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First Meetings: In Ender's Universe (Other Tales From The Ender Universe)



Synopsis

Welcome to the Enderverse. When Orson Scott Card first published "Ender's Game" as a novella in 1977, few would have predicted that it would become one of the most successful ventures in publishing history. Expanded into a novel in 1985, Ender's Game won both the Hugo Award and the Nebula Award for Best Novel. Never out of print and translated into dozens of languages, it is the rare work of fiction that can truly be said to have transcended a genre. Ender's Game and its sequels have won dozens of prestigious awards and are as popular today among teens and young readers as adults. First Meetings is an audiobook collection of three novellas-plus the original "Ender's Game"-that journey into the origins and the destiny of one Ender Wiggin. "The Polish Boy" begins in the wake between the first two Bugger Wars when the Hegemony is desperate to recruit brilliant military commanders to repel the alien invasion. In John Paul Wiggin-the future father of Ender -they believe they may have found their man. Or boy. In "Teacher's Pest"-a novella written especially for this collection-a brilliant but insufferably arrogant John Paul Wiggin, now an American university student, matches wits with an equally brilliant graduate student named Theresa Brown. It is many years since the end of the Bugger Wars in "The Investment Counselor." Ender's reputation as a hero and savior has suffered a horrible reversal. Banished from Earth and slandered as a mass murderer, twenty-year-old Andrew Wiggin wanders incognito from planet to planet as a fugitive. Until a blackmailing tax inspector compromises his identity and threatens to expose Ender the Xenocide.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I would not call these three new works novellas, but simply longish short stories; they are very quick reads. The most memorable, I think, is "The Polish Boy". Concerning duels between a 5-year-old and various administrative figures, it recalls some of the best of "Ender's Shadow": the illustration of how a very young child can, with sufficient wit and preternatural maturity, overcome adult opposition. "Teacher's Pest" is the least of the three. It concerns cleverness used in the furtherance of adolescent romance. While this might be as excitingly done as the first story, it would have to be on a higher level of wittiness to succeed as well. But it doesn't reach that level, and it seems a bit pedestrian. "Investment Counsellor" is set in Ender's "quiet" stage--after he's overcome the trauma of "Ender's Game" and before he's set out upon his Speaker of the Dead life. The fireworks of his passion are missing here--neither his command skills nor his personal interaction livelihood are generating the sparks that provide much of the interest in the books. It's a connector piece, showing some origins of things to come. These are good things, and it's good to have their origins, but it's not very exciting story-telling. The illustrations do nothing for the book but take up page-space, adding 10 or 12 pages to the total. Without them, the book would be under 200 pages in length--and better, in my estimation. (When are illustrators going to stop putting airplane wings, rudders, and elevators on spacecraft??) Having the original "Ender's Game" included is rather interesting, allowing for comparison with the novel it spawned.

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