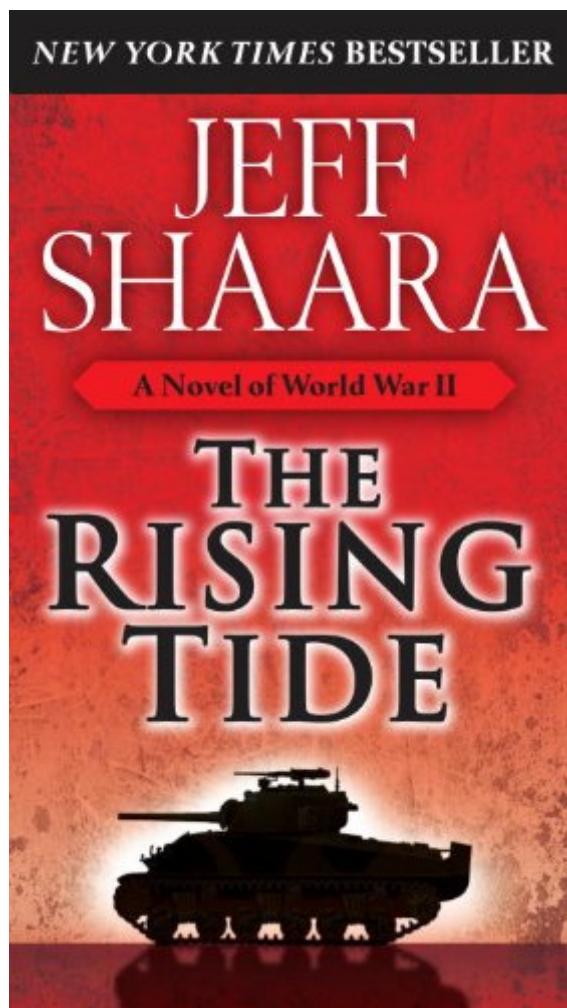


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The Rising Tide: A Novel Of World War II



Synopsis

BONUS: This edition contains an excerpt from Jeff Shaara's The Steel Wave. A modern master of the historical novel, Jeff Shaara has painted brilliant depictions of the Civil War, the Revolutionary War, and World War I. Now he embarks upon his most ambitious epic, a trilogy about the military conflict that defined the twentieth century. The Rising Tide begins a staggering work of fiction bound to be a new generation's most poignant chronicle of World War II. With you-are-there immediacy, painstaking historical detail, and all-inclusive points of view, Shaara portrays the momentous and increasingly dramatic events that pulled America into the vortex of this monumental conflict. As Hitler conquers Poland, Norway, France, and most of Western Europe, England struggles to hold the line. When Germany's ally Japan launches a stunning attack on Pearl Harbor, America is drawn into the war, fighting to hold back the Japanese conquest of the Pacific, while standing side-by-side with their British ally, the last hope for turning the tide of the war. Through unforgettable battle scenes in the unforgiving deserts of North Africa and the rugged countryside of Sicily, Shaara tells this story through the voices of this conflict's most heroic figures, some familiar, some unknown. As British and American forces strike into the "soft underbelly" of Hitler's Fortress Europa, the new weapons of war come clearly into focus. In North Africa, tank battles unfold in a tapestry of dust and fire unlike any the world has ever seen. In Sicily, the Allies attack their enemy with a barely tested weapon: the paratrooper. As battles rage along the coasts of the Mediterranean, the momentum of the war begins to shift, setting the stage for the massive invasion of France, at a seaside resort called Normandy. More than an unprecedented and intimate portrait of those who waged this astonishing global war, The Rising Tide is a vivid gallery of characters both immortal and unknown: the as-yet obscure administrator Dwight D. Eisenhower, whose tireless efficiency helped win the war; his subordinates, clashing in both style and personality, from George Patton and Mark Clark to Omar Bradley and Bernard Montgomery. In the desolate hills and deserts, the Allies confront Erwin Rommel, the battlefield genius known as "the Desert Fox," a wounded beast who hands the Americans their first humiliating defeat in the European theater of the war. From tank driver to paratrooper to the men who gave the commands, Shaara's stirring portrayals bring the heroic and the tragic to life in brilliant detail. A new level of accomplishment from this already acclaimed author, The Rising Tide will leave readers eager for the next volume of this superb saga of the war that saved and changed the world.

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Customer Reviews

This is the first Jeff Shaara book I've read. It's a long book and the beginning is a bit of a slog. We see and expect action-packed, fast-paced movies and TV, but this is a book. War planning is hard work and the interactions of the military personnel from the many countries who joined the ally coalition made the story. The action in North Africa showed the difficulties of the soldiers at a time when the best weapon we had was the tank, not the high-tech weaponry of today. As the war moves north into Sicily with the paratroopers, Shaara brings the reader into the battle and there are many tense moments when things go wrong. Then we see the ingenuity of the men in the field and how they learn to work together. Interesting read and brought WWII to life in a good and different way.

"The Steel Wave" by Jeff Shaara is the second novel (following "The Rising Tide") in Shaara's planned Second World War historical fiction trilogy. The theme of this novel is the planning and execution of Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of Northern France. In this piece Shaara uses

his now-familiar technique of examining the time period in question from the perspective of historical figures -- some eminent indeed, such as Dwight D. Eisenhower, others less exalted, i.e. a sergeant of paratroopers. In this novel the approach works superbly, because this novel passes the first critical test--it is one extremely engaging read. The novel moves along at a brisk pace, never loses the reader's interest, and has the ring of realism about it. The other notable trait of this novel is that once again, Mr. Shaara appears to have done his homework. Shaara's insights into the problems faced by General Eisenhower, the various political leaders, and the men in the field, go well beyond the superficial. Here, the reader truly appreciates the risks and uncertainties that faced the planners and fighters of Operation Overlord. Shaara takes us into the infighting, indecisions, and ultimate risks with which the Allied generals had to contend. My sense is that here, Shaara is fairly evenhanded, although *very minor spoiler* partisans of British General Montgomery will probably not be pleased. And of course, Shaara does a creditable job showing us the invasion from the perspective of the incredibly brave men who actually undertook Operation Overlord and made it a success. Overall, this is excellent historical fiction about a great subject, that is very well told. Highly recommended.

WWII is a huge undertaking. Maybe it's because I'm already very well versed in the characters and operations discussed in this work. Trying to encapsulate the entire Mediterranean theater in so few pages, and keeping track of the personalities involved in so few pages leads to a general whitewashing, lack of character development and omissions. The scope of the book is very broad, and it causes a jarring dissonance when the focus shifts from theater strategy to the inner thoughts of individuals. Any of the operations touched upon in this book could easily become a book in their own right. In a way, it seemed like trying to see a whole theater of the war through a straw.

I haven't finished the book yet. Most certainly is up to his high standard of excellence. Digs deeply into the mental, physical, and emotional aspects of war on the men at war. No matter their rank of private, sergeant or officer. All are deeply affected. The front line soldiers from absolute fear to almost uncontrollable rage to those who are killing his friends. A lot of this book takes place in winter shows the continual battle not only against the enemy trying to destroy them but also the fight against the collective hunger and elements of nature that always seem to work against them. From General officers on down through the ranks the difference in perspective on the same events from each soldiers different points of view. This book allows one to engage and learn what war is like from a comfortable chair. A good read that touches the heart and mind.

This is the first of the four novels based on the 2nd World War. The book is about 500 pages long. It is set in North Africa. Germany has conquered most of Europe and what remains of the Allied forces are staggering under the weight of their losses. The only thing that has saved them from complete defeat was Hitler's refusal to let Rommel capture what remained of the British forces at Dunkirk and his unwillingness to invade England when he had the chance. In both cases he took the advice of Field Marshall Goring and decides Germany could win by bombing, Did not work then, will not work now. The Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor. Britain has no allies left and so it turns to America. The commander they send is Dwight Eisenhower. He has less rank than those he is supposed to command. He has to contend with the political issues of Roosevelt and Churchill, the insanity of the French (who initially attacked American forces when they landed in Africa), George Patton and Bernard Montgomery. Somehow, somehow he knits a winning coalition and pushes Erwin Rommel out of Africa. The victories there are as much a case of Rommel having no supply lines and the total incompetence of the Italian leadership as they are of Allied victories. Montgomery won at El Alemaïne mostly because Rommel ran out of gas. The invasion of Sicily and Italy were plagued with huge losses caused by friendly fire. The author makes you understand that most battles are won or lost by the measure of will. This is a must read for anyone that cares about how close we came to living under the cloud of the thousand year Reich.

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