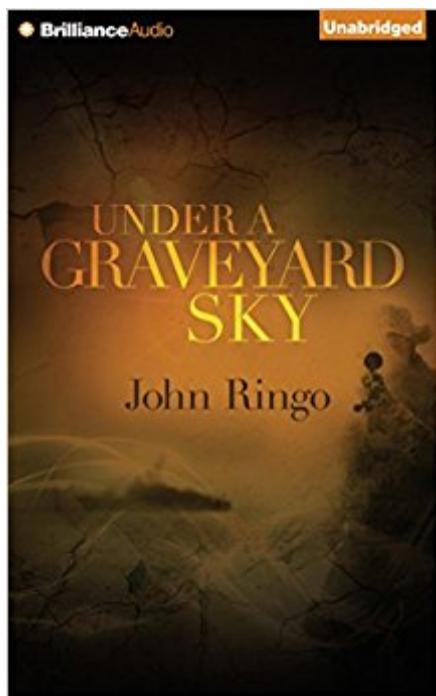


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Under A Graveyard Sky (Black Tide Rising)



Synopsis

Book one in the Black Tide Rising series from the New York Times bestselling author. Zombies are real. And we made them. Are you prepared for the zombie apocalypse? The Smith family is, with the help of a few marines. When an airborne "zombie" plague is released, bringing civilization to a grinding halt, the Smith family—Steven, Stacey, Sophia, and Faith—take to the Atlantic to avoid the chaos. The plan is to find a safe haven from the anarchy of infected humanity. What they discover, instead, is a sea composed of the tears of survivors and a passion for bringing hope. For it is up to the Smiths and a small band of Marines to somehow create the refuge that survivors seek in a world of darkness and terror. Now with every continent a holocaust and every ship an abattoir, life is lived under a graveyard sky.

Book Information

Series: Black Tide Rising (Book 1)

Audio CD

Publisher: Brilliance Audio; Unabridged edition (November 25, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 149154077X

ISBN-13: 978-1491540770

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.8 x 5.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 519 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #770,661 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #76 in Books > Books on CD > Horror #250 in Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction #302 in Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy

Customer Reviews

John Ringo is author of the New York Times best-selling Legacy of Aldenata (Posleen War) series, which so far includes A Hymn Before Battle and nine sequels, the technothriller series starting with Ghost, a dark fantasy titled Princess of Wands, and many other novels for Baen. A veteran of the 82nd Airborne, Ringo brings first-hand knowledge of military operations to his fiction.

This book is the start of a new series by John Ringo. The setting is contemporary and deals with the outbreak of a man made virus that starts with flu symptoms followed by rabies-like symptoms -- causing extreme aggression. This fits in with the concept of a "viral zombie" outbreak -- the infected

are not "dead", but they are not curable and have lost virtually all "human" traits. The story has several points of view, with the main POV's being from the members of a "survivalist" (or "preparer") family that initially avoids the plague and then works with others during the spread of the plague (and collapse of civilization). There are several exciting action sequences and various moral dilemmas that the survivors have to face (which make for a great read and which I will not spoil here). The only downsides are that this is the first of what is clearly a series and I was left wanting more. The fate of characters introduced in earlier parts of the story remain unknown (still alive, dead, who knows?). There are hints that a still unknown "enemy" released the plague and is still out there. The book does not so much have an ending as a pause in the action -- I hope the next book comes out in the near future. So overall, a fun read with more installments to come.

This review is for the entire series. John Ringo writes some kickass action books, in whatever genre he attempts. His 'Empire of Man' is beyond excellent, the 'Vorpal Blade' series matches it, the 'Posleen Saga' tops the charts...the man can write military sci-fi/action like very few others. His heroes are flawed, some extremely so, but soldier on through complex worlds and intricate plots. To steal a phrase from Somebody Important...he doesn't write the hero you want, but the heroes you need. That said, he insists on writing women...or trying to. Simply put, the man cannot write a convincing female. I assume he knows a few, but only through extremely rose-tinted glasses and a sheen of...well, not even Renaissance rhetoric. He has two stock female characters: Pointless Penelope and Perfect Patricia. The first is there to help a plot point and thereafter discarded; the second can do no wrong and can do everything right. The first book started out with a bang and kept accelerating. 'Graveyard Sky' is the best of the series by far, as we're introduced to our hero(es), the Smith family. The father a former Australian para with a heavy interest in prepping for the inevitable apocalypse. His wife, Stacey, whom we can refer to as Pointless Penelope, his 15 year old daughter Sophia, who can be referred to as Pointless Penny (since she does get a few decent scenes and attention in 4 large books), and his 13 year old daughter Perfect Patricia...errr, Faith. In this first book, a zombie plague is released by Bad Guys...who are and will always remain UnSub...and the world goes to a hell where only the strong and prepared will survive. This is the Smith family, and the first book is chock full of action, believable plot-lines, and in short, pretty much everything you want from this sort of book. Book Two and beyond, though, turns into Perfect Patricia Saves The World. Keep in mind, please, that Perfect Patricia is a 13 y.o. girl. She's not a mutant with superpowers, she didn't arrive from Krypton, she wasn't the result of a super-soldier experiment. If she had been, the entire series would have earned five stars instead of four. Perfect

Patricia...err, Faith...or Shewolf as she comes to be known, is a normal 13 y.o. girl, Active, in good physical health, with some decent firearms training courtesy of Dear Old Prepper Dad. Several scenes have badass military hardcases barely escaping a zombie's grip because they're so strong and don't feel pain and will not stop unless you destroy the brain. Somehow, Perfect Patricia manages to destroy literal hordes of them in hand-to-hand combat. She fights for hours and days on end. Now, 13 year-olds, male and female, seem to have a lot of energy, but it's a rollercoaster, almost manic depressive. Their body chemistry changing as puberty has its way with them, lots of energy followed by lots of sleeping and adjustment. Their skeletal structure and everything out from there shifting from Child to Adult. Having a 13 y.o. girl in the middle of these fundamental changes being the baddest zombie killer on the planet? Kinda takes you right out of the believable fictional world you dove into. Perfect Patricia...err, Faith...does things the most hardcore Delta Force, SEAL, or Spetsnaz couldn't even dream about. She is literally unstoppable, and the few 'humanizing' attempts Ringo makes last a paragraph and are only ever mentioned in passing (yes, Trixie, I'm talking about you). That's her downside. The upside is she gets the most attention and the best scenes in the books. If she'd been a 19 or 20 year old martial arts champion or competitive weightlifter or something, I would buy it wholeheartedly and give Ringo two thumbs up and lots of lavish praise. Not to provide spoilers, if you don't move Drowning Pool's 'Let The Bodies Hit The Floor' onto your Favorite Playlist, thee may be something wrong with you. That entire portion of the book is beyond amazing, and it focuses almost completely and necessarily on Perfect Patricia...err, Faith. Even she's not enough to lose the series a star, though. *That* happens because...Ringo apparently got bored. The first two books are easily 5+ stars. Books 3 and 4, with a few very notably exceptional scenes, drop down to bare 3 stars. They stop being personal, intricate involving scenes and devolve into Big Picture broad strokes as Ringo apparently wanted to get the series done with and move on to something new. Instead of a chapter involving a pitched, desperate battle in NYC or clearing a cruise ship, it becomes: "We're going to take this base." Three pages later, they have that base and are moving on to the next base. Three pages later they're consolidating the entire Eastern Seaboard and about to move to free DC. A major plot point involving Shewolf being removed from command is handled in a few pages and with no lasting impact. Another could-be-major plot point involving the Succession Act lasts a chapter and...that's it. So, for fans of apocalyptic fiction, this probably won't disappoint. The first two books alone are worth the cost of the whole series, and the last two aren't *bad*, they're just nowhere near as powerful as the first two. Ringo got bored and wrapped things up too quickly...there was at *least* one more book there...in the main quartet, I mean, not the add-ons and collaborations that have since been released. I think Ringo recognized

this and brought on a couple others to write while he oversees the process. I haven't read them, so can't pass any sort of judgment. I just hope one or some of them can write believable female badasses. I would give an assortment of stranger's left arms to see a series by John Ringo and...Elizabeth Moon, Patricia Briggs, Seanan McGuire, Kelly Armstrong, Kim Harrison...I would say David Weber for Honor Harrington, but Ringo has worked with him...Anyway, buy the series and judge for yourself.

First off - this is was written by a military combat veteran, so things aren't just bloody - the blood might come in buckets occasionally. There concept of zombies has always ignored certain issues that require solutions for zombies to exist, this book actually addresses at least one really important issue. The combat scenes and weapon actions/ uses are really good (helps when the writer has some experience, I guess). The characters are also very well written for the problems they face as people (and the world) starts to die around them.

This is absolutely the best zombie series ever. Like many of this genre the zombie plague starts as a man made virus someone releases. These zombies however are much more reasonable and believable. For one they are not dead but have lost sentience and they eat, drink, hibernate, pee, poop and even have sex. They can also be killed by any gunshot placement that would kill a normal human -- none of this in the head stuff necessary. The main characters are a family consisting of a husband and wife and their two daughters 13 and 15 who are very intelligent and kick ass. They flee and start rescuing people at sea. My major gripe is the lack of knowledge of firearms. Ringo for some reason belittles the M16/M4 rifle and acts as though it takes 4 or 5 5.56mm rounds to put a zombie down. This is totally inaccurate and being a gun guy it bugs me no end. Still it rates 5 stars as the characters are awesome

I have been a fan of Mr. Ringo's work since he wrote 'March Upcountry' with David Webber. Due to this enthrallment, I have become hooked on Ruyard Kipling, spent a good deal of money on Crux Shadows' albums, and did my best to bump up his royalty checks as I can never wait for his books to come out in paperback (so hardback prices). I deeply enjoy his realistic portrayal's of combat (even in his science fiction series) and while I am less thrilled with his ability to kill off characters after you really begin to like or love them, I can understand it. I was thrilled when I discovered he was writing a Zombie Apocalypse series and it doesn't disappoint. I love the strong characters, both female and male, and their believable reactions to the world ending around them. I also adore the

drive that they have to rebuild, even if they never see a reasonably stable society in their lifetime. I waited impatiently for the second installment and now have equal impatience for the third. I have already started to recommend this to my friends and therefore have no problem recommending it to anyone who can deal with a very true-to-life story of how actual people would react in this situation.

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