



## A Few Good Men

*Daniel Kaffee is defending two US Marines in a military trial. The Marines are charged with killing a fellow Marine and Daniel is questioning the witness, COLONEL JESSEP. During questioning, it emerges that it was Colonel Jessep who ordered the hazing ritual known as a code red, which led to the death of the Marine.*

**COLONEL JESSEP:** You want answers!?

You want answers!!??

You can't handle the truth!

*(Pause)*

'Cause the truth is that we live in a world that has walls, and those walls need to be guarded by men with guns. Who's gonna do it? You? You, Lt. Weinberg? I have a greater responsibility than you can possibly fathom. You weep for Santiago and you curse the Marines. You have that luxury. The luxury of the blind. The luxury of not knowing what I know: that Santiago's death, while tragic, probably saved lives. And my existence, while grotesque and incomprehensible to you, saves lives. You can't handle it. 'Cause deep down in places you don't talk about at parties, you want me on that wall. You need me on that wall.

*(Pause)*

We use words like honor, code, loyalty...We use these words as the backbone to a life spent defending something. You use them as a punchline. I have neither the time nor the inclination to explain myself to a man who rises and sleeps under the blanket of the very freedom I provide, then questions the manner in which I provide it. I'd prefer you just said thank you and went on your way. Otherwise, I'd suggest you pick up a weapon and stand a post. Either way, I don't give a damn what you think you're entitled to.

*(Pause)*

I did the job you sent me to do.

*(Is asked if a code red was ordered)*

You're goddam right I did.

*(There's a stunned pause... the Court is informed that this admission means an Article 39A session, a session of a Court Martial, can be called. There's silence- not unsympathetically)*

What the hell's going on? Captain? What the hell's going on? I'm not familiar with Article 39A. I did my job. I'd do it again. Now I'm getting on a plane and going back to my base.

*(A voice is heard shouting to guard the prisoner)*

What?!

I ordered a code red and everybody's going to pieces like a ladies auxiliary.

*(COLONEL JESSEP's legal rights are read but continues talking over the reading)* I'm being charged with a crime? I'm — that's what this is - What - this is funny, you know that, this is —

*(Makes a quick move towards Kaffee but is stopped)*

I'm gonna tear your eyes right outa your head! You messed with the wrong Marine!!

*(Looks around the courtroom)*

You have no idea how to defend a nation. All you did was weaken a country tonight, Kaffee. That's all you did, give yourself a pat on the back. You put people in danger tonight. Sweet dreams, son.

*By Aaron Sorkin*