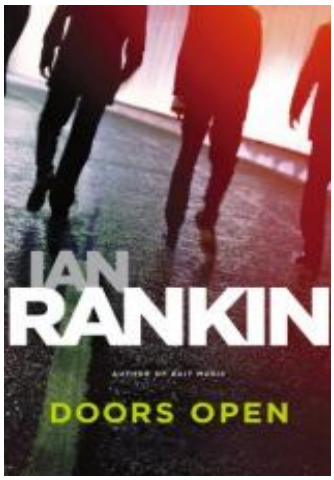
Doors Open

by Ian Rankin



About the Book

Three friends descend upon an art auction. Mike Mackenzie --- retired software mogul, bachelor and fine art enthusiast --- wants something that money can't buy. Fellow art-lover Allan Cruickshank is bored by his banking career and burdened by a painful divorce. And art professor Robert Gissing is frustrated that so many paintings are hidden in private collections. After the auction, they have a chance encounter with a crime boss?

Discussion Guide

1. Why does Mike Mackenzie agree to get involved in the heist? Does his understanding of his own motives change from the story?s beginning to its end?

2. Describe the motivations of Allan Cruickshank and Robert Gissing in stealing the paintings.

3. Ian Rankin discusses some of his favorite paintings in Edinburgh elsewhere in this reading group guide. What works of art do you feel similarly passionate about? In your opinion, is it appropriate that they are displayed and accessible?

4. Why does Robert Gissing describe the theft as ?repatriation?? What is meant by the phrase ?art as collateral,? as Mike describes it (page 39)?

5. Why is Mike Mackenzie drawn to Chib Calloway? Why does Chib want to be involved in the plot with Mike?

6. Discuss the signifi cance that the painting of Monboddo?s Reading Group Guide wife plays for Mike. Why is it so meaningful to him? Why does Monboddo?s biographer note that the painting was likely created ?to make up for some transgression notably more heinous than the norm? (page 227)?

7. What role does Gerry Pearson play in the narrative?

8. At one point in the novel Robert Gissing describes what happens ?when a culture gets greedy? (page 162). Do you think it is morally wrong for a public institution to own huge volumes of art and not display it?

9. Why does Westie insert crushed beer cans or used condoms into the details of his replicas? What does his involvement in the story say about the nature of real art and forgeries? Why does so much value attach to the original version of any art work?

10. Is Chib Calloway ever a sympathetic character? Why does he choose to live in the neighborhood he does when ?he could have practically any house in Edinburgh? (page 297)?

11. Did you think Mike Mackenzie should have been punished for his role in the crime? Was his punishment a reasonable one?

12. Discuss Mike Mackenzie?s list of favorite heist movies. What other heist movies would you recommend to Mike?

Author Bio

Ian Rankin is a #1 international bestselling author. Winner of an Edgar Award and the recipient of a Gold Dagger for fiction and the Chandler-Fulbright Award, he lives in Edinburgh, Scotland, with his wife and their two sons.

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