

Commonalities Between Katniss And Lida

Posted on October 16, 2019

Introduction

Katniss Everdeen in Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* and Lida Ferezuk in Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch's *Making Bombs for Hitler* are young women forced to survive systems that treat children as disposable. Katniss lives under the Capitol's authoritarian rule and volunteers for the Hunger Games to protect her sister Prim. Lida is taken from Ukraine by the Nazis, separated from her sister Larissa, and forced to labor in a German munitions factory. The original comparison correctly identifies family loyalty, courage, perseverance, resistance, and kindness as shared qualities. It should not describe either girl as having an instinct to kill. Both characters use violence or sabotage under coercive conditions, but their defining instinct is protection. Their stories are meaningful because they show young readers that humanity can survive political systems designed to destroy trust, identity, and moral choice. Katniss and Lida fight differently, yet each turns care for others into a form of resistance. (Collins; Skrypuch)

Different Worlds, Related Forms of Oppression

The two novels belong to different genres. *The Hunger Games* is dystopian fiction set in the imagined nation of Panem, while *Making Bombs for Hitler* is historical fiction grounded in the Nazi system of forced labor and racial persecution. This difference matters because Lida's ordeal represents historical crimes suffered by real children, whereas Katniss's arena exaggerates political tendencies in order to criticize authoritarian power, inequality, spectacle, and war. Despite that distinction, both worlds separate children from safety and convert their bodies into state resources. The Capitol forces selected adolescents to kill for televised entertainment. Nazi authorities classify Lida, erase her identity, exploit her labor, and threaten her life. Both heroines must survive without accepting the moral definitions imposed by their captors.

Commitment to Family Survival

Family loyalty gives both characters their first reason to act. Katniss has already become a provider after her father's death, hunting illegally to feed Prim and their mother. Her defining choice occurs when she volunteers to take Prim's place at the reaping. Lida's determination centers on finding Larissa and keeping the promise of reunion alive despite displacement and uncertainty. The sisters are physically separated, but the relationship continues to organize Lida's decisions. Neither heroine treats family love as sentimental comfort. It becomes a discipline that helps her endure hunger, fear, grief, and isolation. The comparison is strongest when it recognizes that their courage develops from

responsibility rather than from a desire to appear heroic.

Providing Under Conditions of Scarcity

Katniss and Lida both learn to work within systems of extreme scarcity. Katniss hunts, gathers plants, trades at the Hob, and calculates how food can be divided. These skills challenge the Capitol's attempt to make the districts entirely dependent. Lida must survive inadequate food, dangerous labor, poor clothing, illness, and arbitrary punishment. She also observes how small resources can be shared among prisoners. Scarcity tests moral relationships: a person can hoard for individual survival or cooperate despite risk. Both novels show that generosity is not easy when resources are limited. It is precisely because food, medicine, and safety are scarce that sharing becomes evidence of retained humanity.

Fierceness Without Dehumanization

The original essay calls both girls fierce, which is accurate if fierceness means determined resistance rather than cruelty. Katniss can shoot accurately and acts decisively when threatened, but she is disturbed by killing and repeatedly distinguishes enemies from people trapped by the same system. After Rue dies, Katniss honors her body with flowers, refusing the Capitol's attempt to turn death into disposable entertainment. Lida's courage appears through endurance, observation, and participation in sabotage. She understands the danger of defying factory authorities, yet she works with others to weaken bombs made for the Nazi war effort. Their fierceness is morally significant because it remains connected to grief, empathy, and protection.

Fire as Symbol

Katniss is publicly transformed into "the girl on fire," an image designed initially by Cinna to attract sponsors. The symbol later exceeds fashion and becomes associated with rebellion. Fire represents visibility, danger, hope, and the possibility that one act can spread beyond the person who begins it. Lida's relation to fire is less theatrical. She works near weapons and explosive production, where fire can mean industrial violence, destruction, or sabotage. Calling both "firewomen" should therefore remain metaphorical. Katniss becomes a political symbol through spectacle; Lida fights inside the machinery of war through small hidden acts. One flame is public and rapidly circulated, while the other is concealed within forced labor.

Maintaining Humanity

Both protagonists preserve humanity by refusing to accept the categories assigned to other people. The Capitol calls tributes competitors and expects Katniss to see them only as threats. Her friendship

with Rue disrupts that logic. She recognizes a child, ally, and sister-like figure rather than an opponent. Lida's captors divide people by race, nationality, health, and usefulness. She forms relationships across the camp and factory, accepting help and offering it where possible. Humanity is maintained through names, memories, promises, mourning, and reciprocal care. These acts may appear small compared with armies or governments, but oppressive systems depend on convincing victims that no trustworthy relationship remains. Every bond contradicts that claim.

Small Acts of Resistance

Katniss's resistance begins before she understands herself as a rebel. Illegal hunting, the salute to District 11, honoring Rue, threatening to eat the nightlock berries with Peeta, and refusing simple hatred all interrupt the Capitol's script. Lida's resistance is quieter because discovery would mean immediate punishment or death. Forced workers make deliberate errors, damage production, share information, protect one another, and preserve personal identities. These actions differ in visibility but share a principle: power is not absolute when people retain the ability to withhold complete cooperation. Young readers learn that resistance can be dramatic, but it can also involve a hidden decision to protect life, truth, or solidarity.

The Role of Peeta and Zenia

Neither heroine survives through isolated strength. Peeta helps Katniss recognize that survival without moral identity would be another form of defeat. His question about remaining himself influences her understanding of the Games and later war. Zenia and other companions help Lida navigate forced labor and remind her that cooperation is not weakness. The original essay correctly identifies accepting help as a lesson. Both novels reject the fantasy of the completely self-sufficient hero. Skill matters, but survival depends on knowledge shared by allies, emotional support, sacrifice, and trust. Accepting assistance allows each heroine to remain connected rather than becoming the solitary person her oppressors expect.

Kindness as Political Action

Kindness in these novels is not passive niceness. Katniss's care for Rue creates a political message because it contradicts the Capitol's portrayal of district children as expendable pieces in a game. District 11's response shows that recognition can cross boundaries imposed by the state. Lida's concern for other prisoners challenges a system that distributes food and punishment to force competition. A shared portion, warning, or comforting word can preserve another person's will to live. Kindness becomes political when institutions are organized around dehumanization. It says that the target of oppression remains a person whose life has value.

Trauma and Emotional Cost

The heroines' strength should not hide the trauma they experience. Katniss develops fear, grief, nightmares, distrust, and difficulty understanding how public performance relates to private feeling. Lida faces separation, hunger, dangerous labor, death, and uncertainty about her family. Courage does not make either girl emotionally unharmed. Young readers need this distinction because heroic stories can imply that strong people recover immediately or should not need support. Both novels show that survival and suffering can exist together. Emotional difficulty is not evidence that the heroine failed; it is evidence that violence has consequences.

Being Yourself Under Forced Performance

The lesson "be yourself" is important but complicated. Katniss must perform for cameras to gain sponsors, and she cannot simply express every feeling safely. Her authentic care appears through choices that escape or transform the performance, such as mourning Rue or protecting Peeta. Lida must conceal thoughts and intentions from guards. Authenticity therefore does not always mean complete openness. Under oppression, survival may require disguise. Being oneself means retaining inner commitments and acting on them when possible. The heroines teach that identity can remain genuine even when a person must manage appearance to survive.

Perseverance and Its Limits

Katniss and Lida persevere through repeated setbacks, but the novels do not reduce success to positive thinking. Their obstacles are political, military, and economic, not merely personal attitudes. Hard work helps Katniss hunt and helps Lida perform difficult tasks, yet hard work alone cannot make an unjust system fair. This is a valuable lesson for young readers. Persistence matters, but people also need allies, institutions, resources, and collective change. The characters do not succeed because they ignore structural barriers. They learn to identify those barriers and act with others against them.

Gender and the Heroic Tradition

Katniss and Lida are distinctive partly because their stories place young women at the center of survival and resistance. They are not presented as courageous only when adopting stereotypically masculine aggression. Caregiving, emotional attachment, practical knowledge, adaptability, and community loyalty are sources of strength. At the same time, neither character is idealized as endlessly nurturing. They feel anger, confusion, fear, and resentment. Their complexity challenges the expectation that female protagonists must be either gentle victims or emotionless warriors. They can protect others and require protection themselves.

Lessons for Young Readers

The stories teach several connected lessons. Family and chosen community can provide purpose, but one person should not be required to carry everyone alone. Help should be accepted when offered safely. Kindness can interrupt systems built on fear. Courage may involve visible confrontation or quiet refusal. Identity can be protected even when circumstances require strategic performance. Finally, survival is not the same as victory if a person adopts the oppressor's contempt for human life. These lessons are more durable than a simple instruction to work hard or be brave because they connect personal character with ethical relationships and political conditions.

What Courage Can Readers Take From the Books?

Readers can take courage from the fact that neither heroine waits to become fearless. Katniss volunteers while terrified, and Lida acts while knowing the cost of discovery. Courage is shown as action guided by value in the presence of fear. Young readers facing ordinary difficulties should not equate their lives with war or totalitarian persecution, but they can recognize the underlying pattern: a person can identify what matters, seek allies, and make the next responsible choice without controlling the entire outcome. The books also encourage readers to notice people whose resistance is less visible than Katniss's public symbol.

Conclusion

Katniss and Lida share loyalty to family, practical intelligence, fierce protection, perseverance, empathy, and willingness to resist powerful systems. Their differences are equally important. Katniss's dystopian struggle unfolds through a televised arena and an expanding rebellion, while Lida's historical-fiction experience is rooted in Nazi forced labor and hidden sabotage. Neither girl is defined by an instinct to kill. Their central instinct is to preserve life and human connection under conditions designed to make both impossible. They maintain humanity through friendship, memory, mourning, care, and refusal. For young readers, their stories show that strength is not solitary hardness. It is the ability to protect moral identity, accept help, and keep acting with others when fear and oppression make indifference easier.

Works Cited

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. Scholastic Press, 2008.

Skrypuch, Marsha Forchuk. *Making Bombs for Hitler*. Scholastic Canada, 2012.