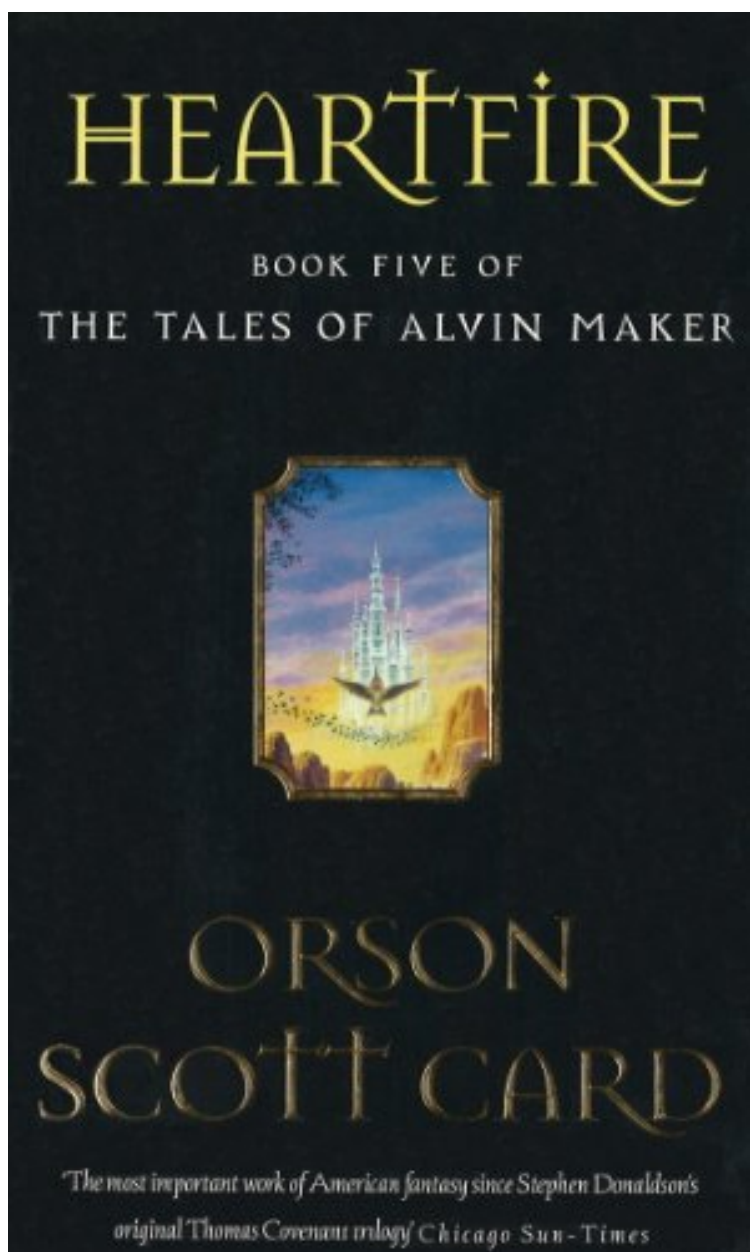


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King Arthur Stuart in exile. For she has seen a terrible future bloom in the heartfires of every person in America, a future of war and destruction. One slender path exists that leads through the bloodshed, and it is Peggy's quest to set the world on the path to peace.

Presentation de l'diteur Peggy is a Torch, able to see the fire burning in each person's heart. She can follow the paths of each person's future, and know each person's most intimate secrets. From the moment of Alvin Maker's birth, when the Unmaker first strove to kill him, she has protected him. Now they are married, and Peggy is a part of Alvin's heart as well as his life. But Alvin's destiny has taken them on separate journeys. Alvin has gone north into New England, where knacks are considered witchcraft, and their use is punished by death. Peggy has been drawn south, to the British Crown Colonies and the court of King Arthur Stuart in exile. For she has seen a terrible future bloom in the heartfires of every person in America, a future of war and destruction. One slender path exists that leads through the bloodshed, and it is Peggy's quest to set the world on that path to peace. Look out for more information on this and other Orbit titles on the Orbit website at www.orbitbooks.co.uk.com This is the fifth novel in Orson Scott Card's popular Alvin the Maker series, based on an alternate America where some people are born with knacks, which resemble magical abilities. The protagonist of the series, Alvin, is a maker who not only can fix things (such as restoring a wounded bird to health with his doodlebug) but is also something of a natural leader. Alvin and his small band of followers are on a quest to build the Crystal City, a place where those who have knacks can live in safety from the people who sometimes burn them as witches. While Alvin visits the nearly holy province of New England to find out just how cities work, his wife Margaret, traveling under the name Peggy, journeys to the kingdom of Camelot, which was formerly known as Charleston, South Carolina. There she hopes to persuade the exiled King Arthur to help her abolish the practice of slavery. Heartfire is an excellent midseries novel that's sure to delight fans of Alvin. --Craig E. Engler From Publishers Weekly Fifth in Hugo and Nebula winner Card's immensely popular Tales of Alvin Maker, this installment of alternative American history centers around two grievous social wrongs. Arthur Stuart, exiled King of England, reigns in Camelot (Charleston), capital of the slaveholding southern Crown Colonies; in New England, meanwhile, "witchers" connive to execute anyone with the "knack," the ability to connect to the powers of the universe. Just before civil war erupts, telekinetic Alvin and his historical friends, such as John James Audubon, and legendary ones, such as riverman Mike Fink, set about to abolish New England's antiwitch laws, while Alvin's wife and mentor, Margaret, uses her ability to read human souls to offer the hope of freedom to the Colonies' slaves and to heal Alvin's malevolent brother before he can kill her husband. Card's antebellum settings, dialogue and historical figures seem authentic and thoroughly researched, and, as always, he offers excellent differentiation of characters. However, Card is as occasionally windy and preachy as ever, and the plethora of lengthy philosophical and/or psychological digressions make for considerably less fictional sizzle than fizzle. Consider this a good bet for fans of the series, but not for a wider readership. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.