

Rogue Submarine Newsletter
Volume 1
3rd Quarter 2015

Rogue Readers,

Welcome to the inaugural Rogue Submarine Newsletter! I appreciate your interest in the stories I write for you, and I hope to keep you entertained for many years.

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1. Appreciation for your support

In theory, I should start by thanking Jeff Bezos for creating Amazon.com and popularizing eBooks. But since I doubt he's reading this newsletter, I'll instead thank my friend Jeff Edwards for taking me into his Stealth Authors publishing group and teaching me the ways of digital publishing.

That's fine, but Jeff doesn't buy enough of my books to keep my little indie side career going. So I credit you and my other reader/customers for giving life to my craft. Jake Slate and the gang would have petered out a long ago without your interest and support.

Oh sure, I had launched book #2, *Rogue Betrayer*, into the same sad vanity-press abyss into which I had sent *Rogue Avenger*, and I had penned book #3, *Rogue Crusader*, before Jeff counseled me out of the financial tailspin of paying to create hardcover books. But I doubt I would have written #4-6, *Rogue Defender*, *Rogue Enforcer*, and *Rogue Fortress* (the alphabetical titles are intentional so that you don't have to memorize the chronology) without the spark of income I saw when I shifted the first three books over to Kindle and its close cousins of Kobo, iTunes, Nook, and others.

With reader support, I've been able to keep the Rogue Submarine series going, and I'm happy to announce that #7, *Rogue Goliath*, is well into its second trimester of gestation. That's all because of readers like you who have connected with me via reviews, emails, and (yes, pardon the harsh financial reality) purchases.

Can I thank you appropriately? I don't know. The enjoyment I get from writing is hard to quantify. But I am certain that I do owe you thanks. So thank you.

And with that thanks comes a promise to continue writing with humility and with the intent of making sure that I stay true to the principles that have kept you entertained thus far.

2. Review of Rogue Submarine book #6, *Rogue Fortress*

This is where I thank you for your patience.

I gather from the reviews of *Rogue Fortress* that people like it best of all my books. It's by far my highest rated novel, and I suspect this is because I told myself before starting it:

“John, you may never become a household name, but you are an established indie author. You have a responsibility to your readers to be confident into your writing. Stop worrying about mechanics. You're beyond that other than continued self-learning. Focus forevermore on your stories and trust that your writing won't suck.”

I did that with book #6, and it turned out okay. This contrasts with my approach to #1, *Rogue Avenger*, when I was learning how to write. It took me nine years and countless revisions to create book #1. Like many writers glancing at their early work, I cringe when I look at it. At the risk of flogging myself, I'll list under-use of pronouns, frequent changes in perspective, and wide variance in chapter lengths as examples of things I wish I could change in my first novel.

Well, okay, with digital publishing I could change them. But I won't. There's a certain nostalgia about one's first novel, even if it's less refined than its siblings. Plus I see a certain appeal with *Rogue Avenger's* raw emotion. So I'll probably defer to industry wisdom and leave it “as is”.

For those of you who have experienced the progression of my novels, I thank you for your patience with my earlier work. I trust and hope you will notice ongoing improvements in *Rogue Avenger's* younger siblings, all the way up to its latest brother, *Rogue Fortress*.

3. Preview of Rogue Submarine book #7, *Rogue Goliath*

Book #7 will take place near the Korean Peninsula, where the South Koreans launch a mission of vengeance against the North Koreans who orchestrated the sinking of their *Pohang* class corvette in 2010. I was actually in Korea on a business trip when it happened, and it always stuck with me as a harsh reminder of what even the crudest nation can do with a submarine.

As usual, something goes wrong early in the story, and the South Koreans need help. Enter international arms dealer, military strategist, and mercenary fleet owner Pierre Renard and the gang. Of course, former naval officer-turned-traitor Jake Slate will command a submarine on

Renard's behalf. What else is going on in *Rogue Goliath*? Well, as a rule, I hope to remember to warn you of spoiler alerts, identified by the book it spoils. So here's a spoiler alert:

SPOILER ALERT (ROGUE FORTRESS)

At the end of book #6, Terry Cahill joins Renard's fleet. Now, in book #7, he returns as a major 'point of view' character. That means that you'll experience some of the story through his senses and thoughts, and his perspective will carry several chapters of the book. I've also reached out to an awesome gang of Aussies I met during an anniversary cruise with my wife, and I've asked them to create a fictional childhood for Cahill based upon their hometown.

END OF SPOILER ALERT (ROGUE FORTRESS)

A major facet of book #7 will be the addition of a fictional ship. I haven't toyed with a fictional ship since I took the liberty in book #1 with creating the Taiwanese stealth patrol craft, *Tai Chiang*. Granted, I made up the ship's innards and abilities, but I based the ship on reality - the Swedish *Visby* class. In *Rogue Goliath*, however, I'm making up a ship without analog.

I realized that my heroes needed a rapid way to get a *Scorpène* class submarine from its home port to a "client" site, which could be half way across the world. If they're late to offer their services, they're useless, and they lose the business. So speed to operating theater matters.

Nuclear submarines solve that problem with sheer horsepower. But diesel submarines, even those with air-independent propulsion, can't hack sustained sprints. So what were Pierre Renard and company to do? Simple. Build a ship that can hustle on the surface, submerge when needing to hide, and defend itself while carrying the primary combatant *Scorpène* to the fray.

Ergo, the birth of the *Goliath*.

4. Preview of the combat transport ship *Goliath*

A challenge when creating a fictional warship is drawing it. I did my best with pencil and paper on 2-dimensional renderings, and then I handed over the nascent *Goliath* to the professional designers of 99Designs. The desired outcome was a 3D model of the ship that my book cover designer can use, and with potential for other uses of the model (i.e. website, other promotions). Here's a draft of the winner.



5. A real world submarine technology update

I'm including this section to force myself to stay current on submarine technology. I have no idea what's interesting to you. So I'd appreciate your feedback. But here goes my first attempt.

I'll start with the United States for this issue. So let's take a look at the *Virginia* class.

From: http://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact_display.asp?cid=4100&ct=4&tid=100

Although I don't think the United States invented this (I thought I heard of this on European designs earlier, but I need to check my facts), I find this interesting:

"In Virginia-class SSNs, traditional periscopes have been supplanted by two photonics masts that host visible and infrared digital cameras atop telescoping arms. With the removal of the barrel periscopes, the ship's control room has been moved down one deck and away from the hull's curvature, affording it more room and an improved layout that provides the commanding officer with enhanced situational awareness."

I hope I got this right in *Rogue Betrayer*! I think I did my research, but I may need to recheck.

6. A preview of author panel with Rick Campbell and George Wallace

Fellow submariner veterans and authors of submarine fiction Rick Campbell and George Wallace reached out to me with an invitation to join them on an author panel at the 2015 United States Submarine Veteran Inc. convention in Pittsburgh, September 11, 2015. I'm honored to join them and my fellow veterans as a guest speaker.

To get a feel for my colleague's mojo, I read a book from each of them. I enjoyed each story. From George, I read *Operation Golden Dawn*, and from Rick, I read *The Trident Deception*.

George Wallace: http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00EJ2IGGU?ref_=cm_cr-mr-title

Rick Campbell: http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00ERVXDDO?ref_=cm_cr-mr-title

Good luck finding my review among the 300 that Rick has. He's backed by a major publisher.

And the convention: <http://www.ussvconventionsteelcity2015.org/events/meet-the-authors-of-submarine-novels-somerset-room/> (open only open to members of USSVI).

7. Extra shameless self-promotion: My speaking/workshop

I've decided to start speaking, offering guest lectures/workshops related to creative adventure writing. Since I'm just getting started, I'm going to do it for free (minus travel cost) for a while. If you're interested or know someone who is, I'm happy to invade your privacy, show up/log in, and pretend I know everything about writing. Contact me at john@subthriller.com !

That's enough for one newsletter. Thank you for reading!

John