

Trial by Fire (Caine Riordan Book 2)

By Charles E. Gannon

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Sequel to national bestseller, Nebula Award finalist, and Compton Crook Award winner *Fire with Fire*. Science fiction adventure on a grand scale.

When reluctant interstellar diplomat and intelligence operative Caine Riordan returns from humanity's first encounter with alien races, sudden war clouds burst. With Earth's fleet shattered by a sneak attack and its survivors fighting for their lives, Caine must rely upon both his first contact and weaponry skills to contend with the non-humanoid enemy. And when the technologically-superior attackers sweep aside the solar system's last defenses, and traitorous corporations invite the invaders to land 'security forces,' humanity fights back with its best weapons: cunning, inventiveness, and guts.

But as Earth hurtles towards a final trial by fire that is certain to scar its collective memory, Caine discovers that there may also be large and disturbing gaps in that memory. Clues point to a much earlier inter-species apocalypse, buried in humanity's own prehistory. Which raises a terrifying possibility: what if the aliens' invasion of Earth is not one of conquest, but preemption? And what if their harrowing memories of a long-past cataclysmic war makes them willing to do anything to keep it from reigniting?

Even if that means exterminating the human race.

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About Compton Crook award winner for best first novel, *Fire with Fire*: "Chuck Gannon is one of those marvelous finds—someone as comfortable with characters as he is with technology, and equally adept at providing those characters with problems to solve. Imaginative, fun, and not afraid to step on the occasional toe or gore the occasional sacred cow, his stories do not disappoint."—David Weber

"If we meet strong aliens out there, will we suffer the fate of the Aztecs and Incas, or find the agility to survive? Gannon fizzes with ideas about the dangerous politics of first contact."—David Brin

"The plot is intriguing and then some. Well-developed and self-consistent; intelligent readers are going to like it."—Jerry Pournelle

"[T]he intersecting plot threads, action and well-conceived science kept those pages turning."—*SF Crowsnest*

About Starfire series hit, *Extremis*, coauthored by Charles E. Gannon:
“Vivid. . . Battle sequences mingle with thought-provoking exegesis . . .”–*Publishers Weekly*
"It’s a grand, fun series of battles and campaigns, worthy of anything Dale Brown or Larry Bond ever wrote." –*Analog*

About Charles E. Gannon:
"[A] strong [writer of] . . . military SF. . .[much] action going on in his work, with a lot of physics behind it. There is a real sense of the urgency of war and the sacrifices it demands." –*Locus*

Charles E. Gannon is a breakthrough rising star in science fiction with a multiple short story and novella publications in Baen anthologies, *Man-Kzin Wars XIII*, *Analog*, and elsewhere. Gannon's debut novel for Baen was *Fire with Fire*. Gannon is coauthor with Steve White of *Extremis*, the latest entry in the legendary Starfire series created by David Weber. Other novels include *1635: The Papal Stakes* cowritten with alternate history master, Eric Flint. A multiple Fulbright scholar, Gannon is Distinguished Professor of American Literature at St. Bonaventure University.

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Trial by Fire (Caine Riordan Book 2) By Charles E. Gannon Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #73806 in eBooks
- Published on: 2014-07-15
- Released on: 2014-07-15
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

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