

READING GROUP GUIDE

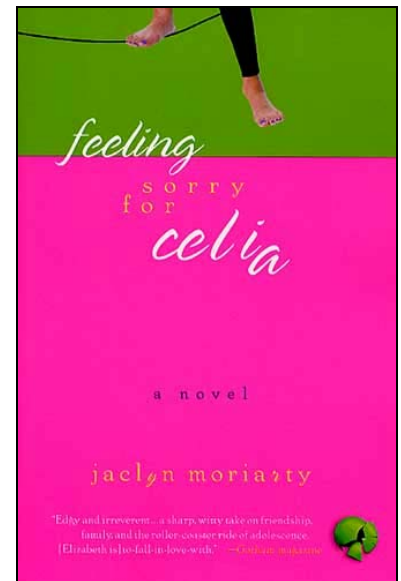
Feeling Sorry For Celia

by Jaclyn Moriarty

A #1 Bestseller in Australia and Book Sense 76 Pick

St. Martin's Press

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Introduction to Feeling Sorry For Celia

Life is pretty complicated for Elizabeth Clarry. Her best friend Celia keeps disappearing, her absent father has reappeared, and her dialogue with her mother consists entirely of wacky notes left on the fridge. On top of everything else, her English teacher wants to rekindle the "Joy of the Envelope," and now a Complete and Utter Stranger knows more about Elizabeth than anyone else. A #1 bestseller in Australia, this fabulous debut is a funny, touching, revealing story written entirely in the form of letters, postcards, and missives from imaginary organizations like "The Cold Hard Truth Association."

Praise for Feeling Sorry For Celia

"Dare to steal a glance into Elizabeth's teen years....it feels a little like snooping into someone's personal drawers-but after a while, you'll relish the sneak peeks....Sassy Celia is no sorry sister."
-*Seventeen*

"I absolutely loved *Feeling Sorry for Celia* and wish I had written it myself. It's so funny and so gripping -it describes perfectly the confusion and bittersweet hope of being a teenager. Written with exquisite deftness, immense warmth and humanity, it is the best 'feel-good' book I've read in a long time." -Marian Keyes, author of *Last Chance Saloon* and *Rachel's Holiday*

"Elizabeth is feisty and charming, and she and the novel are a delight...this tells of relationships and especially friendships in a humorous but insightful fashion." -*Kliatt*

"Highs and lows alternate as dizzily as adolescent hormone levels in this engaging Australian debut....Adolescence, zits and all, described with wit and empathy." -*Kirkus Reviews*

"Edgy and irreverent...a sharp, witty take on friendship, family, and the roller-coaster ride of adolescence. [Elizabeth is] to-fall-in-love-with." -*Gotham* magazine

Reading Group Guide Questions

1. Who grows and changes more over the course of the novel, Celia or Elizabeth? How and why?
2. How does the structure of *Feeling Sorry for Celia* with letters, postcards, and messages from societies such as "The Cold Hard Truth Association" affect the reading experience? How does this structure reflect the experience of being a teenager?
3. What is the significance of Elizabeth's letters from "The Association of Teenagers" throughout the story?
4. Compare the development of Elizabeth's friendship with Celia to that of her friendship with Christina. Do you think that Elizabeth would have become friends with Christina if they had met in person?
5. Some readers feel sorry for Elizabeth. Does she feel that way about herself? What about the characters around her?
6. After Celia begins dating Saxon, she writes Elizabeth a letter: "I feel as if I have lost you. You are a different person. It's like you've disappeared.... You weren't happy for me. You never asked me a single question about Saxon or about how I felt. Maybe you thought you had to be cruel to me so I'd learn how to survive on my own. But maybe you were being too cruel, Lizzy? Maybe you just weren't being fair?" Is this true?
7. Describe why most teenagers and adults, who remember what it was like to be a teenager, would identify with some of the experiences that Elizabeth and Christina share with each other?
8. Why do you think Celia is always running away from home?
9. What does the outcome of Elizabeth's relationships with Celia and Christina tell us about the nature of friendship?

About the Author

Jaclyn Moriarty's *Feeling Sorry for Celia* has been nominated Best Book of the Year by the American Library Association, for YALSA's 2002 Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Readers, and for the 2002 Colorado Blue Spruce Young Adult Book Award. Jaclyn Moriarty lives in Sydney, Australia where she works as a media and entertainment lawyer. She is currently writing her second novel.