



## The Renegades

*Tom Young*

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## **The Renegades** Tom Young

A catastrophic earthquake ravages Afghanistan, and American troops rush to deliver aid, among them Afghan Air Force adviser Lieutenant Colonel Michael Parson, and his interpreter, Sergeant Major Sophia Gold. The devastation facing them is like nothing they've ever seen, however—and it's about to get worse.

A Taliban splinter group, Black Crescent, is conducting its own campaign—shooting medical workers, downing helicopters, slaughtering anyone who dares to accept aid. With the U.S. drawing down and coalition forces spread thin, it is up to Parson, Gold, and Parson's Afghan aircrews to try to figure out how to strike back. But they're short of supplies, men, experience, and information—and meanwhile the terrorists seem to be nowhere . . . and everywhere.

## **The Renegades Details**

Date : Published July 19th 2012 by G.P. Putnam's Sons

ISBN : 9780399158469

Author : Tom Young

Format : Hardcover 322 pages

Genre : Fiction, Thriller, War, Military Fiction

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## From Reader Review The Renegades for online ebook

### **Lisa Johnson says**

Title: Renegades

Author: Tom Young

Pages: 336

Year: 2012

Publisher: Putnam Adult

Note: The content within this book contains foul language which maybe offensive, no sexual content is in the novel. Other reviews can be seen at <http://seekingwithallyourheart.blogspot.com>...

Renegades is a novel I won on Library Thing websites in the early reviewers giveaways. While normally not a book I would choose to review or purchase, I read this one as it interested one of my sons. As I went through the novel, whiting out the foul language before he read it, I have to admit I fell in love with the story. The genre of historical fiction with a subgenre of war draws many to read these kinds of books from various authors. This is the first book of Tom Young's I have read. While I highly admire the depth of his writing, it is my hope that authors will learn to tell a great story without adding offensive content. My particular interest is the Civil War era and apocalyptic novels; however, this work of fiction was excellent.

Two main characters, Parson and Gold, have been in two other previous novels by the same author as I learned from the author at the end of the book. Parson is serving in the Air Force while Gold serves in the Army as a translator, who is assigned to Parson while in Afghanistan. Gold has served with Parson, and their friendship with mutual respect develops as a result of their various trials while deployed. Gold is trained in a special division as a female translator who finds herself in several countries at the forefront of gathering intel. Other times Gold is needed to listen to transmissions in order to help her superior, Parson, advise the chain of command as information is gathered and deployment of troops is needed.

Parson, in this novel, is mainly an advisor to the Afghanistan army who is attempting to be better trained in order to one day take over complete control in defense of their nation. Parson was injured in an earlier mission, but is able to walk about with only a slight limp. Parson recognizes that his time of service is coming to an end as all the previous years and injuries seem to be taking their toll. Gold as well is nearing retirement, but wants to see this last mission through to the end.

Within the pages of this masterpiece of fiction is a story that stirs within the reader a reminder to support our troops. Tom Young states as one of his goals in writing the book is he wanted people "to understand the mindset and motivations of servicemen and women". Parson and Gold along with a host of other characters are after a cell of terrorists that has cropped up after a natural disaster occurs. The group is called Black Crescent and has been stealing young boys to train as suicide bombers and fighters. There is a group within this nation who might help the American "infidels" if it would help get them out of their country faster. They also disagree with the use of children in armed conflicts.

Believe me when I tell you this story has action, heroes who live and die, as well as wonderful descriptions of lots of military weaponry and what it can do. The author himself has served our nation so I know that his firsthand knowledge comes through in his writing. At the end of the novel, the author shares his experiences and the background that help form this novel.

Again, I am sure that such foul language is used not just in the military. However, my hope is that authors realize that a good story can be told without the use of it. However, I can say that it isn't overly used in this particular work of fiction.

My rating is 4 stars.

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## **Ethan says**

As we have seen, especially in recent years, when nature decides to throw a natural disaster our way, there is nothing for us to do but watch it happen and work quickly to recover. In his latest novel, "The Renegades", Tom Young presents a natural disaster, complicated by the human disaster of war.

The horrors of the war in Afghanistan are elevated when a large earthquake strikes the area. In the immediate aftermath, US Lt. Col. Michael Parson is called in to assist with the recovery efforts. Assisted by a cast of interesting characters, especially translator Sophia Gold, the team attempts to save the lives of innocent locals, caught in the crossfire of war and natural disaster.

Young presents the people of Afghanistan as torn between being thankful or completely against American assistance. Some locals, like pilot Rashid, even join forces with the US military. Unfortunately, the Taliban witnesses the American's response to the earthquake and, in turn, enter the village, killing many and kidnapping the young boys to train as future soldiers.

The bare, mostly quick prose used by Young helps to portray the intensity of the war. The book never lags, always driving forward with suspense and action. Either because of the military jargon or the sheer number of people contributing to a conversation, there were some moments when the dialogue became a bit confusing. I imagine, however, that this confusion may be another form of accurately depicting the intense situations of war. In the end, this novel had no major revelations, but was an entertaining look into the horrors of war and mother nature.

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## **Elliot says**

An earthquake has struck whole sections of Afghanistan and the countryside is left in rubble. Thousands who were already suffering from being homeless, starving and living in constant fear need some kind of help. We meet U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Parson, a combat veteran working as a liaison and trainer with the Afghan Air Force. Parson is working with a Capt. Rashid and his crew flying older but sturdy Soviet-built Mi-17 helicopters. Parson gets help from an old colleague, Sgt. Maj. Sophia Gold, a skilled translator of the Pashto language. The two get thrown into many horrible situations. A Taliban group the Black Crescent is killing any Western aid workers, civilians and stopping the delivery of any kind of relief supplies. Worst of all they're taking children hostage to be used as suicide bombers. Tom Young an Iraqi-Afghan war veteran writes very well about the completely mixed up life in the war torn country of Afghanistan. He knows from personal experience how to use military terminology to show anyone the real horrors of any war. This is a well written story about self sacrifice, betrayal, women in fighting roles as well as fighting cultural norms alien to Western cultures and all the time showing the true bravery and talent of our men and women in the United States Armed Forces.

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## **Jack Stubblefield says**

I don't know how else to put it, but the characters felt 'lived in.' The author imbued them with a past history and complexity of emotion to the point where I started to wonder who Mr. Young was basing these characters on. He has lived and knows the basic subject matter of this book. Easy read that moves at a comfortable pace. If I find more of the Parson and Gold series, I will definitely pick them up. Good stuff,

Maynard.

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### **Ronald Roseborough says**

Tom Young previously wrote under the name Thomas W. Young. (The Mullah's Storm and Silent Enemy) His stories are becoming more tightly written as is his name. His characters are becoming less stiff and more lifelike. His stories continue to evolve with more effective action scenes and greater character depth. The Renegades presents two sides of the warrior's dilemma. The book recounts the soldier's desire to fight, to lash out, to end the conflict by crushing the enemy. This is best personified in Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Michael Parson, a battle scared veteran who is training the U.S.'s Afghan allies in combat operations flying Russian built helicopters. It also shows the need to help others through understanding and providing aid and comfort. This role is effectively filled by U.S. Army Sergeant Major Sophia Gold. Her unique role as an interpreter and a jump qualified airborne veteran are tempered by her understanding and feelings for the victims of the terrorists. The humanity is not weighted down however with political correctness. The book is full of action. The author's background with the Air National Guard provides a rich basis for the dramatic descriptions of aerial action and hot, lead filled ground actions. This book provided for review by the well read folks at Library Thing and G.P.Putnam's Sons.

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### **Mason Canyon says**

Listening to a book by author Tom Young stirs strong emotions. While it is a story of fiction, the author's extensive military background gives credibility to what he writes. The pain, suffering, torture, loss of life and dedication have elements of truth to them.

Having said that and the fact that I'm not big on war-theme stories, I do highly recommend THE RENEGADES.

Narrator Scott Brick brings the story, people and setting to life. His deep throaty voice gives depth to Young's words. Brick's cadence is alluring as he pulls you into the middle of a battle zone and breaks your heart with the tenderness of his soothing voice when emotions involve the young and innocent victims. Then he has you on the edge of your seat as the action gets underway.

Afghan Air Force adviser Lieutenant Colonel Michael Parson and his interpreter, Sergeant Major Sophia Gold, are once again reunited following a devastating earthquake in Afghanistan. They are on hand to assist with aid and rescue efforts. However, a Taliban splinter group Black Crescent, is making life difficult for the workers. They are shooting medical works, downing helicopters, and threatening anyone who takes aid. But worst of all - they're kidnapping young boys and making them become suicide bombers.

Parson, Gold and Parson's Afghan aircrew scramble to provide aid, along with the other workers, in everyway they can. Discovering a way to possible locate the leader of the splinter group, Gold goes against Parson's orders. Following her lead could stops the new group or get her killed.

THE RENEGADES is action-packed from beginning to end. It's adrenaline-driven with so many twists, turns, highs and lows it feels like a roller coaster ride. The story flows smoothly, but quickly with moments of tenderness and concern woven throughout, as well as snippets of humor.

The characters are engaging, realistic and well-developed. Their interaction with one another is plausible. Young's eye for authentic detail adds depth to the story and places the reader/listener in the midst of the action. The story will leave you breathless, exhausted and eager for more.

Having read/listened to THE RENEGADES (or any story by Young), you come away not only having finished a fascinating story, but learned a great deal about American servicemen and women, the trials they face overseas and their dedication. Young entertains with his words, but also educates and informs.

This is the third book featuring Parson and Gold, but can be enjoyed as a standalone. But be warned, after an introduction to Parson and Gold you'll want to know more.

FTC Full Disclosure - This audio book was sent to me by the publisher in hopes I would review it. However, receiving the complimentary copy did not influence my review.

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### **George says**

Plot revolves around a splinter group of Taliban who decide to start using child soldiers obtained via kidnapping and an Air Force Liaison, Michael Parson with his Army Translator sidekick, Sophia Gold get involved. The book is a sequel, #3 in the list. Author does a great job explaining the action and absolute horror of the war. However, those not enamored of military jargon and ethics might not get it.

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### **Shaun says**

This is my first Tom Young book, and all in all everything about it was just okay. The big, big flaw in my opinion is that I just don't care about the characters. I won't say that they aren't developed, because they do have backstories, but... I just don't like them very much. This runs into the next issue, and that's that the book is pretty much all A) helicopters B) war. A big thing I'm learning is that action in books isn't as interesting as character development. I see a few other reviews complained about use of profanity; I don't like profanity in books, but I thought the swearing in this book was appropriate for the most part. But yeah. The big part for me was that I just didn't care about the characters, I was tired of helicopter ride after helicopter ride, and battle after battle. It'd probably make a decent movie though.

One more thing, there's been some comparisons here to Clancy - in other reviews and on the book jacket. Doesn't come close to touching Clancy. Clancy's really technical like I suppose this one is, but Clancy really develops characters and character relationships. All kinds of plots weaving together to form one grand plot. Setting jumps around. Jumps around to different characters. Makes you wonder how it's all tied together. This is just... military porn.

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### **Craig says**

\*Goodreads First reads ARC\*

I'd actually have to rate The Renegades by Tom Young as a 3.5 star book. I can't really put my finger on it, but I found the story lacking some intangible quality that would elevate it to where I would place books by Brad Thor, James Rollins and Vince Flynn. I honestly wish I could be more specific.

I suppose I found the story to be a bit formulaic. To me, there was a lot of instances where the author could have fleshed out the scenes, allowing the reader to fully immerse themselves in the story, yet he failed to do so. While this didn't destroy the story, it left me yearning for more.

To me the story started out a bit slow. I also found it hard to actually develop a connection to any of the main characters, though I will say I had no feelings of animosity towards them either.

One of the better aspects was the obvious knowledge the author has involving his subject matter. The reader learns a lot about the armed services (various positions and their interactions). The reader also develops an understanding of some of the thought processes of a soldier.

Overall I would say that The Renegades is worth reading.

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### **Michael says**

There is an earthquake measuring 7.2 that hits Afghanistan. U.S. military are among the first responders.

Lt. Col. Michael Parson is in Afghanistan as an advisor to the Afghan Air Force. When his translator, Sgt. Maj. Sophia Gold arrives from the states, they travel to a village called Ghandaki. This village was hard hit by the quake and with some specialized equipment, they are able to save a number of villagers who were buried in the rubble.

From the distance, members of a renegade Taliban group observe the actions and when the U.S. leaves, this group goes to the village and kills anyone who conspired with the Americans. They also kidnap a number of young children who they intend to brainwash into becoming Taliban members and martyrs.

A unique aspect of Young's writing is that he combines the political reasons for going after the Taliban and he discloses why so many Afghans dislike Americans. This is all set in an action filled adventure.

A glossary of terms would be helpful in that there was constant use of military abbreviations and at times, I was wondering what was being discussed.

Nevertheless, this is an enjoyable book and an easy read.

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### **Tom says**

I received this book as an ARC from Goodreads First Reads program.

I could've sworn I had written a review for this book already, but oh well. The book is a sequel, though you don't really need to read the work preceding this to understand what is going on. It's a very gritty, realistic

book. You can picture the scenes as people are shooting, or the weariness felt by the main characters as they try and foil terrorists and make it back to base alive.

I liked the characters a lot, and found myself rooting for the local militias to succeed in keeping the fragile peace in the country. I also liked the interaction of the different services over in the sandbox. It made me think sometimes that it might be more efficient to integrate various task forces to encompass the various services, instead of having so many similar training programs.

I look forward to reading the next novel in this series, and will be recommending Tom Young to my friends who like military novels.

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### **Jeffrey says**

An excellent war novel set in Afghanistan. It is a sequel apparently to a previous novel featuring the likable Lieutenant Colonel Michael Parson, who is an advisor to the Afghans training their helicopter pilots and his subordinate, Sergeant Major Sophia Gold, who is both his translator and a airborne veteran with parachuting experience.

Young plunges the reader right into the thick of the Afghan conflict, where villages are threatened by Taliban fighters, and friend and foe are not easy to perceive. Parson goes to an Afghan village to help with earthquake relief and the copter comes under enemy fire. When they leave, Taliban swoop in and steal some kids. They want to use them as suicide bombers. The Taliban commander is a radical even for the Taliban. A kid is killed in grotesque ways. Parsons must fight through enemy fire. A co-pilot of his helicopter tries to take him captive. We see the war through the eyes of Parsons and his helicopter crew.

Meanwhile Gold goes to a village to talk to some local women, who seem to have Taliban leanings. They invite her to talk to one of their husbands -- a leader of the Taliban. Parson refuses to permit her to meet with the Taliban leader, but she defies his orders and ultimately her visit leads to vital intelligence as the Taliban and the Americans have a coalescing of interests. The Taliban do not want radicals to undermine their pursuit of keeping the populous leaning toward their interests, and the Americans, have an interest in killing Taliban terrorists.

Gold's intelligence coup leads to a final battle to breach an Afghan stronghold and kill the Taliban radicals.

The war action is fierce. The book may be a little slow in parts, but Young is able to expose a different war to us, a modern age war, where innocents are pawns.

Its an effective war novel.

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### **Ed says**

#3 in the Michael Parson & Sophia Gold series. Author Young has moved the action to relief efforts in Afghanistan after a major earthquake and Taliban efforts to subvert those efforts. Young's larger than life heroes stand in for real heroes in many parts of the conflict and this detracts from their believability and slightly from the novel's readability although not from its message.

Michael Parson & Sophia Gold - Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Parson, now an adviser to a helicopter unit in Afghanistan, requests that his interpreter friend, Sgt. Maj. Sophia Gold, be deployed back to Afghanistan to help with relief efforts after a major earthquake. Just as Parson and his team are about to lift off with a number of injured Afghans, members of a terrorist group called the Black Crescent shoot up their helicopter; soon after, they kidnap a 10-year-old boy from a nearby village. Parson and Gold get on the trail of the Crescent leader, Chaaku (the Pashto word for knife), and in a last deadly battle bring a measure of justice to their corner of the war.

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### **LAWonder10 says**

This was very well-written and the story was a tribute to those who suffer so much for the rest of the world's freedom.

However, it contained too much detail. It was very graphic, as the reality of this war truly is, but way too much for the average person to digest.

I know many feel they have to resort to profanity -probably not totally educated in a vocabulary that can express themselves without it - but the use of profanity by the main character was excessive, especially since he is suppose to be an educated officer.

A truly great writer can allude to these situations without dragging the reader down to that level.

I won this book and I would have appreciated it as a great work had it not been so foul. It was generous to offer it for the giveaway but I will not be recommending it nor purchasing any further works of Tom Young because of the above reasons.

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### **Henri Moreaux says**

The Renegades is an excellent war novel set in present day (well, circa 2012) Afghanistan.

I seem to have a knack for picking up parts of a series out of order, this is another of those situations being book #3 in a series, nonetheless, The Renegades is still a great stand alone story.

The plot of The Renegades revolves around a splinter group of Taliban who decide to start using child soldiers obtained via kidnapping and an Air Force Liaison, Michael Parson with his Army Translator sidekick, Sophia Gold who are obviously not in favour of such a scheme. All this takes place in the frame of a humanitarian disaster in the form of an extensive earthquake and an Afghan air force which is still learning to be an air force.

I really enjoyed this book and would love to give it 5 stars but there was just a little something missing that kept it from Vince Flynn 5 star territory.

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