

Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes

by Suzanne Collins

Have you ever wondered if the evil President Coriolanus Snow was always so manipulative? Follow young Coriolanus Snow as he has a personal experience with the Hunger Games and struggles to find and maintain where he stands in Panem.

The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes is a spin-off and prequel to The Hunger Games trilogy. You might also recognize Suzanne Collins's five-book series titled "The Underland Chronicles."

Coriolanus Snow is a mentor in the tenth annual Hunger Games, where two tributes are pulled from each district and forced to fight to the death as punishment for a previous rebellion. Coriolanus must outwit his fellow students to be the mentor of the winning tribute. The odds are not on his side, as he was assigned the female tribute from District 12. Coriolanus starts to feel for her, and will help her to win as best as he can. But will his ambition take him too far?

I liked this book because the plot was very intriguing. Not only does Coriolanus have to live up to the family name, but he also has to help his family stay afloat. Coriolanus must make tough decisions on if he should choose to help his friends, even if they are doing the wrong thing. The characters in this story were all well-developed because they all went through changes in the story, and grew as people, for better or for worse. I enjoyed the dialogue because it was very captivating. I specifically liked that we got to learn more about Coriolanus by seeing what he said to people, and knowing what he really thought about them. I liked the author's writing style because it made me excited to read what happens next.

I would recommend this book to readers that enjoy books that take place in dystopian societies. I would recommend this book to people that enjoy the "Divergent" series and "The Giver." These books have similar themes, such as the struggle for power, or against it. I think the conflict in which Coriolanus must figure out where he stands would appeal most to readers. Coriolanus needs to decide what he believes in, and who he holds loyalties to.

-Kaitlyn, Age 13

