Reader's Guide/Discussion Questions

1. What was unique about the setting of the book (present-day Michigan, a corporate and manufacturing campus)? Did it enhance or take away from the story?

2. What themes does the author emphasize throughout the novel? What do you think she is trying to get across to the reader?

3. Do the teen and adult characters seem real and believable? Can you relate to their predicaments? To what extent do they remind you of yourself or someone you know?

4. How does Milo Shoemaker change or evolve throughout the course of the story? What events trigger such changes?

5. Milo's feelings for two specific adults influence his actions. How do his opinions of his father, and of Alf Farnon, change over the course of the story? Why?

6. Ellie Farnon and Milo Shoemaker have each lost a parent to death. Discuss how this affects their actions, in particular their treatment of their remaining parents, and of each other.

7. In what ways do the events in the book hint at the author's world view? Specifically, how do you think Cappo regards the American system of capitalism, based on her depiction of Wolverine Motors?

8. Did certain parts of the book make you uncomfortable? If so, why? Did this lead to a new understanding or awareness of some aspect of your life you might not have thought about before?

9. Milo is a virgin at the age of 18--by his choice. The responsibilities he's inherited after his father's death have made him more determined than ever to avoid sex for the foreseeable future. Is the scene where Milo must decide whether to maintain his virginity, credible? How does his decision here affect his subsequent treatment of Ellie? Of her father?

10. Some readers have suggested the ending of the book leaves certain questions unresolved between Milo and Ellie, and between Milo and Alf Farnon. Do you agree? Why might the author have left some points ambiguous?

11. In *Unaccounted For*, themes of honesty and betrayal feature prominently. The protagonist admires adults who then disappoint him. Does this disillusionment embitter Milo Shoemaker?

12. Alf Farnon is considered the "Hero of Valeene" because his leadership of Wolverine Motors has brought prosperity and jobs to that region of Michigan. Is he a hero? Will Milo work for him in the future? Should he?

13. Milo begins to see parallels between the choices that his father, and now he, are asked to make about corporate wrongdoing. How do his choices differ from Tim's? Do you think Tim Shoemaker would have been proud of, or disappointed in, his son's decision at the end of book regarding Wolverine Motors?

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14. One theme of the book is the balance that communities and individuals try to maintain between job creation and corporate and personal integrity. Do you see any parallels between the book's setting and current events in your town or region? Are there situations in which the community's economic welfare outweighs one person's guilty conscience?

15. Both Milo and Ellie, at various points in the story, believe they can count on their parents' integrity and courage to do right. How correct are they in this belief?

16. Milo reflects several times that he is becoming an accomplished liar. Does his increasing skill at deception make him a more, or less, trustworthy person? Has he matured as a result of the story's events, or been corrupted by them?

17. When his father died, Milo tried very hard to uncover the truth about Tim's death. At the end of the book Milo deliberately keeps parts of the truth from his mother, and from Ellie. Why? Is it to protect them, or himself? What conclusions can we draw regarding what he has learned about keeping secrets?

18. Throughout the book Milo feels he must direct his and Zaffer's investigations, since it is *his* father's crimes that brought them to Wolverine. Is he correct in thinking his view of the situation is accurate? Can you think of an instance in which Zaffer's perception turns out to be more reliable?