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AUTHOR: MARK ILES
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Corporate greed supported by incompetent surveyors leads to the colonisation of a distant world, ominously dubbed ‘Halloween’, that turns out not to be uninhabited after all. The aliens, soon called Spooks by military units deployed to protect the colonists, can adopt the physical form of an opponent’s deepest fear and then use it to kill them. The colony is massacred and as retaliation the orbiting human navy nuke the planet. In revenge, the Spooks invade Earth.

In a last-minute attempt to avert the war, Seethan Bodell, a marine combat pilot sent home from the front with PTSD, is given a top-secret research spacecraft, and a mission to travel into the past along with his co-pilot and secret lover Rose, to prevent the original landing on Halloween and stop the war from ever happening. But the mission goes wrong, causing a tragedy later known as The Sundering, decimating the world and tearing reality, while Seethan’s ship is flung into the future. The Spooks win the war and claim ownership of Earth. He wakes, alone, in his ejector seat with no sign of either Rose or his vessel. When he realises that his technology no longer works, his desperation to find Rose becomes all the more urgent – her android body won’t survive long in this new Earth.

Gardens of Earth is the first book of *The Sundering Chronicles*. The story tackles alien war, a future that may be considered either dystopian or utopian, depending on who you ask, and a protagonist coping with his demons in an unfamiliar and stressful environment – not to mention immediate threats from a pathological serial killer, the remnants of Earth’s inhabitants now living in a sparse pre-industrial society under the watchful eye of the Spooks, and returning human colonists intent on reclaiming Earth. Underlying all this are issues of social justice, human and android rights, and love that transcends difference. In many senses this is classic science fiction, but the abilities of the Spooks provide an environment, and archetypal creatures within it, that are reminiscent of myth and magic fantasy. Truly cross-genre, *Gardens of Earth* is an exciting adventure, a heart-rending quest, and an eye-opening insight into the coping strategies of a veteran.

Visit bit.ly/GardensOfEarth

Born and raised in Slough, Mark Iles began studying the martial arts when he was 14 and joined the Royal Navy at the age of 17. A voracious reader he used to devour up to three paperbacks a day – primarily science fiction, fantasy, and horror – by the likes of John Wyndham, Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clark, Ray Bradbury, Brian Lumley, Frank Herbert, Stephen King, and a plethora of others. After The Falklands War Mark was drafted to Hong Kong, where he began writing features, for a variety of martial arts magazines, and short stories for a wide range of markets.

In 2012 he decided to challenge himself and undertook an MA in Professional Writing, followed by Diplomas in Copywriting and Proofreading. With over 200 short stories and articles under his belt the book he wrote for his MA Project, *A Pride of Lions* was published by Solstice – followed by two other novels, a short story collection, and four novellas. His latest novel is *Gardens of Earth*, book 1 of *The Sundering Chronicles*. Currently Mark is working on the second in the series, as well as another short story collection. Now a 9th Degree Black Belt in Taekwondo, Mark is still involved in martial arts and has also written both a book and an app on the subject.

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