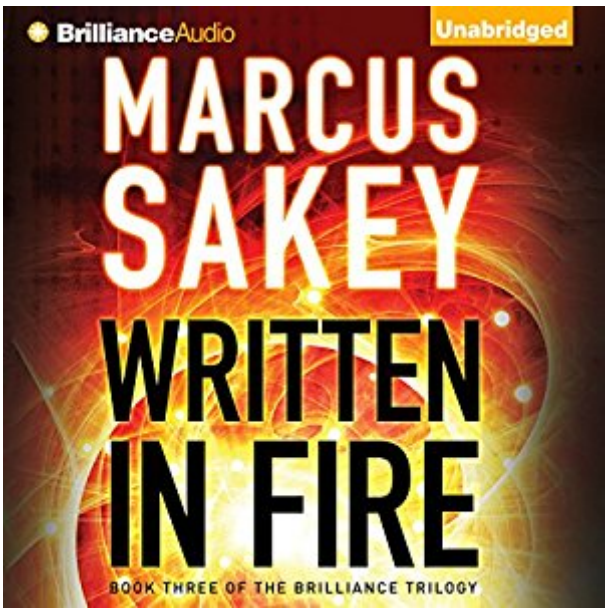
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Written In Fire: The Brilliance Trilogy, Book 3



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Synopsis

The explosive conclusion to the best-selling Brilliance Trilogy. For 30 years humanity struggled to cope with the brilliants, the one percent of people born with remarkable gifts. For 30 years we tried to avoid a devastating civil war. We failed. The White House is a smoking ruin. Madison Square Garden is an internment camp. In Wyoming, an armed militia of thousands marches toward a final, apocalyptic battle. Nick Cooper has spent his life fighting for his children and his country. Now, as the world staggers on the edge of ruin, he must risk everything he loves to face his oldest enemy - a brilliant terrorist so driven by his ideals that he will sacrifice humanity’s future to achieve them. From "one of our best storytellers" (Michael Connelly) comes the blistering conclusion to the acclaimed series that is a "forget-to-pick-up-milk, forget-to-water-the-plants, forget-to-eat total immersion experience" (Gillian Flynn).

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition
Listening Length: 10 hoursÃ Â andÃ Â 50 minutes
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Audible.com Release Date: January 12, 2016
Whispersync for Voice: Ready
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ASIN: B018F0EYJE
Best Sellers Rank: #44 inÃ Â Books > Audible Audiobooks > Mysteries & Thrillers > Espionage #279 inÃ Â Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Dystopian #358 inÃ Â Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Spies & Politics > Espionage

Customer Reviews

The third and final book in a masterful SF trilogy where the SF takes a backseat to character development, politics, non-stop action, a touch of romance, and edge-of-your-seat per-apocalyptic thriller. WRITTEN IN FIRE and its two predecessors, BRILLIANCE and A BETTER WORLD describe a believable near future where 1% of the population are born with mental and physical abilities far beyond most "norms", or regular folk. These can range from mild (tier 4 or 5) to awesome (tier1) abilities to do things like predict future actions of single or groups of people, to eidetic memories and the ability to move unseen through a crowd by being where people are not

looking. And then there are some freaks, like a recurring (in all 3 novels) character, Soren, whose mental life is 11 times faster than normal, so for him the world and everyone on it is moving in slow motion.In this third novel, the stage is set for an all-out climactic battle between the norms and the brilliants, many of whom are living in a privately owned "Holdfast" that occupies one quarter of Wyoming, purchased and run by Epstein a their 1 brilliant who made hundreds of billions in the old stock market, eventually causing its demise and resurrection.Notable characters are the hero, Cooper, another tier 1 brilliant who used to work for a department of the US government tasked with apprehension of dangerous brilliants (or "twists" as they are derogatorily referred), Shannon, another tier 1 brilliant assassin and John Smith, who has orchestrated an impossibly brilliant years-long plan for war against the norms.The writing it really, really good. The pacing is fast and the action furious. There are many plot twists and turns before the satisfying end, the last few sentence of which reminded me of the very last bits of the ending of the 1950s creature feature, "The Blob".Highly recommended.

The reason this book doesn’t get five stars is simply because it doesn’t quite live up to the near perfection that was the first book and really how could it? Brilliance was one of the best books of the year. Now in Nick Cooper’s final run in the Brilliance world, Marcus Sakey provides an exciting and satisfying ending, even though an epilouge leaves open the idea of a sequel, or at least a depressing end to what seemed to be a triumphant close.While Sakey provides just enough information for a person to read the book without reading the first two in the trilogy, it is not recommenced as much of the nuance will be missed. The story starts off right where A Better World ended. Nick is broken, the President is dead and the gifted have just killed tens of thousands of soldiers poised to attack their compound.In response, a militia is forming to attack the compound and John Smith is trying to get his hands on a serum that could turn regular humans into the gifted.The next 400 pages are full of action, double and triple crosses and everything that has made the trilogy so excellent, including the commentary on racism and xenophobia. Particular interesting in the era of Trump. It is a great finish to a magnificent series. You will not be disappointed.

This review is for the entire trilogy. As an action story, it gets 5 stars. But I had to take away 2 stars for glaring weaknesses in plot development. This trilogy was written like a movie script, and as a movie I think I would be very taken with it! It has good action characters; the kind we’d love to see on the big screen. Think a more cerebral "X-men". However, as a book series, it is just not strong enough in concept development to be great "speculative fiction".Foremost, the setting is an

alternate history timeline, going back to at least 1980. There are vague hints that the divergence might have originated with something that happened to the current generation of young adults' grandparents...reference is made to the [real] Dutch Hunger Winter at the end of WWII, and the well-studied epigenetic changes to the descendants of women who were pregnant during that winter. This is fact; but the author went no further in speculating WHAT specific force could have caused 1% of the current population (in this alternate universe) to develop "brilliance" traits. I teach genetics and am currently obsessed with epigenetics (it is turning traditional Darwinism on its head!), and I spent many hours--between Books 2 & 3--imagining what might have caused the changes to gene expression that led a minority of people to have special powers. A poison gas that some of the people in WWII were exposed to? The struggle for survival itself and how it changed WWII survivors? I couldn't wait to find out which direction the author went.Most of the special "powers" these Brilliants have seem to give them tactical or strategic advantages; rather than the metabolic changes wrought in the descendants of the "Hunger Winter" survivors. I fully expected that the author would go into detail as to WHAT had caused the changes in gene expression, to a small percentage of the population. Instead, he copped out and literally had the geneticist (Ethan) say "who knows what caused it?". Aaaaarrrgghh! Don't bring up a concept like epigenetics and then not speculate any further! You have to justify what created this alternate timeline!!! So frustrating.Other gripes I had, as I read volumes 2 and 3, included how America-centric it was. How were other countries dealing with the appearance of the Brilliants? Just a couple of tiny hints that they even existed in other regions of the world. It made the story unrealistic, since globalism IS a huge factor in what's going on all over the world today. And finally, the character Soren. He lives at 11.2 times the subjective speed of normal consciousness. And went to an "abnorm" Academy starting at 8 years old. So from his perspective, he'd already lived about 90 years before he started to be "shaped" by the Academy. How did he ever learn to speak normally?! He'd be hearing people in painfully slurred slow-motion; he'd have no idea how "normal" speech sounds. With all the "new tech" described in the book, maybe the author should have invented something that sped up speech when people spoke to Soren; and slowed his down? It just wasn't very well thought-out, as a super-power.There are plenty of other novels that speculate what the "post-sapiens" humans will be like, and portray the specifics of how they will supercede us "normals" [e.g. David Palmer's 1984 novel, "Emergence"]. But without a specific speculation as to what CAUSED the epigenetic effects of the "Brilliants", this isn't a novel about human evolution so much as an action-movie script based on a weak allegory about prejudice, with a less-powerful set of X-men.

SiFi has considered what might happen if a sudden major step in human intellegence appeared. Much of late has been concerned with human-engineered change, one form of the "singularity." Evolution typical moves slowly and with much more bad results than good. Here is a really believable view of how the phenomenon of savants could become a sudden step, complete with consequences and a glib thought as to how. Although each story in the trilogy is itself, the whole is way more than its parts. And, the action is nonstop, there are many human stories, everyone is good, and bad (some worse than others, of course) but even the protagonist has feet of clay, and in spite of his "gift," has all to human problems getting "it" right. Great read. Highly recommended.

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