



A Few Good Men

Directed by: Rob Reiner
©: Columbia Pictures Industries Inc.,
Castle Rock Entertainment
A David Brown production
Presented by: Columbia Pictures,
Castle Rock Entertainment
Executive Producers: William Gilmore,
Rachel Pfeffer
Produced by: David Brown,
Rob Reiner, Andrew Scheinman
Co-producers: Jeffrey Scott, Steve Nicolaides
Production Manager: Steve Nicolaides
Production Co-ordinators: Linda Allan-Folsom,
Elizabeth Ervin
Production Co-ordinator (Washington):
Alison Sherman
Production Accountant: K. Lenna Kunkel
Location Manager: Richard Davis Jr
Assistant Location Manager: Jody Hummer
Location Consultant (Washington): Mike Wallace
Post-production Supervisor: Christy Dimmig
1st Assistant Director: Frank Capra III
2nd Assistant Director: Matthew Rowland
2nd 2nd Assistant Directors: Algric L. Chaplin,
Alisa Statman
Script Supervisor: Kerry Lyn McKissick
Casting: Jane Jenkins, Janet Hirshenson
Screenplay by: Aaron Sorkin
Based on the play by: Aaron Sorkin
Creative Consultant: William Goldman
Director of Photography: Robert Richardson
2nd Unit Director of Photography: Gary Kibbe
Camera Operator: Anthony Gaudioz
Camera Operator (Washington Additional):
Gábor Kóvér
Steadicam Operator: James Muro
Steadicam Operator (Washington): Bob Ulland
Chief Lighting Technician: Ian Kincaid
Key Grip: Chris Centrella
Still Photographer: Sid Baldwin
Still Photographer (Washington): Andy Schwartz
Matte Shot by: Illusion Arts
Special Effects Co-ordinator: Eugene Crum
Film Editors: Robert Leighton, Steve Nevius
Assistant Editors: Mary Morrissey, Nina Lucia
1st Assistant Editor: Alan Edward Bell
Production Designer: J. Michael Riva
Art Director: David Klassen
Art Department Co-ordinator: Renée Faia
Set Designers: Virginia L. Randolph, Rob Woodruff
Set Decorator: Michael Taylor
Leadman: Lee Orlikoff
Illustrator: Tom Lay
Property Master: Jerry Moss
Construction Co-ordinator: Terry Scott
Costumes Designed by: Gloria Gresham
Men's Costumer: James Tyson
Women's Costumer: Margo Baxley
Make-up Department Head: Steve Abrams
Make-up: Edouard F. Henriques III, Richard Dean
Head Hairstylist: Larry Waggoner
Hairstylists: Lyndell Quiyou, Enzo Angileri
Titles/Opticals: Pacific Title
Colour Timer: Phil Downey
Negative Cutter: Donah Bassett
Colour and Prints by: Technicolor
Music by: Marc Shaiman
Conducted by: Artie Kane
Orchestrations by: Mark McKenzie
Music Produced by: Hummie Mann, Marc Shaiman
Music Programming: Ralph Grierson, Nick Vidar
Music Editor: Curtis Roush

Tom Cruise

A Few Good Men

In Rob Reiner's riveting courtroom drama, Lieutenant Daniel Kaffee's moral compass is put to the test when a murder with hints of institutional wrongdoing takes place inside the famed Guantanamo Bay Naval Base. Young navy lawyer Kaffee shares many traits with *Top Gun's* Maverick: both men belong to the US armed forces, both fall for their impossibly beautiful and charmingly antagonistic superiors (here played by Demi Moore), and both navigate life with the borderline obnoxious confidence of people who've faced little hardship.

It's in the differences between the two, however, that Cruise displays a significant refinement of his craft. Whereas Maverick wobbled towards the cartoonish in his expression of frustration, Cruise's Kaffee is less exaggerated, harnessing the fear of his impending courtroom defeat to effectively convey desperation.

Rafa Sales Ross, bfi.org.uk, 27 April 2022

In 1988, 27 year-old playwright Aaron Sorkin completed the first draft of his play *A Few Good Men*. Sorkin's agent sent the play out and it was soon brought to the attention of producer David Brown. Although stage rights to the play had not yet been sold, Brown immediately bought the film rights. Enthusiastic about the project, Brown then bought the stage rights and, after bringing in Broadway producers Lewis Allen, Robert Whitehead and Roger Stevens, began plans to mount the stage production.

As Brown comments, 'When the play was brought to my attention I was already familiar with Aaron Sorkin's one-act play *Making Movies* which got a very good review in the *New York Times*. I went to a couple of readings of *A Few Good Men* and, impressed, I then brought along Lewis Allen and his wife, playwright Jay Presson Allen. They loved the play and Lewis and I decided then to produce it.'

Sorkin suggested that Don Scardino be hired to direct the play and casting began in June of 1989 with rehearsals beginning that August. The play was first given a two-week try out at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. Then a four-week run was staged at the Kennedy Center in Washington. After two weeks of previews in New York the play opened on November 15 at The Music Box Theater. It ran for 449 performances and became Broadway's longest running drama.

'The performance opening night was magical,' says Brown. 'We knew word-of-mouth would make the play a hit so we got the advertising going and we waited. The people soon soared in and we had a standing ovation almost every night for two years.'

It was during the Broadway run that Rachel Pfeffer, at that time Vice President of Production at Castle Rock Entertainment, brought the play to the attention of Castle Rock principal Martin Shafer. Castle Rock soon purchased the film rights to the project although Reiner himself hadn't the chance to go to New York to see the play. When he did see the production he was simply overwhelmed.

Music Recorded/Mixed by: Joel Moss
[Sound] Recordist: Matt Patterson
Boom Operators: George Baetz, Rob Scott
Re-recording Mixers: Kevin O'Connell, Rick Kline
Sound Mixer: Bob Eber
Supervising Sound Editors: Louis L. Edemann, Charles L. Campbell
Stunt Co-ordinator: Tim Davison
Technical Consultant:
 Brigadier General David M. Brahms
Filmed with: Panavision Cameras & Lenses
Filmed at: CA) Warner Bros. Studios (Burbank, Culver Studios
Cast:
 Tom Cruise (*Lieutenant Daniel Alistair Kaffee*)
 Jack Nicholson (*Colonel Nathan R. Jessep*)
 Demi Moore
 (*Lieutenant Commander JoAnne Galloway*)
 Kevin Bacon (*Captain Jack Ross*)
 Kiefer Sutherland
 (*Lieutenant Jonathan James Kendrick*)
 Kevin Pollak (*Lieutenant Sam Weinberg*)
 James Marshall (*Private Loudon Downey*)
 J.T. Walsh (*Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Markinson*)
 Christopher Guest (*Doctor Stone*)
 J.A. Preston (*Judge Randolph*)
 Matt Craven (*Lieutenant Dave Spradling*)
 Wolfgang Bodison
 (*Lance Corporal Harold W. Dawson*)
 Xander Berkeley (*Captain Whitaker*)
 John M. Jackson (*Captain West*)
 Noah Wyle (*Corporal Jeffrey Owen Barnes*)
 Cuba Gooding Jr
 (*Corporal Carl Edward Hammaker*)
 Lawrence Lowe (*bailiff*)
 Josh Malina (*orderly*)
 Oscar Jordan (*steward*)
 Alex Wexo (*guard*)
 Aaron Sorkin (*man in bar*)
 Frank Cavestani (*agent*)
 Jan Munroe (*jury foreman*)
 Ron Ostrow (*M.P.*)
 Matthew Saks (*David*)
 Harry Caesar (*Luther*)
 Michael Delorenzo (*Private William T. Santiago*)
 Geoffrey Nauffts (*Lieutenant Sherby*)
 Arthur Senzy (*Agent Robert C. McGuire*)
 Cameron Thor (*Commander Lawrence*)
 David Bowie (*Commander Gibbs*)
 Gene Whittington (*Mr Dawson*)
 Maud Winchester (*Aunt Ginny*)
 USA 1992©
 138 mins
 Digital 4K

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'I saw it just to see if it was something I might want to direct, and I fell in love with the play,' Reiner recalls. 'It was so emotional and powerful that I was just knocked out by it.'

Reiner committed to direct the motion picture and within only three weeks, Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson and Demi Moore were signed to star in the film.

Reiner was fascinated with the material from two perspectives: the first was the theme of a moral dilemma in a military setting; the second was the personal struggle of Kaffee, struggling to emerge from under the shadow of his famous father and find himself. Reiner was able to relate to this struggle on a personal level.

Says Reiner, 'I'm always asked if I intentionally choose to direct such a diverse range of pictures, but I don't think of it in those terms. I think, "What's in this film that I can relate to and that appeals to me." *Misery* happened to be a thriller, but what appealed to me was an artist's struggle to break out of a mold. It's something I can relate to. What appealed to me here is Kaffee's struggle to find himself. This theme is set inside a courtroom drama which is then part of the challenge because I've never done anything like this before.'

Aaron Sorkin began to write his screenplay during a continuous interaction with Reiner and producer Andrew Scheinman resulting in a work that Sorkin feels surpasses the play.

'Rob, Andrew and I originally sat down for five days with a bulletin board and index cards,' says Sorkin. 'We said, okay, this is the loosest possible structure of how this is going to be made and we made our way through the screenplay. Then I wrote a new "first draft". The best part about working with Rob as a writer are the questions he asks because they demand answers and they demand that holes be fixed. He's got a fantastic sense of structure and drama. After another month of going over it every day in his office we had a second draft. Then we had a table reading with Tom Cruise and were on our way.'

Rob Reiner concentrated his efforts on developing the struggle that Kaffee goes through to establish himself as separate and apart from his father; an idea only hinted at in the play. Reiner also felt that the climactic courtroom confrontation needed to be altered.

'I felt it was important that Kaffee not go into the courtroom armed with a smoking gun as he did in the play,' says Reiner. 'Instead, I felt it would be more impressive and satisfying if Kaffee was in there flying by the seat of his pants, using all of his intelligence to take on this big case, not sure whether or not he would win. I saw it as David taking on Goliath.'

Production notes