
A Tale of
American
Armor



SCAR TISSUE

SHANNON
FRISON

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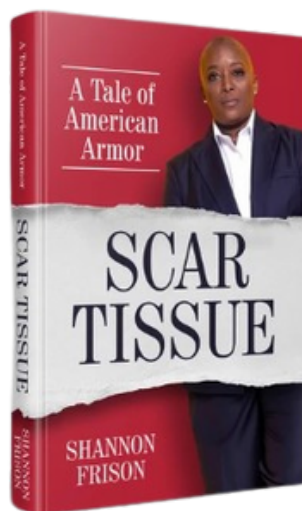
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About the Book

Scar Tissue is the true tale of the first Black openly gay Justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court and the second Black female Marine judge advocate to ever serve the United States Marine Corps.

This captivating memoir details a life led in full measure at the intersections of race, poverty, sexual identity, and the law. Judge, Attorney, and Major Shannon Frison grabs your heart and mind as you journey with her through the mud as she tackles life and jurisprudence.

With each experience and each case, the author pulls you into every courthouse to fight injustice, racism, homophobia and ignorance.



Letter from the Author

Thank you for choosing *Scar Tissue*.

This book was not easy to write. For years, I kept much of my life private—not because I was ashamed, but because I was surviving. I was protecting myself from a world that often sees Black women, especially queer Black women, as strong enough to take anything without complaint. I've worn that armor for most of my life. But armor gets heavy.

Scar Tissue is about what happens when you take it off. It's about the marks we carry, both visible and invisible. Some come from growing up in Chicago. Some from the military. Some from the courtroom. Some from living in a country that doesn't always value you or your story. But every scar has something to teach. Writing this book was a way for me to stop hiding the hurt and start naming it. Not for pity. For power.

I don't pretend to have all the answers. I'm still figuring things out like everyone else. But I do believe in telling the truth. And I believe that when we share our truths in community, we all come out stronger. That's why I'm honored this book is being read in a space like yours.

You don't have to agree with everything in these pages. You might question some of the choices I made or wonder why I didn't say more in certain places. That's part of the process. My only ask is that you read with intention. Talk honestly. And if something in the book hits close to home, give yourself permission to sit with it.

This story is mine, but I know I'm not the only one carrying scar tissue. So if anything here helps you feel seen, helps you speak your own story, or helps you keep going—then this book has done what I hoped it would.

—Shannon Frison



Author Interview Questions

Personal & Motivational

1. What made you finally decide to write *Scar Tissue*?
2. Was there a specific moment when you knew you had to tell your story?
3. How did writing this book impact your own healing process?
4. You've lived many lives—Marine, lawyer, judge. Which identity was the hardest to write about?

Writing Process

1. How long did it take you to write the book, and what was the hardest part?
2. Did you ever feel like stopping? What pushed you to keep going?
3. How did you decide what to include and what to leave out?
4. What would you tell someone who's afraid to write their own story?

Themes & Messages

1. What does “scar tissue” mean to you beyond the physical?
2. This book covers trauma, racism, queerness, and justice. Which conversation do you hope readers keep having?
3. How did your experience in the military shape the way you show up in civilian spaces?
4. What do you want young Black women—especially queer women—to take away from this book?

Book Club Party Ideas

1. “Armor & Identity” Theme Night

Invite members to wear something that represents how they show up in the world vs. who they really are—then discuss what armor they’ve carried and why. Optional: use prompts from the book to start the conversation.

2. Marine-Inspired Meal or Mocktail

Serve simple, hearty foods inspired by military mess hall staples—but elevated (like sliders, chili, or veggie bowls). Pair with a custom “Scar Tissue” mocktail or cocktail—dark cherry, bitters, and lime—something that feels both strong and complex.

3. Scars that Shaped Us: Show & Tell

Ask members to bring a physical object (a photo, memento, letter, etc.) that represents a personal “scar” or life-altering experience. Give each person time to share if they feel safe doing so.



Book Club Party Ideas

4. Soundtrack of Survival

Create a playlist inspired by Shannon's journey—include songs about strength, healing, or resistance (Beyoncé, Nina Simone, Janelle Monáe, Kendrick Lamar, etc.). Play in the background or make it a guided listening activity with reflections.

5. Write Your Own Reflection Prompt

Each member writes one prompt based on their experience reading the book (e.g., “When did I first feel unseen?” or “What moment in my life taught me resilience?”). Drop in a bowl, draw at random, and discuss.

6. “Letters We Never Sent” Writing Circle

Inspired by Shannon's transparency, have a quiet moment where everyone writes an unsent letter—to a parent, a younger self, an old boss, etc. If comfortable, share aloud.

7. Photo Wall or Storyboard

Ask everyone to bring a printed photo from a time in their life when they were “fighting in the mud” or learning to heal. Display the photos with a short caption or quote from the book. Creates a visual conversation starter.

Group Discussion Questions

1. 🧡👤 **Armor & Identity Theme Night**

- What part of your “public self” feels most different from your private truth?
- When in your life did you first realize you needed armor? Who or what made you feel unsafe?

2. 🍷👤 **Marine-Inspired Meal or Mocktail Night**

- What parts of Shannon’s military experience stood out most to you, and why?
- How do institutions (like the military, courts, or schools) shape how we cope with trauma or show strength?

3. 💬👤 **Scars that Shaped Us: Show & Tell**

- What scar (physical or emotional) has taught you the most about yourself?
- What does healing look like for you now, compared to how you used to define it?



Group Discussion Questions

4. 🎵 **Soundtrack of Survival**

- If your life had a survival anthem, what would it be and why?
- Which chapter or moment in Scar Tissue would you set to music—and what kind of song would fit?

5. 🗣️ **Write Your Own Reflection Prompt**

- Which prompt from the bowl stuck with you the most? Why?
- What's a question you're still carrying after reading the book?

6. ✉️ **Letters We Never Sent Writing Circle**

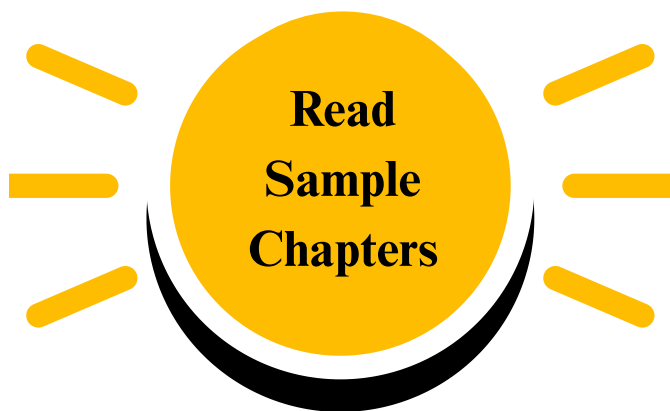
- Who would you write to if you could say anything with no consequences? What would you want them to understand?
- Did writing the letter bring up anything unexpected for you?

7. 📷 **Photo Wall or Storyboard**

- Looking at your photo, what was the version of you in that moment fighting through?
- What would you tell that version of yourself now?



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