



## Discussion Questions

### Iron Flame by Rebecca Yarros

1. Familial roles, both found family and birth family, play a huge part in Iron Flame. In many ways, Violet seems closer to her newly formed Fourth Wing family than to her biological family. Do you agree? Why or why not? What factors of “family” do you think are most important in the novel?
2. Violet helps Liam’s sister, Sloane, survive Parapet. She continues to aid her throughout the book, first with Parapet and then during challenges; she even strong-arms Sloane into training with Imogen to improve her combat skills. What do you think Violet’s motivation was in helping Sloane—just her promise to Liam, or are there other motivating factors? Do you think that she made the right choice, helping Sloane and potentially weakening her wing, and that she used the correct methods to motivate Sloane?
3. Second-year cadets attend a secret course required for graduation—RSC. The interrogations and the field operations ostensibly help prepare them for war, but throughout the book, RSC is an opportunity for sabotage, torture, and misuse of power by leadership. Do you think RSC is an effective method of preparation for the horrors of war? Do you think it ultimately strengthened the riders, or did it break them in any way? What sort of course would you design for dragon riders?
4. Rhiannon is promoted to squad leader early in the novel. What qualities do you think make her a good or bad leader? Would you have chosen another character for a leadership role? If so, why?
5. Violet and her fellow cadets are surprised by the emotions displayed by the gryphon riders while the death roll is called. What do you think the novel is saying about grief, and especially the expression of it? Do you agree with Violet’s discomfort about how riders are instructed to move on from loss? Which method do you think would be most effective in the world of Iron Flame, and in our own world, and why?
6. Truths and lies are explored heavily throughout this novel, especially in Violet’s relationships with others—Xaden and his half-truths; her squad, with the risk of putting them in danger; her family, from Brennan being alive to the truth of the revolution. Do you think any of these lies were the wrong choice? Xaden seems to believe that trust

between Violet and himself has to develop without complete transparency—do you agree?

7. The chemistry between Xaden and Violet is explosive, only in part due to the bond between their dragons. What aspects of their personalities—and their circumstances—make them good partners? Do you think Violet would have the revelations, character growth, and heartaches she does if she were partnered with someone else?
8. In *Fourth Wing*, Violet realized that stories often change depending on who tells them. From inaccessible Archives to rewritten histories to secret folklore, the truthfulness of Navarre's written history is clearly suspect. Who do you think is ultimately behind it, and why? Do you agree with Xaden that all scribes are enemies of the revolution, or do you agree with Violet that some (like Jesinia) have earned the right to be trusted, even if it's risky?
9. In Chapter Twenty-One, Professor Devera asks the second-year riders, "What was sacrificed in the Unification?" Why did she ask this, and what do you think of the cadets' various answers? Having finished *Iron Flame*, do you agree with the cadets' conclusion that the sacrifices were worth it to keep the citizens of Navarre safe?
10. Two figures return from the past in a sort of parallel: Jack Barlowe and Catriona Cordella. Each is a threat to Violet, Xaden, and the revolution at large. At first, Jack seems like a possible friend, and Cat seems like a foe; by the end, those positions have changed drastically. What do you think the novel is saying about the past dictating the future? What factors do you think contribute to each character's change of heart (or lack thereof)?
11. Navarre isolates itself from other lands, with leadership prioritizing its own people's safety over the global good. Is this stance justifiable? Do you see any real-world parallels?
12. Violet's family plays a larger role in this novel. Explore the complex relationships between General Sorengail and her three children. How do they balance loyalty to family, country, and humanity overall?
13. Yarros is unafraid to kill off even significant characters. Whose death in *Iron Flame* surprised you the most?
14. Violet was prepared to sacrifice herself to imbue the wardstone. What did this show about her character?
15. Did Andarna's reveal surprise you? Do you think more powers of her dragon breed will emerge in future books? Andarna mentions that she was "left behind" to raise the wards if needed – where do you think the rest of her breed went and why?
16. That ending! Yarros ends *Iron Flame* on another cliffhanger. What do you predict will happen next to Xaden, and to his relationship with Violet?
17. The final chapter is told from Xaden's point of view rather than Violet's. Would you like to hear more from his or other characters' perspectives in future books?

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