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Ender's Shadow (The Shadow Series)



Synopsis

The novel that launched the bestselling Ender's Shadow seriesâ•available for the first time on unabridged cd The human race is at War with the "Buggers," an insect-like alien race. As Earth prepares to defend itself from total destruction at the hands of an inscrutable enemy, all focus is on the development of military geniuses who can fight such a war, and win. The long distances of interstellar space have given hope to the defenders of Earth--they have time to train these future commanders up from childhood, forging them into an irresistible force in the high orbital facility called the Battle School. Andrew "Ender" Wiggin was not the only child in the Battle School; he was just the best of the best. In Ender's Shadow, Card tells the story of another of those precocious generals, the one they called Bean--the one who became Ender's right hand, part of his team, in the final battle against the Buggers. Bean's past was a battle just to survive. His success brought him to the attention of the Battle School's recruiters, those people scouring the planet for leaders, tacticians, and generals to save Earth from the threat of alien invasion. Bean was sent into orbit, to the Battle School. And there he met Ender....

Book Information

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Authors, A-Z > (C) > Card, Orson Scott #147 inÂ• Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction &

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Customer Reviews

Every few years, a book comes along that burns into the very core of the reader, leaving memory of the book for many, many years to come. When ENDER'S GAME first appeared in the mid-80's, the groundbreaking novel did more to turn legions of "mainstream" readers into sci-fi fans. The gripping human drama in that Hugo & Nebula winning book left many of us stunned and wowed. While some

many have followed Mr. Card's foray into the further adventures of Ender Wiggins through the sequels, I personally couldn't get through *SPEAKER FOR THE DEAD* and decided to abandon the further life story of Ender. And when I saw that a "parallel" novel of *ENDER'S GAME* was published, I thought to myself, "Well, Mr. Card is selling himself out. Talk about rehashing." Then as fate would have it, I picked up *ENDER'S SHADOW* anyway about a week ago and began reading a few days ago. By page 2, I was hopelessly lost in the world of Rotterdam, where the 2-year old Bean begins his political maneuvering, leading to murder, lies and powerplay by various memorable characters. Forget *SURVIORS*. The truth about human nature and its various social manifestations are in *ENDER'S SHADOW*. The reason why *ENDER'S GAME* was so successful was that, despite its background as a SF story, it was really about believable characters that you cared about. *ENDER'S SHADOW* does that, too, and by the end of the book, you're sad that you'll have to say goodbye to your imaginary friends. From the backstreets of Rotterdam, through the Battle School, then to the final simulation game that signals the end of the war between human and buggers, we see the transformation of Bean, from the secretive, emotionless, distrusting schemer to a full-fledged leader of soldiers.

The fifth book in the Ender series (and the follow-up to the somewhat disappointing "Children of the Mind"), "Ender's Shadow" is a parallel novel to "Ender's Game": it relates many of the same events in the first book, told from the point of view of Bean, one of the other boys in Ender's army. I greeted the idea of this book with some skepticism, but I'm happy to report that I was wrong: Card's experiment is non-stop, page-turning fun. Like "Ender's Game," this novel is a bildungsroman--a coming-of-age story about a boy training to be an intergalactic warrior. Both novels share many of the same characters (including Petra, Dink Meeker, Bonzo, Mazer Rackham, Crazy Tom, and Colonel Graff), entire episodes are recapped from Bean's point of view (although often with an unexpected twist), and even some of the dialogue is repeated verbatim from one book to the next. Yet the disparities are so dramatic that it's truly like reading completely different novels. The opening chapters, set in the slums of Rotterdam, are so unlike anything in "Ender's Game" that, until Bean finally arrives at Battle School, it's hard to believe you're reading the same series. Unlike "Ender's Game" or "Speaker of the Mind," however, there are no great bombshells or plot twists; the author's usually impressive bag of tricks can't overcome the fact that most of his readers know what will happen at the end, so he doesn't even try to disguise the "big secret" that made the first book so unforgettable.

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