



Fuego del corazón

Orson Scott Card

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Estados Unidos, siglo XIX. Mientras Alvin sigue buscando una inspiración para la mítica Ciudad de Cristal. Su esposa Peggy, que puede leer el 'fuego del corazón', viaja a la corte del rey Arturo de Inglaterra, exiliado en Charleston, ciudad que se ha convertido en un nuevo reino de Camelot. Peggy va allí con la intención de evitar el terrible porvenir que se prevé: la pavorosa guerra entre las naciones libres y los estados esclavistas.

Fuego del corazón Details

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From Reader Review Fuego del corazón for online ebook

Mathew Whitney says

By the fifth book in Orson Scott Card's Tales of Alvin Maker series, Heartfire, there's little chance that this entry will change many opinions about the series. For those with a continued interest in reading about Alvin's quest to become a Maker and build the Crystal City, this will certainly continue that story.

I'm leaning towards the opinion that this series was complete, and better, as a trilogy. Still, the series stands as something which shows the unique voice of the author, and is possibly one of the more accessible alternate-history series out there (though the heavy dose of fantasy may not win over so many fans from the lovers of alternate-history novels). While Ender's Game was the book which brought Card to my attention, this series may very well be the one which I always think of as uniquely his.

Ron says

Rampant Jordan-ism. If there's a spot on his map, he has to set part of his story there--populated with new characters and challenges--even if it has next to nothing to do with the main story.

It ought to be rated a two, or maybe even one one, except that Card is such an extraordinary storyteller.

Just read and enjoy.

The Scrivener's Quill says

I enjoyed the scene where Alvin leaves the court room after he sees that the law is being subverted to find him innocent. I then appreciate that John Adams is able to use the law to find Alvin legitimately innocent by destroying those who abused the law to attempt to find Alvin guilty. Clever twist and excellent lawyering.

Brandon says

This series is starting to get a bit disappointing. In Heartfire, Calvin didn't quite make the waves that I hoped he would. Instead, Card produced another average book in the series that from start to finish makes little progress in the overall conflict. And the overall conflict seems mediocre at this point as well - the conflict is simply how Alvin will build the Crystal City someday. I understand that Card meant to write an American epic poem or something and that perhaps he succeeded. However, the flow of the story isn't much my style. I still plan to finish out the story, but I don't expect any surprises in the final two books. And at this point, I don't even expect the final book to ever be published...

Jeremy says

Quotes:

Government is like watching another man piss in your boot. Someone feels better but it certainly isn't you.

Cupid shoots his arrows where they'll cause the most mischief.

Virtue is what you treasure until you feel desire, and then it becomes an intolerable burden to be cast away, and only to be picked up again when the desire fades.

But that was the way of the world – seducers and rapists rarely bore the consequences of their acts, or at least not as heavily as the seduced and the broken-spirited.

The seeds of all sins were in all people. If it were not so, how would it be virtue when they refrained from acting on those impulses?

There's no one who doesn't have memories he wishes he didn't have. And there are crimes that arise from decent desires gone wrong, from justified passions carried too far. Crimes that began only as mistakes. I've learned never to judge people. Of course I judge whether they're dangerous or not, or whether they did right or wrong, how can anyone live without judging? What I mean is, I can't condemn them. A few, yes, a few who love the suffering of others, or who never think of others at all, worthless souls that exist only to satisfy themselves. But those are rare.

Well, don't count on gratitude. It's the most fleeting of all human virtues.

Luke Paulsen says

Heartfire is the kind of Orson Scott Card book I wish I could like. It's got tons of vintage Card touches that he pulls off well. There's the new character of Purity, a New Englander who should remind Xenocide fans (yes, there are some, and I'm one of them) of Gloriously Bright. There's the disquieting scene where an unscrupulous Maker-- a magician, essentially-- seduces (rapes, really) a stranger by altering her hormones and brain chemistry. And there's the best alternate-history cameo yet in the Alvin Maker series: John Adams as a crotchety old judge with an axe to grind. In these and other moments I felt like Card was up to the relentless, innovative, challenging standard of the first few books of the series. Unfortunately, most of the way through the book I didn't have the same feeling.

Really, the problem with the series since Alvin Journeyman can be summed up in terms of Alvin's power. As a trained Maker he has the ability to do essentially anything, but he spends most of books 4 and 5 doing practically nothing, and there are no serious conflicts to challenge him. His adventures in Philadelphia and New England are noticeably lacking in excitement and originality. The plot in Charleston-- featuring Alvin's second-sighted wife Peggy and good-for-nothing brother Calvin-- is much more interesting for not having Alvin around and delivers most of the book's strong moments, but it gets bogged down in a story of slave revolt that Card doesn't make especially believable or relatable. Overall, the plot just doesn't manage to come

together in either location.

Having read book 6, The Crystal City, I see Heartfire's failures in an especially harsh light-- not because The Crystal City is significantly better (stay tuned), but because it resumes the main theme of Alvin's quest with barely any mention of Heartfire's plot points. For all that it matters to the main arc of characters and plot, Heartfire might as well not have happened. If you're invested in the series by this point, you'll probably want to read it anyway, and you probably won't mind-- like I said, Card is still doing good stuff. But my appetite for this kind of Card book is starting to decrease.

Nathan Burgoine says

Note: I won't be finishing this series, given the author's homophobic stance - I'm not going to fill his pockets. But these were my thoughts on the book before I knew how horrible a man the author was:

Though not quite as up to snuff as the other books in the Alvin Maker series to date, this one wins praise for paying as much attention to Verily Cooper and Peggy the Torch as it does to Alvin and Calvin themselves.

Peggy is taking on slavery, trying to use her gift to see the possible futures of people to arrange a war-free way to end slavery, while Verily is tackling witchcraft laws, trying to find a public trial that will let him set a precedent likely to stop witch hunts forever.

Enjoyable banter starts to fill this book (especially that of Verily Cooper), and Margaret's journey among the slaves is just solidly written.

Best Line: "He was aquitted of all charges," said Verily, "Proving that I'm a clever lawyer." / "Proving I was innocent," said Alvin. "An advantage I don't have this time."

Akiva says

Made the awkward story placement of book 4 worthwhile. Its still entertaining, but not as good as the first two books in the series. O.S. Card knew the resolutions he wanted in the first few books of the series, and it feels like he knows what he wants for the end of book 6, but for books 4 and 5 he just tried moving the pieces around, and give us resolutions that'll bide us over until 6. They were good enough to keep me going, but now I fully expect all that is promised to me in the Crystal City

Werner says

This fifth volume of the series finds Alvin and Peggy now married, and expecting the birth of their first child, but separated for much of the book by separate missions far apart geographically. His continuing quest for understanding of how to build the "Crystal City" of his vision will take him and his small group of companions to New England, to observe a model human community founded on solidly moral and religious principles. But this is a New England where the Puritan theocracy never fell, and which still hangs "witches"--including anybody who has any visible supernatural knack. Meanwhile, Peggy still hopes to emancipate the slaves AND prevent the looming bloody war over slavery that all the possible threads of the futures she

foresees tell her is impending. That will take her on a journey to Camelot (known in our world as Charleston, SC) to seek an audience with the King-in-exile, a mission as dangerous in its own way as Alvin's. And in the background (and sometimes the foreground) is always the wild card posed by Alvin's jealous younger brother Calvin, possessed of significant but untrained powers as a Maker himself, but capricious, vain and lacking in morals and maturity.

A lot of the trademark strengths of this series are evident here, including Card's strong storytelling skills, sometimes singing prose, and attention to ethical and psychological verities. The latter underlies his outstanding characterizations, both of his wholly fictional characters --new ones here include the slave girl Fishy, the confused and conflicted Purity, and the malevolent witch hunter Micah Quill (whom you want to reach into the page and strangle)-- and the ones who are counterparts of real people in our world, with the same personalities but their situations changed by the changed circumstances here, including Honore de Balzac, John James Audubon, Denmark Vesey, and an aged John Adams. (Readers should remember that this is a version of history in which Adams and Jefferson didn't reconcile in old age; so the jaundiced view of Jefferson that Adams expresses, and the ideas he attributes to him, don't necessarily reflect Card's own view.) And a strong point of his characterizations is the recognition of the mixture of good and bad, saint and sinner, that can live in us all. "There's no one who doesn't have memories he wishes he didn't have," Peggy says at one point. "And there are crimes that arise from --from decent desires gone wrong, from justified passions carried too far. Crimes that began only as mistakes. I've learned never to judge people. Of course I judge whether they're dangerous or not, or whether they did right or wrong, how can anyone live without judging? What I mean is, I can't condemn them. A few, yes, a few who love the suffering of others, or who never think of others at all, worthless souls who exist only to satisfy themselves. But those are rare. Do you even know what I'm talking about?" (I think I can answer that with an affirmative, from my own observations of life!)

This time, though, I didn't give the book the five stars I gave the preceding series volumes. That's only because I felt Card dropped the ball by not paying attention to some significant details, both in his world-building and his chronology. The previous book was explicitly clear that Appalachee had been admitted to the U.S. as a slave state (in fact, Jackson, who was from there, became President in that book). But at the outset here, we're told that the question of Appalachee's admission to the U.S., and the continuation of slavery there, are still moot points (and a serious bone of contention between the U.S. and the Crown Colonies). For a reader who takes the details of the alternate world seriously, and regards Card's attention to alternate history as a strength of the series and a key part of its appeal, that kind of sloppy mistake is a defect of craftsmanship that bulks large --and should, because I think readers should demand attention to detail from writers! Also, in the earlier part of the book, Card appears to forget that given the chronology here, Arthur Stuart is only twelve years old --his voice wouldn't be changing at that age nor, probably, would he have been interested in girls (kids in that era weren't fed on hormone- drenched meat, and didn't suffer from precocious puberty as a result). But those flaws didn't keep me from really liking the book!

A major interpretive issue with this series is the role Card's Mormon beliefs play into it, and to what extent Alvin is a clone of our world's Joseph Smith (not, IMO, a very big extent, though a comparison exists). The only indication of a direct influence of Mormon theology so far in the series appears in one place here, where Alvin reflects to the effect that God, having made the world, wanted the people in it to "be Makers with Him." (Alvin's magical knack involves considerable power to re-shape matter at the molecular level by "looking" into it and willing the small particles to line up the way he wants, but Card posits that people in general may have some talents along this line and can learn to exercise them by training and practice.) This line can be interpreted as a reference to the Mormon idea of salvation as (for men) eventual deification --and given Card's Mormonism, it's not improbable that he sees it that way. But it's one line in a 336-page book --and it can be interpreted (if you want to apply D. H. Lawrence's "trust the tale and not the teller" adage :-)) in

a less extreme way. (From an evangelical perspective, there is a very real sense in which God does want us -- and even equips us-- to be "makers" with him: he gives us talent, creativity and imagination that involves bringing into being a great many products of human craftsmanship, inventiveness and hard work that wouldn't exist without us, and that we can take satisfaction in.)

Evgeni Kirilov says

Most of my reviews lately have been in the "more of the same" spirit, and this one will have to follow suit. If you liked the previous Alvin books, you'll like this one too. If you didn't, this one won't offer you new reasons to change your mind. I liked it better than the Journeyman, and that's probably because the plot is finally starting to (slowly) pick up: Arthur Stuart is no longer defined solely by his fanboyism, Verily Cooper gets fleshed out a little bit more, the plot around Alvin and Calvin sees some development, and we get to see some heavy duty lawyer on lawyer action! Oh, and the Crystal City gets mentioned.

Regarding the rating, I couldn't decide between 3 or 4 stars for this book - but it **was** better than the previous one in the series, to which I gave 3/5, so I thought 4/5 would be alright for this one. 7/10 is really what I would give it.

Luisa says

I really enjoyed this book. Alvin is really coming into his own as a maker, even though he doesn't yet call himself one :)

Calvin is more and more trouble, but I still have a bit of faith on the kid coming around. Who knows right? :) I loved the part with the slaves. Incredibly interesting idea, and also, the part about witchcraft was great. I really like Verily Cooper :D

Scot Eaton says

Read in a day and a half while I was home sick. This story was MUCH better than book 4, and in fact should have functionally replaced it. I rated them both the same though, because they both have serious flaws.

Alvin doesn't change or really DO anything in this book. He makes no decisions, does no Making... he's more of a backdrop for Verily, Margaret, and Calvin to carry the show. He has almost become like Luke Skywalker in the Star Wars Extended Universe. He doesn't go through any struggles; isn't ever in any real danger, and just kind of wanders around using his powers in just the right way each time. I was a bit disappointed by this, but the dual storyline of the New England witch trial and the Abolitionist were intriguing. Thematically, I struggle to connect the two though. The back cover promises that they will come together in the end, but they really don't. Alvin's in one storyline, and then he literally just gets up and runs to the other. It fell a bit flat.

So all told, this was a good read, but not at the same level of quality I've come to expect from Card.

James says

Two stories in one, that end up coming together. On the one hand Alvin has formed a little gang with Mike, Verily and Arthur Stuart. Wandering around trying to work out how Alvin is going to build his Crystal City - or even what the Crystal City really is. In the process, Alvin gets accused of being a witch and Verily suddenly decides to take on the whole principle of witch trials and fight them through the courts.

The other story is of Peggy, now Alvin's wife, who is trying to get an audience with the exiled King in order to avert the coming war. Mixing her story up a little is the appearance of Calvin, Alvin's brother, who is still jealous of Alvin's powers. Add into this story a more detailed explanation of the magical powers of the black slaves and we now have three distinct magic systems - the knacks of the white people, the nature affinity of the native Americans and now the knots and dolls of the African slaves. Think useful functional magic for white folks, noble savage tree hugging for the red folks, and voodoo for the black folks and you won't be far off. Obviously, not a hint of any implied racism here...

Peggy and Calvin's story is arguably the more interesting here - although both stories feature way too much talking (therefore telling) rather than action and plot development (showing). As a whole it does feel bit too much like a filling story. An attempt to build a journey for Alvin rather than having him just rush off and build his city. And, Card does get a little bogged down in the side stories again. But, while they're fun and well told, we're still no closer to having a crystal city than we were all those books ago... Hopefully the final book - helpfully titled The Crystal City - will actually finish the story out.

prcardi says

Storyline: 3/5

Characters: 4/5

Writing Style: 3/5

World: 3/5

Almost every new volume in the series has been slightly worse than the previous though none have diminished enough to merit the designation of a bad book. I understand now that a big part of Card's plan with the series was to tour 19th century North America and show off his alternate history. There are probably inside jokes and intriguing contrasts being made with colonial towns, historical personages, and popular ideas. I'd count myself as having an above-average familiarity with early American history, but I clearly lack the historical depth to appreciate what Card is doing here. I end up, then, visiting places that I've heard of and encountering events of which I'm vaguely familiar, but none if it is striking. The writing too, is odd here. My wife was surreptitiously reading over my shoulder, and she remarked that the author didn't use adjectives. I hadn't noticed before, but she was right. Not that he completely forgoes them, but analogies, similes, and nouns aplenty saturate the novel but rare is there a description. Card is an old-hand at writing at this point, and he is careful never to violate the "show-not-tell" rule, but in doing so we are largely deprived of environmental context. Thus I rarely could tell you what a town, room, or someone's clothing looked like. Coupled with a slow story this made for a musty read when Card was hoping for something aromatic.

There's still some highlights here that series fans will enjoy. Card continues to work in excellent characters that are not only a study of the human condition but a look backward into history and the condition at that time. It is unfortunate the main characters take up so much room in the novels. Card isn't doing anything new

with them anymore. Some of the minor characters were remarkable enough though that I wished they had been given major roles and more space in the tale. We also finally get a better understanding of the magical system in this book. The details are spread through the story, and, I think, might even contain some retroactive continuity changes, but the system is finally (though slowly) coming together. The whole Mormon allegory thing keeps getting weirder and weirder though. Obviously either I don't understand Mormonism or the point of the story. Still, I'd rather just enjoy it as a fantasy, and that was made more possible here than in some of the earlier books.

I'll read to the end of the series and be glad when it is finished.

Andrew Obrigewitsch says

I found that these Alvin stories are really good at taking up moral dilemmas of early America and show then for what they were. The story telling is quite good as well.
