anything for them, not relief, not happiness, just nothing. I was just detached. And none of it was thanks to Katniss: her only role in the Capitol's defeat was watching Prim die, getting burned, and waking up in a hospital, where we're TOLD instead of SHOWN how the Capitol fell (all while she was unconscious, an occurrence that's way too common in this book).

Again, anti-climactic! During the scene when it really mattered!

I understand the message Collins is trying to convey and I agree with it: that war is awful and no one truly wins. And good and bad are not clearly defined black and white. (It got too preachy at certain points though, didn't it?) And I understand that not all books are unicorns-and-ponies happy endings, and that this series has always been intense and dark and a bit bleak. But that only works when there's an underlying message of hope and of optimism. I felt it in the 1st books, but this ending was devoid of all hope and happiness. Yes, humans are disgusting creatures who hurt and kill one another, who do horrible things because of greed and selfishness and just pure malice. But humans are also capable of love and compassion and kindness, and I wish she'd incorporated a bit of that into the story as well so there'd be a more hopeful ending. Even in real life, no matter how bad things may be, there is always hope. Isn't that the kind of message you really want young people to be left with? Instead of pessimistic doom and "give up on mankind"? I finished the book feeling hopeless and lost and depressed, and not in that deep, profound way where it motivates me to get up off my ass and do something to make a difference.

Gosh, at least Harry was his own person and got to face Voldemort in the end. What did Katniss get to do except be an empty canvas for them to paint and feed lines to?

Though I guess since I'm feeling so passionately about all of this, it wasn't a worthless read. It was just very, VERY disappointing.

Edit:

I just re-read this review a month or so after I wrote it and I sincerely apologize for my sloppy writing and overindulgence in run-on sentences! I was in a rush to unleash all my feelings after finishing the book so I wouldn't forget anything. I hope this review was understandable and enjoyable anyway :)

That's the end of the review and you can stop here but I wanted to add on .. and I'm thinking those who

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grew up with Harry Potter like I did can relate:

So I decided to re-read Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows to prepare myself for the upcoming movie, and to get the bitter taste of Mockingjay out of my mouth, and here's a passage towards the end where Harry's character really touched me and left me in awe:

"Because," said Harry, "sometimes you've got to think about more than your own safety! Sometimes you've got to think about the greater good! This is war!"

"You're seventeen, boy!"

"I'm of age, and I'm going to keep fighting even if you've given up!"

a few sentences later .. "I'm going to keep going until I succeed -- or I die. Don't think I don't know how this might end. I've known it for years."

Reading it again makes me all emotional and teary all over again, from Dobby's heartfelt burial to Harry's courageous walk to his death in the forest, knowing fully well what awaits him and yet willing to sacrifice himself for others and for a better world ...all the while, struggling with his fears and the temptation to run away .. and I swear, tears of pride and joy sprang from my eyes and exhilaration shot through my veins when Harry, the boy we grew up with, stepped up as a man and faced his enemy with confidence, strength, wisdom.

Whatever faults the last HP book may have, I just have to say: Thank you, Harry, for giving me hope again and proving there are still admirable heroes in young literature. ...more

Mockingjay Pdf

I'm never very good at predicting outcomes. Nothing I could've predicted would have been quite as good as this. Although I did get close (a very distant "close") on a few things, and I was right in saying that it wouldn't be walking through a field of flowers and sunshine.

A book like this just couldn't be.

It's good, and yet not good. Because it's good in a very heartbreaking, chilling, haunting, intense way.

Katniss is a different person from the first two books. I found her softer, more thoughtful. I'm never very good at predicting outcomes. Nothing I could've predicted would have been quite as good as this. Although I did get close (a very distant "close") on a few things, and I was right in saying that it wouldn't be walking through a field of flowers and sunshine.

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It's good, and yet not good. Because it's good in a very heartbreaking, chilling, haunting, intense way.

Katniss is a different person from the first two books. I found her softer, more thoughtful, and also more open (granted, she's still kind of a brat sometimes. But don't we all have our moments?). In the first two books, even though the story is told by her, she's very closed off with us. This book is filled with more emotion, and I liked her best in this book, even though it's a tragedy of sorts.

As I'm stewing over the novel I read every word of yesterday, I think, "Did I really love it?" And then, "How could I love it?" I shake my head. I can't love something so terribly sad and at times grotesque. Something so painful.

Truthfully, I don't think I loved it. Love isn't the right word. It was a fantastic novel. I don't think I can come up with any better way for a trilogy of this kind to come to a close. The perfect note of sadness and sweetness, pain and healing all mixed up in a jumble. This book was far more severe than the first two. Much harder to read, and with more emotional depth, I think. Sometimes I just had to close the book for a while and breathe because I needed to stop for a bit, to regroup myself so I could get through a certain part.

Collins wove in a few questions to ponder. Where do you draw the line? Do you give just what you got? Should you show mercy to those who haven't shown mercy to you? Is it right to kill innocent people just because the leaders on their side of the line killed innocent people on your side?

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Contrary to what some believe, this is not an anti-war book. Actually, I think Collins is trying to get us to ask ourselves questions about what justifies war, and where the line should be drawn between justice and vengeance. Not that we shouldn't fight, but that we know what's worth fighting for.

Several notable characters die. It's painful, and it hurts to read it. Some believe that these characters didn't get enough homage. But since this is told from first-person, maybe it's just too painful for Katniss to dwell on those deaths.

The last three pages make all the heavy, intense, painfulness of the rest of the book almost worth it, in a strange way. Bittersweet is the perfect word. The sense of loss underlying the message that life really does go on, even when we don't see how it possibly can.

Sometimes we need a little help to pick ourselves off the floor and start again.

I wasn't disappointed with the ending, but I am disappointed that it's the end. It left me feeling emotionally drained and like I'd lost something. I'm not sure if I'm shell-shocked or simply worn out by the intensity of it all. I'm glad, in a way, that it ended like it did. I'm also sad, and a little confused. Not because I didn't like the ending, but because I simply feel emptied out for the time being.

I just wish...I wish that there could have been more happiness for these characters that I love so much. I think that unfulfilled wish is, at the end of the day, why I'm feeling this way right now. In time the feeling will pass, I know, but at the moment I'm sorry for it. No matter how I enjoyed this book (and I did, I really did), I'm in a sort of grieving state. Happiness was there in the end, but it just wasn't enough to compensate for all the sadness.

Then again, I think that was the point.

It's a very rare thing to find a trilogy like this one, and I'll always hold a place in my heart for the girl who was on fire.

{pre-release}

Waiting for this is torturous. I finished *Catching Fire* and wanted this in my hands immediately. Oh Suzanne, please let Peeta live (without becoming seriously maimed {again}, either)! :(

I know it's stupid, but I want a happy ending. Not like uber-happy, of course, I'm not unrealistic...but I just want to finish this trilogy humming and skipping around the house (yeah, laugh. I don't care! ;)) rather than lying around depressed afterwards wondering what went wrong...'cause I just hate when that happens.

P.S. I'm not making any predictions because it feels like either my wishful thinking or my most dreaded

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outcome. I can't find a balance in between. Call me weird.

All I can say without bias is that the ending will not be all walkin' in a field of flowers and happiness. :P
...more

Update 11/28/14. So, of course I had to read it again after getting only half of the story from the Mockingjay movie. Unsurprisingly, cried and cried again. My feelings basically remain the same about this installment. Structurally, the novel is quite messy. There is such a big game going on and Katniss' motivations and actions don't always make sense to me. But the ending is brilliant, especially the final chapters.

I need something to cheer me up ASAP.

Let's face it, a series is only as good as its last book. Update 11/28/14. So, of course I had to read it again after getting only half of the story from the Mockingjay movie. Unsurprisingly, cried and cried again. My feelings basically remain the same about this installment. Structurally, the novel is quite messy. There is such a big game going on and Katniss' motivations and actions don't always make sense to me. But the ending is brilliant, especially the final chapters.

I need something to cheer me up ASAP.

Let's face it, a series is only as good as its last book. Is a kitchen towel drenched in my tears a good indicator of the quality of Mockingjay? I think it is, considering that I am not a crying-over-books type. I think this book is a FANTASTIC ending of a FANTASTIC series.

The book is lying next to me now, so deceitful in appearance, with its innocent, bright, cheerful cover. Who knew there would be so much darkness hidden between its pages, so much heartache? Mockingjay is indeed a DARK, DARK book full of deaths, sacrifices, torture, betrayal and despair, a book which takes you to a very disturbing but very real place.

I have no doubt the novel will have thousands of readers livid, especially the crowd of readers who mistakenly think The Hunger Games trilogy is mostly dedicated to Team Gale/Team Peeta dilemma with some revolt thrown in as a picturesque backdrop. These books are about love indeed, but they are also about survival, freedom, and peace.

I find it amazing that people are disappointed that Katniss doesn't take a Katniss-becomes-a-superwoman-and-takes-over-the-world-while-deciding-on-which-boy-to-pick route. How realistic is it to expect a child damaged by hunger, oppression, and violence she had to witness and take a part in, and thrown into the midst of all kinds of political intrigue, to achieve that? How many soldiers do you know who came out of a war unscathed or empowered by the atrocities they have witnessed? How many children?

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This is why this book has such a great effect on me. It takes a very difficult but honest route, portraying the infinitely damaging consequences of war (regardless of the righteousness of its cause) and Katniss's journey to stay true to herself and do the best she can. And the love triangle resolution. Truly, it couldn't have ended any other way.

Is Mockingjay a perfectly written book? Absolutely not, it's not nearly as perfectly constructed or clear as The Hunger Games, but just like another imperfectly perfect successful series finale - Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows - it brings its message across in the most honest and powerful way possible.

Suzanne Collins is a genius, she is fearless and I have a great respect for the gutsiness of hers that didn't allow her to settle for an ending all wrapped up in pink paper with a perfect little bow. I am sure she knew that the faint of heart would be enraged. But she stuck to her guns and stayed true to her message and to her characters.

The question now is how will I recover from PTSD of my own caused by Mockingjay? It will probably take me months and a score of Georgia Nicolson diaries to get over it. But I love this book anyway, in spite (and because) of all the pain it has caused me.

Real. ...more

Mockingjay Part 2 Cast

WHAT THE FUCK KIND OF AN ENDING IS THAT?! SERIOUSLY, WHAT THE FUCK KIND OF AN ENDING IS THAT?

Ok, short summary. This is day 3 of my Hunger Games binge after I watched the last movie last Saturday without knowing anything about the books and not having watched any of the movies. First book. Awesome. Second book. Glorious. Third book. FUUUUUUUU *wails out something that sounds like "fuck you, Peeta!!!!!!!"*

So now I know what a Mockingjay is (and I can probably eat it), I know who Coin is, I know wh WHAT THE FUCK KIND OF AN ENDING IS THAT?! SERIOUSLY, WHAT THE FUCK KIND OF AN ENDING IS THAT?

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So now I know what a Mockingjay is (and I can probably eat it), I know who Coin is, I know who President Snow is, and I know why Peeta is so thin. And now that we've gotten that over with...

What the fuck happened to Katniss?! How did she end up being so admirable and awesome in the first two books and turned into such a sniveling, squishy mess in this one? The answer: Peeta.

What the fuck happened to Peeta? Ok, fine, we know what happened to Peeta, but that doesn't make it any better because he's collateral damage. And Katniss is the one who gets hurt with her stupid obsession of him.

In this book, Gale was my favorite. He's the voice of reason. It's war, people have to die in order for there to be peace. And Katniss is like all noooooooooo, we have to save ALL THE PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE ONE WHO COULD GET US ALL KILLED. Because I love(d?) him ;_;

NO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Fuck your single-mindedness, Katniss. YOU HAD ONE JOB. And it's to save your people, not your boyfriend, fiancÃ©, whatever.

And that ending. That stupid ending. I'm sorry, I know that life doesn't always turn out well, but dammit, Suzanne Collins, you put us through the wringer with the last two books. You made us care about these

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people, and WE DESERVE A BETTER ENDING THAN THAT. ...more

3.5 stars

Well, hmmm. I'm not sure how to react to Mockingjay. I didn't love it and I'm not sure it satisfied me, but it was a disturbing read that will stick with me. Sadly, I can't say that I'll be recommending the series as fervently as I did after reading The Hunger Games. Not that the series isn't good, but I'm not longer sure it's for the masses of YA readers.

Like Catching Fire, Mockingjay took awhile for me to get into. When the pages turned into the triple digits and I wasn't hooked, I go 3.5 stars

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Like Catching Fire, Mockingjay took awhile for me to get into. When the pages turned into the triple digits and I wasn't hooked, I got worried it wouldn't be epic. And maybe that's problem: I expected this to match The Hunger Games when I don't think anything can. Like Catching Fire, the stakes are upped, the gruesomeness of war more real, and the intensity more fierce. And in the end, that was my biggest problem. In my opinion, this crossed the line with violence into shock value for the sake of shock value. Yes, it's meant to be thought-provoking and show the price of war to humanity, but at the peak of all this violence, I pulled out of the story. It wasn't President Snow or President Coin (I hated that name) torturing Katniss; it was Collins. I could see the questions running through her head: "What is the worst thing I could do to Katniss? What will break her the most?"

In war, the casualties fall randomly, if heavily, but this was all targeted at Katniss. The death that should have hurt most hardly fazed me (view spoiler)[Primrose (hide spoiler)]; at that point, I had already shut down in a story that was working too hard to manipulate my emotions. It was (view spoiler)[Finnick's death (hide spoiler)] killed me (no pun intended), and it disappeared like a whisper. It seemed like Collins picked the only character she made us care about in this book on purpose. It should have felt natural to the progression of the story, but it didn't. (view spoiler)[Primrose's death upset me because it made the whole series seem pointless, which I'm sure is the frustration Collins was going for--the futility of war, the aftereffect, the scarring, the psychological burden--but it's so under described and anticlimactic that it fell short for me. (hide spoiler)] Plus, the desensitization was, in my opinion, too much. There is a lot of bleakness in the other books in the series, but it is balanced with a humanity and hope that I think is crucial in YA fiction.

My review of Hunger Games states that Collins took an unbelievable story and made it believable. Here, she took the believable violence and cruelty of war and made it a little unbelievable for me. I struggled to find motivation from President Snow targeting children, to understand why the citizens of the capital

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continued to believe him, to accept that these villains could be this sadistically evil, to believe that this much could go wrong for one person, to champion Collin's bleak take on humanity. Not that this story is any more unbelievable than *The Hunger Games*, but Collins delivered this one with such a numb, detached string of events that relied on violence instead of characters to deliver her message. Even more important than hope in YA is a strong character you would follow anywhere. I didn't want to follow Katniss in this story.

She shut down in the end, but really she'd been shutting down the entire book. After the fiery character of the first two books, it was hard to get nothing from her (especially as a first-person POV) and still feel vested in the outcome of her story. Her cold, detached comments to (view spoiler)[Peeta (hide spoiler)] in particular bothered me, especially after everything he sacrificed for her. I had to keep reminding myself of all the horror she'd been through because although her detachment realistic, it bothered me. I couldn't remember why anyone wanted a self-absorbed teenager as the Mockingjay. I didn't need Katniss to lead the revolution, but I wanted something from her: a peek into her emotions/insights, a proactive motion, anything that pushed her character forward. Without any character development (from any of the characters), the story relied too heavily on action without connecting the pieces, developing those story lines, or making me care about the characters involved. I would have almost rather heard the story from a third party watching a broken Mockingjay than the emptiness with which Katniss tells her story. What I really wanted is Katniss back. I know I can't have her, but if I had to lose her, I wanted to feel heartbreak instead of nothing.

About the love triangle... (view spoiler)[You need only look at the comment section to this review to know I'm a Gale fan--was a Gale fan. But I was happy with the resolution for these reasons:

1. Gale never showed up in this book, not the intense Gale hiding a painful love for Katniss that I loved. Not once in this book did I feel his love for her. Was comfortable with her, coldly understanding, wanted to win her because it was a competition, but never once did I sense any love. And when he knew the enormous hurdle he had to overcome to win her back, he laughed and walked away. I would not have minded if the Gale who showed up for this story had been one of its casualties. It was pretty clear from the first chapter that Collins was directing us away from this relationship she had dangled in front of us. If this is the way the relationship had always been, as this book seems to imply, than this is the relationship that should have been there in *Catching Fire*.
2. For the first time in the trilogy, Peeta was not a Gary Stu, a doormat, a little too sacrificial for me to believe. He bite back. Unlike during the games, I never doubted that he could survive on his own. He stopped wanting to be a pointless martyr (the death pleas were still there, but this time they made sense). Not that I ever wanted Peeta to be mean or broken, but he can have heart and a backbone too. He could have a few flaws. Finally, I could root for him.
3. My last reason is not that as Gale and Peeta changed, Katniss did too, and so did the world they lived in. In a harsh war world, you need someone strong and skilled by your side. In the other books, Katniss needed Gale. In a world where you have lost everything and no longer have a reason or the mental

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state or the will to fight, you need someone soft and caring. Even before Katniss said her bit about needing heart not fire, I knew she was going to say it. And finally, the words were true.

So yes, I am eating my words and saying Katniss ended up with the right person. I just hate what Collins did to her to make her need it. (hide spoiler)]

I guess what depresses me most about this book is that I expected so much more from it. I know Collins is capable of power. In the end, I was too numb to feel its power, to even cry, to feel anything at all. I left a fantastic series with a major blank. ...more

Mockingjay Summary

This review has been hidden because it contains spoilers. To view it, [click here](#).

[This just in: the movie adaptation, Mockingjay: Part 1, was absolutely outstanding. I've seen both of the other movies for this series, and while I enjoyed them greatly, the third instalment was on another level entirely. It's one of the best movies I've seen in a very, very long time. Good job, movie people. You made a meh book into a stellar piece of cinema.]

Those two stars are for the last ten pages, which were absolutely outstanding. Probably the best ten pages of the series. The 380 pages [This just in: the movie adaptation, Mockingjay: Part 1, was absolutely outstanding. I've seen both of the other movies for this series, and while I enjoyed them greatly, the third instalment was on another level entirely. It's one of the best movies I've seen in a very, very long time. Good job, movie people. You made a meh book into a stellar piece of cinema.]

Those two stars are for the last ten pages, which were absolutely outstanding. Probably the best ten pages of the series. The 380 pages before that, however, deserve nothing. The first 380 pages can kiss my ass.

This book was a fucking slog. I kid you not. This book tried me to the point of breaking. About halfway through, I was ready to feed the damn thing to my dog.

I'm not the biggest Hunger Games fan. Y'all know that. However, when I read Catching Fire, after its predecessor disappointed me, I was STOKED to read Mockingjay. Catching Fire was just fantastic. I really, really and truly enjoyed it.

Mockingjay was a bloodbath. If you're sensitive to pointless deaths and gratuitous violence, then this is not the book for you.

Actually, I like that word. Gratuitous. It describes this book perfectly. Everything in this book was gratuitous and over the top, from the wangst to the ridiculous romantic interludes in the middle of battle scenes, and from the candy-gore violence to the stupid, overly-disgusting deaths of several characters who did not need to die. There's also the writing, which is so overwrought - it's not even like the author took the sparseness of the first book and butchered it. It's like she took the sparseness, fed it to her dog, fed the dog to a crocodile, fed the crocodile to a Tyrannosaurus rex, cut the Tyrannosaurus rex up into steaks, sold the steaks in Soho to a cabaret dancer, A-bombed the cabaret dancer's house, collected the ashes, mixed them into fluorescent paint, and then splattered the paint all over the White House in D.C. Because we, as readers who have stuck by and read the entire series through, need an entire page of Creative Writing Class explanation on what the Hanging Tree song means. It's like in the first book, when we were constantly being told exactly what the dandelions represent. And in Catching Fire, when the meaning being the clock was spelled out in an "I AM SYMBOLISM" manner. Everything, from Katniss's clothes (which she's weirdly fixated with) to her circular, drier-than-Egyptian-sand inner

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monologues were painstakingly pored over to the point of ridiculousness. Yes. Ridiculousness. Shall I repeat that again? Ridiculousness.

One more time? No? Ridiculousness.

Ridiculousness.

Contrary to the masses, I love reading books where loads of lovable characters die in the final fight. I love going through that grief, feeling the torment of watching one of my beloved friends die a bloody death. In fact, in my own work, I have a death list. I kid you not. I literally have a list of the most beloved characters, and I've put stars in red pen against all those who die.

There are many red stars on that list.

But what I do not enjoy, and what I found far too much of in *Mockingjay*, are pointless deaths. Deaths that don't ensure anyone else's survival, are excessively undignified, or never grieved for. Finnick, Mesalla, Mitchell, Boggs, and Cinna all died ridiculous deaths that really did nothing to aid Katniss's bringing down the Capitol. Essentially, they were all just Mauve Shirts, and they had been all along. I mean, fine. If the author wanted to kill these characters, go ahead and do it. It's actually not the fact that the characters died that bothered me. Yes, I was absolutely distraught over the death of Finnick (he just married Annie! Annie was pregnant! What the fuck kind of sadist kills that?) but given the choice myself? I'd probably kill him too. But the way in which Finnick dies is nonsensical.

YA is a tricky field in which to write dystopian. True dystopian always deals with death. It always deals with untimely death, tragic lives and terrible situations in which people are abused and scarred, in any and every way. But YA is inspiring to young people. YA is a window to different ideologies and -isms held up by other people; for instance, *Mockingjay* is a clear message against war. But YA is also meant for a broad audience of a younger age, and that comes with a responsibility to instill a message that yes, will inspire, but coax some kind of hope out of readers. Some kind of desire to be a better person. Some kind of knowledge that there are wonderful things in the world worth salvaging, and weathering difficult patches in life will ultimately result in a brighter future.

This sounds idealistic, I know. But this series is shelved in Children's. Kids as young as 12 are picking these books up, and what are they finding? The world sucks. People suck. Give up, and stop caring, because nothing good will ever come of trying. Perseverance will get you nowhere. Suicide and alcoholism will make you feel better.

No.

Where is Katniss? Who's the drugged-up shadow that's replaced her? In *Mockingjay*, this fickle, doom-and-gloom girl is not the battleaxe we met in *The Hunger Games*. This Katniss is constantly waking up in hospital, taking drugs and completely losing the will to fight for the people she loves. Her

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voice is flat, drab, full of a whole lot of angst surrounding the love triangle that, during the latter half of the book, became one of the very main concerns. What? I hear a lot of guff about this not being a romance, but it's quite clear that it is. And the scene in Tigris's cellar when Katniss pretends to sleep, but actually lies awake listening to Gale and Peeta talk about how they both love her unconditionally, and are perfectly fine to let her choose who she'll pick like a carton of juice off the shelf in the supermarket, and who she'll dump on his ass? Brought back some pretty pungent T-word memories. Gale and Peeta have absolutely no self-respect, and this scene was totally unrealistic. People do not behave like that in real life. Think about it: you're sitting facing the person who you know has been fooling around with the person you wholeheartedly love, and have done for years. The person you one day see yourself marrying. Are you really going to say, "Oh, I know how he/she feels about you. I know he/she has been making out with you behind my back, just after making out with me. I'm cool with that. I get it. No biggie." Don't even lie. I know that if I were Peeta or Gale, I'd be absolutely furious with Katniss. I'd demand to know why I was being toyed with, used even, and frankly? I'd walk away. I'd pick up my dignity and get out of there, because being treated like a piece of chewy candy in a pack of two that she can't decide whether or not to eat is an insult, and unspeakably degrading.

I kind of wanted Katniss to end up alone. Yes, once I'd forced myself to come to terms with the fact that that wasn't going to happen, I did enjoy the last ten pages greatly. Greatly. They were quite beautiful, actually, as long as I pushed myself to suck up everything I hated about the miserable and hopeless tone of this book. What I didn't enjoy was Gale's end. What happened to him? Oh, he's in District 2. And what's he doing in District 2? Dunno. How did he get there? Dunno. Why did he go there? Dunno. How does he feel about Katniss being with Peeta out of default, not either one's choice? Dunno. What's he going to do with his life now? Where is he going to live? What's going to happen to this character that we've been forced upon for almost three whole books, and 1200+ pages, and who's played a huge part in the story of Katniss's life?

Uh...I dunno.

I also couldn't believe Katniss's trial just happened without us. What the heck? Katniss is moping and plotting her suicide gratuitously in her room in the Capitol, and then one day Haymitch wanders in and says, "Your trial's over. You're free as a bird."

Yes, Katniss is free as a bird. She goes home and lives out the rest of her days as she pleases (and her mother just buggers off too, like Gale did. Where's your mom, Katniss? "Oh, somewhere.").

This whole thing felt like a sputtering fizzle-out of what really should have been a fantastic series. Part way through *Catching Fire*, I was considering that this series may even be literary, but *Mockingjay* spat on that. This is commercial YA, through and through. Yeah, the strong message about war and the hopelessness of Katniss tries to cover it up, but it has everything: silly love triangle, cackling villain, and the fate of the world resting on a teenager's shoulders. What's that? Oh, yeah. This is silly. Silly.

Katniss's *Mockingjay* role was equally silly. One minute Katniss is insisting, "I'M THE MOCKINGJAY

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"BITCH!" and then the next, she says that she just doesn't care about it. She doesn't care about the Mockingjay, or all the stupid TV spots they do, or anything really. And then BAM!

"I'M THE MOCKINGJAY BITCH!"

Katniss got on my nerves here. As did her constant use of arrows in futuristic combat. What is that? Since when was there an explosive that could fit on the head of an arrow and blow up an entire airship?

Why am I even trying to reason this?

The bow and arrows did not have a place in the world of Mockingjay. It seemed overwhelmingly stupid for Katniss to still be using arrows, a prehistoric weapon, when everyone else around her was using firearms and bombs. There's also the "sheath" business, which is just ridiculous. It literally takes 0.40 seconds to Google "bow and arrows" and find that arrows are held in a quiver. See? Simple!

The writing in this book irritated me. The first hundred pages are almost comically boring, and the prose suffers under nonsensical fragments, run-on sentences and huge internal monologues in the middle of conversations. It's just damn hard to read.

Mockingjay was such a flop for me. While the idea of exploring PTSD in war veterans was very interesting, it was employed in such a way that it brought the narrative in this book to a painful grind. There was absolutely no hope left within Katniss, and her complete derailment just destroyed any hope left in the message of this book. The writing was irritating, the deaths pointless, the violence totally over-the-top.

Mockingjay was a great big depressing flop.

Bonus Time!

...more

i NEVER thought i'd ever rate this book below a 5...but here i am....and the only reason i gave it a three even is because the first two books of the hunger games were just SO GOOD they brought this one up...by three stars. honestly, iâ€™ve waited so long for mockingjay to come out. i practically peed my pants on august 24th and now that iâ€™ve finally finished the book (thanks to a full day of obsessive reading-meals not included) all i can feel isâ€™ annoyance. annoyance and disappointment. annoyance i NEVER thought i'd ever rate this book below a 5...but here i am....and the only reason i gave it a three even is because the first two books of the hunger games were just SO GOOD they brought this one up...by three stars. honestly, iâ€™ve waited so long for mockingjay to come out. i practically peed my pants on august 24th and now that iâ€™ve finally finished the book (thanks to a full day of obsessive

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reading-meals not included) all i can feel is annoyance. annoyance and disappointment. annoyance that katniss let herself be so easily used, didn't really care about anything, and was idle for so much of the book. and disappointment that you never really get any closure with gale, peeta wasn't there for a third of the book, and he wasn't himself for almost all of it. but mostly just mad that nothing really happened for large portions of the book. like katniss seemed kinda stuck all throughout. i've always loved her because she was a character that didn't break down easily but mental breakdowns seemed like her favorite activity in this book. she spent like a fourth of the book missing peeta but she never actually DID anything about it. and then when he was saved she barely even talked to him let alone tried to help him. okay *spoiler alert* one of the only bright spots of this book is finding out about finnick's past. i was definitely surprised by all he had to say. it made me like him even more. i can honestly say he was the only character that didn't annoy me once in mockingjay AND THEN HE DIED. i am SO MAD that finnick and cinna's death were pretty much considered inconsequential. like yeah, katniss was sad, but neither of them got like a dramatic tragical death. it was just yeah. they died. it sucks. and that really bummed me out cause i LOVED them both. i thought finnick's death was three times as devastating as prim's, mostly because i feel like we never got to know prim well enough to really mourn her death. but for finnick i had to go back and reread the page several times before i could actually accept that he had died. and even then i hoped he would magically pop to life again. and not a single tear shed for him from katniss? NOT. OKAY. even though this was the book where the most characters died, it was also the book where i didn't cry once reading it. mostly because katniss didn't seem to really even care about anything which sort of killed my sympathy and sparked annoyance instead. and yeah so back to the whole non-closure thing with gale? it was just so anticlimatic and lacking. i've been a peeta supporter since the first chapter of the first book and even i hated how katniss and gale ended. i don't know. i just think that maybe i was expecting this last book to follow basically the same format as the hunger games and catching fire, and i'm just ridiculously (like seriously to the point where it's pathetic) disappointed that it took such a different turn. and now that i know the entire series is over so that's the only ending i'm gonna get....:(

katniss's shining moment appeared near the end though. when she decided to shoot coin instead of president snow. it almost brought back the old hunger-games-and-catching-fire-rational-and-strong katniss. almost. but then she had to go and try to get herself addicted to morphine in a suicide attempt. bleh. i always knew this was a somewhat dark series, but this book was just. so. bleak. reading it was pretty much equivalent to cutting my wrists. perhaps no amount of writing could ever have helped suzanne collins live up to my sky high expectations of this book but still.

the book could have been better. a lot. better.

...more

Mockingjay Symbol

This review has been hidden because it contains spoilers. To view it, [click here](#).

SPOILERS!!!

Ugh. I was just thankful that I decided to be grown-up and not wait until midnight to get this book and then stay up all night reading it. I kindled it early this morning and ignored my kids for 4 hours and got through it. This book makes you realize how much the storyline in the first two depended upon the tension created by the love triangle. In Mockingjay, the author robs her readers of what they (I) crave! By the end, everything is so messed up that Peeta vs. Ga SPOILERS!!!

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Bottom line: You have to read it, but don't spend money on it- wait and borrow it from your friend. And then fondly recall the excellence of the first book. ...more

(B+) 78% | Good

Notes: Rather than tell an interesting story, itâ€™s meant above all to repulse us into reflection on the cruelty and horror of war.