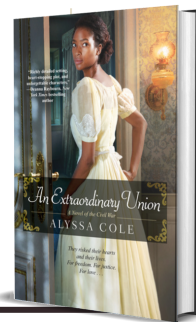


T H E S K I N I ' M I N B O O K C L U B

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 2022

@ 11AM-12PM



GENERAL BOOK QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever read any other Civil War-era books or books by Alyssa Cole?
2. At the beginning of the story, who saved Elle from the dock?
3. What were our favorite and least favorite scenes?
4. The lives of African Americans during the Civil War are often presented as a single story: slaves who either escaped or were liberated by Union troops. Did the historically accurate portrayals in this book make you rethink some of the history you learned in school?
5. Elle is part of a society of African Americans who aided the Union throughout the Civil War. Do you know of any African American spies for the Union outside Harriet Tubman?
6. Historically, the idea of a Southern belle has been seen as something to strive for. How does this *An Extraordinary Union's* depiction of this archetype, based on several stories from the historical record, conflict with other pop culture representations? What are your thoughts on Black vs. white beauty standards of the time & Susie being a foil to Elle?
7. Elle is reluctant to give in to her feelings for Malcolm because of the structure of society. Although consensual interracial relationships did exist at the time, discuss some things Elle would have to take into consideration?
8. Malcolm's relationship with his father colors much of his feelings about love. How does he overcome his hesitancy?
9. Were there any moments where you disagreed with the choices of any of the characters? What would you have done differently?
10. Malcolm McCall's family is from Scotland. Why does McCall fight for the Union?
11. What were some parallels between African Americans and Scottish people?
12. Why was Elle thinking of breaking into a slave market and freeing everyone?
13. Do you have a favorite passage of the book?
14. Does it reveal anything specific about any of the characters or illuminate certain aspects of the story?
15. What was Elle's life like in Liberia?
16. Would you read the other books from the Loyal League series? (*A Hope Divided*/ *An Unconditional Freedom*)

A L Y S S A C O L E

Alyssa Cole is an award-winning author of historical, contemporary, and sci-fi romance junkie. Her Civil War-set espionage romance *An Extraordinary Union* was the RT Reviewers' Choice Award's Best Book of 2017 and the American Library Association's RUSA Best Romance for 2018, and *A Princess in Theory* was one of the New York Times' 100 Notable Books of 2018.

She's contributed to publications including *Bustle*, *Shondaland*, *The Toast*, *Vulture*, *RT Book Reviews*, and *Heroes and Heartbreakers*, and her books have received critical acclaim from *The New York Times*, *Library Journal*, *BuzzFeed*, *Kirkus*, *Booklist*, *Jezebel*, *Vulture*, *Book Riot*, *Entertainment Weekly*, and various other outlets. When she's not working, she can usually be found watching anime or wrangling her pets.

