



# ENTERPRISING

ORSON SCOTT CARD

# GAME

# ENDER'S GAME

TOR BOOKS BY ORSON SCOTT CARD

*Eye for Eye*  
*The Folk of the Fringe*  
*Future on Fire* (editor)  
*Future on Ice* (editor) \*  
*Hart's Hope*  
*Maps in a Mirror:*  
*The Short Fiction of Orson Scott Card*  
*Saints*  
*Songmaster*  
*The Worthing Saga*  
*Wyrms*

THE TALES OF ALVIN MAKER

*Seventh Son*  
*Red Prophet*  
*Prentice Alvin*

E<sub>NDER</sub>

*Ender's Game*  
*Speaker for the Dead*  
*Xenocide*

\* forthcoming

---

# ENDER'S GAME



A TOM DOHERTY ASSOCIATES BOOK

NEW YORK

This is a work of fiction. All the characters and events portrayed in this book are fictitious, and any resemblance to real people or events is purely coincidental.

ENDER'S GAME

Copyright © 1977, 1985, 1991 by Orson Scott Card

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book, or portions thereof, in any form.

Introduction copyright © 1991 by Orson Scott Card. First published in *Phoenix Rising*.

This book was printed on acid-free paper.

A Tor Book  
Published by Tom Doherty Associates, LLC  
49 West 24th Street  
New York, NY 10010

Tor® is a registered trademark of Tom Doherty Associates, LLC  
Cover art by John Harris.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Card, Orson Scott.  
Ender's Game / Orson Scott Card.  
p. cm.  
"A Tom Doherty Associates book."  
ISBN 0-312-85323-8 (pbk.)  
ISBN 0-312-93208-1 (he)  
I. Title.

[PS3553.A655E5 1991]

813' .54—dc20

91-9908

CIP

Printed in the United States of America

20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13

For Geoffrey,  
who makes me remember  
how young and how old  
children can be

# CONTENTS

[Acknowledgments](#)

[Introduction](#)

[1. Third](#)

[2. Peter](#)

[3. Graff](#)

[4. Launch](#)

[5. Games](#)

[6. The Giant's Drink](#)

[7. Salamander](#)

[8. Rat](#)

[9. Locke and Demosthenes](#)

[10. Dragon](#)

[11. Veni Vidi Vici](#)

[12. Bonzo](#)

[13. Valentine](#)

[14. Ender's Teacher](#)

[15. Speaker for the Dead](#)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Portions of this book were recounted in my first published science fiction story, “Ender’s Game,” in the August 1977 *Analog*, edited by Ben Bova; his faith in me and this story are the foundation of my career.

Harriet McDougal of Tor is that rarest of editors—one who understands a story and can help the author make it exactly what he meant it to be. They don’t pay her enough. Harriet’s task was made more than a little easier, however, because of the excellent work of my resident editor, Kristine Card. I don’t pay her enough, either.

I am grateful also to Barbara Bova, who has been my friend and agent through thin and, sometimes, thick; and to Tom Doherty, my publisher, who let me talk him into doing this book at the ABA in Dallas, which shows either his superb judgment or how weary one can get at a convention.

## INTRODUCTION

It makes me a little uncomfortable, writing an introduction to *Ender's Game*. After all, the book has been in print for six years now, and in all that time, nobody has ever written to me to say, "You know, *Ender's Game* was a pretty good book, but you know what it really needs? An introduction!" And yet when a novel goes back to print for a new hardcover edition, there ought to be *something* new in it to mark the occasion (something besides the minor changes as I fix the errors and internal contradictions and stylistic excesses that have bothered me ever since the novel first appeared). So be assured—the novel stands on its own, and if you skip this intro and go straight to the story, I not only won't stand in your way, I'll even *agree* with you!

The novelet "Ender's Game" was my first published science fiction. It was based on an idea—the Battle Room—that came to me when I was sixteen years old. I had just read Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy, which was (more or less) an extrapolation of the ideas in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, applied to a galaxy-wide empire in some far future time.

The novel set me, not to dreaming, but to *thinking*, which is Asimov's most extraordinary ability as a fiction writer. What *would* the future be like? How would things change? What would remain the same? The premise of *Foundation* seemed to be that even though you might change the props and the actors, the play of human history is always the same. And yet that fundamentally pessimistic premise (you mean we'll *never* change?) was

tern-pered by Asimov's idea of a group of human beings who, not through genetic change, but through learned skills, are able to understand and heal the minds of other people.

It was an idea that rang true with me, perhaps in part because of my Mormon upbringing and beliefs: Human beings may be miserable specimens, in the main, but we *can* learn, and, through learning, become decent people.

Those were some of the ideas that played through my mind as I read *Foundation*, curled on my bed—a thin mattress on a slab of plywood, a bed my father had made for me—in my basement bedroom in our little rambler on 650 East in Orem, Utah. And then, as so many science fiction readers have done over the years, I felt a strong desire to write stories that would do for others what Asimov's story had done for me.

In other genres, that desire is usually expressed by producing thinly veiled rewrites of the great work: Tolkien's disciples far too often simply rewrite Tolkien, for example. In science fiction, however, the whole point is that the ideas are fresh and startling and intriguing; you imitate the great ones, not by rewriting *their* stories, but rather by creating stories that are just as startling and new.

But new in what way? Asimov was a scientist, and approached every field of human knowledge in a scientific manner—assimilating data, combining it in new and startling ways, thinking through the implications of each new idea. I was no scientist, and unlikely ever to be one, at least not a *real* scientist—not a physicist, not a chemist, not a biologist, not even an engineer. I had no gift for mathematics and no great love for it, either. Though I relished the study of logic and languages, and virtually inhaled histories and biographies, it never occurred to me at the time that these were just as valid sources of science fiction stories as astronomy or quantum mechanics.

How, then, could I possibly come up with a science fiction idea? What did / actually know about anything?

At that time my older brother Bill was in the army, stationed at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City; he was nursing a hip-to-heel cast from a bike-riding accident, however, and came home on weekends. It was then that he had met his future wife, Laura Dene Low, while attending a church meeting on the BYU campus; and it was Laura who gave me *Foundation* to read. Perhaps, then, it was natural for my thoughts to turn to things military.