



## The Tide of Victory

*Eric Flint , David Drake*

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## **The Tide of Victory** Eric Flint , David Drake

Armed with lancers, breech-loading rifles, steamships, and galleys, General Belisarius, accompanied by his own ally from the future, ventures into the Malwa Empire, a sixth-century kingdom ruled by Link, a horrifying and evil entity from the future.

## **The Tide of Victory Details**

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Author : Eric Flint , David Drake

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## From Reader Review The Tide of Victory for online ebook

### Annette says

While not the last in the Belisarius series, it is the last you can download free from Baen. Sad! I do, of course, have the sequel on reserve from the library!

I am not going to review books 3-5 individually since they all concern several campaigns in the same war against the Malwa in India. The Romans have allied with their old enemies the Persians (aka Aryans) as the Indian threat is on the latter's doorstep. Belisarius is also well on his way to subverting one of the Malwa subject peoples, the Kushans, as well, and some of his other "honorable enemies" are growing deeply uncomfortable with the direction that their own "Talisman of God" is taking.

The series is full of good character development on both sides of the conflict: it is, perhaps, almost cliché nowadays to cast highly honorable, good men as "bad guys" as in a military novel, but I appreciate the practice none the less. I also appreciate an author's willingness to kill off important / major characters - that's as much of a plot spoiler as I'll release, though!

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### Emma says

A great series by David Drake and Eric Flint.

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### Andreas says

Military SciFi/Alternate history in which an evil empire appears in India in the fifth century. Famous historical general Belisarius receives a warning from the future and must counter the threat. This series goes deeper into philosophical and poetical tangents than similar works. Eric Flint's classic wry humour pervades the prose. The books can almost be read as historical novels and contain quite a few interesting tidbits about the period. The series consist of:

An Oblique Approach  
In The Heart of Darkness  
Destiny's shield  
Fortune's Stroke  
The Tide of Victory  
The Dance of Time

The sixth and final book, The Dance of Time came out over two years late and seems a bit of a late addition. It tied up all the loose ends neatly, even though the actual conclusion to the conflict was foregone by this time. However, the habit of the authors to show off their characters's cleverness, while only a minor annoyance in the first five volumes, really grated on my nerves in the sixth book. Endless uses of "Why not?" and equally endless enumerations of "how cool are we" items both in the exposition and the dialogue are just plain bad style. Still and all, a satisfying conclusion.

<http://www.books.rosboch.net/?p=660>

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## Kathy Davie says

Fifth in the histo-military sci-fi series, Belisarius, *Tide of Victory* starts right off forcing you to teeter back and forth! What is Narses playing at? Whose side is the traitor on?

I have thoroughly enjoyed the behind-the-scenes action between rulers. What a treat to get something accomplished while we get to thumb our noses at the politicians! Woohoo!!

Lots of weddings, new kingdoms rising, reforms in the Persian empire. Justinian comes into his own with his gadgets as he helps Belisarius and Antonina thwart Theodora. A change of heart for Lord Damodred and Rana Sanga. Betrayal with a twist. Tragedy with the unnecessary death of a well-loved character---I think I cried for two days! Dammit, Flint and Drake, he didn't have to die!! Oh yeah, you made good use of it eventually, but dammit...it was so unnecessary. All of this interspersed with strategies and battles by land and sea. Fascinating to read of more-modern type weapons being deployed in a less-modern time.

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## Neil says

I had forgotten how long this book is. It moved a lot slower than I remembered from the last time I read it (granted, it also takes longer to read when you read primarily over your lunch breaks). Also, there is a lot more dialogue in it than I remembered, and a lot more scheming than actual "action" (so to speak). It has good character development in it, and it has some "moments" I had forgotten about, so those were some surprises when I read them again. I liked most of the book; there was a "moment" I had forgotten about that left me a little squeamish this time around. There are a lot of sub-plots going on in the book that have to be "resolved" on some level by the end of the next book.

It is "fun" to read about Romans using technology that should technically be beyond their ken. They are weapons we modern-folk would consider "archaic" but which are still centuries ahead of what they were using backwhen. Well, not just the Romans but the Malwa as well. It makes for some pretty crazy moments in the novel.

The cover is hilarious and a bit of a joke, as such a scene never happens in the book. I cannot quite figure out who she is supposed to be (I have always assumed Antonina, except her body-type does not match the description of Antonina in the book, so now I am thinking it might be Irene), and that sword in the foreground always reminds me of Excalibur, for some reason. hahahah

(view spoiler)

(view spoiler)

I do like how the authors are keeping Belisarius "human" over the course of these novels. (view spoiler)'

(view spoiler)

(view spoiler)

Overall, I did enjoy reading the book. There was quite a bit going on in it, to be honest. I did miss the "comradery" of the earlier novels, but the characters are all pretty spread out by this point. There is still enough humor in this book to make me chuckle from time to time; it is not nearly as strong as in previous books, but it is still there. It is still an interesting interpretation of Christianity during that time period; I am not used to reading about such a "militant Christianity" (apart from the Crusades, that is). I am looking forward to starting the last book and finishing the series.

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### **Justin says**

Even though the allied Roman, Persian, Kushan and Axumite (Ethiopian) forces are pushing the Malwa back, the Malwa have their own counter-moves by putting up strong resistance and scorched earth policies. There is little movement on the Indian front so that everyone there are almost reduced to talking heads. The "Peninsular War" in the Deccan was once the most interesting in terms of persons and matters of the heart, not the state. Now, it's just eh.

Flint is not afraid to kill off good guys. There were two very colorful heroes - Eon and John of Rhodes - who got killed off. Eon died like Achilles - young and in combat. John died from sheer dumb bad luck. From a literary perspective, neither has "protagonist invulnerability armor". On the other hand, their losses were truly felt as if you were there. And for those who have experienced combat, some soldiers do die from sheer bad luck and friendly fire. It's tragic, even if Eon and John are just characters in a story. Then there is Calopodius, the young Greek officer, who is horribly maimed and blinded. He did his duty all right and was in the right place and time yet paid the heavy price. It makes him more human and the war more realistic.

Overall, it does move the story along despite the death of heroes.

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### **Padraic says**

#### **Onwards to great reading.**

This is the 5th book and the author keeps going strong. Worth the reading. Get the whole series as it is worth it.

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### **Jim says**

From Publishers Weekly

High spirits and ingenuity mark the fifth volume in the Belisarius series from veteran Drake (Foreign Legions) and relative newcomer Flint (The Philosophical Strangler), who have devised an intriguing premise and developed it intelligently. Agents from two mutually exclusive futures travel back to the sixth century and begin to steer history in conflicting directions. One wants to mold humanity into a single pattern and is directing a ruthless, fanatical empire based in India but designed to take over the world; the other accepts human diversity and attempts to rally the quarreling nations of Asia and Africa to resist domination. Fortunately, the benign intelligence has teamed up with the Roman general Belisarius, a military genius with

a gift for coordinating people as well as army maneuvers. This novel focuses on Belisarius's invasion of India. With all military history to draw on and action scattered across several continents, the story races through many scenes as steamboats launch Greek fire, telegraph lines connect the Romans and their allies and delicious palace intrigues simmer. The far-ranging locations and huge cast of characters may be confusing, but the book does include maps and a long glossary of names, places and unfamiliar vocabulary. More seriously, readers might wish for fewer conferences during which characters cheerfully congratulate themselves on how clever they are. Overall, though, the fascination of seeing familiar tactics applied in unfamiliar situations makes this novel a winner.

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From Library Journal

Guided by a crystalline entity from the future, General Belisarius's Roman armies continue their campaign into the land of Indus, seeking to thwart the malign plans of the Malwa overlord. Flint's fifth installment of his popular alternate history series (e.g., *An Oblique Approach*; *In the Heart of Darkness*) depicts ancient history as it never was, complete with alien intelligences, 20th-century technology, and modern sensibilities. Purchase where the series is popular.

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## **Ron says**

It's not as bad as the lower rating implies, but with this volume the Belisarius series is taking a decided Robert Jordan shift (That's not a compliment.) Squeezed 300 pages of story into 450 pages. have created so many characters and subplots that even extended glossaries and maps don't suffice.

War is not all fun and games. People we care about are killed. And lots of people suffer horribly. If anything Flint and Drake's battles are too antiseptic and clean.

Still, the story has a good heart to go with the rousing story. It's too bad a few good people can't overcome the racial, national, tribal and gender hatred and fear in the world, but that's no reason for them (or us) to stop trying.

Quibbles: Hundreds of miles of telegraph requires many electrical generators, which aren't mentioned and which Aide, if not Belisarius, could probably put to other military uses. Also, Belisarius may hear the term "line of countervallation" from Aide, but he's sure to have read Julius Ceasar describe using it at the battle of Alesia.

A good read.

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## **YouKneeK says**

Although I enjoyed this fifth book in the *Belisarius* series, I found it to be a little slower than the previous four. It's difficult for me to pinpoint why, but I can think of three factors that probably contributed to it:

1. I'm not sure if this is quantitatively true, but it seemed like there were fewer Belisarius chapters in this

book, especially in the middle 50%. I usually enjoy the Belisarius sections the most, so I wanted to see more of him.

2. The main characters were spread out more into different areas, so there was less interaction between the different characters. That interaction is a large source of the humor that I've enjoyed so much about the series.

3. The previous (fourth) book had been my favorite out of the series and I found it to be the most fast-paced book I had read so far in the series. That might have made this book seem slower by contrast.

Despite these things, this was still a good book. There were some sad parts that added realism to the story. There was also still humor, even if I thought there was less of it than normal. The story was still interesting, for the most part. But, unlike with the previous books, there were times when it didn't hold my interest.

One thing I've enjoyed in all the books so far, that I haven't really talked about in any of my past reviews, are the epilogues. They consist of multiple short sections that make the rounds of all the main characters and show us what everybody is up to after the main action has been wrapped up. I wish every author did this, because I often find myself unsatisfied with book endings even when I otherwise enjoyed the book. I've been pretty satisfied with the endings in each of the *Belisarius* books, which is especially impressive given that this is a series and the over-all story isn't complete yet.

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## Dan says

Very good. The whole series is.

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## Jeremy Preacher says

The Tide of Victory suffers a little bit of Epic Fantasy Plot Bloat - there are an awful lot of subplots and minor characters that all need to be followed and wrapped up, and the pacing in this book suffers somewhat because of it. I couldn't pick which plots I'd get rid of, though. They're all mostly delightful.

Actually, that's not entirely true. The plot that I, personally, am least interested in is the military campaign. There are well-done aspects of it - the attention given to the morale of the common people gives it some emotional context, and I am a fan of Calopodius, although he doesn't really shine until the next book - but all of the nitty-gritty military details just read as "blah blah Ginger" to me after a while. The early books focused more on the relationships between the officers, and I like that, but detailed discussions of early machine guns and lines of countervallation just do nothing for me.

It's also the book where the body count starts to rise. The Calopodius plotline is touching, but it's Eon's death that gets to me. It's both pointless and inevitable, arising naturally out of the character as he's been built throughout the series, and it works for me. (Antonina's reaction doesn't, so much, but more because all of their interactions were glossed over in favor of battles than that they didn't have those interactions.) There needs to be a major character death in a six-book series about war, I think, and this one was well-chosen.

The Kushan plotline is only lightly sketched out, which I regret, because Irene and Kungas are great. And all of the setup of the heist plot in India is fantastic, even though it is mostly setup at this point. I can't recall if I figured out the endgame by this point on my first readthrough, but it seems both obvious and well-structured

in hindsight. On the whole, it's not exactly the book I would have chosen, but all of the good bits are there even if I would debate their proper proportions.

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### **Nathan says**

This review applies to all of the books in the Belisarius series by Eric Flint and David Drake. I read them all quickly, in a row, and there's honestly not a whole lot of difference in the elements that make them good books. You get the best mix of David Drake's detailed outlines, sense of pacing, action sequences, and depth of historical knowledge with Eric Flint's ability to manage description and nuances of character that Drake isn't quite as good at. The series is an interesting twist on historical fiction, though not unique. It's one of those "what if this technology was available at this time" sort of deals, and an interesting compare and contrast between several different cultures and their values, and how those values would affect how they interact.

If you like action and science-fiction with an historical twist, you'll love this series. If you like exploration of cultures as part of examining the human condition, you'll find something to like here as well.

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### **Charlie Moses says**

Flint is an engaging author who makes us come to know and love his characters and the world they live and move in. I very much enjoyed this series. Unlike his Ring of Fire series, in which the changes to history are having multiple and cascading ramifications as history continues to change, the Belisarius story sticks mostly to the task of successfully accomplishing the desired change and the efforts of the characters. Despite the large canvas of the story, it is, nevertheless, told at a more-intimate level.

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### **Coyora Dokusho says**

Read at least (3) times

The first two books in the series are still my faves, but this one is really good too!! I'm connecting with a dad I never met and I feel scared to be vulnerable (to loss/rejection) but it's by living life fully that life is best. Even when the characters experience losses, their lives are still richer for having known them at all. Reading always helps me get through the hard times!!!

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