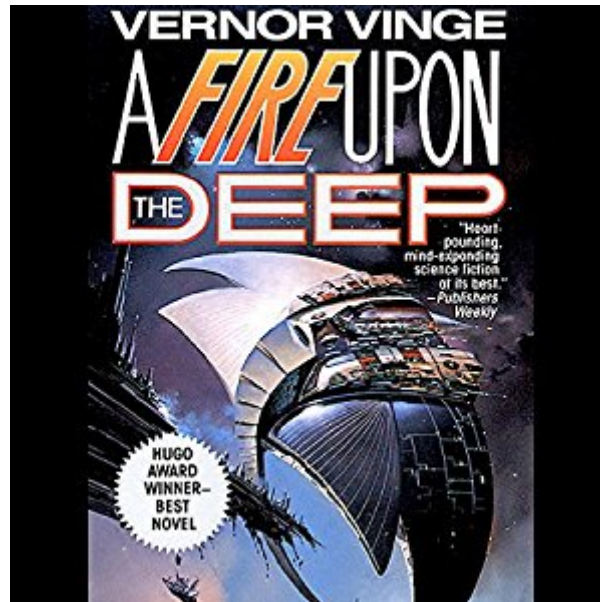




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# A Fire Upon The Deep



## Synopsis

In 1992 Vernor Vinge amazed the science fiction world with this epic novel of star-spanning adventure. It won the Hugo Award for Best Novel, and has since become a landmark in the field. Now, with the long awaited sequel *The Children of the Sky* about to be published, we are proud to offer the first-ever trade paperback edition of this big-screen SF classic. *A Fire Upon The Deep* is the winner of the 1993 Hugo Award for Best Novel. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 21 hours and 41 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Macmillan Audio

Audible.com Release Date: January 19, 2010

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00355AR4Q

Best Sellers Rank: #86 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Science Fiction > High Tech #320 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Hard Science Fiction #3781 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature

## Customer Reviews

This is the first book I have read by Vernor Vinge. It is full of mind boggling ideas and wonderfully complex aliens. One mind boggling idea that the galaxy has zones. The closer you get to the galaxy center, the dumber you are, and the slower you go, the longer you live. A fast, smart, malevolent force from the outermost region reaches into the lower zones spreading death and destruction. Vinge depicts different types of non-human intelligence in a really thought provoking way. example the Tines who are dog like animals who have human or greater than human intelligence when gathered in packs; they are intelligent, pack animals that live on a close-in feudal world. Many individuals make up a personality. They don't have hands but use their jaws and paws together in a coordinated way to get things done. The Skroderiders who are plant-like creatures who become intelligent when paired with carts that some being had created for them billions of years ago and beings of nearly god-like intelligence created by evolving computer

networks, and more. He also comes up with interesting astronomy by splitting the galaxy up into zones in which physics is differentiated, so that it's possible for certain creatures to travel at beyond light speed and become advanced, and for others to be trapped in zones of slowness (like Earth). The entertainment to cost ratio of this book is enormous. It is long, it is well written, it gets you thinking when you put it down, and it makes you want to re-read it.

Highly original and intensely exciting. The universe, along with the characters, are established quickly. While complex initially, the majority of the book adds little new information to digest. As such, I consider this book to be a more accessible version of *Hyperion*. Also interesting is the technological juxtaposition which makes up the central story line. A medieval world set in a universe with limitless (and accessible) technology somehow made each setting seem more alive. What truly sets this work apart are the "zones" of the galaxy and the variety of alien life forms present within. Breathtakingly original ideas that leave the mind reeling. Rarely does the scale of a novel reach the level that was created here. And maybe that is the key point, as the zones represented a major plot device, understanding and visualizing the scale of events throughout the novel was critical. Add in wolf-like pack animals with combined conscientiousness that are more clever than humans... tree-like creatures as old as history that use computers to store memories and a 4-wheeled cart to move around... yes please! There is not much wrong with this work, and oddly the one detraction may also be considered a strong point. The focus of the novel is very narrow, at least from a character perspective. Many times, very interesting and critical events were given a few sentences. A billion lives lost... civilizations destroyed... etc. In the end, the narrow focus in an such an interesting setting makes this a great read that is not as daunting as some other sci-fi classics.

I have never read anything quite like this book. I usually prefer fantasy and this is sci fi. The book does have a humanoid race, but also other completely unique races that are well developed. The way the universe works is also different than anything I have read before. This book was a complicated read that pulled me into it. Not sure I can properly find words to describe it. I highly recommend it if you don't mind a long read. There are 4 books in the series.

1992 must've been a really good year for sci-fi literature, because the Hugo Award for Best Novel had two winners, Vernor Vinge's *"A Fire Upon the Deep"* and Connie Willis's *"Doomsday Book."* I haven't read the latter yet, but if the competition is anything to by then it must be a damn fine novel. Still, *"A Fire Upon the Deep"* is the kind of book that is clearly divided into multiple storylines which

ultimately converge, and thus it suffers from the issue of having one plot thread dominate the others. I'm sure everyone who's read this book has their favorite section of the story, with my own being the Johanna storyline as it has some of the most compelling characters and world-building, and make no mistake, Vinge's novel excels at world-building. The aliens are particularly fascinating to imagine as living things, with the Tines and Riders each having their own history and culture, and it is kind of a shame that these species had to be slightly bogged down by pulp-esque human characters. What I mean by that is that the humans in "A Fire Upon the Deep" are "for the most part" reminiscent of pulp fiction protagonists in the sense that they have a penchant for melodrama, but lack the dimensions to back it up. The kid characters aren't anything special, but they aren't annoying at least, and Johanna is developed enough to have something of an internal conflict going on when compared to Jefri, her younger (brat) brother. Even though two of the heroes of this book are in fact children, "A Fire Upon the Deep" is a deliciously dark and sometimes downright pessimistic space-opera that offers a f\*ck-ton of death and destruction, much of which happens off-screen (or would it be off-page?). There is quite a bit of violence, although nothing too graphic so as to invoke queasiness, but there is definitely a level of carnage harking back to the works of Robert E. Howard. Weirdly enough, Vinge's novel has some fantasy elements mixed in with what is really a hard sci-fi tale. Should you read it, then? I'd say so, but I'd recommend keeping your expectations in check prior to tackling this book as it is a bit of a door-stopper (a solid 600+ pages), and takes some patience to get through the slower parts. When it gets going, though, it becomes quite engrossing, and despite technically being part of a series it functions pretty well as a standalone work. Great read for folks who prefer world-building and a mind-bending premise over three-dimensional characters.

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