

The Long War Series

Robert E. Townsend



In 1945, the twentieth century wars paused. After thirty years of episodic slaughter, two nations remained standing, the US and USSR. Each arms itself with doomsday weapons. Stupored by unrelenting death, sobered under threat of nuclear conflagration, yet another generation groomed for *The Long War*.

For much of the latter half of the twentieth century the Soviet Union loomed as a brooding presence over American political discourse. To some observers, the Soviet Union was less threatening, to others more, but to all a threat nevertheless. It was a state so obsessed and so successful with secrecy that it was impossible to perceive to what extent the threat against which the U.S. prepared so assiduously existed in reality or only in its fears.

This was no accident, as the Communists were wont to say. The flip side of the coin of secrecy is deception. The Soviet Union may have had neither intention nor desire to initiate war with the United States; however their widespread use of deception undercut that assiduously cultivated perception.

On one fine day, the Soviet State imploded. Discussions of war between the Soviet Union and the United States, once chilling, disappear from memory.

The *Long War* series examine the Soviet and American post-WWII war of deception through the eyes of four protagonists, who were but children when in 1947 the Soviet Union designated the United States as 'the main enemy.'

Each side sought advantage in conflict where war was Armageddon. Thus, each sought advantage indirectly, by proxy war or perceptions management; theater, deception, lies, bluff. Rarely—Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan—were main force units committed.

Richard Belisle and his French-Canadian childhood friend, Marie Jeanne Charbonneau, cross paths and cross swords with Danton Larionov and Ekaterina Soroka. They trust and betray one another, give faith and deceive, become fast friends and bitter enemies, each striving to live within a moral code in an immoral world. The novel series addresses deception in war and peace in a 20th century world of contrived and real ambiguity.

Spirit Falls (Book I)

English Language ISBN-13: 978-1499590708

Russian Language ISBN-13: 978-0615840260

Dual-Language ISBN: 978-1515283959

Spirit Falls, Book One in *The Long War* series, is an affecting story of childhood friendship growing into profound love, a coming-of-age novel set in the empty and hardscrabble landscape of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

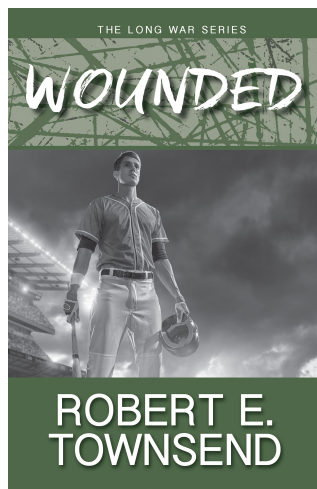
The Korean War rages. A six-year-old girl in overalls appears in the one-room Spirit Falls Graded School on Michigan's isolated Upper Peninsula. Marie Jeanne Charbonneau, French-Canadian, and Ricky Belisle, Serbian and Scots-Irish, befriend one another, and wander the forests, lakes and swamps, their parents occupied with their own injuries. As they mature, strangers come to town bringing with them new influences and a longing for the wider world. A Lake Superior storm brings the two teenagers face to face with death and the knowledge of good and evil, driving them out of Eden into the world.



The Wounded (Book II)

ISBN-13: 978-1493555000

Wounded find Ricky Belisle and Marie Jeanne Charbonneau have left their remote Lake Superior village, a world circumscribed by Life Magazine and the Saturday Evening Post, the radio, stories told around a kitchen table during winter storms, and such news as an occasional visitor might bring from the city.



Marie Jeanne, younger by months than Ricky, wiser by years, understood that two created such meaning as vague words—love, respect, sharing, kindness—conveyed through shared experience; a cup of coffee, a sunset, a birth. M.J. saw the world built in this order: man and wife, immediate and extended family, community, nation.

Richard, however, would be judged worthy by "them," the men in his clan, his tribe, his nation. Yet, truth be told, that wasn't the complete calculation, if calculation there were. In the eyes of most, Ricky had proven himself worthy. It wasn't enough. He would prove himself worthy of his childhood friend by clearing the debt his parents took on for his sin. And, had his priest been wiser or better read, he might have introduced the young man to

the teachings of St. Augustine, "Lord, make me chaste, but not yet."

Ricky Belisle makes his way across the American south seeking redemption and adventure. Soldiering, the family profession, is no longer available; it is the nuclear age. He plays baseball, is jailed, injured, laid low. M.J. finds him on a Colorado mountain recovering from injuries to body and soul. Indifferent nature tests them yet again.

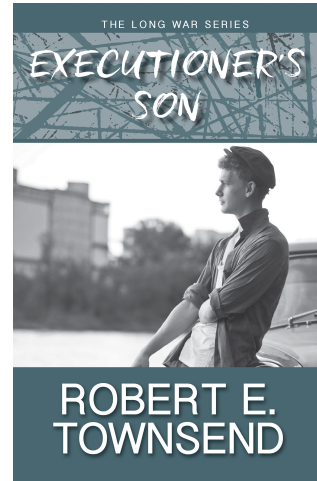
***Executioner's Son* (Book III)**

ISBN-13: 978-1495399336

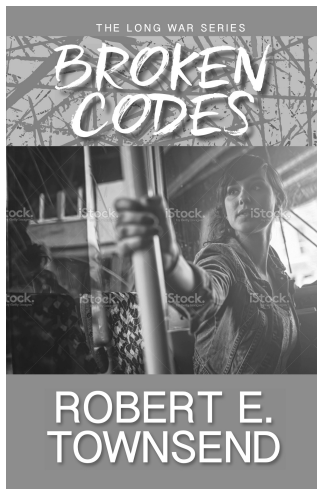
(Release date 15 October 2016). In 1953, Danton Larionov, son of an NKVD officer, lives in the Russian town of Suzdahl. Its medieval fortresses, monasteries, and nunneries are now the NKVD Gulag. Screams punctuate the night. During the *rasputitsa*, Russia's spring thaw, the earth refuses those buried in the mass graves, and they rise from the ground demanding proper burial.

An apparition, the fifteen-year-old goose herder, Ekaterina Soroka, appears on Illian Meadow. The all-powerful sixteen-year-old Danton spies her, drives off young hoodlums, for he will take the beauty for his own. But she tells him a tale and transfixed he pauses. All that Spring and Summer along the banks of the Kamenka River, he hears the girl tell Russian *skazki*, tales.

On a summer day she disappears. He vows he will seek her if he must *beyond the seventh sea beyond the seventh kingdom*. In a distant forest in a distant land, he discovers not whom he seeks, but the enemy, the American sniper, PFC Ricky Belisle.



***Broken Codes* (Book IV)**



Broken Codes (Release date October 2017) is a political thriller set in 1973 that takes place on the ancient and bloodied trails of Thuringia, in the decadence of underground Berlin, and in the corridors of American power.

Captain Russ Vail, an American officer, an attaché to the Group of Soviet Forces Germany, and Julia Cameron, the American journalist, witnesses to the struggle between the American and the Soviet officer, have brought their own yearnings to Berlin. He seeks the glory that escaped him in Vietnam; she needs a scoop to move from stringer to newspaper payroll. Each becomes enamored of an antagonist. The American journalist, Julia Cameron, reports the heroic story of the Soviet colonel as provided by the Soviet press

officer, Ekaterina Soroka; Russ of the French grace and *savoir faire* of the rough Army colonel's wife, the concert pianist, Marie Jeanne Charbonneau.

The grossly disfigured Soviet Army Lieutenant Colonel Danton Larionov and US Army Major Richard Belisle seem to know one another.

***Resurrection* (Book V)**

Richard Belisle, his military career and marriage under stress, is at the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Iron Mountain, Michigan where his father, hero and war hero, lay dying. His daughter, an Air Force lieutenant pathfinder, is in (in Kuwait for the invasion of Iraq).

In the waiting room, decrepit WWII veterans kill time as he recalls the allies he had abandoned to genocide. He, like the dying veterans, is killing time. He visits the past where there is much to be visited. Bucolic childhood, his flight from Eden to war, his betrayal of his beloved Marie Jeanne with The Russian woman, Ekaterina, the lies and deception, personal and professional, the wreckage he left behind. He encounters the Air Force officer, Jon Einarsson, another whom he had betrayed, who offers him a position with the UN Protection Force to police the Yugoslavia cease fire.

