

READER'S GUIDE

We hope you've enjoyed *Random Act*, the twelfth novel in the Jack McMorrow mystery series. Many readers race through the pages of a McMorrow novel, so we are including these discussion questions in the hope that you take time to reflect on the story and characters and talk about your reactions with other Boyle fans.

Early on in the novel, Jack is at the scene of a brutal crime. The murder of Lindy Hines drives Jack to report on the crime and understand Teak's motivation. Why do you think Jack can't let go? Do you think this obsessive characteristic is good for Jack? Is it a characteristic necessary in a journalist?

McMorrow novels are populated by authentic Maine characters. In Random Act, Boyle introduces Marta to the mix. She is from a very different world from Sanctuary or Prosperity, Maine, or even Bangor. What did you think of Marta? Intriguing? Unsettling?

Speaking of Marta, this story reveals more of Louis's past, and clues to his present life. How do you relate to Louis? How does the introduction of his love interest change the dynamic between Jack, Clair, and Louis?

The friendship between Jack and Clair is one of the most enduring relationships Jack has. How does this friendship impact Jack's success? Would Jack be able to do what he does without Clair?

While many readers enjoy spending time with Jack, others love Clair. If you could meet either character for coffee in real life, which one would it be?

In Random Act, Boyle and McMorrow explore the world of mental illness and homelessness. Did that strike you as a realistic portrayal?

Lindy Hines is clearly the victim in Random Act. But are there others? Who?

Boyle's mysteries are about serious stuff but they also have elements of humor. Were there moments in Random Act that made you laugh?

Boyle has said that there have been times when he thought he might have written novels with McMorrow's friend Clair as the protagonist. And for one movie project, he wrote a screenplay that featured Roxanne as the heroine and McMorrow was barely in the story. Who would you like to see in the spotlight in the next McMorrow novel?

McMorrow has been chasing down stories for many years now. What kind of challenges do you think an author faces writing a long series? How has the world changed? How has the role of newspapers changed?