

BROTHERS IN SERVICE

A Reading Group Guide · A.M. Soliman · amsoliman.com

About the book: On September 11, 2001, Omar Bakari walked out of the World Trade Center covered in ash and came home to New Jersey. His twin sons answered the years that followed in opposite ways — Ali with the Constitution, Adam with a uniform — until something happened in Iraq that neither brother could speak of, and a family built on service went silent for eighteen years. Now, in 2026, Omar's grandson Elias begins asking the questions no one will answer.

"A thought-provoking work." —Kirkus Reviews

Discussion Questions

1. At the beginning, were you more sympathetic to Ali or Adam? Did your allegiance change by the end?
2. Both brothers believe they are serving their country. Is one brother's idea of service more admirable than the other's?
3. How should readers judge Adam's actions during his deployment? What is the difference between explaining a terrible decision and excusing it?
4. Did either brother's commitment to his own beliefs prevent him from understanding the other?
5. Who suffered most from the family's silence? Was keeping the truth buried ever justified?
6. Salma often tries to hold the family together. When is keeping the peace an act of strength, and when might it prolong harm?
7. Why does it take Elias, a member of the next generation, to ask questions the family has avoided?
8. By the end, what does patriotism mean? Did the novel change your understanding of what it means to serve your country?
9. Which was your favorite character, and why?
10. What did the book tell you about society, and what would you want to change about society after reading it?

Optional closing conversation

Which scene, relationship, or moral dilemma has stayed with you the longest—and why?

Some themes may connect to difficult personal experiences. Participants are welcome to pass on any question.

Invite the Author

A.M. Soliman joins book clubs by video — any club, anywhere, no charge. He is a New Jersey trial attorney; on September 11, 2001 he was a working newspaper reporter, and he later wrote a column for The Record and produced the PBS documentary *Born in the USA: Muslim Americans* (2003). To schedule a visit: ahmed@amsoliman.com or amsoliman.com.