

The *A Few Good Men* Reader's Group Discussion Guide

Welcome to the Readers' Group Guide for Sarah A. Hoyt's latest novel set in the Darkship Thieves universe. While technically a sequel to *Darkship Thieves* and *Darkship Renegades*, *A Few Good Men* takes up the threads of what happens on Earth in the aftermath of the discovery of exactly who -- and what -- the Good Men are and is the first title in Hoyt's Earth's Revolution saga.

On a near future Earth, "Good Man" does not mean "good" at all. Instead, the term signifies a member of the ruling class, and what it takes to become a good man and to hold onto power is downright evil. Now a conspiracy hundreds of years in the making is about to be brought to light when the imprisoned son of the Good Man of Olympic Seacity escapes from his solitary confinement cell and returns to find his father assassinated.

But when Luce Keeva attempts to take hold of the reins of power, he finds that not all is as it seems, that a plot for his own imminent murder is afoot—and that a worldwide conflagration looms. It is a war of revolution, and a shadowy group known as the Sons of Liberty may prove to be Luce's only ally in a fight to throw off an evil from the past that has enslaved humanity for generations.

1. *A Few Good Men* opens with the line, "The world celebrates great prison breaks." Considering all the stories written about the fall of the Bastille, the Great Escape, etc., do you think we tend to celebrate such events and why? Should we, as Lucius Dante Maximilian Keeva (Luce) points out, be more concerned about the "monsters" who are also released alongside the "righteous and innocent"?
2. Were you surprised when Luce decided to return home to protect his mother and Ben's family after learning not only that his father was dead but that his brother Max, who had been Good Man Keeva of Olympus Seacity, had been found murdered? What does this decision show about Luce that he doesn't recognize in himself yet?
3. In the chapter *Running Away*, Luce goes to see Javier, Good Man of Andalus. Who do you think Javier thought he was talking to and why, especially after he mentions

not liking the thought the Sons of Liberty could break into “your house and kidnap you”? Do you think, after Luce speaks with Jan Ranier and then Nat, that Luce might actually have gone insane and not realized it?

4. In *Familiar Strangers*, Nat explains to Luce exactly what the Good Men are, referencing the history of the Mules and Mule Lords. What sort of concerns do you have about genetic engineering, cloning and population control, all factors in the creation of the Mules and later the Good Men?
5. The Usian movement is referred to as a religion based on the “mythology of ancient country that used to occupy much of the North American territories”. What are the primary beliefs of the Usians and what is the basis of these beliefs?
6. The Sons of Liberty members take names from the American Revolution. Did you recognize any names before knowing the person was involved in the Sons of Liberty? Who and when?
7. In *Riders in the Storm*, Luce and Sam Remy discuss policies the former Good Men had been implementing which created famines and caused deaths. Luce protests that no one man should be able to murder others and then say it is for their own good. Sam responds with, “It’s only evil if you believe there’s intrinsic value in each individual,” Sam said, ruthless. “Only if you believe it matters that individuals are treated like objects. And you can only care, if each individual, in your mind, has the right to self-determination.” What does he mean and what does this portend for Luce and his role as Good Man?
8. Some of the other organizations on Earth fighting against the Good Men include the Sans Culottes, Guy Fawkes’ Legion, Monster Hunters International, The Boys From Ipiranga, and The Incarnate Legion. Which of these, if any, have historical significance in our world?
9. Should the Sons of Liberty act to kill all who oppose them or remember the lessons of the American Revolution and the fact that only a third of those living in what became the United States actively supported freedom from England?
10. When Luce decides Nat has to be rescued, nothing is going to stop him. Were you surprised when Abigail follows him out of the boomer lair? Did his reaction, and the reason for it, at the end of *Into Hell* surprise you?

11. Throughout much of the novel, Luce has “discussions” with Ben, who died early into Luce’s incarceration. Is he really talking with Ben’s ghost or is “Ben” merely a conscience Luce doesn’t believe he still possesses since he sees himself as a “monster”? What about the “role” Ben plays in saving both Luce and Nat in *And Death is at My Side* -- is he Luce’s guardian angel or just that part of Luce’s brain that demands he live? Or is he something else?
12. When Nat says, “We hold strong opinions on the freedom of belief, freedom of expression, the right to self-defense, the right to private property and others,” what part of the Declaration of Independence does this come from and how do those beliefs apply today? What “rights” or “sins” do they not worry about?
13. The time Luce spends on the North American continent lets him have time not only to physically recover but also to begin mentally healing as well. Were you surprised by some of the decisions he made during that time, especially about his role as a Good Man?
14. When Martha comes to see Nat and Luce to tell them what has happened in their absence, she describes a schism that has always existed within the council for the Sons of Liberty as “[t]hose who believe that the principles must be applied even when they work against us, and those who feel we must ignore the principles until . . . until we restore our country and only then applied, and that the principles won’t come into being unless they’re imposed . . . dictatorially from above.” What is the difference between these positions and which one do you think should be followed?
15. The Sons of Liberty and the Daughters of Liberty play two very different, but very important roles in the revolution. Which one, in your opinion, would be most important in the successful completion of the war? Considering that gender was not a requirement for admission to either organization, were you surprised by their names? Was it a surprise to find that Luce was destined to work with one while Nat worked with the other?
16. In his broadcast, Luce states that, among the rights the Usians believe in is the right to self-defense, “even if the state determines you should die.” Does this include if you are condemned to death in a trial by your peers?

17. When Nate tells Luce they've been fighting the war on their (the Good Men's) terms and that fighting it that way will cause the Sons of Liberty and their allies to lose, what does he mean?
18. The Good Men didn't attack Olympus Seacity until after the communication from Circum. Were you surprised they waited so long? Were you surprised by the actions taken by James Madison Remy?
19. By the end of **A Few Good Men**, the battle is being won but the war is far from over. Do you think the sudden ability to communicate across the world without censorship, the knowledge the Good Men are, in reality, the feared and hated Mules from history will help turn the tide and lead to a restoration of a free government for all?
20. **A Few Good Men** picks up several plot threads begun in [Darkship Thieves](#) and [Darkship Renegades](#). Do you feel the book stood on its own, or do you think it only works as part of a series?

Prepared by Amanda Green