



Friar, Richard

**THE KEEPERS, PART I:
WWIII**

Infinite Conception Phase
(672 pp.)

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First installment of an ambitious sci-fi trilogy plays out global warfare in the not-too-distant future.

The wieldy initial volume in Friar's complex and, thus far, engaging trilogy is epic not only in its breadth—weighing in at nearly 700 pages—but in the scope of its inventiveness. The author tackles a mix of current environmental, social and economic trends, playing out how they might converge in the future. Friar's clairvoyant vision, however, isn't for the faint of heart: A new empire arises, with powerful tyrannical urges that lead to an all-consuming and almost gruesomely prophetic third World War. The year is 2039, and the wildly ambitious German ruler Geiseric and his henchmen, "the principles," have—in Hitlerian fashion—taken over Central Europe and threaten to parlay their successes into world domination. Friar uses the first two World Wars as the template for his fictional third and, in spite of its eerie familiarity, the plot remains rich with suspense. Book one of this series concerns itself with the efforts of a new group of Allied powers that attempt to drive Geiseric back and stymie his ruthless imperialism. WWIII is that rarest of sci-fi creations: a hugely innovative tale both smart and entertaining. Friar takes on a smorgasbord of arcane topics—from Platonic philosophy to the science of biomimicry—and makes them not only comprehensible but relevant. Such intellectual tangents might prove tedious fare in the hands of a less skilled author, but here supply the novel with depth and texture that will only enhance the reader's experience. Friar's characters are lavishly imagined and his painstakingly crafted observations of human relationships provide a nice balance to the book's scientific and military content. Despite the wide compass of his novel, Friar has an eye for the intimate; he's as good as evoking artisan-like detail as he is at developing imaginative histories.

Colossal effort and colossal fun.

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