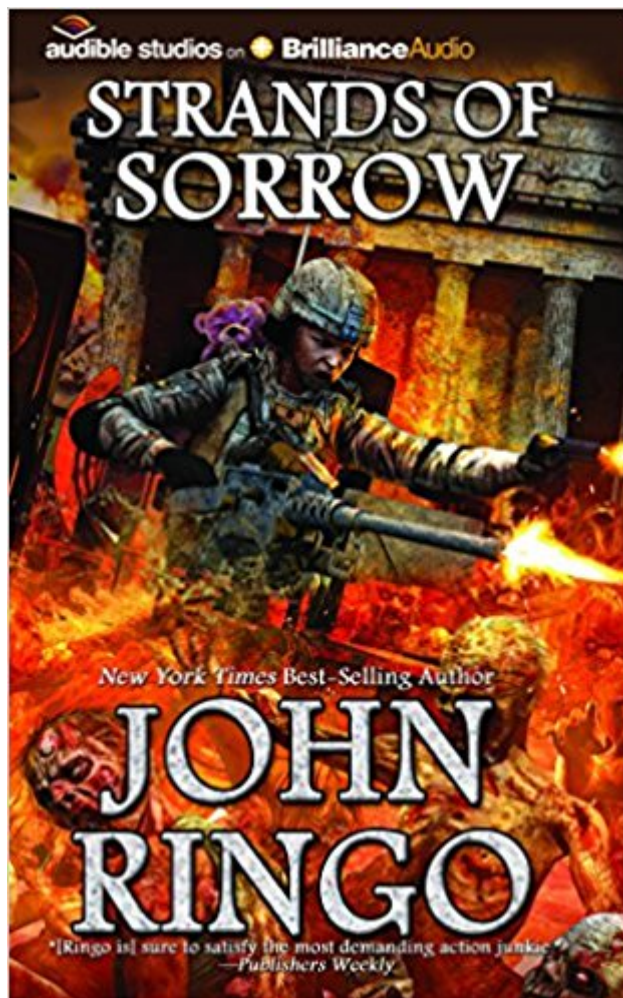


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# Strands Of Sorrow (Black Tide Rising)



## Synopsis

Book 4 and conclusion of the Black Tide Rising series from the New York Times bestselling author, John Ringo. Sequel to *Islands of Rage and Hope*, *To Sail a Darkling Sea*, and *Under a Graveyard Sky*. A hardened group of survivors fights back against a zombie plague that has brought down civilization. With the world consumed by a devastating plague that drives humans violently insane, what was once a band of desperate survivors bobbing on a dark Atlantic ocean has now become Wolf Squadron, the only hope for the salvation of the human race. Banding together with what remains of the U.S. Navy, Wolf Squadron, and its leader Steve Smith, not only plans to survive—he plans to retake the mainland from the infected, starting with North America. Smith's teenage daughters have become zombie hunters of unparalleled skill, both at land and on the sea, and they may hold the key to the rebirth of civilization on a devastated planet.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

John Ringo is author of the New York Times bestselling Legacy of the Aldenata series (also known as *The Posleen Wars*) so far comprised of *A Hymn Before Battle*, *Gust Front*, *When the Devil Dances*, *Hell's Faire*, and *Eye of the Storm*, plus the related novels *Cally's War*, *Sister Time*, and *Honor of the Clan* (all with Julie Cochrane), and *A Watch on the Rhine*, *Yellow Eyes* and *The Tuloriad* (all with Tom Kratman). He also co-authored with David Weber *March Upcountry*, *March to the Sea*, *March to the Stars* and *We Few* in the bestselling Prince Roger series. Other works include the *Into the Looking Glass* series, the *Paladin of Shadows* military thrillers and the New York Times

bestselling Troy Rising series, presently consisting of Live Free or Die, Citadel and The Hot Gate. He's a veteran of the 82nd Airborne.

This book leaves the reader wanting more. It is a good concluding novel of reaching a turning point in the war against the infected humanity and the race to save the remaining uninfected. I hope the series does continue either by John Ringo or by authors collaborating with him. For example, how did this Air Force chief travel with a team 1500 miles across the US? How does a state like Texas assemble the ability to form a state? What would the US look like 5 years down the road? And what about all these Betas? Stories like that would be of interest to me and perhaps many others. Great job, John Ringo!

It seemed like the author was tired of writing and wanted to wrap up this series and move on. Lots of plot and action gaps as the action moves on in the book. I was expecting another 3 or 4 novels out of this storyline.

I'd like to give this a 5 as what there was of it was good. This novel brings to a conclusion Black Tide Rising series. This book however seems very much rushed and screams for more detail. There is one thing that as a person knowledgeable about guns really bothers me. Throughout books 2-4 he refers to M16/M4s as Barbie guns that take 4 to 5 shots to bring zombies down and this is just so much BS and Ringo knows this having served in the 82nd Airborne. His zombies are as realistic as zombies can be. They have to eat and drink and they poop and pee and they can be killed anyway a normal human can. This however presents something that was not addressed or used. At the end of the book they are formulating plans to kill the zombies and are disturbed by the large numbers of them in cities. The problem is those living in the northern climates and even in most areas in the south and west would succumb to exposure during the winter making it much easier to eliminate the rest. Also we never learn what happened to the main character's brother. Overall I give the series 4 3/4 stars.

I am torn. I thoroughly enjoyed this book and devoured it in a couple of sittings as I have all three of its predecessors. But for the first time in the series I finished and said "Is that all there is?" Not because the series is ostensibly over. But because for a book so brimming with blood it was strangely bloodless. In his Ghost series John created characters that were more fully fleshed out and who the reader cared about so when they were badly hurt or killed in what was a dangerous

undertaking the reader cared because the protagonist cared. In this series there are fewer characters developed enough to care about and despite the prevalent and horrific violence I felt like they were playing Doom in "God Mode" - not really at risk. Steve's wife Stacey disappears in this book although she gets a nice reward at the end but she has always been only a peripheral character.- almost as if she has had little to do with Seawolf and Shewolf's emotional strength. Made up more of vignettes than a cohesive narrative this is still a great read. However, despite his alleged pantheon of military advisers and his own experience John still left a couple of military clinkers. A hatch is an opening in a deck and an opening in a vertical bulkhead is a door in naval parlance. So when he talks about knocking on a hatch I grimaced. And no one who so much as graduated from boot camp would ever refer to 1/1 as "First infantry Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment" as the 1st Marines are an infantry regiment even in the reconstituted Corps of his fictional world. I actually would love to get a glimpse into the future of the Smiths .and their dystopian surroundings - perhaps the anthology of stories in this world he mentions will provide that.

I am very fond of the Black Tide Rising series and I am certain I will buy, read, and enjoy as many of these books as Mr. Ringo cares to write. If you have read any of them, you already know that a family of preppers is the seed that is growing into a viable military resistance to the worldwide zombie apocalypse, and book by book has been laying the groundwork for a rollback starting in the USA. The focus has been on the planning and execution of a bootstrap military campaign, and on the development of military skills (and deportment) of the family members, especially the two daughters. Now, there are issues that arise from Mr. Ringo's choices described above, but they should not detract from one's enjoyment of the whole. The biggest complaint from some readers has been the decision to make the main protagonists two teenaged girls -- ha! in a book about zombies, a couple of fierce teenaged girls are what some folks find most implausible! A bigger problem in my mind is that the redoubtable Smith family is the essential core of a recovery, and everyone else in the world is helplessly holed up in subs or bunkers. The need for a military-style campaign is the essence of the series, so Mr. Ringo can be partially forgiven for his increasing reliance, as the series wore on, on military jargon and speaking style. Military briefings that included one or more of the Smith family seemed to become the preferred means of delivering information to the reader. And Sophia and Faith seemed to learn and use that manner of speaking to a fault. Finally, the end of the book exposed a political bias on the author's part that struck me as oddly self-indulgent, and there is one political/personnel decision about which I can't say more but for which I can find no justification. The blurb states this is the conclusion of the series. All I can say is,

NOOOOO.

I hope that this isn't the end of a Good series. I have enjoyed it immensely. John Ringo has made me laugh at some of the scenes in this series, and Faith, Sophia, Decker, Amy, and Olga are among my favorites. Truth be told John's version of the Zombie Apocalypse is the one I personally prefer. The problem I have with other Zombie stories are the questionable and un-intellegent decisions that their creators have their characters make. Duh! People are capable of coming up with creative and innovative solutions to the Zombie problem and it's good to see a master storyteller reflect that. Good Job!

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