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# Earth Afire (The First Formic War)



## Synopsis

One hundred years before Ender's Game, the aliens arrived on Earth with fire and death. Earth Afire by Orson Scott Card and Aaron Johnston is the story of the First Formic War. Victor Delgado beat the alien ship to Earth, but just barely. Not soon enough to convince skeptical governments that there was a threat. They didn't believe that until space stations and ships and colonies went up in sudden flame. And when that happened, only Mazer Rackham and the Mobile Operations Police could move fast enough to meet the threat.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A Reading Guide for Ender's Game. THE ENDER UNIVERSE Ender's Series: Ender Wiggin: The finest general the world could hope to find or breed. The following Ender's Series titles are listed in order: Ender's Game, Ender In Exile, Speaker for the Dead, Xenocide, Children of the Mind. Ender's Shadow Series: Parallel storylines to Ender's Game from Bean: Ender's right hand, his strategist, and his friend. The following Ender's Shadow Series titles are listed in order: Ender's Shadow, Shadow of the Hegemon, Shadow Puppets, Shadow of the Giant, Shadows in Flight. The First Formic War Series: One hundred years before Ender's Game, the aliens arrived on Earth with fire and death. These are the stories of the First Formic War. Earth Unaware, Earth Afire. The Authorized Ender Companion: A complete and in-depth encyclopedia of all the persons, places, things, and events in Orson Scott Card's Ender Universe. --This text refers to the

Paperback edition.

**Starred Review.** With a stellar cast of narrators, this prequel to Card's sci-fi classic *Ender's Game* is a rollicking, rollercoaster ride of an adventure. Set more than 100 years before the events of the *Ender Quintet*, this second part of the trilogy describes the beginning of the Formic war. With a brutal invasion that catches Earth by surprise, the Formics establish a strong foothold in China and proceed to rain death and destruction on the planet. A diverse group of people, including both military personnel and civilians, struggle for survival and endeavors to fight back against the invading hoard. From the very beginning of this audio edition, the almost-nonstop action is delivered perfectly, keeping listeners on the edge of their seats. At the same time, the narrators manage to bring a large and diverse cast of characters to life with a sharply realized array of distinct voices and accents. The standout performance belongs to Stefan Rudnicki, who offers up a pitch-perfect rendition of Mazer Rackham, a New Zealand special ops officer, as he, along with a young refugee, labors across a war-torn Chinese countryside toward a nail-biting showdown with the invaders. The audiobook ends on a major cliffhanger, leaving listeners chomping at the bit for the next installment. A Tor hardcover. (June)

This was my first Orson Scott Card book. After seeing the recent *ENDER* movie, I wanted to get into the Ender story universe that Card created, but rather than reading the first book, I decided to start with the prequels, so that I could follow the story in proper chronological order. So, having said that, I haven't read any of the other books (besides *Earth Unaware*, *Earth Afire*, *Earth Awakens*), so I'm not really privy to the whole Ender universe-story yet. It was difficult to set down the book (actually my kindle) and I read thru this book in a span under two weeks. The story seems to move quite fast, and you're introduced to various characters that you love (or grudgingly tolerate) and see things from their unique perspectives. There are unexpected things too, such as sadness from an unexpected loss, the thought processes of how one makes a decision, and revealing perspectives of systems and people. *\*Spoiler Alert\** If you read this book, you'll find that it's "unfinished". It has an ending, but you really need to read books 1 (*Earth Unaware*) and 3 (*Earth Awakens*) to get the full story. Even still, apparently 3 more books are on the way to complete "the rest of the story", but they haven't been released yet. I can't wait!!

Interesting question that I hadn't thought about, "How is the story narrated". I think it was mostly second person, "Victor did this...", "Lem did that..." didn't really pay attention, sorry. Yes, really there

was a lot of violence in the book I guess, but given the theme (Earth gets toasted by aliens) what would you expect. It was definitely not gratuitous violence and was handled well. Great series, interesting plot twists, a few huge technical flaws that are pretty glaring (if you are a physicist or a rocket scientist and are obsessive compulsive about technical details you may want to skip it, drifting up to the alien ship in a cloud of debris while in orbit? Not sure I buy that but it makes for a good story), A lot of the routine technical stuff is detailed in creative ways that I found interesting and probably somewhat prophetic (which I like about SciFi). I really, really liked the character development (again not perfect but creatively done and very interesting). The political, cultural and human commentary I found extremely interesting (which I like about SciFi). Card is really interesting about the human factor and human interaction. Very interesting story. Good series. I would definitely recommend reading these in order (I didn't and so read the third book again which I thought was the best of the three books). I started reading these because one of my kids was reading Ender's Game and recommended it to me. He told me that I would really like it and I did. The book (Ender's Game) was much better than the movie, they had to leave way too much out of the movie robbing it of the character development which was unfortunate. Yes, some of the stuff in his book is a stretch but so what, its fiction remember? The stories and character development and situations are really interesting. One of my favorite authors. Mark

The sequel novel to Earth Unaware is Earth Afire. None of the books of this series (going on #3 in June 2014) stands on its own. But the overall writing style, shifting from scene to scene and seeing them merge at the end works well with Card's and Johnston's style of writing. Earth Unaware introduced us to Victor, a kid who is very smart with mechanics, who works as part of a family of miners light-years from Earth. Earth Afire leaves the Fathers & Fathers theme and goes into God knows what! Story & Plot: Victor finally makes it to Earth, hacked into a "quickship" not built for human habitation and makes it to Luna with video proof of alien invasion. As expected, no one believes him. What makes the Victor character so obnoxious is his attitude towards others. When he is finished berating people for not believing him, he becomes the victim, discussing the death of his family to the Formics. He blames Lem, the son of the Juke Corporation giant, for much of this. To make a long story short, Victor and Imala (an accountant we met) meet Jukes for some help. Rather than get the help, Victor immediately goes into a tirade, insulting the very people he needs. He does this again with Lem, calling him out as a murderer when they need Lem's help! Other characters try to shut him up to this reader's annoyance. The story ends with a rather ambitious plot of getting onto the

Formic's mother ship, currently orbiting the Earth. Most of this part is anticlimactic and "stay tuned next book folks." Annoying. Conclusion: Earth Afire has some positive aspects to it: Governments complaining about their image to the world or afraid to act or let others help, which gives the Formics time to invade; the paranoid Lem who thinks his father is two-faced but often exhibits the same characteristics as his father; Colonel Wit, who leads a crack team of soldiers and attempts to make inroads in stopping the invasion despite his orders from above not to interfere; and Imala, a smart gal with not a lot of people skills. Victor was the most ambitious character at Earth Unaware, but becomes a know-it-all, sarcastic brat in Earth Afire. Here's hoping the next book vindicates him as he somehow makes it aboard the mothership!

Card is one of the great writers of the Sci-fi genre. Earth Unaware and Earth Afire tell the story of the Formic War leading up to Ender's Game. Several of the important characters of Ender's Game are introduced and fleshed out. It is almost as if Card had this planned ahead. His writing style flows so cleanly and smoothly that you can find yourself halfway through the book, before you come up for air. If you have not yet read the Ender series, count yourself lucky. Pick up Unaware, and Afire, and be prepared for a truly imaginative and fascinating journey through Orson Scott Card's universe.

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