

L. Ron Hubbard's *Hell's Legionnaire* Discussion Guide

(also includes the short stories *The Barbarians*
and *The Squad That Never Came Back*)



STORY SUMMARY & OVERVIEW

Dusty Colton has escaped the French Foreign Legion, hoping to leave danger behind. Instead, he stumbles into an even greater threat when he discovers Ann, an American woman held captive by the ruthless Abd el Malek and his Berber followers. Outnumbered and deep in the Atlas Mountains, Dusty must rely on courage, quick thinking and determination to survive. The author blends military adventure, daring escapes and frontier action into a fast-paced story about sacrifice, trust and redemption.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION AND NORTH AFRICA

Hell's Legionnaire is set against the backdrop of the French Foreign Legion, one of the world's most famous military organizations. Established in 1831, the Legion recruited volunteers from nearly every nation, offering many the opportunity to begin a new life regardless of their background. Its ranks included former soldiers, adventurers, political refugees and men seeking a second chance. This reputation for accepting recruits from around the world made the Legion unique among military forces.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the French Foreign Legion became closely associated with France's colonial campaigns in North Africa, particularly in Morocco, Algeria and the Sahara Desert. Legionnaires served in isolated forts, protected trade routes and fought in rugged mountains and deserts under extremely difficult conditions. The author uses this historical setting as the backdrop for a fictional adventure involving Legionnaires, Berber tribes and dangerous escapes across the Atlas Mountains. Although the characters and events are fictional, they reflect the Legion's demanding discipline, multinational composition and reputation for courage, endurance and redemption.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

📖 How do Abd el Malek's beliefs about power and authority differ from Ann's understanding of human dignity and freedom? Ann and Abd el Malek represent two very different views of leadership and human worth. Compare how their actions reveal their values throughout the story.

📖 Before any rescue appears possible, how does Ann demonstrate courage despite her captivity? Ann refuses to surrender her dignity even in the face of terrible danger. Discuss how bravery can be shown through determination as well as physical action.

 How does Dusty Colton use a bugle and an automatic rifle to create the illusion of an entire Legion force, and why is perception sometimes as important as reality during a conflict? Dusty relies on intelligence and creativity rather than numbers to overcome his enemies. Think about other moments in history when deception influenced the outcome of a battle.

 How does learning that Dusty Colton is both a deserter and a fugitive affect your opinion of him? Dusty's past raises questions about justice, loyalty and survival. Discuss whether later actions should influence how a person's earlier decisions are judged.

 Why does Dusty Colton repeatedly risk his own safety to protect Ann? As the danger increases, Dusty consistently places Ann's safety ahead of his own. Examine whether his actions are motivated by duty, compassion, honor, or another reason.

 How do Dusty Colton's past disappointments influence the decisions he makes during the story? Dusty's earlier experiences shape the way he approaches relationships and trust. Discuss when lessons from the past are helpful and when they may become obstacles.

 What choices were available to Ann throughout her captivity and escape, and what risks accompanied each decision? Ann faces difficult choices with limited options. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of the actions she takes during the story.

 Why do Dusty Colton and Ann succeed? Neither character could overcome every challenge alone. Discuss how teamwork and mutual trust contribute to their survival.

 Which quality contributes most to survival in *Hell's Legionnaire*—courage, intelligence, determination, adaptability, or trust? Throughout the story, different strengths help the characters overcome danger. Support your answer with examples from the story and from history.

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The Barbarians

Discussion Guide

STORY SUMMARY & OVERVIEW

Major Duprey's demand for revenge begins after French Foreign Legion officers receive the severed head of a fallen comrade from Berber fighters in the Atlas Mountains. Captain Harvey accepts a dangerous mission to strike back, believing he understands both his enemy and the conflict. As the campaign unfolds, however, Harvey encounters unexpected people and experiences that challenge his assumptions about war, culture and honor. The author combines military adventure with thoughtful questions about leadership, respect and the human cost of conflict.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION, THE BERBER PEOPLE AND COLONIAL MOROCCO

The Barbarians takes place during France's military campaigns in Morocco during the early twentieth century. At the time, France sought to establish control over large parts of North Africa, often encountering resistance from Berber tribes living throughout the Atlas Mountains. The Berbers, also known as the Amazigh people, have lived in North Africa for thousands of years and developed rich traditions, languages, architecture and systems of government long before European colonial powers arrived.

The French Foreign Legion played a major role in these campaigns. Legionnaires served in isolated mountain outposts, conducted patrols and fought difficult battles across rugged terrain. Aircraft were becoming increasingly important in military operations, giving commanders new advantages while also changing the nature of warfare.

The author uses this historical setting to tell a fictional story that explores both military conflict and cultural misunderstanding. Although the characters and events are fictional, readers in the 1930s would have recognized the French Foreign Legion, the Atlas Mountains and the Berber resistance as familiar elements of contemporary history.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

📖 How do Major Duprey and Caid Kirzigh present different views of the Berber people, and what do those differences reveal about the dangers of stereotypes? Major Duprey repeatedly refers to the Berbers as "barbarians," while Caid Kirzigh presents a very different picture of his people's history and culture. Compare how each character's perspective influences the conflict.

📖 How do Major Duprey and Captain Harvey respond differently to the death of Grauer, and what do their reactions reveal about their leadership? Both officers witness the same tragic event, yet each draws different conclusions from it. Discuss how their responses shape the decisions they make throughout the story.

 How does the use of aircraft change the balance of power between the French Foreign Legion and the Berber fighters? Captain Harvey and Rubio can attack from the air while remaining difficult to reach from the ground. Discuss how new military technology has changed warfare throughout history.

 How does Rubio's repeated statement, "For France," demonstrate both the strengths and challenges of patriotism? Rubio believes he is serving his country through every action he takes. Discuss how patriotism can inspire courage while also creating difficult moral choices.

 Why have mountains and difficult terrain often shaped the outcome of military campaigns throughout history? The Atlas Mountains create challenges for both the French and the Berbers. Can you name other historical conflicts where geography played an important role.

 How does the Berbers' knowledge of their homeland give them an advantage over the French Foreign Legion? The Legionnaires possess superior equipment, yet the Berbers understand every trail, pass and hiding place. Compare the value of local knowledge with technological advantages.

 How does Harvey's conversation with Caid Kirzigh challenge his earlier beliefs about the Berber people? Harvey discovers that Kirzigh is well educated and knowledgeable about history, architecture, mathematics and politics. Discuss how this encounter changes Harvey's understanding of the people he has been fighting.

 Why does Caid Kirzigh believe patience and long-term planning are more powerful than immediate victories? Kirzigh explains that lasting success often depends on careful planning rather than quick results. Compare this strategy with historical movements that achieved their goals over many years.

 How do Major Duprey and Captain Harvey view the conflict differently by the end of the story? Both officers experience the same campaign, yet they do not reach the same conclusions. Compare how each man's experiences influence his understanding of the war.

 What lessons from *The Barbarians* can help people better understand conflicts between different cultures today? The story explores misunderstandings, respect and communication between opposing groups. Discuss what modern readers can learn from these experiences before drawing conclusions about others.

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The Squad That Never Came Back

Discussion Guide

STORY SUMMARY & OVERVIEW

The French Foreign Legion believes an entire squad has perished in a remote outpost high in Morocco's Atlas Mountains. In reality, one corporal survives and escapes to Casablanca, carrying the remarkable story of what truly happened. As he recounts the expedition, readers follow a dangerous journey filled with betrayal, greed, hidden ruins and constant threats from both the harsh landscape and determined enemies. The author combines military adventure with historical mystery in a story that explores leadership, survival and the choices people make when fortune and danger collide.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION, MOROCCO AND THE SEARCH FOR LOST CIVILIZATIONS

The Squad That Never Came Back is set in Morocco during the period when the French Foreign Legion operated throughout North Africa. Legionnaires often served in isolated mountain outposts where they faced harsh climates, rugged terrain and frequent conflicts with local resistance groups. Life in the Atlas Mountains demanded physical endurance, discipline and resourcefulness, making survival as challenging as combat itself.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, stories of lost cities, hidden civilizations and buried treasure fascinated readers around the world. Archaeological discoveries in Egypt, North Africa and the Middle East inspired countless fictional adventures about forgotten cultures awaiting rediscovery. The author draws upon this spirit of exploration while grounding his story in the authentic setting of the French Foreign Legion's campaigns in Morocco.

Although the lost city in the story is fictional, references to Roman history reflect the real expansion of the Roman Empire into North Africa, where many ancient ruins still survive today. Readers in the 1930s would have recognized both the French Foreign Legion and the mystery of forgotten civilizations as popular subjects for adventure fiction.

CHAPTER ONE: THE ONLY SURVIVOR TELLS HIS STORY

📖 How does learning that the corporal is the only survivor shape your expectations about the events that follow? The story begins with the narrator revealing that an entire squad has disappeared. Discuss how this opening creates suspense and influences the way readers interpret later events.

📖 What do Copain's delirious statements reveal about the dangers of greed during extreme hardship? As conditions become more difficult, thoughts of hidden wealth begin affecting the men's decisions. Examine how Copain's behavior foreshadows later conflicts.

📖 How does the author portray the realities of serving in the French Foreign Legion? The opening chapter introduces the physical hardships, strict discipline and dangerous conditions faced by Legionnaires. Compare these fictional experiences with the Legion's historical reputation.

CHAPTER TWO: DISCIPLINE BEGINS TO BREAK DOWN

📖 Why does discipline begin to weaken within the squad, and how do different characters respond to the growing conflict? As rumors of great wealth spread, personal ambition begins competing with military duty. Compare how individual characters react to these pressures.

📖 How does the corporal's specialized knowledge become one of his greatest strengths? The corporal possesses practical skills that become increasingly valuable as conditions worsen. Discuss how knowledge and experience can be as important as physical strength.

📖 Why are the men so easily influenced by the promise of treasure they have never actually seen? The possibility of great wealth affects nearly every member of the expedition. Discuss why people throughout history have often risked everything in pursuit of hidden riches.

CHAPTER THREE: THE MOUNTAINS BECOME AN ENEMY

📖 How do the Atlas Mountains become as dangerous as the Berber fighters? The expedition faces steep terrain, isolation and harsh conditions that threaten the men at every step. Compare this with historical expeditions where nature proved as dangerous as human opponents.

📖 How does the search for the lost city influence the behavior of the squad? As hope of discovering great wealth grows, the men begin making decisions they might not otherwise discuss. Examine how ambition affects their judgment.

📖 What qualities make the corporal a more effective leader than Montrey? Both men face the same difficult circumstances, yet they approach leadership in very different ways. Compare how their decisions effect the squad's survival.

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCOVERING THE LOST CITY

📖 How does learning the fate of the earlier explorers change your understanding of the lost city? The expedition uncovers evidence that others reached the city long before them. Discuss how these discoveries change both the mystery and the risks facing the squad.

📖 Which presents the greatest challenge throughout the story—the environment, the enemy, or the choices made by the Legionnaires themselves? As the expedition reaches its goal, several different dangers compete for the men's attention. Support your conclusion using evidence from the story.

CHAPTER FIVE: WEALTH VERSUS DUTY

 How are the values of military service challenged by the desire for personal wealth? As treasure becomes a possibility, several Legionnaires struggle to balance discipline with personal ambition. Compare this conflict with historical examples where greed influenced important decisions.

 Does *The Squad That Never Came Back* suggest that greed can destroy loyalty, friendship and good judgment? The relationships among the squad change dramatically as the expedition progresses. Evaluate whether the events of the story support this conclusion.

CHAPTER SIX: EVIDENCE OF ANCIENT ROME

 What evidence of Roman history and culture is discovered within the lost city, and why is it historically significant? The expedition encounters traces of an ancient civilization that once occupied North Africa. What do you know of the Roman Empire's presence in the region and compare it with the discoveries described in the story.

CHAPTER SEVEN: SURVIVAL AGAINST ALL ODDS

 How do resourcefulness and ingenuity enable the corporal to survive when others cannot? Throughout the expedition, the corporal repeatedly relies on practical thinking rather than luck. Identify the moments where creative problem-solving makes the difference between success and failure.

 What does *The Squad That Never Came Back* suggest about human nature when people face hardship, temptation and the promise of great wealth? By the conclusion of the story, the surviving characters have revealed both admirable and flawed qualities. Discuss what the author suggests about courage, greed, leadership and perseverance when people are pushed to their limits.

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