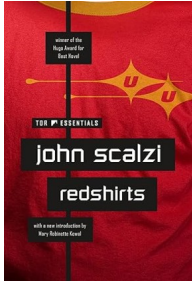




Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians



Redshirts
 By John Scalzi
 Discussed July 2013

Characters

Junior Crew

Ensign Junior Rank Andrew Dahl	a xenobiologist and linguist, a former seminary student	Brian Abnett
Maia Duvall	a former grunt, promoted to the Intrepid, sleeping with Kerensky	
Jimmy Hanson	son of a galactic industrialist/CEO	Chad
Finn	a 'diamond in the rough', drug-dealing, contraband, etc transferred to the Intrepid to cover up a drug deal gone bad - killed by an exploding head bomb in an assassination attempt against Captain Abernathy	Nick
Jasper Hester	a friendless crew member swept up in Finn's troubles, but w/o a backstory of his own.	Matthew Paulson

Senior Crew

- Captain Lucius Abernathy - weakly associated with the Sacrificial Effect
- Science Officer Q'eeng - strongly associated with the Sacrificial Effect
- Chief Engineer Paul West - no association with the Sacrificial Effect
- Chief Medical Officer Hartnell - strongly associated with the Sacrificial Effect
- Lieutenant Kerensky - weakly associated with the Sacrificial Effect - astrogrator, galactic whipping boy - Marc Corey

Xenobiology Lab

- Lieutenant Collins - commander of the xenobiology lab
- Jake Cassaway - lab crew member, death by unidentified alien life form with a fondness for colonists
- Fiona Mbeke - lab crew member, death by unidentified alien life form with a fondness for colonists
- Ben Trin - 2nd in command of the lab
- Adam Jenkins - lab member, doing an independent project.. a hairy wraith, a yeti - Nick Weinstein

Earth 2012 (Non-clones)

- Charles Paulson - Producer

Red Shirts - the Unsung Heroes

- Ensign Tom Davis - devoured by Borgovian Land Worms
- Chen - devoured by Borgovian Land Worms
- Sid Black - a Longranian Ice Shark
- Ensign Lee - liquefied by Merovian Plague
- Crewman Lopez - mulched my crazed machines
- Crewman McGregor - harpooned by a giant killer robot
- Crewmen Payton and Web - swarming bots
- Lt Fischer (Jake Klein - runs a local microbrewery in 2012), Crewman Williams, and an Intrepid shuttle - swarming bots
- Margaret Jenkins (Samantha Martinez - teacher/former actress) - shot by a Cirquerian assassin
- Security crewman Taylor - shot dead by fellow Intrepid crewmembers after going on a violent rampaged triggered by alien poison
- Ensign Dee (junior science bridge officer) - fell to her death on an away mission
- Ensign Grover - pulse beam fired by a cargo cart on his last away mission before retiring and marriage
- The nameless:
 - death by falling rock
 - death by toxic atmosphere
 - death by pulse gun vaporization
 - death by shuttle door malfunction
 - death by Security crewman Taylor
- Grand total: over four hundred Intrepid crew members plus deaths on other ships and planets

The Trials and Tribble-ations of Lt Kerensky

- Merovian Plague
- Swarming bots
- Historical Data (covering 3 years): shot 3 times, caught a deadly disease 4 times, crushed under a pile of rocks, injured in a shuttle crash, suffered burns from exploding control panels, experienced partial atmospheric decompression, induced mental instability, two poisonous bites, alien parasite, and 3 STDs

- Bruised ribs from being pinned by falling duct work

Discussion Questions

1. Did you finish the book? Did you like the book?
2. *Redshirts*: heartless spoof or loving homage to shows like Star Trek, Stargate, etc. Was the author successful at balancing those elements?
3. A key theme of the novel is exploring the nature of reality and how much control an individual has over his/her fate. Was the author successful?
4. Do you think Scalzi provided sufficient explanation for why and how the Narrative came to be, how it works, and how the two realities/time periods are connected? Does it matter?
5. Everyone in the universe seems to be aware of the Narrative, or at least the strange things that it causes. Why does it take so long for someone to do something about it?
6. The Narrative is the television show intruding into reality, altering physics and the behavior of people. Is the influence one way, or does the reality of Dahl and friends influence the Narrative?
7. The Box - is it magic or just sufficiently advanced technology? If it's an artifact of the Narrative, why doesn't every department have one? Or know about the Box in xenobiology?
8. The red shirts tend to die horrid, painful, and sometimes amusing, ways. Did you have a favorite death?
9. Would you watch the "Adventures of the Intrepid"? How would it rank to the rest of SyFy's lineup?
10. Was the author being a little to meta during the last scene in the mess hall?
11. Did you read the Codas? Did they add to the story? Did you enjoy them? Did you have a favorite of the three?
12. Is this your first John Scalzi novel? If so, would you read more of his work?